

THE NATAL AFRIKANER AND THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

by

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PREFACE

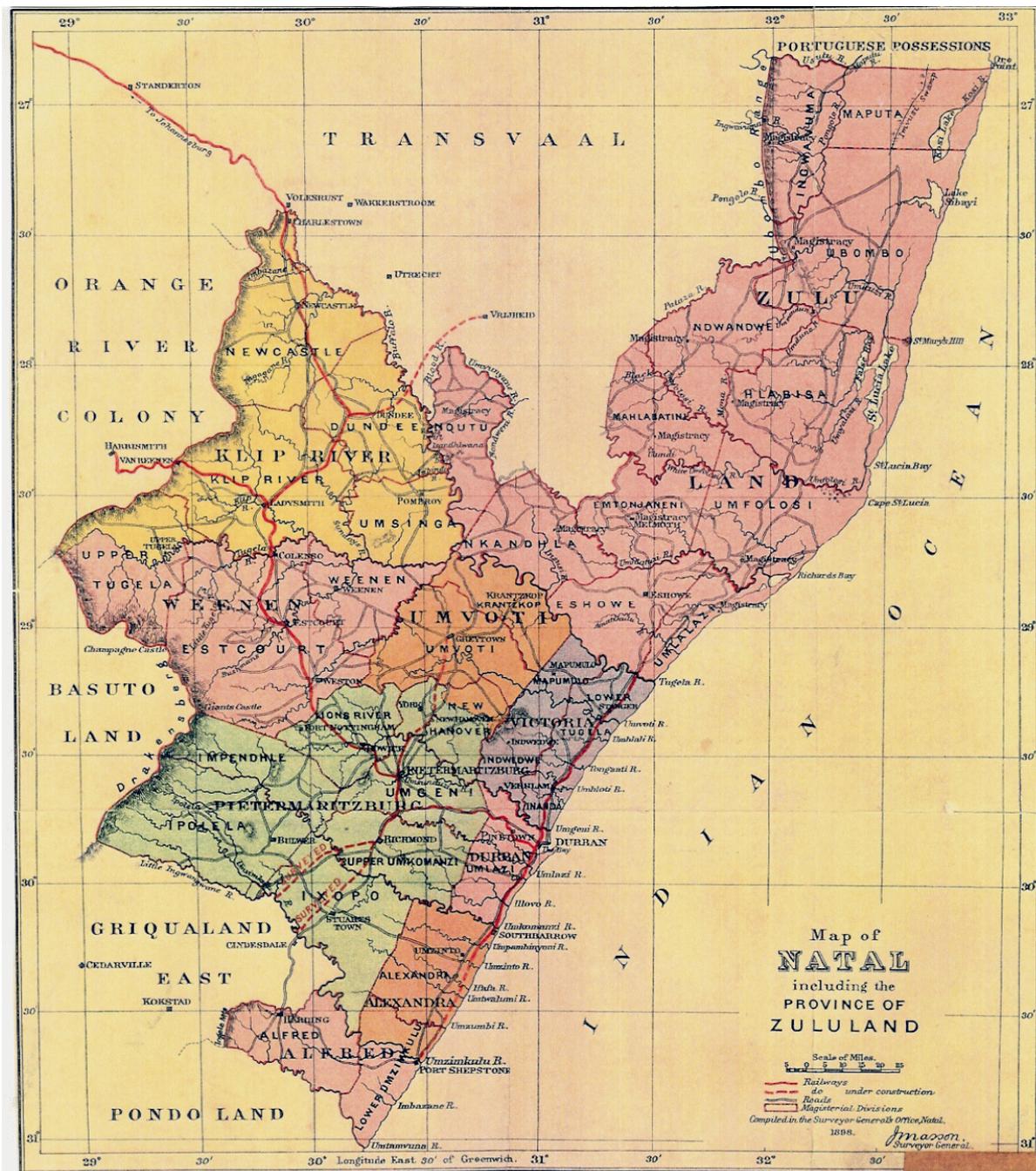
In the preface to *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, my supervisor, Professor Fransjohan Pretorius, jokingly commented that a history thesis invariably takes longer to complete than the duration of the events studied. The same quip applies to this study, for it took me six years to conclude the story of Natal Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War.

Numerous people and institutions assisted me during this time. They all deserve a big thank you. My supervisor, Professor Fransjohan Pretorius, and co-supervisor, Dr Jackie Grobler, deserve my gratitude for their time, practical advice and professional support. Furthermore, I would also like to extend my appreciation to my colleagues and students at the Faculty of Education (Durban School) at University of KwaZulu-Natal for their encouragement and interest. I would also like to record my deep indebtedness to the staff of the following archival repositories and libraries who rendered assistance in a friendly and professional manner: the Durban Archive Repository, the Don Africana and Killie Campbell Africana Libraries in Durban, the National Archive Repository in Pretoria, the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein, the Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository, the Public Record Office at Kew in London, the Talana Museum in Dundee, the Umvoti Mounted Rifles Archive Repository in Durban, the Free State Archive Repository in Bloemfontein, the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk of Natal Archive in Pietermaritzburg, the Local History Museum in Durban, the Fort Amiel Museum in Newcastle, the Vaal Technorama in Vanderbijlpark and the South African National Library in Cape Town. My hearty appreciation also goes to individuals such as, Foy Vermaak and OE Prozesky, who kindly allowed me access to their private collections. Thanks also go to friends like Professor Brian Kearney, Louis Eksteen and Pieter Nel for the real interest they showed in my research, Fran Saunders, Heater Kohler and Gavin Heath for the proof reading and language editing, as well as Professor Hennie Kock and the board of the former Durban College of Education for their generous financial support.

In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to my wife, Annette Wohlberg, for all her support, encouragement, comments and for the valuable help she provided in so many ways.

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MAP OF THE COLONY OF NATAL, 1898¹



1. Pietermaritzburg Archives Repository (hereafter PAR), Map number 323: Natal including the Province of Zululand, 1898. Although dated 1898 the map for some unknown reason refers to the Orange Free State (hereafter OFS) as the Orange River Colony (hereafter ORC).

FREQUENTLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

AGO	Archives of the Attorney-General's Office
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CIO	Criminal Investigation Office
CO	Archives of the Colonial Office
CSO	Archives of the Colonial Secretary's Office
DAR	Durban Archive Repository
DBC	Archives of the Director of Burgher Camps
DRC	Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk or Dutch Reform Church
Ds	Dominee or Reverend
1/DUN	Archives of the Dundee magistrate
GH	Archives of Government House
GOC	General Officer Commanding
1/GTN	Archives of the Greytown magistrate
JP	Justice of the Peace
KG	Archives of the Commandant-General
1/KRK	Archives of the Kranskop Magistrate
1/LDS	Archives of the Ladysmith (Klip River) magistrate
1/MEL	Archives of the Melmoth (Entonjaneni) magistrate
MJPW	Archives of the Minister of Justice and Public Works
MLA	Member Legislative Assembly
MLC	Member Legislative Council
NAR	National Archive Repository
NCP	Archives of the Natal Colonial Publications
NDR	Archives of the Natal Defence Records
1/NEW	Archives of the Newcastle magistrate
NGKA	NG Kerk van Natal Argief
NT	Archives of the Natal Treasury Department
OFS	Republic of the Orange Free State (up to 31.5.1902)
ORC	Orange River Colony (after 31.5.1902)
PAR	Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository
PM	Archives of the Prime Minister of Natal
PMO	Archives of the Provost Marshal's Office
POW	Prisoner of War
PRO	Public Record Office
PUS	Principal-under-Secretary
PVS	Archives of the Principal Veterinary Surgeon
SGO	Archives of the Surveyor-General's Office
SNA	Archives of the Secretary of Native Affairs
SOP	Archives of the Staff Officer Prisoners of War, Natal
UMR	Umvoti Mounted Rifles
1/UMS	Archives of the Umsinga magistrate
VCR	Volunteer Composite Regiment
VTR	Vaal Technorama (Vereeniging)
1/WEN	Archives of the Weenen magistrate
WM	War Museum of the Boer Republics
WO	Archives of the War Office
ZAR	South African Republic same as Transvaal (up to 31.5.1902)

INTRODUCTION

“It was once said of the Anglo-Boer War¹ that it resulted in the spilling of more ink than blood.”² Furthermore, it is also maintained that the Anglo-Boer War is the most written about South African historical event. Rather than try to give a general historiographical overview of the Anglo-Boer War it was, for the purpose of this study, deemed sufficient to refer to others who have attempted to do so.³

Within the meta-narrative of the Anglo-Boer War spanning the past hundred years, not a single work, academic or general in nature, tells the story of Natal Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War. In fact, the role and experiences of Natal Afrikaners were either dismissed in a single sentence,⁴ or it was assumed, without much evidence, that they had willingly joined the invading Boer forces.⁵

The only real attempt made until now to investigate the experiences of Natal Afrikaners during the war was the limited narrative, 64 pages in length, by VS Harris. His honours-thesis, submitted to the University of Natal - Pietermaritzburg in 1982, entitled: *The reluctant rebels: The impact of the Second Anglo-Boer War upon the Klip River Dutch*

1. Historically the war went by numerous names: Boer War, Engelse Oorlog (English War), Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Second War of Independence), South African War and the politically correct term for the centenary commemorations in 1999 - Anglo-Boer South African War. The author feels, the name, Anglo-Boer War, remains the most appropriate historical term.

2. S Stone, *The Victorian Army: health, hospitals and social conditions*, p.7, as quoted by MS Coghlan, *The Natal Volunteers in the Anglo-Boer War, September 1899 to July 1902: reality and perception*. PhD-thesis, UNP, 2000, p.422.

3. F Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp.15-24; I van der Waag, Re-fighting the second Anglo-Boer War: historians in the trenches, *Journal for contemporary history*, 27(2), May 2002, pp.184-210; FR van Hartsveldt, *The Boer War: historiography and annotated bibliography*, passim.

4. LS Amery (ed)., *The Times history of the war in South Africa 1899-1902, Volume VI*, p.62. *The standard encyclopedia of Southern Africa, Volume 9*, pp.260-261, fares no better and does not even acknowledge the existence of Natal rebels.

5. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, *A history of Natal*, pp. 202-209.

Community with special reference to the Dutch Community of Dundee, although limited in scope, was a groundbreaking piece of research as it investigated the reaction of a community of Natal Afrikaners to the Boer occupation.

In stark contrast is the historiography on the Anglo-Boer War experiences of the Afrikaners resident in the Cape Colony, the other area in Southern Africa which formed part of the British Empire at that time. The first such work to appear was that by CJS Strydom, *Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, in 1937. Subsequently, JH Snyman, completed a doctoral-thesis, *Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902*. The same author in his MA-thesis entitled, *Rebelle-Verhoor in Kaapland gedurende die Tweede-Vryheidsoorlog met spesiale verwysing na militêre howe, 1899-1902*, focussed on the treatment, by the military courts, of Cape Afrikaners who supported the invading Boer forces. The war-time or war-related experiences of the Cape Afrikaners are also dealt with in an academic article entitled “Generaal J.B.M Hertzog as kampvegter vir die Kaapse Rebelle 1902-1903” by PW Vorster, published in *Historia*, 35 (2), November 1990, and by Graham Jooste and Abrie Oosthuizen in their book, *So het hulle gesterf. Gedenkboek van teregstellings van Kaapse Rebelle en Republikeinse Burgers tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*.

Why then was the history of Natal Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War neglected? Perhaps historian Albert Grundlingh provides the answer in his analysis of Afrikaans historical writing on the Anglo-Boer War. Unlike other Afrikaners, Natal Afrikaners were never quite viewed as being part of the struggle “against the mighty British Empire, and the suffering of the women and children.” Therefore, their history was not really going to contribute to an “enhanced patriotism and national consciousness.” Their war effort did not contribute to creating a “nationalist spirit” while that of the numerically superior Cape Afrikaners did.⁶ In simple terms their suffering was not viewed as real.

An even harsher view on the Anglo-Boer War and the theme of this thesis was adopted by two academic historians. When I applied to a statutory body for financial assistance, an anonymous reviewer of the submitted proposal rejected it in a single sentences as a “pet project”, which holds little importance to the broader South African society and is therefore not worth funding. Similarly, a young colleague, now at Oxford working on the history of the South African chemical weapons programme in a later conflict, dismissed the topic under investigation as “old history”.

6. AM Grundlingh, War, wordsmiths and the ‘Volk’: Afrikaans historical writing on the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 and the war in Afrikaner historical consciousness 1902-1990, in E Lehmann and E Rechwitz (eds)., *Mfecane to Boer War. Versions of South African history: papers presented at the symposium at the University of Essen*, pp.50-52.

The two comments should be seen in the context of how significant the Anglo-Boer War is in the new South Africa. According to Bill Nasson "...it is increasingly clear that a shifting historical context will affect the established ways in which the war has been remembered...Outside of elite cultural and academic circles, the Anglo-Boer conflict is not *felt* to be shared South African history, let alone a shared tragedy. By and large, the impulse of the black majority is to dissociate; for white Afrikaners and English speakers, it is to associate, however reticently, in many instances."⁷

7. B Nasson, The war one hundred years on, in GA Cuthbertson, AM Grundlingh and M-L Suttie (eds)., *Writing a wider war. rethinking gender, race, and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, p.14.

This neglect of the story of the Anglo-Boer War story of Natal Afrikaners cannot only be laid at the door of professional and amateur historians, Afrikaner nationalist politicians of the past, and present day African nationalist politicians. It can also be laid at the door of the Natal Afrikaner communities in general as reflected in the centenary commemorations of the Anglo-Boer War, 1999-2001. Between 15 January 1999 and 14 September 2001, the role of Natal Afrikaners in the war did not feature in the commemorations held at Newcastle,⁸ nor at Dundee. Despite the statement: "Dundee in the heart of the KwaZulu-Natal offers you a number of different events and occasions, planned to understand all the people involved, their motives and the trauma of the times", the town did not set aside a single ceremony or moment to reflect on, or try to understand the involvement in the war and the trauma, experienced by local Afrikaners a hundred years before. This happened, despite the fact that the descendants of the participants still reside in the area in significant numbers. Instead, they found place for, apart from the commemoration of battles, a vehicle exhibition and an *Oktoberfest* as part of the "Centenary Programme."⁹ Matters were no different in Ladysmith and its freedom festival fared no better. The only possible look in the descendants of Natal Afrikaners got was the so-called *Boerefees* promoted as: "Traditional Boer festival. Taste exquisite traditional Boer cuisine. Complete with *koeksisters* and *boerewors*. All day. Accommodation available in the most hospitable concentration Camp (from 29 October to 31 October 1999)."¹⁰ What makes this event even more ironic and insensitive was the fact that the author had to alert the committee to the fact that Ladysmith actually had a concentration camp, situated at the former Tin Town POW Camp, lasting from January to September 1902. One can only but come to the conclusion that Natal Afrikaners and their war experiences mean as little today as they did 100 years ago.

Another motivation to engage in this project stems partially from the stories of the involvement of my maternal family in the war. My mother, Fourie/Hattingh by ancestry, and originally from the North-Eastern Orange Free State would regale us, amongst others, with tales about her bittereinder grandfather, of the Vergeet-my-niet farm in the Rhenoster River valley, who fought with De Wet, the two aunts who died in the Bloemfontein Concentration Camp and the post-war economic hardships.

My mother's stories were juxtaposed with those of the residents in the area I grew up in, the Dundee district in Northern Natal. Here I resided amongst, and went to school with, the descendants of Natal Afrikaners who had endured the war, including the Slabberts, Labuschagnes and Vermaaks. What struck me was the silence on their part when tales

8. *Newcastle Advertiser*, 15.1.1999-4.9.2001.

9. Dundee Publicity Association and the Talana Museum, *Anglo Boer War centenary programme 1999, Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*, 1999.

10. Ladysmith 99/2000 commemoration Project, *Ladysmith 99/2000 Freedom Festival*, 1999.

were exchanged about how heroic “our families” were during the war. It seemed as if they had no stories, no museum displays, no public monuments or memorials, no vernacular history of Natal Afrikaners during the war, thus no participation or memory.

As a result, my mother’s stories became my vernacular history of the Anglo-Boer War. In my mind, the Anglo-Boer War became a war about other places, battles and the misery of concentration camps, combined with the belief that only Republican Afrikaners had suffered.¹¹ In this process, my mother’s accounts were supported by the Afrikaner historiography of the time whose “official” versions of heroes, villains, injustice and war left very little room for social history of the kind that would have described the experiences of Natal Afrikaners during the war. It should be remembered though, that this in turn was a reaction to an equally aggressive and one dimensional British historiography of the war.

The observations made, during my school-going years, regarding the silence of my fellow Natal Afrikaners on the war, only made sense when, at the outset of this thesis, I read the words written in 1941 by a convicted Natal rebel, JC Vermaak, in the first page of his memoirs: “Dit is ‘n klein deeltjie van die groot oorlog, maar dit is ‘n gewigtige gebeurtenis wat aan die vergetelheid moet ontruk word. As dit nie nou vertel word nie, wie sal dit dan later kan doen? Die antwoord daarop is geeneen nie...”¹²

This statement by Vermaak made more than 60 years ago, as well as the lack of historiographical depth on the wartime experiences of Natal Afrikaners, highlighted the need to, within the current political, public and historical perspectives of the Anglo-Boer War, to protect “true history.”¹³ This thesis, an ethnographic study with the war as context, is an attempt to do just this. It is also, however, written for all Natalians and South Africans

11. D Thelen, The postmodern challenge of introducing past to present: teaching about memories and monuments, *Perspectives in Education*, 1993, 14 (2), pp.117-138.

12. Vaal Technorama (hereafter VTR), JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.1, 1941.

13. H Gilliomee, *Die skryf van geskiedenis in radikaal nuwe omstandighede*, pp.14-15. <http://www.litnet.co.za/seminaar/hggesk.asp>

with an interest in history to enlighten them on what the war was like outside of the military campaigns. But most importantly, the greatest value of this study perhaps lies in its attempt to address an area which has previously been neglected in the historiography on the Anglo-Boer War.

History writing has undergone a profound change over the past 50 years. The historical narrative is no longer restricted to great statecraft, and in the case of the Anglo-Boer War, to great battles, but now encompasses everyday experiences of ordinary people as they tried to deal with the war. This thesis is therefore more than mere military history, it primarily investigates the experiences of ordinary people caught up in war, as well as the impacts the war had on them, and they on the war. The questions ‘what were their motivations and reactions?’, ‘what were the implications of the war for Natal Afrikaners?’, ‘how did they react to modify or redirect the course of their lives during the war?’ were grappled with. It must be borne in mind that it was impossible to follow a reductionist approach in answering these questions. For, although Natal Afrikaners were a small group on the fringes of both Natal Colonial and Republican society, they were not a homogenous group and did not all suffer the same experiences. It was therefore attempted to provide a comprehensive picture of their wartime experiences within a specific historical time frame, without merely recreating an idealised image of Afrikaners. In the process I hopefully managed to remain, in the words of C Vann Woodward, “detached and sympathetic.”¹⁴

No study is without its shortcomings. This study is no different and practical and personal considerations such as time, in that it took six years to complete, and the length of the thesis, in excess of 500 pages at a line spacing of 1.3, and the fact that at some stage the research and writing process must reach some finality, mitigated against certain themes and approaches.

A possible criticism of this thesis could therefore be that at times it merely winked at certain aspects and themes, and possibly did not deal with them as comprehensively as one should have. Examples of this include the following: the relationship between Natal Afrikaners resident in the “Dutch Districts” and their English neighbours, the wartime role of the 300 plus rebels not apprehended by the Natal authorities, Republican attitudes towards Natal Afrikaners prior to the war, Natal Afrikaner rebels as folk heroes and martyrs for Afrikanerdom, and an in-depth look at the war experiences of Natal Afrikaners in specific districts.

14. VC Woodward, *The burden on southern History*, pp.189-191.

Furthermore, it was also decided, again due to constraints in terms of time and length, not to do a comparative analysis between how minorities, related by kinship to the invading army, reacted to war. For reasons already stated, and because it was not part of the conceptualisation of the thesis, it was also decided not to compare the war experiences of the numerically inferior Natal Afrikaner to that of the Cape Afrikaner. To a certain extent, given the political and economic power Cape Afrikaners wielded when compared to their Natal brethren, such a comparison would have been unfair, while the dynamics and scale of the rebellion in the Cape exceeded that of Natal at least ten fold.

Attempting to include, especially the aspects/themes mentioned in the previous paragraph, within this thesis, would have made it unmanageable and could even have detracted from the emphasis on the experiences of the Natal Afrikaners during the Anglo-Boer War. Despite these shortcomings, and others that I am sure will be highlighted by its readers, the author feels that, all things considered, the thesis adheres fully to the outlined topic and provides an adequate overview and conclusions on the wartime experiences of Natal Afrikaners.

For the completion of this thesis, a wealth of information was located in especially the Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository. Some of the major archival groups consulted included, amongst others, the Attorney-General's Office, Colonial Secretary's Office, Prime Minister's Office, Natal Defence Records, Ministry of Justice and Public Works, Natal Colonial Publications, Natal Treasury Department, Government House, Secretary of Native Affairs, as well as the records of the various magistracies in which Natal Afrikaners resided such as Dundee, Umsinga, Klip River (Ladysmith), Newcastle, Weenen, Kranskop, Umvoti (Greytown), Melmoth and Pietermaritzburg. Within the said archival repository, accessions such as those of Ds HF Schoon and the Colenso collection were also extensively consulted. The fact that these collections were generally not fragmented made the research easier.

The large quantity of material within the above-mentioned archival groups invariably proved to be meticulous in its depth of detail. It seems that nothing happened in the Colony of Natal during the Anglo-Boer War which did not leave a thorough paper trail. According to Robert Morrell, this was brought about because of the exactitude and reliability which characterized the Natal administration at the time.¹⁵

In terms of evidence, the author leant heavily on the official colonial documentation found within the above-mentioned collections. Sources such as these might be biased but the intention was not to deliberately deceive, as the colonial officials would invariably be

15. R Morrell, *The family man and Empire*, pp.37-38.

exposed. The same cannot necessarily be said of the countless statements and claims, made before magistrates, courts, police, the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission, and so forth. Many of these documents are based on mental pictures of what happened and conversations recalled. Furthermore, often the witnesses were merely following the lead of the investigators who steered the statement in a certain direction. Fortunately enough evidence was available to cross check or triangulate most of these statements.

According to a rough estimate at least 80% of the information used for the completion of this thesis comes from the Pietermaritzburg Archives Repository. This does not mean that the prodigious number of sources available were without problems. The predicament is not in the fact that the sources used were generally official sources generated by the authorities of the time, but in the administration of the sources by archivists. Some of the archival collections consulted have been resorted, reboxed and reclassified several times, raising problems with precise citations. As far as this is concerned, the author cannot but echo the sentiments expressed by Jeff Guy: "As a consequence of such 'reorganisation', comprehensive citations would have to reflect the history of archival collections. This is clearly impossible, but I have attempted to give sufficient information for subsequent researchers to track down the documents I have used." The problems Guy had with the numerous accession numbers inserted on the letters in the Colenso collection is not unique and is in some instances duplicated in other collections.¹⁶ To avoid problems with citations, these numbers were ignored so as to create uniformity.

A similar process was followed when dealing with the large numbers of minute papers that most collections in the Pietermaritzburg Archival Repository consist of. Furthermore, since most of the minute papers used were lengthy documents which sometimes spanned a considerable time period, the heading allocated by the officials on numerous occasions did not reflect the true contents of the file, or were overlong. An alternative and more descriptive heading, whereby the general nature of the documents contained in the minute paper is described in the appropriate footnote, were therefore used.

The second most important archival repository, in terms of this thesis, was the Public Record Office in Kew, London. The Colonial Office collection, dealing with matters related to the Colony of Natal, were meticulously organized and proved especially invaluable in painting the picture of the war time relationship between the mother country, the Colony, and their Natal Afrikaner subjects. Snippets of importance were also located in the War Office collection housed at the same repository.

16. J Guy, *The view across the river. Harriette Colenso and the Zulu struggle against Imperialism*, pp.455-456.

Within South Africa, successful inquiries were conducted in the National Archives Repository in Pretoria. Particularly valuable were the Archives of the Staff Officer Prisoners of War, Natal which dealt with Natal Afrikaners as prisoners of war, the Archives of the Director of Burgher Camps which covered the concentration camps system, and the Archives of the Commandant-General which provided valuable references to the relationship between the Transvaal and the Natal Afrikaners during the war. Useful insight was also gained from the Archives of the Colonial Secretary, the Provost Marshal's Office and certain private accessions as listed in the source list.

Other archival repositories consulted within South Africa included the following: the Talana Museum, Dundee; Fort Amiel Museum, Newcastle; the Local History Museum, Durban; the War Museum for the Boer Republics, Bloemfontein; the Free State Archives Repository, Bloemfontein; the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk van Natal Argief, Pietermaritzburg; and the Vaaltechnorama in Vanderbijlpark. All these repositories yielded invaluable primary source material needed to complete the picture. Of the sources within the repositories mentioned, special attention must be drawn to the diary of JC Buys in the War Museum for the Boer Republics, and the memoirs of JC Vermaak located in the Vaaltechnorama. Although some historians view personal reminiscences as dubious, it provides a wonderful counterbalance to official documents. Furthermore, such personal testimonies, which serve to place the war-time experiences of Natal Afrikaners within the social context of the Natal society of the time, provided insight into the popular attitudes prevalent during the war, and gave a voice to those who participated directly. This, at times, also spilled over into poetry and song as found in the diary of Buys and also in that of Truscott, located in the National Archives Repository.

Rivaling the diaries of JC Buys and JC Vermaak, and the diary of Dominee HF Schoon referred to under the Pietermaritzburg Archival Repository, is that of a German missionary, JJA Prozesky, located in the private collection of OE Prozesky. Both Prozesky and Schoon were well educated, ministers of the church by profession, anti-war, pro-Republican, and with sensitivity and thoroughness managed to provide detailed and coherent accounts of numerous aspects of the war. These diaries, although very worthwhile, are not without flaws and did reflect the prejudices, preconceptions and honesty of the men and, at times, tended to dwell on the trivial. Like any historical source, they needed to be treated with some caution. Of equal value was the information gained from the letters within the private collection of Foy Vermaak, resident near Helpmekaar in the Dundee district. The letters exchanged between JC Vermaak, a convicted rebel serving his sentences in the Eshowe Prison, and his brother CT Vermaak, then in exile, who used the pseudonym of Miss C Herzog, provided, despite the prevalence of censorship, useful insights into the prison and economic life of Natal Afrikaners.

The references to the archival sources outlined above were accessed by means of the well indexed computerised retrieval systems. At other times, appropriate inventories were consulted while guidance, in terms of possible sources, was also provided by my supervisor and archival staff. At least in terms of the sources housed in the Pietermaritzburg Archival Repository, all documents for every collection for the period 1899-1902 were physically trawled through to ensure that not a single document slipped the net.

Owing to the abundance of archival material available, it was possible to portray a social history which sheds light on the wartime experiences of Natal Afrikaners which included heroism, collaboration, generosity, and cowardice all intermingled. This made moral judgement difficult and at times altogether impossible.

In terms of printed works, as explained earlier, in the form of books or articles, very little of real significance had been produced on Natal Afrikaners and the war. On the other hand, contemporary newspapers - regional, Republican and Colonial alike - proved to be very useful sources. In terms of the rebel trials and the macro-political landscape of the war, newspapers such as the *Natal Witness*, *De Natal Afrikaner*, *Natal Advertiser*, *Times of Natal* and the *Natal Mercury* proved to be especially helpful in understanding the official view taken. In fact, the reports of especially the *Natal Witness* on the hundreds of high treason trials were so comprehensive that the Natal authorities elected to forward the accounts published to the Colonial Office in London alongside their own official reports.

As sources, the Natal newspapers were, however, anything but unbiased and uncritical. Within the jingoistic mindset and euphoria surrounding the Imperial war effort, Natal Afrikaners were attacked, belittled and branded as traitors and disloyal. In contrast, the newspapers in question were almost totally uncritical of British forces, while the Natal authorities also came under fire for not handling the rebels in a tough enough manner. As a result of the one-sidedness of the reporting, one had to be critical in determining where accurate reporting started and jingoistic reporting took over. In spite of these shortcomings, the Natal newspapers consulted proved valuable in both confirming official documentation and to fill in gaps in the story of Natal Afrikaners

Other newspapers used to complete this study included *De Volksstem* which provided perspectives from the Boer side, and various local Natal newspapers which often sketched a more social picture. Both the newspapers on the Boer and on the British side had the same agenda, namely to provide their respective readers with the news that they wanted to read. The difference was that in particular the Natal newspapers suffered heavily under wartime censorship.

The use of oral sources was limited to the minimum in this thesis as they proved to be extremely biased and one-dimensional simply, because of the time that has expired since the events under investigation took place. Although the oral sources consulted were not rejected out of hand, they were used with great circumspect.

In terms of weights and measurements, one uses a metric system at the present time. Matters were very different during the Anglo-Boer War as British Imperial and some Cape Dutch measurements were generally used in the Colony of Natal. Generally, throughout this thesis, the Imperial system was applied, while the metric equivalent is provided in brackets. At the same time an effort was made to steer clear from pedantic practices, such as to render 100 yards as 91.4 metres. On the topic of numbers, numbers between one and ten are written in full while numbers larger than ten are written numerically.

As far as monetary units are concerned, pounds, shillings and pence were used during the period under investigation. It would be difficult, ridiculous and make little sense to convert these to rands and cents since the fluctuations in currency markets would deter from historical correctness, while at the same time it would prove difficult to convert them into realistic present-day values. Therefore, monetary values are expressed in the monetary system of the period under review.

A challenge that confronts most students writing a thesis on South African history is how to spell the names of people and places. In terms of place names and the names of geographical features, such as rivers and mountains, the principle applied was to use the names and spelling applicable at present. This was deemed possible and appropriate since KwaZulu-Natal, unlike some other provinces, has not experienced a spate of name changes. It needs to be noted that archaism was not deliberately promoted.

It proved more difficult to apply a uniform principle to the spelling of Christian names and surnames of Natal Afrikaners. Both the spelling of the names and surnames of Natal Afrikaners varied greatly. One of the reasons for this was the anglicising of names, especially by English speaking colonial clerks. Willem would for example become William and Pieter, Peter. Matters were further complicated by the manner in which semi-literate Afrikaners spelt their surnames, for example Combring rather than Combrink. Sometimes, even within a single household variations in spelling would occur, for example Van Vure by the wife and Van Vuuren by the husband.

In dealing with the above-outlined phenomena, the following principle was applied: it was endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep to the spelling in the consulted archival sources,

except where blatant spelling errors occurred, or where a name had a variety of spellings. In such instances, the most probable or the most commonly used spelling was applied.

Terms, concepts and vocabulary peculiar to the Anglo-Boer War, such as hendsoppers, joiners, and bittereinders were generally not explained, as the author worked from the premise that whoever read the thesis would be familiar with the language of the war. Terms imbedded in South African English such as for example bywoner/s were, for the same reason, not spelt out. Two terms that do need clarification are those of Boer and Afrikaner. The former was generally accepted to be a resident of the Republics and treated as such in this thesis.

The latter term Afrikaner proved to be much more problematic. Who and what the Afrikaners are is still a hotly debated issue and it is possibly fair to say that no single descriptive definition exists. Instead, a number of competing definitions coexist. Referring to the renowned Afrikaans author, PG du Plessis, “The Afrikaner is...the most described and redescribed, defined and redefined concept he has ever come across.”¹⁷ One possible definition could be that any person of Dutch, German and French or English descent could be considered an Afrikaner as long as “they identified themselves culturally with the Afrikaners through the adoption of their language and mores and, ultimately, through intermarriage.”¹⁸ The Natal Afrikaner was a perfect example of the grouping outlined above. Annie Charlotte Krogman, who resided in Natal after 1849, was a Swede, her husband a German, and two of her sons Orange Free State burghers and two Natal Afrikaners.¹⁹ The invading Boer forces applied their own criteria in determining who were Afrikaners, and stated that anyone who had resided in Natal for longer than 30 years was an Afrikaner.²⁰ For the purpose of this thesis the broad ideas as outlined in this paragraph will be used as a working definition.

However, documentation generated by the Imperial and Colonial authorities at the time of the Anglo-Boer War used the generic term “Dutch” when referring to Natal Afrikaners. Although appropriate at the time, it has now, like some other racial/ethnic descriptors, become dated. In fact, the renowned travel guide, *Lonely Planet*, states that the term “Dutchman” is “always used in a derogatory manner and offence is always taken, so be

17. Translated from, *Die Transvaler*, 11.11.1979.

18. G Schutte, Afrikaner historiography and the decline of Apartheid: ethic self-construction in times of crisis, in E Tonkin, M McDonald and M Chapman (eds)., *History and Ethnicity*, pp.216-217.

19. Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository (hereafter PAR), Archives of the Colonial Secretary's Office (hereafter CSO) 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AC Krogman, 5.4.1901.

20. At the time of the Anglo-Boer War the term, Afrikaner or Natal Afrikaner, was not uncommon and it appears in numerous documents. See for example, National Archive Repository (hereafter NAR), Archives of the Commandant-General (hereafter KG) 818: Letter Justice of the Peace (hereafter JP) JB Wolmarans to General PJ Joubert, 28.12.1899.

forewarned.”²¹ In the light of this, any attempt to justify the use of the term “Dutch” when referring to Afrikaners smacks of ignorance and insensitivity.

This thesis consists of 13 chapters, all dealing with a specific theme pertaining to the experiences of Natal Afrikaners and the war. Following this, a thematic approach was deemed to be the most appropriate method of illuminating the relationship between Natal Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War, and to deal with the large volumes of material without duplicating it in several chapters. This does not mean that certain broad themes, such as the war itself, do not feature in several or all chapters.

In order to place the war in its correct historical context, and to explain adequately the pre-war conditions Natal Afrikaners resided under, it was deemed necessary to, in the first two chapters, investigate Natal Afrikaner society since its inception in the late 1830s up to the heady days just before the outbreak of war in October 1899. The broad theme dealt with in Chapters 3 and 4 relates to Natal Afrikaners, and the conventional phase of the war in the Colony for the period October 1899 to May 1900. In Chapter 3 the emphasis is placed on the experiences of Afrikaners resident in the areas under Boer occupation to the north of the Tugela River. The pseudo-war experiences of their kin, resident to the south of the afore-mentioned river mostly under British and Colonial administration, is analysed in Chapter 4.

The repercussions for, and reactions towards, those Natal Afrikaners who, willingly or unwillingly, supported the invading Boers are scrutinized in Chapters 5 and 6. The overriding theme for the two-mentioned chapters centres around judicial aspects such as the investigation and apprehension of suspected rebels and the High Treason trials. In stark contrast to these chapters is Chapter 7, the chapter, in which the various guises of Natal Afrikaner loyalty are highlighted. Several intertwined themes form the nucleus of Chapter 8. Aspects such as the impact of Martial Law on Natal Afrikaners, and the socio-political, linguistic, and religious struggles, brought about by the war, are analysed. Imprisonment of Natal Afrikaners, from prisoner-of-war, to convicted rebels held in civilian jails, to those incarcerated in concentration and internment camps, are scrutinized in Chapter 9.

21. *Lonely Planet travel survival kit. Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia*, p.130.

Chapters 10 and 11 deal respectively with the position of Natal Afrikaner women in the war and the relationship between Natal Afrikaners and people of colour during the conflict. The idea was not to ghettoise either of the two afore-mentioned groupings. Afrikaner women, for example, feature throughout the thesis, but it seemed the most appropriate manner to address their roles and experiences separately. In all probability, if not approached in a thematic way, their stories would have remained silent.

The second to last chapter, Chapter 12, deals with the economic impact of the war on Natal Afrikaners. Within this chapter, various sub-themes such as the impact of war on landownership and economic means are explored. In the final chapter, several post-war issues faced by Natal Afrikaners are examined. These include the incorporation of several Transvaal districts into Natal; the questions surrounding rebels – both those still in prison and those bittereinders, not yet arrested and sentenced, relations within the broad Afrikaner society and with Africans and English in post-war Natal, and the political revival amongst Natal Afrikaners.

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ABSTRACT

The invasion by the Boers of Natal set a process in motion that changed the lives of Natal Afrikaners forever. As a group which shared family, cultural, and other ties with the invaders, but were British subjects by citizenship, they had to make a difficult decision: join the Republican forces or remain loyal to the crown. Factors which influenced this decision, amongst others, were the pre-war suspicion of all Natal Afrikaners by the Natal authorities and the prevalence of a general anti-Republican sentiment.

Despite the above-mentioned, and the sympathy which existed for the plight of the Republics, very few Natal Afrikaners joined the commandos. Doing that would have meant economic annihilation. This the Natal Afrikaners understood and the majority remained neutral. Matters were complicated when the British Army and the colonial authorities withdrew south, leaving especially the Afrikaners of the Klip River county unprotected. When occupation did not convince the Afrikaners of the area to join, a well-thought out strategy based upon fear and misinformation, brought most into the fray. Duty on these commandoes was generally slack, subversive in nature, and as much as one can expect from people forced into military combat. A small group, however, managed, despite the pressures placed upon them, to remain loyal to Britain. For these loyalists the greatest rewards were in terms of economics and power.

In stark contrasts were the economic experiences of the Natal Afrikaners who were somehow, either directly or indirectly, guilty of high treason. All their possessions were systematically looted or destroyed, leaving most of them in an impoverished state. Secondly, through a range of court cases 409 Natal Afrikaners or associated people were convicted of treason, mostly by the purposefully introduced Special Court and special magistrate. The outlined experiences coincided with victimization on socio-political and cultural levels under Martial Law.

Afrikaners resident in the southern part of Natal, and especially in Umvoti county, did not suffer directly because of the war but experienced a different kind of war namely a pseudo war in which they were spied upon, viewed with suspicion and under Martial Law harassed. However, these Afrikaners managed to maintain some political power while economically they carried on as before the war. They attempted to use these assets to assist the Afrikaners who had to endure desertion by their own government and Boer occupation. Natal Afrikaners also experienced other aspects of the war normally associated with the Republics. Some were arrested as POWs, while others were deported to concentration camps within the Colony. Furthermore, as a result of the war, relations between Natal Afrikaners and English colonists and Africans suffered. The collective impact and legacy of the war, as well as the shared experiences of suffering under the British, with their Republican brothers and sisters, eventually helped to bring Natal Afrikaners into the broader Afrikaner fold.

OPSOMMING

Die inval in Natal deur die Boere het `n proses aan die gang gesit wat die lewens van Natalse Afrikaners radikaal verander het. As `n groep wat familie, kultuur, en ander bande met die invallers gedeel het, maar ook Britse onderdane was, moes hulle `n moeilike besluit neem: sluit aan by die Republikeinse magte of bly lojaal aan die Britse Ryk. Die besluit is onder andere beïnvloed deur faktore soos die suspisie waaronder alle Natal Afrikaners gebuk moes gaan en `n algemene anti-Republikeinse sentiment.

Desondanks die bogenoemde, en die simpatie wat bestaan het vir die lot van die Republieke, het bitter min Natal Afrikaners by die kommando's aangesluit. So `n stap sou ekonomiese selfmoord wees en hulle het dit besef. Derhalwe het die meeste neutraal gebly. Sake is bemoeilik toe die Natalse owerhede en die Britse magte teruggeval het na die suide. Dit het die Kliprivier Afrikaners onbeskermd gelaat. Besetting deur die Boere het hulle nie oortuig om aan te sluit nie. Om die rede is `n strategie, gebaseer op vrees en disinformasie, gevolg om aansluiting te bewerkstellig. Diens op kommando was in die algemeen slap en ondermynend van aard, tipies van persone wat gedwing word om die wapen op te neem. `n Klein groepie het egter daarin geslaag om ondanks dreigemente lojaal te bly. Hul latere beloning was ekonomies en polities van aard.

In teenstelling hiermee was die ekonomiese belewenisse van die Natal Afrikaners wat op een of ander wyse skuldig was aan hoogverraad. Hul eiendom is geroof en vernietig wat armoede tot gevolg gehad het. `n Reeks hofsake het gevolg waartydens, grootliks in die Spesiale Hof en deur die spesiale magistraat, 409 Natal Afrikaners skuldig bevind is aan verraad. Die bogenoemde ondervindinge het hand aan hand gegaan met viktimisasie op kulturele en sosio-politieke vlak onder Krygswet.

Afrikaners woonagtig in die suide van die Kolonie, en spesifiek in Umvoti, het nie direk gebuk gegaan onder die oorlog nie maar het eerder `n skynoorlog beleef waartydens op hul gespioeneer is en hulle beskuldig is van dislojaliteit. Die Afrikaners het daarin geslaag om hul politieke mag tot `n mate te behou terwyl hul op ekonomiese gebied gefloreer het. Die voordele het hulle gepoog om aan te wend tot die voordeel van mede-Afrikaners wat in die steek gelaat is deur hul regering, en wat die okkupasie van die Boere moes beleef.

Oorlogstoestande wat gewoonlik met die Republieke geassosieer word is ook ondervind. Sommiges is byvoorbeeld gevangene geneem en na konsentrasiekampe gestuur. Die oorlog het ook die verhouding tussen Natal Afrikaners en Engelse en swart inwoners van Natal geskaad. Die kollektiewe impak en nalatenskap van die oorlog, en die gedeelde gevoel dat hulle saam onder die Britte swaar gekry het, het gehelp om Natal Afrikaners mettertyd in die hoofstroom van Afrikaner nasionalisme op te neem.

Key Words

Africans

Afrikaner

Anglo-Boer War

Boer

Concentration Camps

Dutch Districts

High treason

Imprisonment

Klip River County

Loyalist/s

Martial Law

Military courts

Natal Afrikaner

Natal Afrikaner women

Privy Council

Rebels

Special Court

Special Magistrate

Umvoti County

Weenen County

CHAPTER 1

AFRIKANERS IN NATAL UP TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR: EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES PREVALENT AT THE TIME

By the late 1870s, Natal constituted the only European political entity in South Africa in which Afrikaners formed a minority group amongst the white inhabitants. This community was shaped by events spanning half a century which included: living under British rule in the Cape Colony, embarking on the Great Trek, experiencing strained relations and subsequent military engagements with the Zulu, marked especially by the Battle of Blood River on 16 December 1838, witnessing the creation of the Republic of Natalia and its subsequent annexation and destruction by the British after the Battle of Congella in 1843.¹ The cycle was completed when Colonial rule was instituted in 1845² and the subsequent attempt in 1847 by Natal Afrikaners to resurrect a republic, the Republic of Klip River, failed.³

The Afrikaners who remained in Natal throughout these events increased in number as immigrants from the Cape Colony joined them,⁴ and slowly evolved into a united community, trapped in an agrarian economy.⁵ Their socio-political world was characterised by complaints of preferential treatment afforded to Africans, and a lack of access to land. A predominant sense of injustice prevailed, exemplified by acts such as the execution of Hans Dons de Lange,⁶ and the community experienced a general feeling of disempowerment and unfair treatment under British rule. They had no voice to express their feelings of dissatisfaction since Dutch newspapers had not proved profitable,⁷ Dutch had become a marginalised language,⁸ and the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk or Dutch Reformed Church (hereafter DRC) which was caught up in a constant struggle for survival, both financially and in terms of recruiting members, lacked power.⁹ As a result, by the early 1870s, the Boshof(f) brothers, JN and JC, were the only Afrikaner members of the Natal Legislative

1. AJ du Plessis, Die Republiek Natalia, *Archives yearbook for South African History*, 1942 (1), *passim*; JH Breytenbach (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse argivale rekords, notules van die Natalse Volksraad (Volledig met alle bylae daarby) (1838-1845)*, *passim*.

2. BJ Liebenberg, *Andries Pretorius in Natal*, *passim*.

3. MM Behn, *The Klip River insurrection, 1847*, MA-thesis, Natal-South Africa, 1932, *passim*.

4. PAR, Natal Colonial Publications (hereafter NCP), 7/1/24: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1878.

5. *The Natal Almanac and yearly register*, 1878, pp.189-209. Only 17 Natal Afrikaners were economically active outside agriculture: ten were involved in the military, four were justices of the peace (hereafter JP), two were ferry men and one a pound keeper.

6. AJ van Wyk, Hans Dons de Lange - skuldig of onskuldig?, *Historia* 18 (1), March 1973, pp.18-29.

7. AJ van Wyk, Die Afrikaanse koerantwese in Natal, *Neon*, 18, August 1975, pp.95-101; GS Nienaber, *Honderd jaar Hollands in Natal (tot 1928)*, *passim*.

8. GS Nienaber, *passim*; BR Buys, Onderwys in Natal, pp.208-215, in JC Coetzee (ed.), *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika, 1652-1956*.

9. GBA Gerdener, *Ons kerk in die Transgariëp. Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerke in Natal, Vrystaat, Transvaal*, *passim*; Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk van Natal Argief (hereafter NGKA), Pietermaritzburg: Lidmate registers vir die gemeentes van Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Greytown en Weenen tot 1878; PAR, NCP 7/1/24: Report on religious activities in the Colony of Natal, 1876.

Assembly.¹⁰ The marginalised position the Natal Afrikaners found themselves in is best summarised by Brookes and Webb: "...an incompatibility of temperament and outlook (existed) between the rough, vigorous, land-hungry frontiersmen who conquered Dingane and the just well-meaning officials with limited sympathies who governed Natal, some from London, some from Cape Town and some from Pietermaritzburg."¹¹

Against this background it was predictable that the Natal Afrikaners, especially those who resided in close proximity to the South African Republic (hereafter ZAR) or Transvaal, and the Republic of the Orange Free State (hereafter OFS), should speak, dress and behave in ways similar to that of their Republican kin.¹² The lack of representation and participation in political and economic matters in Natal resulted in the local Afrikaners gravitating towards the Republics with whose people they formed an ethnic community, shared a common history, and subscribed to the same political philosophy namely, Republicanism.

Eventually a significant event in the history of the group, the Anglo-Transvaal War of 1880-1881, spawned by the imperialist federation policy of the secretary of state for colonies of the time, Lord Carnarvon, succeeded in challenging the status quo.¹³

1.1_ Natal Afrikaners and the impact of the Federation Policy of Lord Carnarvon

One of the steps required for Carnarvon's federation scheme to succeed, was to bring about an end to the Zulu Kingdom. When war was forced on King Cetshwayo in 1878, it posed a threat to the Colony of Natal.¹⁴ In the three so-called "Dutch Districts",¹⁵ the counties of Umvoti, Weenen and Klip River, Natal Afrikaners were conspicuous in their lack of commitment to the defence of Natal. In the vast majority of cases they reacted by trekking to the Transvaal or OFS or congregating in laagers. The enduring recollection of the war for Natal Afrikaners was neither their lack of participation, nor memories of their lack of co-operation with the Natal Government in defence of the Colony, but they recalled their lack of reliance on the authorities to address their need to defend themselves. To the Natal Government and British colonists on the other hand, the Natal Afrikaner attitude in the face of a war with their traditional enemies, the Zulu, smacked of treason which bordered on subversion, especially when the British defeat at Isandlwana was welcomed by for example some Afrikaners in Greytown.¹⁶

10. AC Swanepoel, *Die rol van Johan Christoffel Boshof in die geskiedenis van Natal*, D Phil-thesis, UOFS, 1985, *passim*; AN Smit, *Die lewe van J.N. Boshof*, D Phil-thesis, UOFS, 1970, pp.330-339.

11. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, *A history of Natal*, p.62.

12. PAR, NCP 7/1/24: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1876.

13. AJH van der Walt *et al*, *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika*, pp.280-323.

14. For a comprehensive outline of the Anglo-Zulu War see JPC Laband, *Rope of Sand. The rise and fall of the Zulu Kingdom in the nineteenth century*, pp.161-325.

15. This usage consistent with the time frame of the text will be adopted for convenience of reference.

16. JPC Laband and PS Thompson, *War comes to Umvoti: The Natal-Zululand Border 1878-1879*, *passim*; JPC Laband

The eventual British victory in the Anglo-Zulu War was the prelude to the second war arising from the federation attempts, namely the Anglo-Transvaal War of 1880-1881. The first step in this confrontation was the annexation of the Transvaal by Britain in 1877, a move that reminded Natal Afrikaners of the demise of their own successful, but short lived Republic, Natalia. After the annexation of the Transvaal, resistance slowly began to build up. By late 1880, events came to a head when the Transvaal issued an ultimatum to Britain demanding that their forces withdraw. This was ignored and during the ensuing clashes the British did not only lose every battle but the governor of Natal, Sir George Pomeroy-Colley, lost his life at the decisive Battle of Majuba on 27 February 1881.¹⁷ To the British Empire and British Natal, the Anglo-Transvaal War, and specifically the Battle of Majuba which restored partial independence to the Transvaal, came to be viewed as a blot on their history. Even as late as 1897 a visitor noted that the English in Natal were of the opinion that the "... disgrace of Majuba Hill ought to have been wiped out by a march to Pretoria, and ... the Boers should have been made to recognise that Britain is and would remain the paramount power in fact as well as name."¹⁸

Although the *Times of Natal*, in late 1899, recorded that Natal Afrikaners participated with enthusiasm and without any judicial repercussions in the war on the Transvaal side,¹⁹ authors such as JH Lehmann and M Flemmer refute this claim. If rebellious activities existed at all amongst Natal Afrikaners, it was possibly limited to communications of information to Boer forces by individuals, for the patrols of General PJ (Piet) Joubert in fact ventured as far as Ladysmith without receiving military or logistical support. According to Lehmann: "Boer intelligence, which was quite sophisticated, had alert agents and excellent means for transmitting the news of every new arrival and the exact location of each detachment and gun on the roads of Natal."²⁰ If the communication and intelligence activities of the Boer forces were as effective as Lehmann states, then the *Natal Mercury* was probably right when it recorded in February 1881: "We have so many treacherous friends and concealed enemies among the Natal Dutch colonists that it is high time to proclaim martial law."²¹

The reactions of the Natal Afrikaners to the Anglo-Transvaal War were decidedly pro-Transvaal and

and PS Thompson, *Kingdom and Colony at War. Sixteen studies on the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879*, passim; JPC Laband and PS Thompson with S Henderson, *The Buffalo Border 1879. The Anglo-Zulu War in Northern Natal*, passim; PAR, A 743, Herrineringe van Jan Jonathan Maré: 17-18.11.1952.

17. For an comprehensive outline of the Anglo-Transvaal War see amongst others: JH Lehmann, *The First Boer War*; FA van Jaarsveld, APJ van Rensburg and WA Stals (eds), *Die Eerste Vryheidsoorlog. Van verset en geweld tot skikking deur onderhandeling 1877-1884*.

18. Quoted in HW Whysall, *The response of Natal to the annexation of the Transvaal and the subsequent Anglo-Boer War of 1880-1881*, BA Hons-thesis, UNP, 1964, pp.64-65.

19. *Times of Natal*, 9.10.1899.

20. JH Lehmann, pp.160-161.

21. *Natal Mercury*, 15.2.1881.

pro-Republican. This was specifically the case in Umvoti county where several meetings were held in support of the Transvaal. During the first meeting, the purpose of which was “to express sympathy with the present agitators in the Transvaal,” no English-speaking person was admitted.²² The second meeting in Umvoti county was held in Greytown in February 1881, and was chaired by the resident magistrate. According to the *Natal Witness*, the meeting was attended by “leading Boer Farmers together with a fair number of Englishmen.”²³ The purpose of this meeting was to consider the “expediency of procuring the services of a surgeon to proceed beyond the borders to attend to the sick and wounded among our relatives, the Boers.” Subscription lists were opened to pay the doctor’s salary and to provide medical supplies. £200 was immediately raised. The “moderate Dutch element”, as the Afrikaners present signed themselves, took a step which was not in line with their expressed policy of being non-radical, when they petitioned the secretary of colonies, the Earl of Kimberley, to restore peace, by rescinding the annexation of the Transvaal.²⁴ In an act of defiance the Umvoti Afrikaners also vowed not to sell wagons and oxen to the British Army.²⁵ In the other counties with large Afrikaner populations, Klip River and Weenen, no rebellious activities were reported by the local magistrates.²⁶ Unbeknown to the authorities in Klip River county the Afrikaners of Helpmekaar collected £221 for the Boer cause.²⁷

When peace was restored, the Transvaal, in terms agreed to by the Pretoria Convention, became a self-governing state subject to certain conditions, creating a situation that posed a threat to the British ego and their image as conquerors. On the other hand, the military victory of the Transvalers filled their brothers in Natal with a renewed confidence as well as confirming their historical and ethnic ties with the Republic which many had come to regard as their political home.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, statements made on two separate occasions, alluding to the Anglo-Transvaal War of 1880-1881, illustrate the magnitude of the impact of the war on the psyche of Natal Afrikaners. Firstly, the governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, noted that subsequent to the Anglo-Transvaal War, Natal Afrikaners looked to Pretoria and the Transvaal as their political Mecca.²⁸ Secondly, Dominee (hereafter Ds) HF Schoon, who served the Ladysmith DRC and its outlying stations for several decades, did not want to make the church building

22. WH Whysall, p.20.

23. *Natal Witness*, 26.2.1881.

24. PAR, British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter BPP) 29: Letter Acting-Governor CBH Mitchell to the Earl of Kimberley, 21.3.1881.

25. M Flemmer, Support for Transvaal independence from Natal, in FA van Jaarsveld *et al* (eds), *Die Eerste Vryheidsoorlog...*, pp.253-254.

26. VS Harris, *The reluctant Rebels: The impact of the Second Anglo-Boer War upon the Klip River Dutch Community with special reference to the Dutch Community of Dundee*, BA Hons-thesis, UNP, 1982, p.14.

27. Vaal Technorama (hereafter VTR), JC Vermaak collection, unnumbered document: Copy of letter PJ Joubert to HJ Kriel, 9.3.1881.

28. Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), Colonial Office (hereafter CO) 179/206: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

available to the town council as a refuge in case of war, citing as one of his reasons the damage done by the British troops to the DRC building in Wakkerstroom during the Anglo-Transvaal War.²⁹ His objections reveal a new, more outspoken, recognition of the division existing between Boer and Briton. The sense of confidence and unity linking Natal Afrikaners to their Republican kin, was noted by the magistrate of Umsinga in 1883, when he reported that many of the Afrikaners in the area had delayed their annual trek to the Transvaal in search for grazing in order to commemorate the “anniversary of Dingaan’s battle” on 16 December.³⁰ This signified a new awareness of a group identity and a celebration of cultural significance which had not existed prior to the Anglo-Transvaal War. Many decades later Afrikaner historians such as GD Scholtz³¹ and FA van Jaarsveld³² recognised the emotions arising from the victory of the Transvaal against the British as the birth of Afrikaner nationalism. The question now arises as to how deep-rooted these changes were amongst Natal Afrikaners, or whether they were merely a superficial response to external circumstances in the decade that followed the war.

1.2 The aftermath of the Anglo-Transvaal War and its effects on the lives of Natal Afrikaners

The legacy of the Anglo-Transvaal War soon became apparent amongst Natal Afrikaners, and healthy political activity was reported by the Newcastle magistrate.³³ The new-found confidence encouraged those who fulfilled the economic requirements for participation, that is to say, white males who owned or rented property to the value of £50, to become involved in proceedings. The first test for their newly acquired confidence came in the form of the 1882 elections, with the central focus on gaining responsible government, which implied political self-rule for the Colony of Natal. Fearing the military and financial implications that would follow, and with the Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Transvaal Wars still fresh in their memories, Natal Afrikaners, on election day, 15 May 1882, exhibited the power of their minority vote by rejecting the candidates who proposed responsible government.³⁴ The *Natal Mercury* condemned Natal Afrikaners for their stance, stating that they had voted against the proposals hoping to alienate Britain and thus pave the way for a Republic.³⁵ Although far from the truth, this proved a clear indication that the Natal Afrikaners had made their debut on the political scene.

These political efforts were aided by the voice of a newspaper started by JR Hershensohn, a German-Jew born in Russia, who married an Afrikaner woman. After travelling the Dutch Districts

29. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 5.10.1899, pp.7-8.

30. PAR, NCP 7/1/31: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1883.

31. GD Scholtz, *Die ontwaking van die politieke denke van die Afrikaner, Vol IV, 1881-1899*, pp.246-250.

32. FA van Jaarsveld, *Die ontwaking van die Afrikaanse nasionale bewussyn, 1868-1881*, pp.139-140.

33. PAR, NCP 7/1/29: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1881.

34. S Hugo, *The 1882 elections in Natal*, BA Hons-thesis, UNP, 1960, pp.37-39.

35. *Natal Mercury*, 20.5.1882.

to gauge the political waters and to promote his newspaper he started with the publication of the weekly *Natal Boeren Vriend* in 1885. Following a dispute with the directors Hershensohn started the *De Natal Afrikaner* in 1886 with the aim of creating equal political rights for Afrikaners and Englishmen.³⁶ As editor, Herschensohn used his newspapers to try and educate Afrikaners, both politically and economically. At the same time he initiated the formation of agricultural societies or “boereverenigings” amongst Afrikaners to promote their cause. The inspiration of Hershensohn’s newspaper as well as his personal efforts, led to the formation of the first of these co-operative endeavours, the Helpmekaar-Boerevereniging, at the house of D Pieters on 11 November 1885. This was soon followed by the creation of other similar organizations at Weenen and Venterspruit and by 1886 nine such organizations were in place.³⁷

Through his newspapers Hershensohn guided these organizations, giving them political direction. This was later to earn him the title “father of Afrikaner politics in Natal” from historian AJ van Wyk. The various boereverenigings met regularly and soon a representative body, Het Kongres, evolved, uniting Afrikaners from north and south of the Tugela River. At Het Kongres meetings agricultural matters such as wool prices and the scab disease, socio-political matters like the Dutch language, and political matters in the Cape Colony, especially the Afrikanerbond and Boerebeschermingsverenigingen, were discussed and debated. The boereverenigings soon became a power to be reckoned with, both as a collective body and as individual branches, and political candidates who supported the political ideals of the Afrikaners were assured of voter support.³⁸

The real test for the Natal Afrikaners and their growing political awareness, as driven by *De Natal Afrikaner* and the agricultural societies, came with the elections which took place in the final decade of the 1800s. As was the case a decade earlier, responsible government was once again foremost on the agenda, while new issues, such as the position of Africans and Indians in the political dispensation of Natal, also needed to be considered.

With the *De Natal Afrikaner* at the helm the mood was now decidedly pro-responsible government, and the readers were confronted with the choice of, on the one side “...the fighters of Imperialism, Kafferdom, Asian immigrants-men who want to see the inland Republics remain untouched in their independence” and, on the other side, “the Jingos, who want nothing more than that the Republics... be annexed. If this caused bloodshed, mattered very little to them as long as Afrikanerdom was dragged under.”³⁹ According to the newspaper, responsible government would halt such a destructive process by improving relations with the Republics. Cultivating closer ties with the

36. GS Nienaber, pp.54-56; AJ van Wyk, Die Afrikaanse koerantwese in Natal, *Neon*, 18, August 1975, p.95.

37. GS Nienaber, pp.46-50; AJ van Wyk, *Politieke woelinge in Natal 1910-1915*, D Phil-thesis, UOFS, 1977, pp.37-39.

38. AJ van Wyk, *Politieke woelinge...*, p.37.

39. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.10.1890.

Republics would also prevent the British government from turning Natal into a “kaffer reserve”. Furthermore, the cry from all corners of Natal was “away with the influence of Downing Street and Imperialism, we want to rule ourselves so the Natal Afrikaners can in future prevent hostile actions against our friends and neighbours, against our blood relations and clansmen by the imperial authorities.”⁴⁰ At last, according to *De Natal Afrikaner*, Natal Afrikaners could determine the future history of South Africa by sending people to the Legislative Assembly, who supported responsible government. The view expressed was that such a step could mean the end of Imperialism and Jingoism in South Africa.⁴¹ The newspaper also warned that the mobilisation of Afrikaners in the Cape Colony which had led to the creation of the Afrikaner Bond, meant that the ministers in that Colony now knew that Afrikaners were the real political power and therefore did not act against them. A similar situation was now deemed possible for Natal.⁴² Although these expectations were rather exaggerated it provided a clear indication of how post-responsible government relations with the Republics and Britain were envisaged. As advised by the paper, the Natal Afrikaners in the Umvoti, Weenen and Klip River counties did return pro-responsible government candidates.⁴³ The attitude of the Afrikaner voters did not go unnoticed and, during the debate on responsible government in the Legislative Assembly on 15 January 1891, two members labelled them as “Republican orientated.”⁴⁴

Despite this accusation the Natal Afrikaners played their role in securing responsible government with its accompanying Legislative Assembly and Council. The former consisted of 37 members elected for a period of four years, while a council of 11 members was nominated by the Natal governor. The cabinet, under the prime minister, contained six members.⁴⁵ With the decision in favour of responsible government secured, *De Natal Afrikaner*, went one step further and reminded its readers that they now had the opportunity of participating in politics and in the governing of Natal on condition that they remained united and independent of all political parties.⁴⁶

In reality the situation soon proved to be different from what had been anticipated. A meeting to discuss responsible government, held on 20 September 1890 at Dundee, which was attended by numerous Afrikaners and Englishmen, gave a glimpse of the ethnic discord prevalent in Natal. When John Hershensohn, the son of the editor of *De Natal Afrikaner*, addressed the meeting in Dutch, most of the Englishmen got up and left the hall.⁴⁷ Eventually only five of the sixty candidates

40. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 22.8.1890.

41. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.10.1890.

42. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 21.3.1890.

43. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 17.10.1890.

44. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 23.1.1891.

45. R Robinson and J Gallagher with A Denny, *Africa and the Victorians. The official mind of Imperialism*, p.175.

46. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 7.7.1893.

47. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.10.1890.

nominated for the first election of the Legislative Assembly turned out to be Afrikaners. Of these only TJ (Tol) Nel who had served Umvoti from 1886-1893, was elected, and he became the sole Natal Afrikaner representative.⁴⁸ This disturbed supporters of *De Natal Afrikaner* and Hershensohn did not fail to assign blame when he named the lack of co-operation and distrust amongst Afrikaners as the main reason. According to him division would continue as long as “... they are happy to be led by the nose by any Jimmy. As long as that is the case the Englishman will firstly use and then despise them.”⁴⁹

The establishment of responsible government in fact did little to change the position of Natal Afrikaners. What *De Natal Afrikaner* must have lost sight of in propagating its political ideals for Natal Afrikaners, was the extent to which the people could be encouraged to participate. Earlier appeals by the newspaper that branches of the Taalbond should be created in Natal had fallen on deaf ears and only a few allied groups were created, with little enthusiasm being shown. One of these was the Newcastle branch which came into existence on 20 January 1892 on the farm Doornpoort. The main reason for the apathy was that the boereverenigings were fighting the same struggle as the Taalbond.⁵⁰

On another front, but this time acting as pressure groups, *De Natal Boeren Vriend*, *De Natal Afrikaner*, the agricultural societies, the DRC, and individuals prevailed upon the Natal Government to secure minority language rights for Dutch. Initially petitions to secure Dutch as a subject and a medium of instruction streamed in from Umvoti and Weenen, highlighting the concern over the neglect of the language.⁵¹ Supported on the political front by JC Boshof, optimism initially ran high, and it was hoped that by the end of 1886, English and Dutch classes would exist in every school.⁵²

This soon proved to be an unrealistic dream. Boereverenigings, despite pressure on politicians representing the Dutch Districts, complained about the education system and those who administered it. Furthermore, opinions voiced at teachers' conferences had little influence in establishing a more prominent position for Dutch in the curriculum.⁵³ The reasons for this failure were numerous. Early Afrikaans or “Die Taal”, the language spoken by Natal Afrikaners and for that matter almost all Afrikaners, was already far removed from written Dutch, and both learners and parents failed to grasp the relevance of studying Dutch in an academic context. The problem was aggravated by Afrikaner parents who still took their children out of school to work on their farms or to participate in the annual seasonal migration to more suitable pastures. Dutch teachers were also

48. *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, Vol V, p.571.

49. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 26.9.1893.

50. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 21.11.1890 and 18.11.1890.

51. AC Swanepoel, pp.290-292.

52. *De Natal Boeren Vriend*, 10.12.1885.

53. GS Nienaber, pp.210-211.

very scarce and neither the education department, nor the parents, could attract teachers to poorly paid jobs in the sparsely populated Dutch Districts.⁵⁴ Affluent Afrikaners chose to have their children educated by private tutors or governesses, or sent them to be schooled in the Cape Colony at great expense.⁵⁵ On the other side of the economic spectrum, children of poor Afrikaners did not attend school at all.⁵⁶

Understandably, Education Superintendent Russell was concerned that very little good could come from the teaching of Dutch. In his 1891 report he wrote: “The work in Dutch is of a low average. The tendency all through the papers is to write phonetically and in accordance with the South African taal. Only 25 took up this subject and only one gained as much as 75% of the marks. These results do not seem to justify the considerable amount spent by the government for the instruction of this subject.”⁵⁷ Matters did gradually improve and by 1897, 305 learners throughout Natal studied Dutch as a subject in government-aided schools. The standard was still very low and this was attributed to the lack of suitably qualified teachers.⁵⁸ The struggle surrounding the position of Dutch within the education system, and in public life, reached a position of stalemate, largely because the Natal Government deemed that it had done enough to accommodate the requests of the various pressure groups. The *Natal Government Gazette* and the *Agricultural Journal* were translated into Dutch, Afrikaners like JH Kleinschmidt were appointed to the education department to oversee the instruction of Dutch, and the language was offered as a subject in some government-aided schools.

The weakening position of Dutch was an omen to Natal Afrikaners that they could become totally anglicised and denationalised, since English was the dominant political, educational and economic language. According to AF Hattersley the anglicisation process amongst Natal Afrikaners gained momentum as the railway and telegraph lines started to reduce the isolation of farms.⁵⁹ In *De Natal Afrikaner*, letters by Afrikaners regularly appeared complaining that fellow Afrikaners were neglecting their language by speaking English to their children in efforts to improve the English of parent and child alike. When such people were confronted they normally retorted that “Hollands kom vanself.” A point in case was the letter by “Onpartydig” in which it was pointed out that English is a foreign language and had to be learnt. Dutch, on the other hand, was the mother tongue and children were familiar with it. According to the writer, the past needed to be forgotten for practical reasons.⁶⁰ The tendency to speak English rather than Dutch was especially prevalent amongst

54. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/1: Annual report superintendent of education, 1884; PAR, NCP 7/2/2/2: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1885; PAR, NCP 7/1/31: Annual report magistrate Weenen, 1883.

55. PAR, NCP 7/1/24: Annual report magistrate Klip River (Ladysmith), 1876.

56. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/1: Annual report superintendent of education, 1884.

57. GS Nienaber, pp.213-214.

58. PAR, NCP 7/4/4: Inspectors report for Dutch education, 1897.

59. AF Hattersley, *Portrait of a Colony. The story of Natal*, p.98.

60. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 18.3.1892.

Afrikaners whose children attended the town schools. In extreme cases the children spoke English to one another, while the parents who understood very little, were present.⁶¹ In other instances children would speak English prior to entering the church and once inside would whisper loudly in the acquired language so that all could hear that “zij ‘educated’ zijn.”⁶² Even love letters between Afrikaner couples were in some instances written in English.⁶³

Equally serious language politics were experienced by the DRC. In a letter to *De Natal Afrikaner* of 26 February 1892, “Geboren Engelschman” expressed his concern that sermons for Afrikaners in the Greytown DRC was held in English. He furthermore described how certain Afrikaner children were questioned in English at the time of their confirmation. The letter prompted GT (Gert) van Rooyen to deny that English services were conducted for Afrikaners, stating that such services were only held for English speakers. Van Rooyen did, however, admit that the Otto and Keyter children had been confirmed in English.⁶⁴ Further proof that the Greytown congregation were starting to lose touch with Dutch/Afrikaans is provided by the minutes of the church council which were at one stage during 1892 taken down in English, causing the synod of the church to intervene and prohibit the practice.⁶⁵

To those Natal Afrikaners who had strong leanings towards Dutch the fight was not over and the struggle to preserve their language as a way of preventing the erosion of their culture and identity continued.⁶⁶ At the 1898 Congress of the Dutch Farmers’ Association resolutions were adopted calling on the government to print advertisements of all imports in *De Natal Afrikaner* in Dutch and to include Dutch in the curriculum of all government-aided schools and not only a selected few.⁶⁷ As late as 29 July 1899, the position of Dutch within the education system was still an important issue,⁶⁸ a clear indication of the crucial role the language played in terms of the identity of the Natal Afrikaner.

Within a decade the euphoria created amongst Natal Afrikaners by the victory of the Transvaal in the Anglo-Transvaal War started to wane. The foothold they had gained in the macro-political scene in the 1883 elections was lost by the time responsible government came about in 1893. In reality, the responsible government propagated by *De Natal Afrikaner*, the agricultural societies and some

61. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.3.1896.

62. GS Nienaber, pp.57-59.

63. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter ASM Meyer to C Vermaak, 13.11.1893.

64. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 26.2.1892.

65. GS Nienaber, pp.53-54.

66. WE Lambert, Language as a factor in intergroup relations, in H Giles and RN St Clair (eds), *Language and social psychology*, pp.186-187.

67. PAR, CSO 1563: Resolutions adopted by the Congress of Dutch Farmers’ Association, 6-7.5.1898.

68. PAR, CSO 1635: Letter secretary Dutch Farmers’ Association, FDJ Havemann to Principal-under-Secretary (hereafter PUS) C Bird, 29.7.1899.

individuals, hardly improved the political position of Natal Afrikaners. The reason for this was quite simple: the vast majority of these people were neither politically skilled nor literate enough to participate in the process, while the annual seasonal migration to the Republics served to interrupt any ongoing involvement, causing most Natal Afrikaners to remain apolitical. Parallel attempts to gain rights pertaining to language issues were less than successful. This was greatly due to the changing nature of the Dutch language and the low premium placed on education by many Natal Afrikaners, regardless of the language employed. At the same time affluent Afrikaners who had the vote by virtue of their property, also had the economic means to pay for the education they desired for their children. This in itself tinted both political and language movements with an elitist hue.

The nationalist momentum brought about by the Anglo-Transvaal War amongst Natal Afrikaners slowly petered out and proved to be but a passing phase. This happened despite the increase in the numbers of Natal Afrikaners, when the British recognised the New Republic in October 1886. In exchange, the New Republic dropped all claims to a protectorate over Dinizulu and ceded a block of territory in central Zululand known as Proviso B. The Afrikaners in this block of land were allowed to keep their farms at quit rent, but became British subjects when Zululand was made a British Colony in May 1887.⁶⁹ The main reason, however, for the failing momentum in both the political and linguistic areas, was that the fight was not carried into the most important sphere, namely the economic realm.

1.3 The economic position of Natal Afrikaners prior to the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War

By the 1880s and 1890s very few Natal Afrikaners had ventured beyond the field of agriculture. If they did, links to their agricultural heritage were generally maintained. Natal Afrikaners like P Nel, and PH van Rooyen from Umvoti, A Pretorius and JC Buys from Weenen and S de Jager and B Steenkamp of Klip River county operated water-driven corn mills. A few, especially in Umvoti, became shopkeepers or butchers. No Afrikaners were members of boards or directors of companies.⁷⁰ By 1887 only seven out of the 143 justices of peace, four out of 85 post office managers, and 12 out of 121 office bearers and committee members of agricultural societies in the civil service were Afrikaners.⁷¹ This had altered very little by 1895.⁷² By 1897 matters had deteriorated even more. Only 12 or 1.2% of the roughly 1 000 members listed in the Natal civil service were Afrikaners.⁷³ Natal Afrikaners were also no better represented in professions outside the civil service. According to the *Natal Almanack, Directory and Register* for 1899, Natal

69. JPC Laband and PS Thompson, The reduction of Zululand, 1878-1904, in A Duminy and B Guest (eds), *Natal and Zululand from earliest times until 1910. A new history*, pp.215-216.

70. See PAR, NCP 7/1/19-7/1/27: Return of manufacturers, mines and fisheries in Natal, 1874-1893.

71. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, p.158.

72. GT Plowman, *The Natal civil service list, 1895, passim*.

73. GT Plowman, *The Natal civil service list, 1897, passim*.

Afrikaners figured in the following occupations as enumerated: wagon builders - five; builders - three; shopkeepers - three; blacksmiths - two; teachers - two; watchmakers - one; hotelkeepers - one; masons - one; bakers - one; brickmakers - one and bricklayers - one. In 28 other listed professions which included architecture, medicine, and law, no Afrikaans names appeared.⁷⁴ Such a significant lack of representation could be attributed to the fact that Natal, with its capitalist system linked to the British dominated industrialised international economy, whose mechanisms and intricacies were better understood by the English, marginalised Afrikaners and denied them access to capital and/or positions.⁷⁵

As stock farmers, Natal Afrikaners favoured higher altitudes such as the Umvoti, Weenen, Klip River, Dundee and Newcastle districts because these areas were generally disease-free, received up to 1 400 mm of rain per year, and conformed to the agro-ecology needed for extensive livestock farming.⁷⁶ It was also the furthest many could trek away from British influence, especially those who settled in Klip River county. Settling in such remote counties had distinct disadvantages as it was geographically, politically and economically isolated from the rest of Natal. Economic growth was thus hampered in the Dutch Districts because local markets were largely absent and the long distances to urban markets along bad roads made crop farming in particular not viable. Other deterrents, apart from the lack of markets and the absence of a suitable infrastructure, were rust, late frost and frequent droughts. As a result, the crops that were generally planted were maize for bread and mieliepap and oats, as fodder.⁷⁷

Stock farming was not without its hazards. Runaway fires and lack of fodder proved problematic, while the annual migration in winter to Natal and in the summer to the highveld was time consuming and economically disruptive. Cattle herds were decimated by the outbreak of lungsickness (pleuropneumonia) which caused the deaths of two-thirds of white owned cattle, and the herds only started to recover when new stock was introduced. The recovery was hampered by red water and the destructive impact of rinderpest in 1896-1897 which destroyed 65% of European owned cattle in the Klip River district, 50% in Dundee, and 40% in Umsinga and in Umvoti.⁷⁸

The ongoing threat of lungsickness and red water forced many Natal Afrikaners to introduce sheep from the OFS and later to import stock from overseas in an attempt to diversify and improve their agricultural prospects. In this pioneering venture, significant contributions were made by WH

74. *Natal almanack, directory and register, 1899, passim.*

75. C Ballard and G Lenta, *The complex nature of agriculture in Colonial Natal: 1860-1909*, in B Guest and JM Sellers (eds.), *Enterprise and exploitation in a Victorian Colony. Aspects of the social and economic history of Natal*, p.143.

76. Thorrington-Smith, Rosenberg and McCrystal, *Towards a plan for Kwazulu, a preliminary development plan. The written report.* pp.20-50.

77. JPC Laband and PS Thompson with S Henderson, p.6.

78. PAR, NCP 7/4/3 and 7/4/4: Annual magisterial reports, 1896 and 1897.

Boshoff and PAR Otto, with the latter playing an important role in the formation of the “Natal Association for the Introduction of Woolled Sheep.”⁷⁹ Otto contributed immensely to the development of agriculture in Natal by importing Friesland cattle, Rambouillet sheep and horses from overseas, while also being a very successful wheat farmer.⁸⁰

Sheep farming was not without its own problems. Wild dogs, blue tongue, boetebossie (*xanthuim spinosum*) and especially scab, caused major economic difficulties. To a certain extent the problem of scab was addressed up to 1899 by dipping plus the introduction of various laws to curb the disease. None of these laws were popular; they were generally viewed by both Afrikaans and English farmers as an infringement on their rights as British subjects. How strong these feelings were could be gauged by the 18 petitions submitted in 1880 to protest against Law 26 of 1878, or the “Law for the better prevention of the disease in sheep called scab.” One of the petitions from Afrikaners in Umvoti county claimed that the number of sheep in the area had declined from 147 000 in 1877 to 94 000 in 1880 because of the enforced dipping with Cooper’s powders. LJ Nel claimed to have lost 238 of his 454 sheep after they were dipped.⁸¹ The wool was generally of a bad quality, owing to scab and the need for capital, which forced sheep farmers to shear twice a year. At the same time the washing and preparation of wool was a tedious process.⁸² In spite of these complications, sheep farming remained popular with Natal Afrikaners and most had a herd, especially since cattle was subjected to lungsickness which reoccurred repeatedly.⁸³

Apart from cattle and sheep, Natal Afrikaners also reared large numbers of horses, both for farm work and transport, but horse sickness proved to be a perennial problem and in summer the horses had to be moved to higher ground. Angora and other species of goats were also kept, especially in the rocky areas.⁸⁴

Numerous other economic problems also confronted Natal Afrikaners. The depression of the mid-1880s caused great hardship. Between 1886 and 1889 severe droughts struck the Colony, especially the Klip River county, resulting in serious stock losses. Numerous other natural disasters such as locusts, horse sickness, hail, early or late frost, and even snow in the Newcastle area during 1881, hampered farming. Stock theft by Africans constituted another major drawback with farmers in Weenen losing an average of 80 sheep per farmer during 1884. Despite these problems most Dutch

79. JM Sellers, *The origin and development of the merino sheep industry in the Natal midlands 1856-66*, MA-thesis, UNISA, 1946, pp.19-20.

80. *Lantern*, Vol XXIII, March 1974, No. 3, Natal 150 1824-1974, p.57; *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek*, Vol IV, pp.463-464.

81. AC Swanepoel, pp.248-260.

82. JPC Laband and PS Thompson with S Henderson, p.7.

83. JM Sellers, p.53.

84. See, PAR, NCP 7/1/16-7/1/28.

Districts, or parts thereof, also had their share of favourable agricultural conditions.⁸⁵

Long-term advantages from beneficial agricultural conditions were furthermore hampered by Natal's fast disappearing frontiers, with farms systematically decreasing in size by as much as 400 acres on average between 1860 and 1900. Afrikaners, especially where sub-division as a means of providing inheritance for offspring played a prominent role, found themselves with diminished land areas, and land shortage became a major problem. As the population grew land availability decreased and it became almost impossible for young Afrikaner men to become agronomists. Ultimately, few farms of 10 000 acres or the size of the original grants continued to exist. The lack of land meant that Natal Afrikaners could no longer trek elsewhere or participate in the annual migration to the Republics as readily as they had done in the past; a habit which had caused the magistrate of Newcastle to describe them as being the opposite of "the swallow and other migratory species that come in summer and go in the winter."⁸⁶ To make matters worse, access to land became even more difficult after 1893, when crown lands in Klip River county were thrown open for sale by "public competition" with the explicit aim of curtailing migratory movements and the economic complications thereof, such as tax evasion.⁸⁷ The hope of the authorities that more extensive land ownership would introduce greater stability in the Afrikaner community failed as many who had rented the crown lands did not necessarily purchase it.⁸⁸

Policy decisions by the government, as outlined above, irked Natal Afrikaners and made them suspicious of the ruling powers. They came to regard the administrative bodies as interfering and meddling. This was particularly true of the Klip River Afrikaners, as indicated in the reports of the Umsinga magistrate. In 1884 he recorded that "...many of the Boer farmers are suspicious that they will be taxed on their stock and for any improvements on their farms; this evil has arisen from the property tax bill, and when evaluators went around a few years ago it made farmers restless."⁸⁹ In 1888 the scab law of 1887 also aroused suspicion and a few Afrikaners left Natal as a direct result thereof.⁹⁰ The misgivings of the Natal Afrikaner were so deep-rooted, that they almost all provided the field-cornets with inaccurate figures regarding livestock and cultivated land. This was only rectified after 1889 when the Natal Mounted Police collected and recorded the yearly statistics.⁹¹ According to the historian VS Harris, Natal Afrikaners, especially those north of the Tugela River remained distrustful of the intentions of the Natal Government throughout the period 1881 to 1899.

85. For the economic conditions prevalent during this time in the districts in which the Afrikaners resided, see: PAR, NCP 7/1/29-7/1/31 and 7/2/2/12-7/2/2/14: Annual magisterial reports, 1880-1890.

86. AJ Christopher, *Natal: A study in land settlement*, D Phil-thesis, UNP, 1969, pp.43-344; PAR, NCP 7/1/30: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1882.

87. PAR, NCP 7/4/1: Annual reports magistrate Newcastle, 1893-1894.

88. VS Harris, p.15.

89. PAR, NCP 7/1/35: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1884.

90. PAR, NCP 7/1/38: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1888.

91. For the complaints of almost all the magistrates in the Dutch Districts see: PAR, NCP 7/1/32-7/1/38: 1881-1888.

This was not helped by the rudimentary administrative infrastructure in which the resident magistrate carried the bulk of the governing load. All in all by the end of the 1890s government control over the Afrikaner population was barely stronger than it had been during the 1850s.⁹²

Alongside the decrease in available land, environmental degradation increased. As Natal Afrikaners introduced private land tenure, the impact on the environment in the Dutch Districts, and especially on forests and game, became more and more noticeable. Apart from gathering firewood, Natal Afrikaners chopped vast quantities of yellowwood, stinkwood, sneezewood and black ironwood which they sold. Game was shot for meat and trading in skins, horns, ivory and teeth. This meant that by 1870 sightings of eland, hartebeest and buffalo were rare, while no elephants, rhinos and lions were to be found in Natal. Only small game such as duiker and steenbok still existed. As a result, by the 1890s, the fauna and flora, once viable economic commodities in the Dutch Districts had been exploited beyond redemption. The impact on minerals and veld composition was far less dramatic and the vast coal reserves on farms were mined merely for household purposes.⁹³

After the discovery of gold and diamonds, some economic respite came in the form of transport riding, but in some ways this event created more economic problems for the Natal Afrikaners than it solved. Railways developed along the shortest routes thereby bypassing agricultural regions such as Umvoti, Weenen and Umsinga which excluded these counties as markets for food produce. By the time the railroad from Durban reached Johannesburg in 1895, numerous Natal Afrikaners who had survived on transport riding or wagon building, or who followed these pursuits as an additional source of income, and in many areas had monopolised the trade, were put out of business. Furthermore, the limited transport market that remained for non-perishable products after the completion of the railroad, was flooded by the oversupply of transport riders, making it unsustainable.⁹⁴ To add to the dilemma, a large number of Natal Afrikaners, especially during the early years of the goldfields and before the completion of the railroad, had concentrated on transport riding, leaving their farms unattended, and thus neglecting a valuable means of providing a living.⁹⁵

According to the historians Ballard and Lenta, the discovery of diamonds and gold and the subsequent development of the mining industry, had a detrimental effect on the farmers of Natal. The growing Witwatersrand population soon attracted the attention of countries such as Argentina, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. Since technology had led to the development of refrigerated shipping, these countries with their large-scale food exporting industries, could

92. VS Harris, The Klip River Dutch community 1843-1899, *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, VII, 1984, pp.6-7.

93. B Ellis, The impact of white settlers on the natural environment of Natal, 1845-1870, in B Guest and JM Sellers (eds), *Enterprise and exploitation...*, pp.71-72.

94. H Heydenrych, Railway development in Natal to 1895, in B Guest and JM Sellers (eds), *Enterprise and exploitation...*, pp.47-70.

95. N Hurwitz, *Agriculture in Natal 1860-1950*, p.8.

export their agricultural products more cheaply than the Natal farmers. Owing to the fact that Natal could not compete with the international market, it soon came under pressure in its own arena when cheap products such as butter from Australia and New Zealand, flooded the local markets during the 1890s.⁹⁶

The discovery of gold also impacted negatively on an important prerequisite for white farmers in Natal, that is, the availability of cheap, and large supplies of African labour. The mines on the Witwatersrand and the construction of the railroad which offered steadily increasing wages, lured large numbers of African labourers - as many as 25 514 during 1894 - from Natal. Working on the mines was preferred simply because "... few Africans other than labour tenants were prepared to work on farms unless necessity drove them, as was the case during the depression of the mid-1880s or the years of the natural disaster in the 1890's." A significant factor which helped to account for reluctance of Africans to work on farms, was the practice of wage reduction adopted by many farmers at times when labour was plentiful.⁹⁷

Afrikaners, as extensive livestock farmers, needed herders, but found them in constant short supply. In Umvoti this was blamed on the railway which drew away labour while in Weenen, Africans were viewed by farmers as too affluent to enter into service.⁹⁸ All white farmers, including the Natal Afrikaners, were unhappy with the general policy towards Africans and the shortage of available labour. This dissatisfaction was expressed by JC Boshof who believed no African should be allowed to own a horse or a rifle, and that the locations should be split up in order to provide the labour imperative for economic growth. Boshof substantiated his point of view by stating that blacks contributed very little to the economy apart from paying hut tax. According to him the men were lazy and immoral.⁹⁹ Similarly PR Botha and LJ Nel, livestock farmers from Greytown, who also needed herders, complained in the early 1880s of a shortage of labour and that youngsters were disobeying their elders and not entering into service as per agreement.¹⁰⁰ Yet, while the farmers complained about lack of labour, very few in the then embryonic capitalist economy had the resources to take full advantage of the African workers available to them.¹⁰¹

Many Afrikaners opted for African tenants rather than farming themselves. These tenants focussed

96. C Ballard and G Lenta, The complex nature..., in B Guest and JM Sellers (eds), *Enterprise and exploitation...*, p.133; PAR, NCP 7/2/2/4: Annual report magistrate Weenen, 1887.

97. C Ballard and G Lenta, The complex nature..., in B Guest and JM Sellers (eds), *Enterprise and exploitation...*, pp.93-96.

98. PAR, NCP 7/1/24: Annual reports magistrates Umvoti and Weenen, 1876.

99. AC Swanepoel, pp.242-243.

100. B Carton, *"Blood from our sons." Generational conflict in Natal and Zululand, South Africa, 1880-1910*, PhD-thesis, Yale, 1995, pp.129-130.

101. J Lambert, *Africans in Natal, 1880-1899. Continuity, change and crisis in rural society*, D Phil-thesis, UNISA, 1986, pp.384-385.

on grain production, rather than livestock farming, and were so successful that they managed to pay their rent and taxes by producing marketable agricultural surplus.¹⁰² Generally, Afrikaners did not exact rent from their African tenants, but preferred them to supply labour for herding purposes, as well as for weeding and harvesting crops.¹⁰³ This changed after the discovery of gold and with the construction of the railroad, as Africans tended not to keep to their part of the arrangement. As a result Afrikaners started to charge rent.¹⁰⁴ In extreme cases families were evicted, even though they may have worked for a particular Afrikaner all their lives.¹⁰⁵

Despite the hardships and challenges during the 1880s and 1890s, numerous Natal Afrikaners prospered. PAR Otto, known as the “king” of Natal farmers, was one such farmer who owned 40 000 acres at the time of his death on 10 May 1890.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, Tol Nel was also described as an extremely rich farmer.¹⁰⁷ Well-to-do Afrikaners were to be found in all the Dutch Districts and in 1885 the magistrate of Umsinga could report that: “The European population are chiefly Dutch farmers of stock, and comfortably well off; several of them are the wealthiest stock farmers in this Colony, and own large tracts of land in this Division and in the Transvaal.”¹⁰⁸ In turn the Newcastle magistrate reported that the Afrikaners in his district comprised 66% of the white population and that they were “...well off and prosperous, buying land whenever they can get it, owning large flocks and herds, and having comfortable homesteads.”¹⁰⁹

Not all Natal Afrikaners were rich though, and numerous bywoners and renters co-existed alongside the rich farmers. According to the magistrate of Umsinga, every affluent Afrikaner employed several bywoners.¹¹⁰ The economic position of such bywoners differed greatly. Some were unmitigatedly poor like Thys Pieterse, a local jobber in Weenen county, described as the poorest of the poor, who died when a wall he was working on fell on him, leaving a wife and several children.¹¹¹ Others had some livestock or owned property such as a wagon. The opinion of GBA Gerdener that no poor Afrikaners existed in Natal prior to the Anglo-Boer War was therefore completely untrue.¹¹²

In reality the Natal Afrikaners covered the full economic spectrum, from extremely wealthy to dirt poor, with one common denominator: they were almost without exception involved in agriculture.

102. B Guest and JM Sellers (eds)., *Enterprise and exploitation...*, p.8.

103. PAR, NCP 7/1/30: Annual reports magistrates of Klip River and Newcastle districts, 1882.

104. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/5: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1888.

105. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/4: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1887.

106. *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek, Vol IV*, pp.463-464.

107. *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordboek, Vol V*, p.571.

108. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/2: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1885.

109. PAR, NCP 7/1/25: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1878.

110. PAR, NCP 7/2/2/2: Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1885.

111. *Natal Witness*, 20.9.1899.

112. GBA Gerdener, p.133.

This prevented them from sharing in the economic boom taking place in the Transvaal and diminished the euphoria caused by the Anglo-Transvaal War. At the same time, a lack of English language skills, lack of access to the British economic culture, and an absence of political representation entrapped them in a world that had changed very little since the demise of the Republic of Natalia. Natal Afrikaners, furthermore, felt that they were still under the heel of British Imperialism, which due to the Uitlander question, was now spreading to the Transvaal, their political and spiritual home, and their beacon of hope against the threat of British domination.

1.4 The Jameson Raid and its impact on Natal and the Natal Afrikaner

On 2 January 1896, the political scenario in South Africa, including the position of Natal Afrikaners, changed dramatically when Dr Leander Starr Jameson and his supporters, who had invaded the Transvaal in an attempt to overthrow the government of President SJP Kruger, were arrested by Boer commandos at Doringkop. The raid, described by General Jan Smuts as "...the real declaration of war in the Great Anglo-Boer conflict..."¹¹³ immediately polarised Natal society, with unanimous support from English Natalians for the invaders, especially since the defeat at Doringkop brought back memories of Majuba. At the same time it was viewed as another defeat by Britain at the hands of the Afrikaners. In the ensuing events an outpouring of support for the Uitlanders and Britain reached fever pitch in Natal, and a meeting in support of Jameson and his raiders was held in Pietermaritzburg while rumours of gathering military aid abounded. The effect of this was soon visible in exacerbated hostility in Natal between Afrikaner and English.¹¹⁴

In contrast to the wild enthusiasm of the English following the invasion, Afrikaners were said to be crossing the border to the Transvaal in small groups to assist the Republic, with Dundee Afrikaners notably expressing sympathy for the Boer cause. The prime minister, Sir John Robinson, however, informed the Natal Government that it was believed that those crossing the border in an active show of support for the Transvaal were very few in number and, as far as could be ascertained none were from the powerful Umvoti district. In an attempt to allay racial tension, the Natal Government urged the Transvaal authorities to discourage Afrikaner volunteers from Natal, as it could become difficult for them to "control" such itinerant groups. Rumours even started to circulate that Natal Afrikaners were planning to capture Laings Nek, which if true, posed a serious threat to the internal security of the Colony.¹¹⁵ This was refuted by FAR Johnstone, the member of the Legislative Assembly (hereafter MLA) for Newcastle, who as a result was labelled as "pro-Dutch" by Governor Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson. According to Johnstone, the Natal Afrikaners could not have been more loyal, and they behaved in a proper and orderly manner at a meeting in Newcastle. The real anti-British feelings were prevalent across the border in Utrecht and Wakkerstroom and, given the close

113. As quoted by T Pakenham, *The Boer War*, p.9.

114. R Owendale, Natal and the Jameson Raid, *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, IV, 1981, pp.7-8.

115. R Owendale, Natal and the Jameson Raid..., p.9. At least one Natal Afrikaner, Cornelius Nel of Greytown, then resident near Pretoria, joined the fight against the raiders. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.9.1903.

proximity of these districts, Johnstone found the Natal Afrikaner's restraint commendable.¹¹⁶

Subsequent to the raid, Robinson and his cabinet found themselves in an extremely difficult position, especially when a large section of the public, rather than denounce the Jameson Raid and the challenge to the sovereignty of the Transvaal, gave it their support and turned against their official economic ally, the Transvaal. Notwithstanding the feelings of numerous English colonists, the moderate attitude of the Natal Government, made easier by the composure of the Natal Afrikaner, did serve to curb racial tension.¹¹⁷ Like the Natal Government, *De Natal Afrikaner* feared the possibility of racial conflict and its reports were full of praise for the responsible manner in which the authorities attempted to remain neutral. The publication called on all Natalians to follow suit.¹¹⁸ As a solution to Uitlander grievances against the Aliens Expulsion Act, the Press Law and the Immigration Laws, and in line with its declared vision of equal political rights for all Europeans, the newspaper advocated that their position be alleviated without providing concrete suggestions as to how this could be accomplished.¹¹⁹

The dividing issue nonetheless remained and individuals either supported the imperialist and Uitlander cause, or the Republican and Afrikaner cause. The reality of how English Natalians really felt about their imperial connections and the raiders soon became clear to the Natal Government, the governor of Natal, Natal Afrikaners and the editor of *De Natal Afrikaner*.

Dr Jameson and his raiders left Pretoria on 18 January 1896, after being pardoned by President Kruger. Throughout the Natal leg of their journey they were cheered on by crowds of onlookers and treated as men of honour rather than criminals. This happened despite measures taken by the Natal Government such as parking goods trains at the station platforms to obscure a view of the raiders and having the train which carried them arrive in Durban in the early hours of the morning. How strong the imperialist sentiments were amongst English Natalians was exhibited by the contrast in treatment received by the governor of Natal and Jameson in Newcastle, especially after the former's congratulatory utterances to Kruger on having thwarted the invasion. Governor Hely-Hutchinson passed through Newcastle from Pretoria at 10:30 and was booed, while Jameson who passed through at 13:00, was cheered. Although the crowd was labelled as out-of-town loafers, it seems that they were concerned citizens intent on repudiating the governor for his treatment of the raiders. Similar treatment awaited both parties at Pietermaritzburg Station, followed by a jingoistic meeting in Pietermaritzburg on 24 January 1896 which set the tone for intensified future racial division.¹²⁰

116. FR Carroll, *The growth and co-ordination of pro-war sentiments in Natal before the Second Anglo-Boer War*, MA-thesis, UND, 1993, p.29.

117. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, p.9.

118. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 7.1.1896.

119. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 14.1.1896.

120. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, pp.12-14.

De Natal Afrikaner viewed these incidents as “schandelijk en onvergefelijk” and praised the governor for performing his duties.¹²¹ Similar political activities, however, continued, and forced *De Natal Afrikaner* to show indignation at the spirit of “jingoism”.¹²² The persistent pro-Jameson and anti-Transvaal politics forced a section of the Afrikaner community to retaliate by organising a meeting of their own at Greytown on 9 February 1896. Under the auspices of the Umvoti Farmers’ Association, about 100 Afrikaners and six English farmers congregated. One of the speakers encapsulated the mood when he referred to the Jameson Raid as “low, abominable, barbarous and unprecedented” and accused the raiders of being driven by a desire for “plunder and murder”. The mood gradually became more tempered and in the end a resolution was passed, congratulating the Transvaal on repelling the raid, and commending Kruger for his treatment of the prisoners in his wish to strengthen the cause of peace. The hope was also expressed that the grievances of the Uitlanders would be dealt with speedily. In a second resolution, sympathy was extended to the Natal Government at the treatment it had to endure. The meeting was closed with applause for Kruger and Hely-Hutchinson.¹²³ Similar gatherings were held soon afterwards by Afrikaners in Weenen and Klip River where parallel expressions of condolence and support were uttered, with special commendation reserved for the anti-government press and the demonstrations in Pietermaritzburg. When Hely-Hutchinson expressed his appreciation for the confidence shown in him, and the declarations of support from Natal Afrikaners, he, in an attempt to remain as impartial as possible, used general terms and avoided alluding to the raid or congratulating Kruger.¹²⁴ Reactions, especially to the Afrikaner meeting in Greytown, were soon forthcoming. The *Natal Witness* condemned the Umvoti Farmers’ Association, an organization which allegedly had no political ties, and whose members were both Afrikaner and English, for holding such a meeting. The newspaper claimed that 75% of the people present were not members of the association.¹²⁵ *De Natal Afrikaner*, for its part, expressed regret that the resolutions drafted were so strongly worded,¹²⁶ and maintained its appeal for a solution to Uitlander grievances.¹²⁷ With emotions still running high the Legislative Assembly, in an effort to terminate racial turmoil, condemned both the Greytown gathering and the meeting held in Pietermaritzburg the day after the station incident.¹²⁸ Such disapprobation was futile as the die had been cast and the Natal public, newspapers and politicians had become mere observers as the course of history unfolded.

121. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 28.1.1896.

122. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 1.2.1896.

123. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, p.17.

124. FR Carroll, pp.48-49.

125. *Natal Witness*, 10.2.1896.

126. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 15.2.1896.

127. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 16.6.1896.

128. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, p.17

In English communities the anger remained. Despite the government's insistence that only a small boisterous minority supported Jameson, and that "level-headed Englishmen" did not, the veracity of this claim seems dubious. In Durban, where commercial interests reigned supreme, emotions soon calmed but in Pietermaritzburg and in certain country districts, fuelled by the *Natal Witness*, the *Times of Natal*, and *The Natal Advertiser*, approval of Jameson remained vocal. Support in the newspapers took the form of constant attacks and negative references to President Kruger and the Transvaal.¹²⁹ Politicians who were aware of the commercial dependence of Natal on the Transvaal, and who preached neutrality, did not escape either, and were accused by *The Natal Advertiser* of being out of touch with the views of the colonists.¹³⁰ *De Natal Afrikaner* predictably backed the government in its endeavour to maintain healthy relations with the Transvaal.¹³¹ The feelings of Natal Afrikaners regarding the constant attacks on, and negative references to Kruger and the Transvaal, is best illustrated in a letter from a "Dutch Girl" to the *Natal Witness*, in which she criticises the editor for "sowing ill-feeling and hatred."¹³² Support for her point of view came from the MLA for Umvoti, TJ (Theuns) Nel, who regarded the behaviour of Natal Afrikaners as a reaction to the anti-Transvaal meetings being held all over Natal.¹³³

At this stage attempts by the Natal Government to counter racial polarisation had obviously failed. According to FR Carroll, the response of Natal Afrikaners to the political events that followed the Jameson Raid, suggested that the divisions had widened, not only between Afrikaners and English, but also between certain Natal politicians, who relied heavily on the support of Natal Afrikaners for re-election, and their electorate. Proof of this was that politicians, of the likes of Robinson and FR (Frederick) Moor who had attended the commemoration service at Blaauwkrantz on 16 December 1895, did not view the Pietermaritzburg meeting of 24 January 1896, held the day after the station incident, as extravagant.¹³⁴

Although it is difficult to determine how many English Natalians favoured a more forceful British presence in South Africa at this stage, there was a small but determined nucleus, namely the Natal Province of the South African League, who was committed to sustaining pro-imperialist enthusiasm. The league grew and under the leadership of AH (Albert) Hime, H (Henry) Bale, and FS (Frank) Tatham, soon had branches all over Natal. These three sought support for their ideals from the English section of the white population in Natal. Notwithstanding their aggressive pro-imperialist propaganda, they were initially unable to secure large scale support in districts where people who had lived alongside Afrikaner families for more than a generation, out of mutual respect, were not

129. See the *Natal Witness*, *Times of Natal* and *The Natal Advertiser* for the period under review.

130. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, p.19.

131. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 11.4.1896.

132. R Owendale, *Natal and the Jameson Raid...*, p.17.

133. FR Carroll, p.53.

134. FR Carroll, p.49.

keen to have divisions created on racial grounds.¹³⁵ Furthermore, since Natal was unable to move out of the economic orbit of the Transvaal, Imperialism was thrust backstage in favour of local commercial interests, proving that patriotic sentiments were a luxury compared to bread and butter issues. By mid-1897, the economic boom in Natal as a result of sea-borne goods to and from the Transvaal, was on the decline, and the growth created by the opening of the railroad tapering off.¹³⁶ The latent patriotic and imperialistic feelings exposed by the Jameson Raid now became ignited.

The decline in general economic prospects in Natal was followed by political changes. In February 1897, Harry Escombe replaced John Robinson who, as prime minister, had advocated close relations with the Transvaal. Escombe had different political views and favoured closer ties with the Cape Colony. At the same time, there was growing dissatisfaction in Natal because of Transvaal policies aimed at the Uitlanders, many of whom were British subjects. It was against this backdrop that the elections of September 1897 took place.¹³⁷ Although Governor Hely-Hutchinson maintained that the elections were not contested on political grounds but that they focussed rather on the personalities of the candidates, the results did in fact reflect the dissatisfaction felt by many English Natalians towards previously empowered political figures and the political issues at stake, and the outcome indicated a shift to a more hardline Imperialism. The three leading figures of the South African League, Tatham, Hime and Bale, were voted in, defeating the Escombe Ministry in the process. The new prime minister was the pro-Transvaal Henry Binns, while AH Hime became minister of lands and works, and FAR Johnstone, the pro-Afrikaner MLA from Newcastle, the minister of agriculture. With a new government consisting of men with such divergent views on the Transvaal, Governor Hely-Hutchinson could not help but be anxious about future relationships with the Transvaal.¹³⁸

At about the same time that economic and political adjustments were taking place in Natal, another major political change took place in South Africa: Sir Alfred Milner became the South African High Commissioner and the Governor of the Cape Colony.¹³⁹ From the outset, Milner made it clear that he wanted to maintain the existing imperial ties as strongly as possible, while at the same time forging new ones. His vision included dealing with Natal, which he perceived as fostering disloyalty. One of the first to experience his wrath was Prime Minister Binns, who had used unofficial channels to inform Kruger of his good intentions towards the Transvaal and to congratulate him on his re-election as president in 1898. This convinced Milner, with Hely-Hutchinson in tow, that there “has got to be a separation of the sheep from the goats in this

135. FR Carroll, pp.48-49.

136. R Owendale, The politics of dependence, 1893-9, in A Duminy and B Guest (eds), *Natal and Zululand. From earliest times to 1910. A new history*, pp.328-329.

137. R Owendale, Profit or patriotism: Natal, the Transvaal and the coming of the Second Anglo-Boer War, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 8, 1980, pp.213-215.

138. FR Carroll, p.108.

139. DW Krüger *et al*, *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika*, p.389.

subcontinent, by which I don't mean the English and the Dutch, but those who approve and those who disapprove of the present dishonest despotism at Pretoria, and those who either admire or truckle to it."¹⁴⁰

With Milner at the helm of British affairs in South Africa he ensured that the political inclinations of Natal were slowly but surely directed away from the Transvaal. A major move in engineering this was to get Natal to join the OFS-Cape Colony customs union in May 1898. Despite criticism by Natalians, who feared that they would have to pay more for their food, the Natal Parliament ignored the protests and forged ahead and, in the beginning of 1899, the union took place. The Natal Government must have felt vindicated since profits from rail line dependence on the Transvaal were declining, which suggested diminished economic reliance on Kruger's Republic. Apart from intermittent hindrances, such as the affair surrounding the Swazi King Bunu, a marked cooling was noticeable by 1898 in the attitude of Natal to the Transvaal. To some extent this was due to an improvement in the Natal economy, because of the customs union which had allowed Natal to move out of the economic sphere of the Transvaal.¹⁴¹

More important, the waning relationship with the Transvaal occurred as a result of the dominant influence of jingoists in the Natal Cabinet and the pressure exercised by Governor Hely-Hutchinson, who, in July 1898, after the Bunu affair, warned the Natal Government not to do anything "which might in any way tend to embarrass the High Commissioner in his delicate and responsible task of negotiating with the Republics in matters of imperial and general concern." Reacting to this reprimand, acting Prime Minister Bale gave the assurance that Natal would not provide any further cause for complaint. This declaration followed the vociferous public support for the rights of Uitlanders emanating from Natal, in the wake of an incident involving the shooting of an Englishman named Edgar by a ZAR policeman, which resulted in outrage and calls for intervention. As the tension between Britain and the Transvaal mounted, Natal kept a low public profile in accordance with the promise made by Bale. It was by now becoming clear to Natal, as to the rest of South Africa, that the British Government, under the auspices of Milner who published documents such as the "Helot despatch", was determined to force political reform on the Transvaal, with the objective of creating a united South Africa. To ensure that Natal remained under imperialist control, unlike the Afrikaner Bond Ministry in the Cape Colony, Milner instructed Hely-Hutchinson on 8 May 1899, to "stiffen the wobblers" in the Colony.¹⁴² When the Kruger-Milner Conference held in Bloemfontein in June 1899 failed to provide a peaceful solution to the problem of political rights for the Uitlanders, it seemed that most of the English sentiment in Natal had turned. In their editorials, the *Natal Witness*, the *Times of Natal*, and the *Natal Mercury* exhibited extreme jingoistic views in

140. As quoted by R Ovendale, *The politics of dependence...*, p.331.

141. R Ovendale, *The politics of dependence...*, pp.331-332; R Ovendale, *profit or patriotism...*, pp.216-217.

142. R Ovendale, *The politics of dependence...*, pp.332-334.

their support of Milner and his policy.¹⁴³ As such, they in all probability reflected the opinions of English Natal as voiced during the numerous public meetings on the political problems in the Transvaal. In contrast the bi-weekly *De Natal Afrikaner* remained a lone voice campaigning for a peaceful solution.¹⁴⁴

As the twelfth hour approached, the pro-Transvaal Prime Minister of Natal, Sir Henry Binns, passed away on 6 June 1899. He was succeeded by Albert Hime, founder member of the South African League and well-known for his unwavering imperial sentiments.¹⁴⁵ In the light of the Transvaal question that dominated everything else, Hely-Hutchinson seemed pleased with the new government and visualised that it would provide Milner with all the support he needed.¹⁴⁶ This did not prove to be the case and Hime was forced to include two conciliation minded members in his ministry: FR Moor and CJ Smythe, while the minister of agriculture, HD Winter of Weenen, was labelled a pro-Afrikaner by the governor and therefore distrusted. The two key ministers who would co-operate with Milner were Bale and Hime.¹⁴⁷ At this stage, the balance of power seemed to have slipped away from the pro-Milner lobby and, on 8 June 1899, the cabinet was persuaded “to subscribe to a minute implicitly criticising Milner’s policy and demanding that South Africa ought not to be exposed to war by any act of Her Majesty’s Government” without consulting the governor.¹⁴⁸ At this juncture, Governor Hely-Hutchinson, acting as buffer between Milner and the cabinet, stepped in and refuted the view that the people of Natal would veto war, stating that they merely wanted to have a say.¹⁴⁹ Milner was asked to communicate this message to the Cape Government. This he did, but in the process avoided Natal’s request to be consulted, and gave no positive assurances that their opinions would be taken into account in future. This seemed to mark the end of the Natal Government’s resistance to war with the Transvaal and its demand to be consulted on matters influencing the Colony. Milner’s appeal for equal rights for all in the Transvaal received wide spread support from public meetings held not only in Durban and Pietermaritzburg, but also in towns like Ladysmith, Nottingham Road and Estcourt. Backed by the press and the public, and armed with a petition in favour of “radically” reforming the Transvaal signed by 7 542 European Natal men, Hely-Hutchinson could report to Colonial Secretary Sir Joseph Chamberlain, that if the Imperial Government did not yield, the resolve of Natal to find a solution for the Transvaal problem by whatever means and regardless of the consequences, would remain.¹⁵⁰

143. *Natal Witness*, 12.6.1899; *Times of Natal*, 9.6.1899; *Natal Mercury*, 6.6.1899, 8.6.1899 and 10.6.1899.

144. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 9.6.1899.

145. R Owendale, *The politics of dependence...*, p.333.

146. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, p.199.

147. FR Carroll, p.156.

148. JS Marais, *The fall of Kruger’s Republic*, pp.293-294.

149. R Owendale, *Profit or patriotism...*, p.221.

150. R Owendale, *The politics of dependence...*, p.334; R Owendale, *Profit or patriotism...*, p.222; FR Carroll, pp.173-174. Governor Hely-Hutchinson was also angered by this petition as most Natal Afrikaner men had signed it.

His warning proved well-founded. On 22 July 1899, the motion of Joseph Baynes (MLA), the representative for Ixopo, “supporting the British Government in its endeavour to secure equal rights and privileges for all Europeans in South Africa” was carried unanimously. The motion of equal rights for all Europeans in South Africa and a vote of approval for actions by the Imperial Government to achieve this, was supported by Theuns and Tol Nel in the Legislative Assembly, be it with some reservations. The sole response from Theuns Nel who, during 1895 still viewed President Paul Kruger as a possible leader for a united South Africa,¹⁵¹ was that he thought the time rather inappropriate, as negotiations with the Transvaal were still ongoing. His nephew, Tol Nel, used the opportunity to highlight the political plight of Natal Afrikaners and suggested that the call for equal rights and privileges for Europeans should include those British subjects in Natal who had no voice in Parliament. On 27 July 1899, a similar resolution, seconded by the Afrikaner member of the Legislative Council (hereafter MLC) for Zululand, DC “Vaal Dirk” Uys, was passed unanimously in the council.¹⁵² The English press was jubilant about the result of the debate,¹⁵³ while Natal Afrikaners felt betrayed by their politicians.¹⁵⁴

With Natal now firmly part of the fray, Milner's hand was strengthened in dealing with any franchise proposals offered by Kruger. To Hely-Hutchinson, it was a case of loyal and patriotic feelings that had finally overcome commercial considerations. The views of jingoistic politicians had triumphed over those of the old school, and the issue now at stake was that of British supremacy in the region, and no longer merely the question of the political rights of Uitlanders. The only fear Natalians had, was that the Imperial Government would not fully institute their regime, leaving Natal open to commercial revenge from the Transvaal. Milner again produced skilful arguments to convince the Imperial Government not to waver. As part of the trade-off for political support the military enforcement, which Milner and Hely-Hutchinson had colluded over since early 1899, was called for and troops were deployed in Natal.¹⁵⁵

By mid-September 1899, Hely-Hutchinson again incited the British Government to follow through on its threat of war, arguing that Natal's allegiance had shifted in favour of Imperial policy. If war did not break out, Natal would be commercially ruined through commercial revenge by the Transvaal. Hely-Hutchinson also felt that the attitudes of Natal Afrikaners and Africans left no other option than war, for Africans would not understand a “diplomatic victory”, while the sentiments of Natal Afrikaners were with their Republican kin. Any hesitation by the British Government would

151. FR Carroll, pp.5-6.

152. PRO, CO 179/295: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 11.8.1899; *Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly*, pp.532-534.

153. *Natal Mercury*, 21.7.1899; *Natal Witness*, 21.7.1899.

154. NAR, A 116, 4: Die Boere in Natal tydens die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog, memoirs van JC Vermaak, no date.

155. R Ovendale, *The politics of dependence...*, pp.335-336; R Ovendale, *Profit or patriotism...*, pp.225-227; AH Duminy, *Sir Alfred Milner and the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War*, pp.42-45; FR Carroll, p.168.

therefore cause serious internal dissension amongst the two groups.¹⁵⁶ There was no need for the governor of Natal to be concerned, because the British Government did not abandon its position, and war between the Transvaal and its ally the Orange Free State on the one side and the British Empire on the other, broke out on 11 October 1899 after the Transvaal ultimatum to Britain had expired.¹⁵⁷

1.5 Concluding comments

Subsequent to the Jameson Raid, and until the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, Natal Afrikaners had merely observed the slow drift towards war. With no politicians speaking out on their behalf, and with *De Natal Afrikaner* remaining loyal to the changing Natal Governments, the only representative to express the real feelings of Natal Afrikaners remained the Dutch Farmers' Association. As the sole political voice, its focus in the years after the Jameson Raid remained fixed on bread and butter issues such as African labour, the control of Africans via passes, cures for stock diseases, and the position of Dutch in schools and in public life.¹⁵⁸ The extent to which even the Dutch Farmers' Association, as a quasi-political movement, was out of touch with the changing political climate in Natal, is illustrated by the loyalty expressed to Queen Victoria and her government on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of her reign in 1897.¹⁵⁹

With the macro-political influences in Natal having swayed almost irreversibly towards war, Natal Afrikaners finally reacted accordingly. At a meeting of the Congress of Dutch Farmers' Association on 27 July 1899 at Ladysmith, a resolution drafted with the aid of the Dundee magistrate, P Hugo, was adopted, namely that war could be averted and the franchise question in the Transvaal be settled, by accepting the latest proposals laid before the Executive of the Transvaal Volksraad. On reception of the petition, Governor Hely-Hutchinson forwarded it to High Commissioner Milner.¹⁶⁰ A similar naive solution came from the Natal DRC in the form of an appeal to Governor Hely-Hutchinson. After drawing attention to the rising tensions created by the events of the past years, and alluding to the war talk of the press and certain politicians, the governor was asked to intervene personally to prevent war, as hostilities would create division between races that would take a long time to heal. As requested, he again forwarded the petition to Milner,¹⁶¹ but these late and idealistic appeals predictably had no impact.

According to Governor Hely-Hutchinson, relations between Afrikaner and Britain started deteriorating after the Anglo-Transvaal War. Thereafter Natal Afrikaners looked at Pretoria as their

156. R Owendale, Profit or patriotism..., pp.225-229.

157. The events outside of Natal which lead to the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War were regarded as beyond the scope of this thesis. For comprehensive discussions of these events and suggested reasons for the war see: T Pakenham, *The Boer War*, and IR Smith, *The origins of the South African War*.

158. PAR, CSO 1563: Resolutions adopted by Congress of Dutch Farmers' Association, 6-7.5.1898.

159. PAR, CSO 1527: Letter PUS C Bird to Congress of Dutch Farmers' Association, 16.7.1897.

160. PAR, CSO 1588: Letter secretary Dutch Farmers' Association FDJ Havemann to PUS C Bird, 29.7.1899.

161. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter moderator DRC Natal, Ds GS Malan to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 30.8.1899. pp.3-6.

national centre, while racial tensions spilled over from the Transvaal into Natal. The Jameson Raid soured matters even further, so much so that a dominee was heard addressing an audience of Natal Afrikaners on the significance of race. This, the governor viewed as a thankless position as he declared that where the British reigned Afrikaners received rifles, their children were taught in Dutch, and laws, regulations and important agricultural documents were translated into Dutch and distributed. Even the trekboers were treated well. Furthermore, Hely-Hutchinson maintained that when visiting the Dutch Districts he made an effort to show special attention to Afrikaners in an attempt to combat the Transvaal influence. Unfortunately, as far as he was concerned, all these endeavours aimed at Natal Afrikaners were doomed as long as the Transvaal question existed.¹⁶²

Hely-Hutchinson's concern regarding Natal Afrikaners who saw the Transvaal as their real political home, was not exaggerated. Family ties, a common history, geographical proximity and a shared political vision meant that Natal Afrikaners viewed the Republics, and especially the more powerful Transvaal, as a spiritual home, and President Paul Kruger as their leader, so much so that Theuns Nel kept Kruger posted on the political developments in Natal.¹⁶³ Even mundane matters were directed to Kruger, as illustrated in a very submissive letter from AC Vermaak of Paddock near Dundee, in which he asked Kruger information about the healing mineral waters of the Waterberg, as he wished to take his ill son to the baths.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, shortly before the outbreak of the war a spy wrote to Kruger from Natal to report that 3 530 troops were congregated in Pietermaritzburg, 500 in Pinetown, 1 500 in Ladysmith and that 70 Natal Afrikaners had resigned from the volunteer regiments.¹⁶⁵

Throughout the years that followed the Jameson Raid, Natal Afrikaners remained shadowy figures on the fringes of the macro-political process, never fully integrated into the broader white Natal society. Their political energy of the years before the Jameson Raid was largely expended, and very few signs of the vigour with which for example language rights were pursued, were prevalent during these turbulent years. They had experienced the consequences of British Imperialism before, in 1843, when the Republic of Natalia had been destroyed and again in 1877 when the Transvaal was annexed. The next period to consider in outlining the history of the Natal Afrikaners is that immediately preceding the Anglo-Boer War.

162. PRO, CO 179/206: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

163. FR Caroll, p.156.

164. NAR, A 371, 11, SP Engelbrecht collection, section President SJP Kruger incoming letters, April-December 1899: Letter AC Vermaak to President SJP Kruger, 23.4.1899.

165. NAR, A 371, 11, SP Engelbrecht collection, section President SJP Kruger incoming letters, April-December 1899: Letter Unknown to President SJP Kruger, 29.6.1899.

CHAPTER 2
ADMINISTERING NATAL AFRIKANERS IN THE PERIOD
LEADING UP TO THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

The reaction of Natal Afrikaners at grassroots level to the ongoing diplomatic conflict taking place between Great Britain and the Transvaal-Orange Free State alliance, needs to be considered against the socio-political and economic backdrop sketched in the previous chapter. It is important to trace how, during the period immediately preceding the Anglo-Boer War, this ethnic minority related to their government, and the policies of the true blue Imperialist, Prime Minister AH Hime, and his cabinet. In this chapter the focus falls on the role, or lack thereof, of the Natal Afrikaner in defending the Colony, and on how the approximately 5 000¹ men, women and children reacted to the threats Imperialism and their own government posed to the Republics with which they shared a common history, language and culture.

2.1 The restrictions of arms and ammunition and its implications for Natal Afrikaners

When signs of the impending war became more evident midway through 1899, the Natal Government, as a preventative measure, deemed it necessary to exercise tighter control over the selling of firearms and ammunition. This was considered necessary so as to deal with the perceived enemy from within, namely Natal Afrikaners.

The first step in implementing these measures was taken when the commandant of volunteers, Colonel W Royston, forwarded a circular to all magistrates, stating: "Owing to a delay in the receipt of the usual supply of ammunition it is advisable to issue to purchasers no more than absolutely necessary. Therefore until further instructions not more than 200 rounds of ammunition of any description is to be issued to any person within 12 months."² This did not apply to registered members of rifle associations and, in fact, had nothing to do with a shortage of ammunition, but rather with the upswing in the amount of ammunition purchased by non-rifle association members. Statistics show that for the comparative periods 1 April to 21 June 1898 and 1 April to 21 June 1899, purchases by non-members from gunpowder depots rose from 8 230 to 13 090 rounds, while that of members declined from 48 660 to 32 650.³

Although the above measure prevented Natal Afrikaners, who generally did not belong to rifle associations, from purchasing ammunition from government depots, they were still free to purchase

1. It proved extremely difficult to determine the exact number of Natal Afrikaners. In 1896 it was estimated at 5 000 in total with 862 men on the voters role. PAR, CSO 2575: Request by agent-general for Natal, W Peace, on behalf of the War Office (hereafter WO) for the approximate number of Natal Afrikaners. Harry Escombe claimed in 1897 that 2 000 adult Afrikaner males resided in Natal. See, FR Carroll, p.174.

2. PAR, CSO 2580: Circular on the issuing of arms and ammunition, commandant volunteers, Col W Royston to magistrate, 10.7.1899.

3. PAR, Minister of Justice and Public Works (hereafter MJPW) 68: Summary of ammunition issued from gunpowder depots, 1.4.1898-21.6.1898 and 1.4.1899-21.6.1899.

ammunition and rifles from traders such as JF King in Durban. Applications for the purchase of firearms were nevertheless subjected to the discretion of the resident magistrate who, in an attempt to avoid confrontation, seldom declined the requests for permits. In a single month at Dundee, the magistrate, P Hugo, issued permits for 29 firearms of which 25 were purchased by Afrikaners. Of the 3 240 cartridges sold, only 500 were not bought by Afrikaners, with JS Vermaak being allowed to buy 700 rounds.⁴ It was no different in other districts. The magistrate of Umsinga reported that Afrikaners had bought 2 200 rounds and the English only 1 800. Afrikaners who purchased the ammunition also bought bandoliers. In addition to this Hugo also received applications from Afrikaners for certificates to purchase arms in other divisions, and to buy and sell weapons amongst themselves. None of these requests could be refused since they complied with the law, but the magistrate was convinced that the purchases were not merely for the destruction of vultures and dogs, or out of fear of an African uprising.⁵ In Estcourt, Magistrate Addison, issued 1 300 cartridges, mostly for Martini Henry's, to Afrikaners in the first 25 days of September 1899, taking care not to exceed the prescribed limit of 200. He could, however, not prevent the Van der Merwe family from collectively purchasing 1 000 rounds, and other Afrikaners from buying rifles and bandoliers.⁶

In a further attempt to control the sale of arms and ammunition, Prime Minister AH Hime, who also held the portfolio of minister of justice and public works (hereafter MJPW), called for an investigation of the records of all rifles sold in Natal since 1 January 1896. This opened up a hornets' nest. Over 500 rifles had been sold, of which JF King in Durban had sold 312. Of these, only two were licensed by the Durban magistrate, despite his having registered 206 rifles. The explanation by the controller of firearms was that rifles were registered immediately after passing customs and, consequently, the return of sales by dealers, who had had rifles in stock for long periods, did not correlate with the magisterial lists. To Hime this was incomprehensible. The extensive list of rifles bought by Natalians, many of whom were Afrikaners, did not aid him in his quest to control arms and ammunition in the face of the impending war. All he knew was that all the Mausers registered in Natal belonged to Afrikaners: 35 in 1897, 21 in 1898 and 13 in 1899.⁷

As if this was not enough of a security problem, rumours started to circulate that Natal Afrikaners were receiving arms and ammunition from the OFS and the Transvaal. The first rumour suggested that in July 1899, a person presenting himself as a roving photographer, travelled in the Normandien area near Newcastle with a wagon and eight horses calling only upon Natal Afrikaners. During these visits he was said to distribute Mauser ammunition. The allegation was immediately investigated by Inspector Dorehill of the Natal Police, who reported to the Natal Government and the Klip River

4. PAR, MJPW 69: Controller of firearms forwards return of ball ammunition sold at Dundee from 1.6.1899-1.7.1899, 12.7.1899.

5. PAR, Attorney-General's Office (hereafter AGO) I/7/39: Report Magistrate GE Adamson, Umsinga, 20.9.1899.

6. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 25.9.1899.

7. PAR, MJPW 116: Report controller of firearms on arms and ammunition imported and sold in Natal, 22.8.1899.

(Ladysmith) district magistrate. Although the incident happened before his appointment Magistrate Bennett did not consider it serious, since trekboers who came into Natal could bring in as much ammunition as they wished. Hence, there was no need to distribute ammunition secretly and risk punishment.⁸

Bennett was correct. To acquire arms and ammunition, Natal Afrikaners did not require any clandestine operations such as those implied by the rumours. Section 17 of Law 11 of 1862 allowed residents from neighbouring countries visiting Natal to carry arms and ammunition needed for personal use. The visitors included the great number of trekboers who resided in Natal during winter and in the Republics during summer.⁹ The nature of the law therefore made it possible for arms and ammunition to be brought into Natal and to be left behind on departure. Frequent concerns relating to this practice were expressed by the Natal Police between 1896 and 1899. Yet, the Natal Government did not deem it favourable to repeal the grant that had been in effect for so many years.¹⁰ With the rising tension between the Transvaal and Britain, Royston pointed out that the law in question conflicted with newly imposed regulations calling for the registration of all firearms brought into Natal.¹¹

A second rumour elicited more urgent action. A coal prospector, Cummings, reported that it was believed that every Natal Afrikaner between Dundee and the Buffalo River had a Mauser and it was not known if the guns were registered. These rifles were apparently secretly issued by Field-Cornet John Kruger of Ward Four, Utrecht, in the Transvaal. It was alleged that, as part of their mobilisation plans for the Republican cause, the Natal Afrikaners would practice with the Mausers against whitewashed stone targets, and that they had orders to rendezvous at Talana Hill should war break out. Prime Minister Hime, on being informed of this rumour, immediately tasked Chief Commissioner of Police Col JG Dartnell, to look into the matter. Dartnell in turn, instructed Sub-Inspector WE Lyttle to investigate the registration of firearms in the area. He was not too optimistic about the results of his strategy as he was of the opinion that if the Natal Afrikaners had Mausers, they would conceal them, and he believed that to issue search warrants would not be a good idea.¹² The rumour had a rippling effect and news of it was carried all the way to London. The colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, contacted Governor Hely-Hutchinson, regarding the distribution of arms in the area around Landmansdrift, asking for an enquiry to be launched, and requesting that

8. PAR, CSO 2579: Letter PUS C Bird to Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 23.8.1899; Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to PUS C Bird, 26.8.1899.

9. PRO, CO 179/206: Minute paper regarding distribution of firearms in Natal by Boers, 19.9.1899.

10. PAR, MJPW 69: Report by Natal Police that OFS Boers brought arms and ammunition into Natal, 1898-1899.

11. PAR, MJPW 69: Report Col W Royston on firearms brought into Natal by trekboers from the OFS and Transvaal, 5.6.1899 and 28.8.1899

12. PAR, CSO 2580: Letter Col W Royston to Prime Minister AH Hime, 24.8.1899; Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Chief Commissioner of Police JG Dartnell, 25.8.1899; Letter Chief Commissioner of Police JG Dartnell to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.8.1899; *Natal Witness*, 4.9.1899.

should rumour be verified, the serious implications of the situation be “brought home to the SAR government”. Via the governor, the prime minister and the commissioner of police, the orders were again passed down to Sub-Inspector Lyttle, who was commissioned to conduct an investigation and to submit a report. Lyttle consequently relayed that he had inspected all the arms in the area in question and found four Mausers, all registered to Natal Afrikaners. Despite his findings, Lyttle firmly believed that every single Natal Afrikaner in the district had a Mauser hidden away. In support of his suspicion, Lyttle was informed by his spies that the customs post at De Jagersdrift had received a consignment of Mausers, apparently destined for Natal Afrikaners. The spies could, however, not report where the consignment was kept or whether it had already been distributed.¹³ As a result, the Natal authorities proceeded to keep a watch on the Landmansdrift and De Jagersdrift areas.¹⁴ Proof that the rumours suggesting Natal Afrikaners were armed by the ZAR were unfounded, is confirmed by the refusal of Commandant-General PJ (Piet) Joubert in May 1899 to sell Mausers to Natal Afrikaners who called on the Vryheid landrost for this purpose.¹⁵

In spite of inadequate legislation, the house to house search for rifles was extended to include the following counties in which Afrikaners resided in great numbers: Weenen, Umvoti, Klip River, and the Province of Zululand, while counties dominated by Europeans of British origin who suffered this inconvenience were Pietermaritzburg, Alfred and Durban.¹⁶ The inspection soon started to flush out the odd unlicensed firearm, while rumours persisted that Afrikaners had unlicensed Mausers, and in this case, the accusation was specifically aimed at the inhabitants of Noodsberg in the New Hanover district.¹⁷

Only one case seem not to have been based on hearsay. Police were informed that RJ van Rooyen of Rustenburg, Umvoti, had used an unlicensed Mauser at the Upper Umvoti Rifle Association practice. Sergeant Barbezat of Riet Vlei was despatched to investigate the matter. On being questioned, Van Rooyen did not deny possessing an unlicensed Mauser and 120 of the original 600 cartridges purchased and when he offered to take the rifle to the resident magistrate himself, Barbezat refused permission and confiscated the Mauser.¹⁸ A day or so later Van Rooyen proceeded to the office of the magistrate and submitted a declaration regarding his acquisition of the rifle: on returning from the Transvaal he had taken two Mausers purchased to the temporary magistrate, E Fannin for registration. Tax and duties were paid on one rifle. Fannin, however, refused to register

13. PAR, CSO 2580: Letter Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 16.9.1899; Letter Chief Commissioner of Police JG Dartnell to Sub-Inspector WE Lyttle, 18.9.1899; Letter Sub-Inspector WE Lyttle to Chief Commissioner of Police JG Dartnell, 20.9.1899.

14. PRO, CO 179/206: Minute paper regarding distribution of firearms in Natal by Boers, 19.9.1899.

15. NAR, KG 818: Telegram Landrost Vryheid to General PJ Joubert, 5.5.1899.

16. PAR, MJPW 68: Question by TJ Nel to Prime Minister AH Hime regarding investigations into unregistered rifles, 9.5.1900.

17. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate CLA Ritter, New Hanover, 23.9.1899.

18. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Report on discovery of an unlicensed Mauser in possession of RJ van Rooyen, 27.8.1899.

both rifles as Van Rooyen only had a permit for one. The second rifle was subsequently registered on 12 March 1898, in the name of TC van Rooyen of Pampoennek, but retained at the office. To solve the problem, Fannin undertook to write to the controller of firearms. When Van Rooyen called a week later Fannin had still not received a reply and handed the Mauser to Van Rooyen, informing him that he should produce it when called upon to do so. According to Van Rooyen, if he had contravened the law he had done so unwittingly, for he had not attempted to conceal the rifle and had relied on the correspondence of Fannin and the controller of firearms to execute the necessary administrative procedures.¹⁹

This incident incensed Prime Minister Hime who felt that the proceedings on the part of the magistrate and the controller of firearms had been highly irregular and illegal from the start. The rifles were brought in under section 17 of Law 11 of 1862 which was not applicable under the circumstances as a application had been made for a Martini Henry and a Mauser been registered. In the light of this the rifle in question should never have been registered to TC van Rooyen as he had not applied for the permit, while the second rifle should have been confiscated and the government informed. Owing to the irregularities the law could not be enforced and after paying the custom duties Van Rooyen's Mauser was handed back to him,²⁰ but this was the end of his good fortune. His later application to import 600 cartridges from Germany for self defence, shooting of vultures, and target practice, was denied by Hime because, according to the controller of firearms, Van Rooyen had declared that he would under no circumstances fight for the British. He had nonetheless stated that he would not fight against them either even though some members of his family might.²¹

The inspection of firearm licenses by the Natal Police also unearthed several unregistered items in the Estcourt district which the owners brought to the magistrate. GL Oosthuysen of Mount Alice applied to have two rifles, a carbine and a revolver, registered. He had brought these into Natal on returning from a hunting trip in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). J van der Merwe, of the farm Moor, who believed that as a trekboer section 17 of Law 11 of 1862 applied to him, applied to register a Mauser which he had purchased in the OFS. JJ Meyer and JC Jordaan also possessed unregistered firearms,²² as did the member of the Legislative Council for Weenen, Casper (CJ) Labuschagne, who had brought in a Martini Henry carbine.²³

Problems arose with the Mausers of JA Oosthuysen and his son. The Oosthuysens were wealthy landowners with 12 000 acres in Natal and 13 000 in the OFS. In 1898 father and son bought

19. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Deposition by RJ van Rooyen relative to his confiscated Mauser, 29.8.1899.

20. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Report on discovery of an unlicensed Mauser in possession of RJ van Rooyen, 29.8.1899

21. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter RJ van Rooyen to controller of firearms, 9.10.1899.

22. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Application to have firearms registered by GL Oosthuysen, 18.9.1899; Application by J van der Merwe to have firearm registered, 18.9.1899.

23. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 12.9.1899.

Mausers from the OFS Government, but did not have them registered in Natal. In an attempt to circumnavigate the process, JA Oosthuysen (snr) wrote to FR Moor, the secretary of native affairs (hereafter SNA) who, as a politician, relied heavily on the vote of Afrikaners in Estcourt, and explained that he trekked seasonally between Natal and the OFS, and was therefore unsure about legal requirements and the process of registration. On 22 September 1899, Oosthuysen requested Moor to forward a telegram to the Estcourt magistrate explaining the situation. When this did not materialise, Oosthuysen, in a sworn affidavit before Magistrate RH Addison, acknowledged that he as a British subject, had brought in unlicensed Mausers from the OFS, pleading that he had been ignorant of breaking the law. The same day Oosthuysen visited his lawyers, Chadwick and Miller who, on behalf of father and son, applied to the controller of firearms to grant them licences on the grounds that the Mausers were not brought in willful contravention of the regulations or with the intention of using them against the British. When an immediate response was not forthcoming Chadwick and Miller were instructed to write to the colonial secretary, asking that the governor set aside the normal formalities since the Oosthuysens wanted their Mausers registered without delay. They received a standard reply from the colonial office - the matter was receiving attention.²⁴

The reason for urgency in trying to register the rifles were evident, the Transvaal forces were already mobilized on 27 September 1899, a fact that surely did not escape the attention of Oosthuysen. In early October 1899, JA Oosthuysen left for the OFS without handing in his Mauser despite requests by the magistrate to do so. The fact that the police could not prevent him from leaving, nor confiscate the rifle, nor prevent him from causing problems with Chief Ncwadi, angered Prime Minister Hime who asked for an explanation from the Chief Commissioner of Police Dartnell. Dartnell, in turn wanted an explanation from the officer in charge of the investigation, Inspector Mardall. A week later Mardall had still not offered an explanation.²⁵

Generally the inspection of firearms caused great dissatisfaction amongst Natal Afrikaners. In Weenen county, the Afrikaners took it for granted that the inspections were aimed at them. A Mr Grobbelaar who possessed an "old piece" without a permit, told Magistrate Matthews that the government should not take arms from the people but that they should rather provide them with weapons. A certain Heine went even further and told the police that Natal Afrikaners could get many more rifles from the Transvaal.²⁶ In the Dundee area much offence was incurred by the first search for rifle licenses in the history of Natal. The question posed was why this was being done at a time when friction between the Transvaal and Britain was rife, and while rumours of disloyalty amongst Natal Afrikaners were widespread. Although most Afrikaners found the process insulting, the half-hearted and perfunctory manner in which the inspection was done brought a smile to both English

24. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Application by JA Oosthuysen (snr) to have firearms registered, 18.9.1899-28.9.1899

25. PAR, Secretary of Native Affairs (hereafter SNA) 1/4/6: Correspondence between Magistrate WG Wheelwright, Upper Tugela, and Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.9.1899-5.10.1899.

26. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 4.8.1899.

and Afrikaners alike.²⁷

Since all measures regarding the control of arms and ammunition seemed to be failing, the only solution appeared to be to instigate stricter regulations when issuing licenses to Natal Afrikaners, especially for Mausers. Alex Jansen, the son of Adrian Jansen (JP), was refused a permit for the Mauser he had imported six months earlier from the Transvaal without being given a reason. What was puzzling to Natal Afrikaners was that in the past there had not been a problem and they felt: "It is an indignity, and the sign manual of distrust. If this gun was intended to be used for disloyal purposes, there are other and easier means of obtaining it."²⁸ Furthermore, firearms not only formed an important part of the defense and hunting prowess of the Natal Afrikaner, but they also served as an important cultural symbol of masculinity. The emotions and ill feelings of Natal Afrikaners surrounding the arms and ammunition issue is best summarised by CJ Triegaardt in a letter to the *Times of Natal*:

...I could not get one (rifle) for love or money. Before this disturbance, I bought one in town, took it to the Resident Magistrate's office, and had it registered. That shows plainly that we Natal Dutchmen are not trusted with a gun; frightened it might go off when we have it. Don't blame them; guns are dangerous. The Home Guard in Pietermaritzburg can get firearms and ammunition served to them, to protect them against the supposed coming war. That is arming one party and disarming the other by not wanting to sell them firearms; but, thank God, Ladysmith is not the only place to get firearms. I suppose after this I'll be branded as a disloyal subject, which I certainly must be as regards (*sic*) the way I was treated.²⁹

On the whole, the inspection of firearm licenses by the Natal Police yielded only 16 unlicensed rifles, of which only two were Mausers. Of the 16, only 11 were confiscated.³⁰ Natal Afrikaners thus possessed few unregistered arms since they could be brought in legally from the Republics or regularly purchased under law. The whole exercise which proved to be highly unsuccessful merely served to antagonise Natal Afrikaners and the Reverend August Prozesky, a missionary of the Berlin Missionary Association station at Königsberg near Newcastle, expressed the fear that these inspections could easily have led to armed revolt.³¹

2.2 Natal Afrikaners and the armed forces of Natal

After dealing rather unsuccessfully with Afrikaners who owned and purchased firearms the Natal Government turned their attention to the next manner in which they could pose a threat to the

27. *Times of Natal*, 27.9.1899.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Times of Natal*, 13.9.1899.

30. PAR, MJPW 75: Question by TJ Nel to Prime Minister AH Hime regarding investigation into unregistered firearms, 9.5.1900.

31. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 16.9.1899, p.17. Prozesky had by this time resided in Natal for 34 years and had great sympathy with the Boer cause and actually referred to himself as an Afrikaner. He was later convicted of high treason.

Colony, namely membership of the rudimentary armed forces of Natal. Like with the debacle surrounding firearms and ammunition the measures taken would serve to further alienated Natal Afrikaners.

The first line of defence in Natal was the various rifle associations. Being a member of a rifle association held several advantages, including the ability to purchase rifles at cost price, and acquire free ammunition. Despite these advantages Natal Afrikaners did not join rifle associations in large numbers. For those who did belong, the politics change radically during early 1899. New rules and regulations were published requiring all members to take an oath of allegiance to the crown. Members not willing to do this would be excluded from receiving a rifle and ammunition, and had to continue membership at their own expense. An outcry followed. Associations with substantial numbers of Afrikaner members such as Kranskop, refused to adopt the new rules. Journalists of the *Natal Mercury* found the action incomprehensible since, for as British subjects who enjoyed the accompanying privileges, they could also be called upon to defend the Empire. The only conclusion the journalists could arrive at was that Afrikaners wanted to be free to join the Transvaal in the case of war. In the light of their refusal to take the oath, accusations of disloyalty aimed at Natal Afrikaners appeared, in this case, to be valid.³²

The reaction of Col W Royston, the commander of the volunteer forces, was to call for the abolition of all rifle associations whose members had refused to take the oath of allegiance. Attorney-General Henry Bale was more cautious. He pointed out that the new regulations were not applicable to members who joined under the rules of 6 June 1896, since these regulations did not demand an oath of allegiance except when purchasing a rifle for cash. Although the governor had the power to disband the rifle associations, Bale maintained that such a step would cause much anger amongst Afrikaners.³³

Matters regarding the new regulations and the signing of the oath of allegiance came to a head when the Legislative Assembly member for Melmoth, Mr Yonge, an active campaigner of the South African League, asked the assembly to identify the rifle associations which had refused to adopt the new rules. Thirteen associations were subsequently named of which only two, Upper Umvoti headed by TJ Nel, and Venterspruit headed by AWJ Pretorius, had Afrikaners as presidents. None of these associations provided reasons for their rejection of the new regulations but the assumption was that the Afrikaners were responsible for the recalcitrance as they did not wish to sign the oath of allegiance.³⁴ How emotional the matter had become, was illustrated by the hate mail Yonge received from Umvoti. A copy of the newspaper article in which the offending rifle associations were listed

32. *Natal Mercury*, 23.3.1899.

33. PAR, MJPW 65: Extract from the *Natal Mercury*, 23.3.1899, with comments by commandant volunteers, Col W Royston.

34. PAR, MJPW 67: Question by Yonge on which rifle associations have failed to adopt the new regulations, 30.5.1899.

was sent to Yonge covered in red ink, presumably to symbolise blood.³⁵

The associations which complied with the new regulations lost most of their Afrikaner members. Others, dominated by Afrikaners, held out and by 12 October 1899, the day after the commencement of the Anglo-Boer War had still not adopted the new rulings. Prime Minister Hime therefore decided that the associations which had failed to comply with the regulations, and whose membership had fallen below 50, would cease to exist. They were all in Dutch Districts namely: Helpmekaar, Ingogo, Little Tugela, Upper Tugela, Upper Bushmans River and Venterspruit³⁶. This step successfully eliminated the associations dominated by Afrikaners who were not willing to sign the oath of allegiance. All in all the measures taken proved to be counterproductive since they only served to eliminate Afrikaners, with some loyalty to the Empire, from the rifle associations.

As a result of this cleansing, the various rifle associations retained only a minimal number of Afrikaners as members. Proof of this is to be found in the muster role for the various rifle associations as it stood by the end of 1899: Camperdown, 20 members, two Afrikaners; Clyderdale, 15 members, four Afrikaners; Dundee, 90 members, two Afrikaners; Elandslaagte, 18 members, two Afrikaners; Highlands, 32 members, two Afrikaners; Klip River, 18 members, one Afrikaner; Kranskop, 20 members, three Afrikaners; Rietvlei, 18 members, two Afrikaners; Seven Oaks, 19 members, three Afrikaners; Tshekana (Muden), 21 members, six Afrikaners; Umvoti, 29 members, four Afrikaners and Weenen, 52 members, 18 Afrikaners. By the end of 1899 only 14% of the members of rifle associations were Afrikaners and only the Weenen association boasted a significant number of Afrikaner affiliates.³⁷

Within the rifle association culture of the time an ethnic division already existed. As an alternative to the official government aligned rifle associations, Natal Afrikaners created their own independent groups. Such associations did not adhere to any of the above regulations. The appeal of these clubs therefore lay in the alternative political policies they offered. The most active of these was the Biggarsberg Boer or the Dutch Rifle Association where, from 1896, regular sham fights, drills and a “wapenskou” were held under the command of PR Vermaak who even invited the magistrate of Umsinga to attend one of their meetings.³⁸ The magistrate was, however, instructed by the Natal Government “...on no account to attend any sham fight, and as far as you can you are to make it known that a sham fight, now is regarded by the Government as imprudent, apart from the question of legality.” The magistrate was instead obliged to designate a policeman to attend the fight in order

35. *Natal Witness*, 31.8.1899.

36. PAR, MJPW 71: List of rifle associations which have not adopted the new regulations. 12.10.1899.

37. PAR, Natal Defense Records (hereafter NDR) 2/3: Muster role rifle associations, 31.12.1899.

38. PAR, AGO I/8/52: Request by PR Vermaak to magistrate Dundee to hold sham fight, no date; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Preliminary statement by CL Pieters in the case against JC Vermaak, no date.

to report on the events.³⁹ The government attitude did not seem to affect the Afrikaners residing in the area because, on 26 August 1899, the Biggarsberg Rifle Association held their quarterly practice session with 35 members attending, of which according to the *Natal Witness*, all but three were armed with Mausers.⁴⁰ The Umsinga magistrate took umbrage to the report, since he knew of no Mausers in his district and only a few in the Dundee district but did have to admit that the rifle association, with CJ de Villiers acting as leader and addressed as Commandant by those involved, was not a conventional rifle association since during their meetings near Paddafontein, sham fights and drilling did occur.⁴¹ Other such private Afrikaner rifle associations were less successful. Practices at the Normandien Rifle Association were only attended by ten members. The low turnout was blamed on the drought.⁴² Private irregular corps such as these were generally frowned upon by the military who regarded their existence as illegal. The Natal Government could, however, not be moved to interfere, mostly out of fear of internal political repercussions.⁴³

The second tier of the Natal colonial defence was the Natal Police and the various volunteer units. Apart from the Natal Police, which had three Afrikaner members,⁴⁴ the only volunteer unit which had a substantial number of Afrikaner members was the Greytown-based Umvoti Mounted Rifles (hereafter UMR). As the year 1899 progressed and the prospects of war increased, more and more German and Afrikaner members resigned from the UMR, mainly to avoid fighting against their kin in the Transvaal. Between 1 April and 30 June 1899, six Germans and one Englishman resigned. Thereafter, between 1 July 1899 and 30 September 1899, 19 members resigned of which 16 were Afrikaners including Troop Sergeant-Majors CJ van Rooyen and S van Niekerk, Sergeant PR Botha and Corporal JHF Nel.⁴⁵ Apart from being unwilling to fight against their kin, further pressure was imposed when the commanding officer, Col George Leuchars, was attributed with the dubious honour of rooting out the disloyal Dutch contingent from the UMR, thus ensuring that Afrikaners remaining in the unit were aware that they had to be loyal as they were under close surveillance.⁴⁶

The bottom tier of the Natal colonial military hierarchy consisted of cadets. Every government and most private schools had cadets. From the available archival material on the cadet corps the statistics given below, provide an overview of the strength and ethnic composition of the corps.

39. PAR, CSO 1501: Letter PUS C Bird to magistrate Umsinga, 8.12.1896.

40. *Natal Witness*, 4.9.1899.

41. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate GW Adamson, Umsinga, 11.9.1899.

42. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 24.1.1899.

43. *Natal Witness*, 4.9.1899.

44. PAR, NDR 215-216: List of Natal Police parading at head quarters, 31.3.1899.

45. PAR, MJPW 69: List of men who have resigned from UMR, circa 1899.

46. *Times of Natal*, 24.8.1899.

Table 2.1: Muster roll for Cadet Corps in Natal as on 31.12.1899⁴⁷

SCHOOL	ROLL	COMMENTS
Dundee	?	3 Afrikaners. Two Liebenbergs and a Prozesky.
Durban High School	50	2 Afrikaners. EG (Ernst) Jansen and his brother. Ernst joined on 3.8.1896 and left on 30.11.1899 with the rank of sergeant.
Estcourt	35	4 Afrikaners. All left in September 1899.
Greytown	80	49 Afrikaners.
Ladysmith	57	8 Afrikaners. All had left by August 1899.
Maritzburg College	79	7 Afrikaners. Started leaving in June 1899 and by November 1899 all had left, including FJ Rousseau, son of the local dominee, WP Rousseau.
Newcastle	76	7 Afrikaners. By August 1899 all had left except J van Blerk. L Bosman, aged 16, the son of the local dominee, served as a corporal and was later convicted as a rebel.
Stanger	30	6 Afrikaners. They either left for Vryheid or Eshowe.
Weston College	?	1 Afrikaner. F van Reenen who left in August 1899.

Some of the Afrikaner scholars listed were sent from the Republics to complete their schooling in Natal. As war approached they were taken out of school. A point in case was the removal of 15-year-old JAE Prozesky from Dundee as a precautionary measure, in case war should break out.⁴⁸ Being a cadet in an English school was never easy, but in spite of this the political fervour of some Natal Afrikaner boys was not dampened. At a cadet camp in Durban, six Afrikaner boys refused to applaud the queen. When asked for an explanation one replied: "she is not our Queen." The *Natal Mercury* believed that the only solution was to expel the boys from the corps if discipline amongst cadets was to be maintained. Hinting at the measures adopted at the UMR and referring to the new rifle association regulations, the newspaper called for drastic action to be taken against any signs of disloyalty.⁴⁹ The behaviour of the Afrikaner cadets was raised in the Legislative Assembly by a Mr Sparks who wanted to know if any official reports had been received, to which the prime minister replied that an official enquiry had been called for.⁵⁰ It seems nothing much happened to the boys in question for on 14 October 1899, "Fear God-Honour the King", in a letter to the *Times of Natal*

47. PAR, NDR 2/2: Muster role for cadet corps, 31.12.1899.

48. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 22 and 28.9.1899, p.19.

49. *Natal Mercury*, 14.8.1899.

50. *Times of Natal*, 4.8.1899.

complained that they were not adequately punished.⁵¹

Afrikaners did not feature prominently in any of the first line defences of colonial Natal as represented by the rifle associations, volunteer units, and the cadet corps. This was largely as a result of political reasons, and the mounting tension between the Transvaal and the British Empire. Furthermore, very few Natal Afrikaners were prepared to place themselves in a position where they would have to fight their kin. The aggressive rooting out of Natal Afrikaners, who were not deemed to be one hundred percent loyal to the armed forces, thus solved very few problems. Instead it served to polarise white Natal society even further.

2.3 Courting the allegiance of Natal Africans

One of the pre-war factors both the Natal Afrikaners and the Natal Government had to consider was the position of the numerically superior African population of the Colony. The relations between the Natal Afrikaner and the African inhabitants of Natal should be viewed in the context of historical clashes over land and livestock which commenced in the mid 1830s during the Great Trek. By 1899 the economic foundations for interaction between Natal Afrikaners and Africans had hardly changed but by now these traditional adversaries had both experienced the dominating influence of British Imperialism. The Zulu lived in constant fear that they would be attacked under the guise of war and that the few head of cattle that had survived the rinderpest, would be looted. Similar fears existed amongst Natal Afrikaners. Governor Hely-Hutchinson suspected that Africans would not understand a British diplomatic victory but only a military one, and that several tribes were ready to use the disruptions caused by war to resolve inter tribal conflict.⁵² Since the Natal Government had an elaborate spy system in place, it was well aware of the intentions and attitudes of both the Africans and the Natal Afrikaners towards the impending war.⁵³ Additionally, under circular No. 51 of 1899, the Natal Government also expected the magistrates to keep the SNA and the colonial office informed on the views of Africans in each district.⁵⁴

The first report that the Natal Afrikaners feared they would be attacked by Africans when war broke out, was issued by Major-General William Penn-Symons, who said that the Afrikaners in the upper districts of Natal were concerned that their cattle would be looted in the case of conflict. He also stated that Natal Africans were prepared to defend their property if given arms.⁵⁵ This was followed by a report from the magistrate of Dundee relaying the fears of several Afrikaners in the area namely

51. *Times of Natal*, 14.10.1899.

52. PRO, CO 179/206: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

53. For this system see: PAR, SNA I/4/6: *passim*.

54. PAR, CSO 2579: Confidential circular No. 51 of 1899 instructing magistrates to furnish reports regarding conditions of affairs in their districts, 29.8.1899.

55. PRO, CO 179/206: Memo Major-General W Penn-Symons to chief of staff - Cape Town, 31.7.1899.

that, in case of hostilities, Africans would commence looting and destroy their property.⁵⁶ Apprehension also existed that their wives would be murdered.⁵⁷ With similar concerns emanating from Weenen, Kranskop, Melmoth and Newcastle, and being echoed by the *Times of Natal*⁵⁸ and the *Natal Witness*,⁵⁹ the Natal Government decided not only to allay Afrikaner fears but also to appease the Africans who, owing to their numerical superiority and military tradition, could prove a formidable adversary or ally capable of playing a decisive role.

A response to the expressed fears and concerns came in the form of a message from Prime Minister AH Hime, via the magistrates, to the various chiefs and headmen: "That in the event of war breaking out between the English and the Dutch, the Queen wishes the Natives to remain within their own borders, as the war will be a white man's war, but they may, of course, protect themselves and their property against attack or seizure by the enemy." It was also stressed that magistrates were to limit themselves to this declaration and under no circumstances was any other information to be provided without the instructions of the Natal Government.⁶⁰ On their own authority, and for the sake of internal political stability based largely on the fears of Natal Afrikaners, the Natal Government therefore declared the coming war, in the name of the British monarch, a "white man's war".

The magistrates immediately informed both the traditional African leaders and the Natal Afrikaners of the content of the prime ministers' letter.⁶¹ The section of the message relating to the right of the Africans to protect their property and themselves, caused much concern with the Klip River and Dundee magistrates. The former concluded that Africans would ask for arms and ammunition to defend themselves. This in turn would create dissatisfaction and unrest among the Afrikaners in his district. He therefore wanted to know what answer he was to give Africans when asked: "How are we to protect ourselves without arms?" After consultation between the prime minister, the colonial secretary and the SNA, he received the following reply: "...the necessity for protecting themselves and their property is regarded by the Government as a remote contingency."⁶² With this evasive and unsatisfactory answer the Natal Government presumably regarded the matter as settled and assumed that the war would be fought by Europeans only.

Not all Afrikaners were convinced that the government's instructions would have the desired effect. They feared the possibility of inter tribal fighting, which could be planned to coincide with the

56. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, to FR Moor, 27.9.1899.

57. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report native intelligence officer No. 3, 9.3.1899.

58. *Times of Natal*, 28.8.1899.

59. *Natal Witness*, 18.9.1899.

60. PAR, CSO 2580: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to magistrate, 9.9.1899.

61. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 28.9.1899; Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 16.9.1899.

62. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 13.9.1899.

outbreak of war when the Natal Police and other forces were be occupied elsewhere, and that such hostilities could spill over into white areas. In Weenen some Afrikaners even applied to the magistrate for permission to congregate in laagers on the higher lying areas to protect themselves against an onslaught by the victors of a tribal fight between Chiefs Silwane and Mamele which was assumed to start as soon as war broke out. As a result the Afrikaners who resided in nagmaalhuisies in Weenen, for the sake of the schooling of their children, abandoned the town and left it undefended. Magistrate Matthews argued that there was a second motive behind this departure, namely that the Afrikaners wanted to separate themselves from the English, in order to be able to act in an unrestricted manner in case of a Boer invasion.⁶³ Evidence for the magistrate's argument was provided by the Weenen Afrikaners themselves, when they made it clear that they would support the quelling of any African uprising, but insisted that they would not fight against the Republics.⁶⁴

In the Dundee area Afrikaners also prepared to form a laager at or near Fort Pine out of fear of an African uprising. The Umsinga magistrate, who described the Africans as peaceful, found these plans and the reasoning behind it difficult to understand. His rationale, like that of his Weenen counterpart, was that the Afrikaner action was based on the principle of getting their families to safety in order to make it easier for them to join the Boers once the invasion began.⁶⁵ The idea of laagering and arming against a possible African attack was also raised by the Afrikaners of Upper Tugela.⁶⁶ The governor of Natal, like the Umsinga magistrate, received news of these plans with apprehension, but he understood the move to have been born out of fear of the Africans, rather than put forward for sinister reasons.⁶⁷

The Dutch District most threatened by tribal fighting under the guise of war, was Kranskop. Local traditional leaders, Gayede and Hlangabezu, were adamant that they would use the impending war to resolve their problems. The concern which such a possibility sparked amongst Afrikaners was that it could result in looting and attacks during which the raiders would not distinguish between blacks and whites or their property, especially if the British should suffer reverses. These Afrikaner fears were described by the local magistrate, HW Boast, as unfounded,⁶⁸ but the local Afrikaners still clamoured to purchase large quantities of ammunition in case the tribal violence spilled over into their territory.⁶⁹

Unconvinced by the reassurances of Magistrate Boast, the Kranskop Afrikaners decided to hold a

63. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 6.10.1899.

64. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 20.9.1899.

65. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate GW Adamson, Umsinga, 3.10.1899.

66. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate WG Wheelwright, Upper Tugela, 4.9.1899.

67. PRO, CO 179/206: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

68. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 15.9.1899.

69. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 23.9.1899.

meeting on 29 September 1899, at the local court house to ask for government assistance in acquiring arms and ammunition to defend itself, should the expected tribal violence between Gayede and Hlangabezu spread into their domain. At the meeting the chairman, LMJ van Rooyen (snr), recommended that the government themselves should be asked to supply arms and ammunition for protection, in the event of African tribal clashes. This suggestion was not well received by AJJ Nel who disagreed vehemently stating that such a request would only evoke a “slap in the face from the government” since any request for arms and ammunition would be refused because of the unwillingness of the local Afrikaners to sign the oath of allegiance. An agitated Nel continued, saying that any Afrikaner who signed the oath of allegiance was of low class and nothing more than a dog. Owing to the commotion caused by Nel’s outburst, Magistrate HW Boast, and the clerk of the court, JM Hodgson, went to investigate the commotion. They arrived just as Nel was being asked what the local Afrikaners would do if the Transvaal were to invade Natal. He replied that only once it happened, could a decision be made. The arrival of the two local officials soon brought an end to the meeting.⁷⁰

AJJ Nel’s resistance to the Natal Government provided the *Times of Natal* with an ideal opportunity to continue its crusade against Natal Afrikaners. According to the paper the chairman, LMJ van Rooyen, had been extremely hostile and denounced the Natal Government in the strongest possible terms. The article claimed that others had joined in, complaining that experience proved it was fruitless to ask the government for any assistance. The meeting, according to the newspaper, was also an indication of the racial antagonism in the area.⁷¹ When Magistrate Boast and Afrikaners who had attended the gathering met in an attempt to resolve the situation, most Afrikaners expressed great indignation at what they regarded as a false reflection of the events. The chairman of the meeting, LMJ van Rooyen, denied the allegations and proclaimed: “Being an old and very loyal resident of the Colony for upwards of 40 years he seeks to obtain the protection of the government from such wild and damaging attacks.” Van Rooyen was supported by LJH Nel who stated that the trouble was caused by AJJ Nel who spoke in a very excited manner, going beyond the jurisdiction of the chairman, and disrupting the meeting in the process. To another member of the extended Nel clan resident in the area, Theunis, the only solution in dealing with such misleading journalism was for the government to prevent a reoccurrence by prosecuting false reporters in a court of law. In their condemnation of the *Times of Natal*, the Afrikaners who were present, had the support of Boast who felt “... that newspaper reports of this nature do a great deal of harm.”⁷²

As war and the possible conflict between Gayede and Hlangabezu drew nearer, the moderate Afrikaners at Kranskop continued negotiating with Magistrate Boast, requesting that he provide for

70. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 5.10.1899.

71. *Times of Natal*, 1.10.1899.

72. PAR, CSO 1628: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, regarding complaints by LMJ van Rooyen and LJH Nel on false reports made by a newspaper, 9.10.1899.

their safety and security. On 7 October 1899, several Afrikaners once again asked for government protection, while at the same time refusing to sign the oath of allegiance. According to LMJ van Rooyen and WG Havemann, the local Afrikaners were still determined not to fight against their relatives in the Transvaal. A strong force patrolling the border between the tribal area and the white farms would, according to Van Rooyen, address their security requirements. The suggestion was rejected by JC Martens of Broederbank who felt that the magistrate should rather discuss the matter with Gayede and Hlangabezulu since an armed patrol would be seen as a sign of weakness. Instead, Martens, supported by WG Havemann, suggested that arms and ammunition be sent to the magistrate, who would then keep supplies in reserve and issue them as needed. A follow-up meeting on 10 October 1899, did not achieve anything other than merely reiterating formerly expressed fears. Those present again made it clear that they would not fight against the Transvaal or take up arms against the Natal Government but that they wished to help to suppress any African uprising. The final attempt of the embattled Kranskop Afrikaners to find an amicable solution to their problems took place on 12 October 1899. In the office of Magistrate Boast, WG Havemann supported by Petrus Nel, suggested the formation of a home guard but no decision was reached, and the six Afrikaners in attendance left with the promise that they would support the suppression of an African uprising and provide information regarding the movements of Boers in the area.⁷³

While on the one hand fearing a possible attack and looting from Africans, individual Natal Afrikaners on the other hand tried, mostly in a clumsy intimidating manner, to convince Africans to support the Republican cause. Between 1 July 1899 and 23 September 1899, 12 confirmed cases of attempts to influence Natal Africans were reported to the SNA. Of these, six were attributed to Natal Afrikaners, and the remaining six to citizens of the Republics. In the first reported case, three young Natal Afrikaners, all related to Christoffel Lombard Odendaal of Klip Kraal near Besters Station, visited the Amakolwa or Christian chief, Johannes Khumalo, to enquire on which side he would fight if war broke out. After receiving an evasive answer they left. In other cases involving the Amakolwa, who resided in Klip River county, visits were paid by leading Natal Afrikaners who informed leaders that the British had been defeated in the past and would be defeated again. These chiefs would thus do better to side with the Boers. If they did, they were promised more land, but they were warned that if they did not they would be shot down like the British. After investigating these claims, the Klip River district magistrate declared that only in the case of Khumalo did he deem the allegations to be true.⁷⁴ He was of the opinion that incidents such as these interfered with the good relations he had with the Africans in his district.⁷⁵

The second chief to be approached was Ncwadi of Upper Tugela. He received a messenger sent by

73. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 12.10.1899.

74. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 4.7.1899; Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to Prime Minister AH Hime, 28.7.1899.

75. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 5.9.1899.

JA Oosthuysen of Bethanien in the district of Estcourt, who enquired what his intentions were in case of war. Oosthuysen followed this up with further emissaries sent to Ncwadi, and also quizzed Chiefs Nyanda and Silwane, trying to determine their position in the impending war, while at the same time attempting to convince them to side with the Boers in case of hostilities.⁷⁶ What made matters even worse for the chiefs involved, was that Attorney-General Bale advised against the prosecution of Oosthuysen, despite conceding that the available evidence could lead to a conviction. Although Oosthuysen was also suspected of spying for the OFS, Bale was afraid that “if a search warrant were to be issued and no incriminating papers found the moral and political effect might be serious.” Such an act would make the Natal Afrikaners suspicious as well as cautious and alienate them even further. The consequent lack of action had a negative effect in that it encouraged other Natal Afrikaners to engage in subversive activities involving Africans.⁷⁷

In one such instance, Chief Nondubela declared that on his way to Pietermaritzburg he had met four Afrikaners from Sterkspruit who rode with him and questioned him on the matter, asking whose side he would take. On another occasion Chief Kula stated that a certain Maritz, who traded with him and who had outspanned at his kraal, had tried to convince him to side with the Boers. Macala-Ka-Becana of Proviso B disclosed certain threats made by LJR Kritzinger regarding the treatment Africans in Zululand could expect from the Boers in the event of war.⁷⁸ Reports from Melmoth revealed that some local Afrikaners used every opportunity to belittle the British Government in front of the Africans who remained unimpressed.⁷⁹ A point in case was the testimony of Ziweni, a police constable sent by the Melmoth magistrate to collect butter and oranges from a Mr Kritzinger. During the transaction Kritzinger (jnr) informed Ziweni that it would be better if there were no soldiers in Melmoth as their presence would only cause trouble.⁸⁰

In the Kranskop area, AJJ Nel, when asked by Jacob Zuma what he would do in the case of war, replied that unlike the Zulus who turned on Cetswayo during the Anglo-Zulu War, the Natal Afrikaners would wait until the Transvalers came for them after first attacking Durban. He continued, saying that *en route* to Durban the Boers would cross at Ngubeva Drift and attack Greytown first. In addition to this Nel boasted about Majuba and the Jameson Raid and said that he had set some cattle aside which he would slaughter when the Boers came. Nel also told Zuma of a recent visit to Cape Town by him, where he saw cartoons, one in which President Kruger was stirring porridge and Afrikaners emptying meal into a pot, and a second one in which Queen Victoria was washing Kruger’s face. Angered by this Nel retorted that he would “rip open English

76. PAR, AGO I/7/39: List of cases of tampering with Africans reported to government between 1.7.1899-23.9.1899.

77. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Report Magistrate WG Wheelwright, Upper Tugela, with regard to the depositions made by Ncwadi, Nyanda and Silulwana regarding advances made by JA Oosthuysen, 15.9.1899.

78. PAR, AGO I/7/39: List of cases of tampering with Africans reported to government between, 1.7.1899-23.9.1899.

79. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate, TR Maxwell, Melmoth, (also known at the time as Entonjaneni), 24.9.1899.

80. PAR, SNA I/4/7: Statement of African Constable Ziweni, 28.9.1899.

women and impale their children.”⁸¹

Nel was not one to mince his words, even when speaking to English Natalians. In July 1899, he greeted a certain HV Killoch with the words “Good day Rooinek”. To this Killoch replied “Good day greybelly”. Reacting in a very aggressive manner Nel stated that the Transvalers would shoot the “Rooineks until their entrails fly.” Killoch took this as a private joke, despite the animosity expressed by Nel.⁸² Acting Magistrate Herbert Miller did not pay much attention to such boastful and slanderous talk because he considered Nel a very excitable and eccentric character and a rabid hater of the English. Moreover, he was locally known as “Mal Theuns”.⁸³ Others disagreed and felt that Nel was sane and that he should take responsibility for his repeated verbal attacks on the British.

These verbal outbursts soon got him into disfavour with the Natal Government and Prime Minister Hime considered the possibility of charging him with treasonable language⁸⁴ under Act 22 of 1896, section 34. One problem did, however, exist in the addendum to the act which stated: “Mere expression of hatred or contempt of the sovereign authority may usually be allowed to pass without notice, though there may be circumstances in which language becomes dangerous to the public safety, and should be punished.” To achieve a conviction was therefore difficult because: “Guilt will depend on the precise words used and the time when, and circumstances under which they were used.”⁸⁵ In Nel’s case liability was difficult to prove as both the Kranskop magistrate and the clerk of the court were not prepared to testify to the slanderous nature of his statements since their Dutch was too poor.⁸⁶ This was nevertheless not the end of the investigation into the affairs of Nel and his trip to Cape Town was closely monitored. Once again charges were not pressed.⁸⁷

Although AJJ Nel was singled out, “native intelligence officer no 2” accused all the Afrikaners of Greytown and Kranskop of interfering with Africans and he felt it his “... duty to warn the government very strongly about the Boers from Greytown and Krantzkop.” He continued: “They should be made to declare on what side they will be in the event of hostilities. If they say they will take the part of the others in the Transvaal, they should be sent across the border to their own people... they are not only trying to set Natives against the English but they try to set tribes of Natives against each other.” His recommendations were based on two items of information; an occasion near Seven Oaks, when an Afrikaner had informed him that the Boers would invade Natal

81. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Deposition by Jacob Zuma to magistrate Umvoti on statements made by JJ Nel, 12.10.1899.

82. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 5.10.1899.

83. PAR, CSO I/7/39: Deposition by Jacob Zuma regarding statements made by AJJ Nel, 12.10.1899.

84. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Minute paper on treasonable language used by AAJ Nel at Kranskop, 29.9.1899.

85. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Attorney-General H Bale, 30.8.1899.

86. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Minute paper on treasonable language used by AAJ Nel at Kranskop, 29.9.1899.

87. PAR, MJPW 69: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, regarding movements of AJJ Nel, 26.9.1899; PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, to Attorney-General H Bale, 28.9.1899.

and that they would “go right into Maritzburg and drink their tea there”, and another near Kranskop when two Afrikaners warned Chief Mbanyana that his cattle would be raided if he supported the British, to which he retorted that he would instigate revenge raids.⁸⁸ Not all Natal Africans were as loyal to the British as spy “no 2.” At a beer drinking party Chief Mdiya said that if the Natal Government should call out the levies he would join the Boers. He claimed that he would “pick out the English Colonel and shoot him” because he was not familiar with the English, but he was accustomed to the Boers.” As a result the authorities removed Mdiya’s chieftainship.⁸⁹

Such opinions only served to prove how impossible it was to gauge the position Natal Africans would take in the event of war. Whichever side the Africans supported, they expected to gain something from it. In the case of allegiance to the British they hoped for “money or land.”⁹⁰ Natal Afrikaners for their part, could offer neither money nor land and so the relations between Natal Afrikaners and Africans remained low-keyed.⁹¹ Some Natal Afrikaners in the Newcastle district tried to protect their labourers from Republican invasion by handing them certificates that could identify them as being in the service of Afrikaners.⁹²

How Natal Africans would be treated by the armed forces on both sides remained uncertain. The available evidence seems to indicate that there were only a few isolated individual attempts to lure Natal Africans to the Republican side. A much more common occurrence was for Natal Afrikaners, in conversations with Africans, to either boast about Boer abilities or slander the British. The anticipated presence of the British Army did not install any confidence either, and along the Buffalo River in the Umsinga district, Africans started slaughtering their cattle, sheep, goats and fowls because they were told that the British Army was going to seize all their stock to feed the troops. A hasty telegram by the SNA was despatched to the Umsinga magistrate, denying this rumour in the strongest possible terms.⁹³

2.4 Attempting to deal with Natal Afrikaners in the run-up to the war - using espionage and close surveillance

Apart from dealing with Afrikaners who owned and purchase firearms and ammunition, those in the armed forces, and the loyalty of the indigenous population of the Colony, the Natal Government, in compliance of its support for the aggressive position of the Imperial Government towards the Transvaal, also had to keep a close watch on its Afrikaner subjects.

88. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Statement by an African, 13.9.1899.

89. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report native intelligence officer No. 2, 31.8.1899.

90. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report native intelligence officer No. 4, 30.8.1899.

91. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter SHF de Jager to C de Jager, 11.10.1899.

92. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 9.10.1899.

93. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report from Helpmekaar that Africans are killing their livestock fearing it will be seized, 12.10.1899.

In line with this, the Natal Government, on 29 August 1899 instructed those who carried the administrative burden in Natal, namely the resident magistrates, to forward at least once a week, a confidential report to the authorities. The reports were to focus on the attitudes of the white and black populations in their districts and were to include any information that could assist the government in maintaining law and order. This included the investigation of rumours and newspaper reports.⁹⁴ In September 1899 this was followed by an instruction from the commissioner of police to each of the district officers to keep a detailed account on Natal Afrikaners suspected of disloyalty.⁹⁵

On 30 September 1899, the monitoring of Natal Afrikaners was intensified, when Col JG Dartnell forwarded a memo to the police inspectors at Newcastle, Dundee, Ladysmith, Estcourt, Greytown, Nkandla and Melmoth, instructing them to "...make out lists of the Dutch residents in your district, and carefully note the names of any who leave the Colony to join the Transvaal, or who are suspected of having done so." Although the OFS was omitted, it may be assumed that any Natal Afrikaners who intended venturing in that direction with ulterior motives, were also to be reported. The anxious governor of Natal, Walter Hely-Hutchinson, also insisted that careful records be kept of such movements, and that each suspicious case had to be supported by evidence.⁹⁶ This was in addition to the routine reports the magistrates had to furnish.

Another dimension in the process of policing Natal Afrikaners was provided by the English Natal press. The most prominent investigative role was adopted by the *Times Of Natal* which, even before war had broken out, hinted that rebels did exist based on the assumed precedent of 1880-1881 when Natal Afrikaners were said to have fought on the side of the Transvaal. The fact that trouble makers had not been tried after the war, was now recalled. The *Times of Natal* expressed the view that the same mistake was not to be made again, and therefore encouraged its readers to act as watchdogs and "to get names and addresses of rebels and witnesses. This could then be forwarded to the newspaper or the Principal Under Secretary."⁹⁷

2.4.1 Reports on the Afrikaners of Proviso B

One of the areas that did prove to be a hotbed of Republican sentiments was Proviso B, and specifically the district of Melmoth (Entonjaneni). This was understandable as it was formerly part of the New Republic which, in exchange for recognition ceded Proviso B to Natal in 1886. Its European population, who were predominantly Afrikaners and geographically isolated from the rest

94. PAR, CSO 2579: Confidential circular No. 51 of 1899 instructing magistrates to furnish reports regarding conditions of affairs in their districts, 29.8.1899.

95. PAR, MJPW 116: Minute paper request by minister of lands and works to see the book kept on disloyal Natal Afrikaners kept by Inspector Mardall, 9.1.1900-24.1.1900.

96. PAR, MJPW 116: Record of all Natal Afrikaners who have left, or may leave, to join the Boers, 30.9.1899-3.10.1899.

of Natal, maintained strong political, cultural and economic ties with the Vryheid district and with the ZAR. It was therefore not surprising when rumours started to circulate that the Afrikaners in Proviso B were expressing pro-Republican feelings and communicating with their Transvaal counterparts via African runners under cover of night.⁹⁸ These rumours gained weight when Africans reported that two members of the Zuid-Afrikaanshe Republikeinse Polisie (hereafter ZARPS), RP Dafel and Potgieter, stayed overnight with some Afrikaners under the pretence that they wished to purchase cattle. At the same time Proviso B Afrikaners started stocking up on sugar and flour.⁹⁹

In reality most Proviso B Afrikaners planned to remain quietly on their farms. The greatest deterrent to their joining the Transvaal forces was the fear that a treasonable offence could lead to the confiscation of their property. At the same time, fears were expressed that they could be forced to take up arms against the Republics. Only a telegram from the prime minister, stating categorically that this would not happen, put their minds at rest.¹⁰⁰

A second matter of concern was that Proviso B could be attacked by the Transvaal in order to forcibly remove those Afrikaners who were known to want to leave. Such a step would serve to nullify the rationale that they left voluntarily, which meant that they could not be tried as rebels or have their property confiscated.¹⁰¹ The prospect of forced removal therefore did not suit most Proviso B Afrikaners. Fears of such an invasion and a possible African uprising prompted 27 whites, including 13 Afrikaners, to convene a public meeting on 19 September 1899. As loyal subjects those present, including later rebels RJ Vermaak and MAS Kritzinger, called on the Natal Government to ask for protection of their property and families.¹⁰² The protection offered by the Natal Government came in the form of 50 African policemen or Nonqai. At least two locals were deeply offended by this step. PJ Uys and F White, an Englishman married to an Afrikaner, complained that the deployment of the African policeman endangered the lives of all Europeans, because the Transvaal would view this as a menace which invited attack. Their concerns were not taken seriously by the Natal authorities.¹⁰³

A significant minority of Proviso B Afrikaners had no intention of remaining neutral or loyal to the government. Several months before war broke out LJR Kritzinger of Osborne, P Klaasen, ICJ

97. *Times of Natal*, 9.10.1899.

98. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 4.10.1899.

99. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 24.9.1899.

100. PAR, CSO 2580: Telegram Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders to Prime Minister AH Hime, 20.9.1899; Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 22.9.1899.

101. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 4.10.1899.

102. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 24.9.1899.

103. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Telegram Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders to Prime Minister AH Hime, 30.9.1899.

Vermaak, GC van der Merwe, AM Potgieter, J Potgieter, CJ Potgieter of Nooitgedacht and T Pretorius and DC Uys (jnr) of Waterfall, left for the Transvaal.¹⁰⁴ They were followed by one of the wealthiest Afrikaners in the area, JJ van Rooyen of Morgenzon. Van Rooyen took approximately 600 head of cattle with him and was accompanied by CJ van Rooyen.¹⁰⁵ The Van Rooyens were followed by T Strydom of Sandpoort who, likewise, took all his livestock across the border.¹⁰⁶ Another equally wealthy Afrikaner, PJ (Piet) Koekemoer of Welcome, followed soon afterwards with 1 800 sheep, 180 cattle, 30 horses and 100 goats. Koekemoer's problem was that he owned considerable property on both sides of the border. On the Transvaal side his property was seized by ZARP Dafel with the aid of two Proviso B Afrikaners, R and C Labuschagne, because he had not adhered to his call-up instructions. In order to secure his Transvaal property Koekemoer therefore left Proviso B.¹⁰⁷ In an attempt to provide labour Koekemoer tried to take some African children along, but both the children and their parents refused to accompany him into the Transvaal, and were supported by Magistrate TR Maxwell, who informed Koekemoer that the masters and servants ordinance No. 2 of 1850, Section 7, stated that Africans have the right to refuse to accompany their master out of the district. Although Koekemoer agreed not to use force in the matter, he insisted that the Africans who refused to accompany him leave his farm.¹⁰⁸ The last two Proviso B Afrikaners to leave for the Transvaal were HJ Laurens of Diepkloof and JJ Uys of Schuilkraal. In total between 17% or 22% of male Afrikaners of a fighting age departed for the Vryheid district;¹⁰⁹ by far the largest number from any Natal district. The reason for joining the Transvaal, at least in the case of T Pretorius, was provided by his father DJ Pretorius, a veteran of the Anglo-Transvaal War. According to Pretorius senior: "The old men who owns the land will sit at home and their sons will assist the Transvaal." No property could therefore be confiscated as it invariably belonged to "the old men".¹¹⁰

2.4.2 Developments in the Afrikaner stronghold of Umvoti county

The Natal county with the biggest and also the most politically active Afrikaner population was Umvoti. Understandably so it became the focus of attention from the jingoist forces in the Colony. An article in the *Times of Natal* of 24 August 1899 entitled "Rebels in Natal" called upon the Natal Government "...to take steps to disarm disloyal British subjects within this Colony and Zululand and to inform all such at once by Proclamation that their properties would be forfeited without hesitation, in the event of these people joining or affording assistance to the enemy." The "facts" which the newspaper obtained from a "reliable source" indicated that the centre of disloyalty was located

104. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 4.10.1899.

105. PAR, Prime Minister's Office (hereafter PM) 91: Telegram Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders to Prime Minister AH Hime, 4.9.1899.

106. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Telegram Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders to PUS C Bird, 7.9.1899.

107. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 4.10.1899.

108. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 5.9.1899.

109. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate TR Maxwell, Melmoth, 4.10.1899.

110. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate JL Knight, Nkandla, 4.10.1899.

amongst the Afrikaners in Umvoti who were armed and had appointed a commandant. They were also in the process of resigning from the UMR. The Republican plan of attack, namely that the Transvaal forces would rush into Umvoti via the Tugela River to reinforce their sympathisers and use the county as a springboard for launching an attack on the rest of Natal, was apparently openly discussed. Umvoti Afrikaners were also accused of trying to influence the Africans to side with the Boers in the case of war. Expressions laced with bitter racial hatred were apparently also levelled against the English. Although the *Times of Natal* did not express the view that Natal Afrikaners were expected to fight against the Transvaal, it was felt that they should not arm and mobilise themselves, or conspire to cooperate with the enemy. Such behaviour, according to the article, smacked of open rebellion, and the newspaper maintained that the sooner the government disarmed those who had acquired firearms illegally, and took action against those who had broken the law, the better.¹¹¹

The article evoked varied reactions from English Natalians. "Alert" thanked the *Times of Natal* for its scathing attack on disloyal Afrikaners and felt that: "It is high time that the undisguised threats and preparation for action be seriously dealt with by those responsible to the Imperial Government." "Alert" was clearly willing to play his part in dealing with the problem because he warned his Afrikaner neighbours: "You are known, you are watched and any overt act of rebellion on your part will be inevitably rewarded on its merits. You have no grievances like the English in the Transvaal - don't imperil your property, privileges and life in an undefendable and unreasonable cause."

George Potter on the other hand, described the plan of action outlined by the newspaper as "...silly, ignorant, childlike nonsense, emanating from a brainless, idiotic stupid ass, a Utopian scheme." To him the idea of attacking from across the Tugela River was mere "praterij" by ignorant boys, since the bio-geography made it impossible, while the historic lack of courage displayed by the Boers and the loyalty of the Natalians would serve to halt any attack. To this the *Times of Natal* responded explaining that the Transvalers would not rush in but that they would infiltrate the Colony in small groups, only to congregate later and create a diversion for the forces at the front.¹¹²

In the Biggarsberg area the article was regarded as lies. What concerned the readers in this jurisdiction was that the newspaper had not revealed everything "out of regard for people holding responsible positions." A correspondent put forward two objections: firstly, that "responsible people" or their relatives could be disloyal in which case he wanted to know why they should be protected for criminal acts that could be a threat to public safety. Secondly, he argued that even "important people" might be the newspaper's informants and if so, sentiment could not be afforded at the risk of public safety and fair play.¹¹³

111. *Times of Natal*, 24.8.1899.

112. *Times of Natal*, 29.8.1899.

113. *Times of Natal*, 11.9.1899.

The first Afrikaner to react to the accusations against the newspaper was D Havemann of Umvoti Poort. He regarded the article as a source of amusement, and went as far as complimenting the journalist who, he remarked, probably did not even have the grace to be embarrassed. Continuing in this lampooning mode, Havemann volunteered further information: "...we are busy manufacturing cannons out of gumwood blocks, to be loaded with onion bulbs, to meet our terrified Greytown English friends, as soon as hostilities commence." On a more serious note Havemann acknowledged that Afrikaners were resigning from the UMR because they could not fight against their own flesh and blood and added that "... the foreigner cannot exactly have his own way." In view of the accusations levelled against the Umvoti Afrikaners, Havemann wondered how great the falsehoods would be when journalists reported on matters in the Transvaal. The accusation that Africans had been incited to join the Boers was rejected by Havemann with contempt.¹¹⁴

J Nel responded in a similar way, stating that they had elected the 84-year-old William Nel as Commandant and the 80-year-old Henry Dafeel as his assistant. In a more serious vein Nel stated openly: "Our sympathy is with the Transvaal for our relatives are there - and we have not sunk so low in the scale of civilization as to forget blood is thicker than water - I am dear sir, one of the so-called rebels."¹¹⁵ By now the election of William Nel as commandant and Henry Dafeel as his assistant had become a standing joke in the Greytown area, especially since Gert van Rooyen in a letter to the press had expressed the thought that these two men would "be a match for the mighty British Empire." The *Times of Natal* did not share the humour. They labelled it as "an example of Boer logic and policy" and hoped that all Van Rooyen's friends would underestimate the "mighty British Empire" to the same extent that he had done.¹¹⁶

Under the outward joking veneer, the Afrikaners of Greytown were fuming about the article in the *Times of Natal* which branded them as rebels, conspirators and meddlers. As a result, a petition initiated by CJ Nel was circulated in the area, calling on the three political representatives from Umvoti, TJ (Theunis), TJ (Tol) Nel and G Leuchars, to present the offending report to the governor.

According to the petition, falsehoods and lies were spread under cover of freedom of the press and the signatories protested "most emphatically and solemnly against these vile charges and accusations hurled in our faces without the slightest cause or reason." The three parliamentarians had to demand "...an immediate and thorough investigation into the matter, with a view to having these charges either substantiated and publically proved or publically withdrawn or revoked..." The hope was that such action would secure the sympathy of all moderate English Natalians who believed in fair play.

The *Times of Natal* welcomed the expression of loyalty in the petition, but stood firm that there was

114. *Times of Natal*, 2.9.1899.

115. *Natal Witness*, 1.9.1899.

116. *Times of Natal*, 11.9.1899.

more to the truth and that any enquiry would verify the article. As proof of its conviction, the newspaper asked why the Natal Police were guarding the bridge on the Sundays River near Ladysmith, night and day.¹¹⁷ The newspaper did not reduce the intensity of its attacks and some time later reported that parties both loyal and disloyal to the authorities were signing the petition. It also confirmed that the general feeling was that, in event of war, the majority of Dutch in Natal would join the Transvaal forces, if they could do so without risking the loss of their farms and stock.¹¹⁸

When nothing came of their petition, the Umvoti Afrikaners held a meeting to remonstrate with the Natal Government for allowing the *Times of Natal* to insult them. They complained that Natal Afrikaners were distrusted by the “Natal Jingo Ministry” and if the government did not act there would be no support for their cause. The protest meeting ended without a clear plan of action.¹¹⁹ Under circular No. 51 of 1899, Attorney-General Bale instructed the Umvoti magistrate, HC Koch, to enquire about the loyalty of Umvoti Afrikaners. Attempts by Koch to gain information were met with evasive answers. He subsequently assumed that the Umvoti Afrikaners were not disloyal, but that they shared a feeling of having been subjected to grave injustices.¹²⁰

Natal Afrikaners could not expect much support from the only Dutch newspaper in Natal. In an attempt to be as neutral and evenhanded as possible, *De Natal Afrikaner* soon adopted opinions contrary to that of the majority of its readers. Natal Afrikaners were encouraged not to discuss the Transvaal crisis, and to accept that the Hime Government would readily believe anything negative about the Afrikaner.¹²¹ An anonymous correspondent took umbrage to this and in an outburst complained that while Umvoti Afrikaners were the people being threatened, the English were allowed to voice their opinions but the Afrikaner not. Afrikaners were furthermore prevented from purchasing rifles, leaving them unarmed and under threat of a black revolt. Their agonised concern was, what was to become of them?¹²² The answer was that Natal Afrikaners could not expect any sympathy or support from their government who was content to let them suffer the consequences of not signing the oath of allegiance.

Rumours of under-cover movements by Umvoti Afrikaners remained in circulation. The first such rumour stated that several young Afrikaners of Umvoti and Kranskop were in the Vryheid district, hoping to gain land in Zululand in the event of war. Investigations by the Natal Police could not

117. *Times of Natal*, 1.9.1899; *Natal Witness*, 1.9.1899.

118. *Times of Natal*, 11.9.1899.

119. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, 19.9.1899.

120. PAR, MJPW 69: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, regarding the movements of AJJ Nel, 26.9.1899; PAR, AGO I/7/39: Letter Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, to Attorney-General H Bale, 28.9.1899.

121. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 19.9.1899.

122. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 8.9.1899

confirm this report.¹²³ A similar rumour soon followed. According to one Robert Horsley, several young Afrikaners had left Umvoti to join the Transvaal forces. His source of information was his brother, the hotelkeeper at Helpmekaar, who was woken twice in one night by young Afrikaners, two of whom he recognised as a young Havemann and a young Van Rooyen of Upper Umvoti near Riet Vlei. Most activity took place in the night after the news of the failed Bloemfontein conference became known.¹²⁴ The third rumour involved six armed Afrikaners, believed to be from Umvoti, who passed Weenen during the night of 17 September 1899.¹²⁵ The latter incident was investigated by Casper Labuschagne (MLC) who dismissed it as mere gossip.¹²⁶ JG Nel, a prominent Umvoti Afrikaner, regarded all these tales of undercover activity as mere fiction. The alleged secret movements, he claimed, were merely young Republicans courting in the area.¹²⁷

In the Kranskop district of Umvoti county matters seemed calmer. The prospect of war was freely discussed but according to Magistrate HW Boast, with great ignorance on the part of the Afrikaners regarding to the strength of the British nation. Although the Kranskop Afrikaners were sympathetic towards the plight of the Republics because of family ties, they planned to remain neutral and were in favour of a peaceful settlement.¹²⁸

eing the Dutch District in closest geographical proximity to the political epicentre of Natal, the Umvoti Afrikaners were far more exposed to criticism than the Afrikaners in Northern Natal. Despite accusations, by specifically the *Times of Natal*, the Afrikaners of Umvoti county had developed no quasi-military organization to engage in military manoeuvres. Their sole transgression was open sympathy towards the predicament of the Transvaal, making nonsense of the view that the Umvoti Afrikaners were not “ware Afrikaners.”¹²⁹

2.4.3 The position of the Afrikaners of Weenen county

In Weenen county, like in the neighbouring Umvoti county, the possibility of war was freely discussed amongst Afrikaners in a manner referred to by the local magistrate as “...boastful...characteristically vague, but disloyal in tendency.” One of the views expressed, by the local dominee AM Murray, from the pulpit, was that the imminent war could engulf all of South Africa. These discussions were finally tempered by the advance of British troops, although only two Afrikaners bothered to watch the passing troops. As in other districts the attitude of most Afrikaners

123. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 16.8.1899.

124. PAR, CSO 2580: Letter Magistrate JL Knight, Nkandla, to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 13.9.1899.

125. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 20.9.1899.

126. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate RA Addison, Estcourt, 25.9.1899.

127. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 4.8.1899.

128. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate HW Boast, Kranskop, 1.9.1899.

129. ES Cilliers, *Die invloed van die Anglo-Boereoorlog op die verhouding tussen Afrikaanse en Engelsprekendes in Durban*, unpublished project, Durban College of Education, 1980, as quoted by VS Harris, *The reluctant rebels...*, p.4.

was one of sympathy towards the Republics,¹³⁰ but it was not accompanied by any concrete promise of support.¹³¹ In the light of this the 28 Afrikaner members of the Weenen Rifle Association made it clear that they would resign if called on to defend the town against the Boers.¹³² Former magistrate GM Rudolph did, however, promise to attend a meeting to form a local defence in case of attack.¹³³ The only tangible support forthcoming for the Republican cause was in the form of contributions to a fund started in the likelihood of there being wounded Transvaal burghers. Ds Murray initially indicated that he would contribute to the Transvaal Relief Fund and accepted complimentary tickets to the “Relief Fund Concert” but, when the counter-fund for Boer casualties was created, he and several other Afrikaners, to the annoyance of the magistrate, changed their minds and withheld their contributions.¹³⁴

Although no evidence of disloyalty could be attributed to the local Afrikaners, Magistrate Addison doubted their allegiance.¹³⁵ The general opinion of the English in the district, however, differed and it was thought that the local Afrikaners would not act aggressively in case of an invasion, with the exception of James Howell of Frere who travelled up and down the railway line to Ladysmith with a hidden agenda.¹³⁶ Casper Labuschagne and other long-standing residents were likewise hopeful regarding the loyalty of the Estcourt Afrikaners. They doubted whether any Afrikaner with property would risk losing it by joining the Republican forces.¹³⁷ Labuschagne and the English colonists were obviously not well informed, as several Afrikaners of the Estcourt district did depart for the OFS, while attempts by two young Afrikaners brothers of Thaba Hlope to proceed to the Transvaal were thwarted by their father.¹³⁸

A week before war broke out, more Afrikaners left the Estcourt district for the OFS - including JT Potgieter who resided on a farm which belonged to A Fuhri near Kamberg. In his haste to make good his intentions that he wanted to fight the British, Potgieter left behind planted crops, a horse and other property and sold his livestock at a low price. PB Simmons, the president of the Weston Rifle Association who reported the act of treason, suggested the immediate confiscation of Potgieter's property, since such prompt action would keep others of vacillating temperament at home. The government's response to this suggestion via PUS Bird was: “Under the present circumstances the government has no power to confiscate property belonging to anyone whether in

130. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 4.8.1899.

131. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 20.9.1899.

132. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 6.10.1899.

133. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 2.10.1899.

134. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate MRN Matthews, Weenen, 1.10.1899.

135. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 4.9.1899.

136. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 9.10.1899.

137. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 25.9.1899.

138. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 12.9.1899.

Natal or otherwise."¹³⁹ This was a clear indication that the Natal Government were either not expecting rebellion by Natal Afrikaners or that they had contingency plans in place to deal with mutinous activities. Potgieter was followed by a certain Buys from Weenen, J van der Merwe, owner of the farm Moor, and JA Oosthuysen and his son of Bethanien.¹⁴⁰ The latter two families had previously run into trouble because of being in possession of unlicensed firearms.

In the Upper Tugela district of Weenen county, the local Afrikaners avoided the resident magistrate and the local police. The result of this unsatisfactory relationship was that information was withheld from the magistrate, for example, when one De Villiers of Waterloo was commandeered by his father, the commandant of Harrismith, or when a memo was circulated stating that in case of war the Natal Government would close the border with the OFS and seize all trekboer livestock. Such propaganda caused panic and many Afrikaners, although it was in the middle of the lambing season, trekked to the OFS.¹⁴¹

2.4.4 Afrikaner sentiments in Klip River county

One magistrate who thought that Natal Afrikaners would join the invading commandos *en mass* was TR Bennett of the Klip River district. Although the Afrikaners were outwardly seen as tranquil and loyal, he sensed an underlying dogged disapproval of the attitude of the Imperial Government towards the Transvaal. Bennett was therefore of the opinion that if hostilities broke out, between 15 and 20 percent of the non-land holders would immediately leave the district and join the Transvaal forces; and in the case of an invading force, the remaining property owners would unite with the invaders, if not as combatants at least to assist in commissariat operations for the force. The exceptions would be a few affluent Afrikaners who would remain neutral.¹⁴² Support for this view came from a member of the public, GL Coventry, of Acton Homes. According to him, since 1896, and specifically after the visit by ex-President Pretorius to the area, treason was viewed in a less serious light by Afrikaners such as Andreas Pretorius, Barend Labuschagne of Kopje Alleen, PM Bester of Abergeldie, PCD Bester of Vaalkop and Philip, John and William Bester of Besters Hoek. Coventry complained that when he brought this change in attitude to the attention of the authorities, he was accused of being alarmist, and his friend Mr Putterill, even received a letter accusing him of causing a disturbance.¹⁴³ In reaction to this criticism, Prime Minister Hime responded in person, expressing regret that Coventry's warning had been received with indifference. He explained that the government failed to act since they wished to prevent undue alarm and hoped to protect the property of those who remained loyal. Action could also not be taken because the diplomatic possibilities for

139. PAR, CSO 1628: Letter PD Simmons to PUS C Bird, 6.10.1899; PAR, MJPW 116: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 5.10.1899.

140. PAR, MJPW 116: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 5.10.1899.

141. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate WG Wheelwright, Upper Tugela, 4.9.1899.

142. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 5.9.1899.

143. PAR, MJPW 116: Statement by GL Coventry on the attitude of Natal Afrikaners, 15.5.1899.

peace were still being pursued.¹⁴⁴ The tension in the Ladysmith area was, however, best reflected in the absence of numerous Afrikaners from the quarterly *nagmaal*.¹⁴⁵

In the smallest magisterial district in Klip River county, Umsinga, strong feelings of sympathy for the Republics existed. In spite of the difficulties involved in gaining reliable information regarding the extent of pro-Republican sympathy, the resident magistrate was confident that leanings towards the Boer cause would not develop into an armed rebellion against the crown. The local Afrikaners were mostly large land owners who feared confiscation of their property.¹⁴⁶ This initial assessment changed as war approached. Afrikaners were building up supplies, some farms were abandoned, and Magistrate Adamson now thought that if the British suffered reverses, the Umsinga Afrikaners would regard mutiny as worth their while. The driving force behind these sentiments was the local commander of the irregular Boer force, CJ de Villiers, who was trying to sell his two farms in Umsinga. At the time De Villiers was at his farms in the OFS to which, he had for the first time, removed all his cattle.¹⁴⁷

Questions regarding the loyalty of Natal Afrikaners were also being asked in the neighbouring Dundee district. As an Afrikaner himself, and because he enjoyed the support of the foremost Afrikaners in the district, Magistrate Hugo found it easier to obtain information on what was transpiring in his magistracy.¹⁴⁸ In a conversation with AL (August) Jansen (JP), whose loyalty to the crown was beyond any doubt, Hugo was informed that, as in the other districts, the Dundee Afrikaners had strong sympathies with the Transvaal. All were, however, pacifists and Jansen did not know of anyone who wanted to take up arms. The Dundee Afrikaners were also advised by Mr Uys, a member of the first Volksraad, during a visit to the district, to avoid becoming involved in possible hostilities. In another conversation Hugo was informed by LJ (Lodewyk) de Jager, whose son was married to a daughter of General Lucas Meyer, that several Transvalers had crossed into Natal to cause trouble. Jansen, promising to keep the magistrate informed, denied any knowledge of such individuals and insisted that only Uys had crossed over.¹⁴⁹ A conversation with another prominent Afrikaner, JJ Gregory, confirmed Jansen's statement. As far as Gregory, supported by AL Jansen was concerned, Natal Afrikaners would not cross into the Transvaal to assist the commandos in case of war. If, however, the Republican forces were to cross into Natal and meet with success, some Dundee Afrikaners would in all likelihood join forces with their kin.¹⁵⁰

144. PAR, MJPW 116: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to GL Coventry, *circa* 1900.

145. *Times of Natal*, 9.10.1899.

146. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate GW Adamson, Umsinga, 28.9.1899.

147. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate GW Adamson, Umsinga, 3.10.1899.

148. PAR, AGO I/8/65: Letter secretary Congress of Dutch Farmers' Association FDJ Havemann to Attorney-General H Bale, 1.0.1899.

149. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 2.9.1899.

150. PAR, AGO I/7/39: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 20.9.1899.

By and large the information supplied to Hugo rang true. Prominent farmers with property assured the magistrate that they would remain neutral but exceptions did occur amongst the landless Afrikaners. Three such young men of the district, after leaving to join the Republican forces, were reported to the magistrate by an informant, Mr Maritz. Although Maritz did not want to reveal their names, he described them as being of the lower class and said they had left without the consent of their parents. Investigations by the magistrate identified the rebels as Jordaan, Meyer and Nel.¹⁵¹ With the magistrate in possession of the names of the potential rebels, matters developed quickly. AF Nel, in trying to cover for his son, informed Hugo that the young man had been studying for confirmation in the Vryheid district and had been commandeered by the Boers. Although Nel declared that he had done his best to get his son back, the magistrate rejected his explanation. In a further attempt to ease matters should his son return, Nel notified Hugo that Hendrik Klopper, a bywoner on the farm of Isaac van Rooyen, had left for the Transvaal, accompanied by a son of Van Rooyen. The latter returned later, without repercussions. With information on the identity of the potential rebels becoming available at a rapid pace, the original informant, Maritz, relented and revealed that the Meyer who had left was Johannes Marthinus Meyer, the son of Isaak Meyer. As far as the Dundee magistrate was concerned, the potential rebels had one point in common: "They all belong to the lower class of Dutch, and have no standing at all in the district."¹⁵²

The upheaval that war would bring to the Dundee district soon became apparent. Defences created by townspeople in Dundee were viewed by Afrikaners as acts of hostility. Tension in the town was heightened by the actions of CJ Wilson who "spared no pains to belittle and insult every Boer with whom he came into contact." Until then he had been held in high esteem by Natal Afrikaners. His "considerable patriotism" now gave offence to Transvaal and local Afrikaners alike.¹⁵³ The foreshadow of war also impacted on economic activities. Several trekboers, on approaching the magistrate with enquiries, were advised, in the absence of government instructions, not to migrate. Others like Coenraad Pieters brought his sheep back from the Vryheid district¹⁵⁴ and JJ Gregory collected his cattle from the OFS. In the latter's case his son was commandeered for ambulance duty while in the OFS,¹⁵⁵ and three cattle were stabbed to death during the return trip.¹⁵⁶

The only Natal Dutch District which bordered on both the Transvaal and the OFS was Newcastle. In early September 1899, Magistrate Jackson could report that all was peaceful in this district. The affluent Afrikaners were strongly opposed to war, but feared that many irresponsible young men

151. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 5.10.1899.

152. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 7.10.1899.

153. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate GW Adamson, Umsinga, 3.10.1899.

154. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 4.10.1899.

155. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 7.10.1899.

156. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, 4.10.1899.

would assist the Republics in case of hostilities.¹⁵⁷ Some Afrikaners, probably those with the intention of joining the commandos, took their stock to the Republics despite the fact that the grazing was worse in the Transvaal and OFS than in Natal, and that the lambing season was about to begin.¹⁵⁸ This premature seasonal migration did not escape the attention of the *Times of Natal* and *De Natal Afrikaner*, but both failed to regard the events as being of particular significance.¹⁵⁹

As the political landscape changed, so did the points of view of Natal Afrikaners. In Spitzkop, an area in the Newcastle district exclusively inhabited by Afrikaners, uncertainty arose as to whether the Natal Government might force them to take up arms against their family in the Transvaal and OFS. Although the magistrate assured the concerned parties that their fears were unfounded, they asked for an assurance from the Natal Government.¹⁶⁰ Reacting very quickly, the Natal Government confirmed that it would not be expected of Natal Afrikaners to take up weapons against their kin.¹⁶¹ With this fear allayed a new one came to the fore; the Afrikaners of Spitzkop were anxious to know whether information they had received that freebooters from the Republics would steal their livestock in case of war was true. To safeguard their stock some Afrikaners contemplated joining the Imperial Army, while the majority proposed that five to six farmers should keep their herds close together, and maintain a strict watch over them.¹⁶²

As in some of the other Natal districts, rumours of suspicious movements by Afrikaners abounded in the Newcastle district. The suggestion was that armed Boers had apparently crossed the Buffalo River from the Transvaal under cover of darkness in order to obtain information from Africans on troop movements.¹⁶³ These rumours gained more credibility when a borough policeman spotted four armed Afrikaners crossing the Ncandu River from the Utrecht side of Newcastle one morning at 03:00. The riders later returned along the same route.¹⁶⁴ Night riders such as these forced the *Natal Witness* to pose the question: "Are they rebels?" As far as the newspaper was concerned the feeling in the Dutch Districts was that the Natal Police were not energetic enough to put a stop to such nocturnal escapades.¹⁶⁵

According to Thomas Watt, a Newcastle solicitor and later minister of justice and education, who had many economic dealings with Natal Afrikaners, the above-mentioned claims were far from the

157. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 5.9.1899.

158. PAR, Principal Veterinary Surgeon (hereafter PVS) 3: Letter DC Uys asking to move his sheep to the OFS, 19.8.1899; PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 9.9.1899.

159. *Times of Natal*, 28.8.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 8.9.1899.

160. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 9.9.1899.

161. PAR, CSO 2580: Letter PUS C Bird to Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, 12.9.1899.

162. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, 30.9.1899.

163. *Ibid.*

164. PAR, AGO I/8/67: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 22.9.1899.

165. *Natal Witness*, 5.10.1899.

truth. He maintained: “Dutch people in the district speaking generally don’t want war. A few of the younger men will help the Transvaal if hostilities begin, but the majority of the farmers, although all their sympathy will be with the enemy, will be still.”¹⁶⁶

In the other counties and districts with Afrikaner inhabitants, the impending war also caused some commotion. In Lower Tugela two Afrikaners employed by the Dartnell Estate, Zietsman and Labuschagne, suddenly left for the Transvaal with their wagons.¹⁶⁷ The four Afrikaners who resided in the Impendhle district were not seen as a threat to the security of the region, although they had empathy with the Transvaal.¹⁶⁸ In these areas, as in Durban and Pietermaritzburg where there were only a small number of Afrikaner inhabitants, the threat of war did not cause nearly as much ethnic polarisation and anxiety as elsewhere.

2.5 The countdown to war

Against the backdrop of tens of thousands of refugees fleeing from the Transvaal into Natal in early October 1899, the final act of espionage against Natal Afrikaners commenced. Although Martial Law had not yet been proclaimed, all letters to and from Natal Afrikaners were illegally intercepted and opened so that, in the words of the governor, they were in a position to “...thwart and counteract work of spies in Natal.” To Chamberlain he wrote “... these documents go to bear out the theory of the existence of a widespread and deep rooted Dutch conspiracy throughout South Africa for the subversion of British rule.”¹⁶⁹ The governor clearly over-reacted, if the contents of the letters he forwarded to Chamberlain were any indication of the mood of the group. Phrases such as “if we faithfully trust in the lord...who will defeat us?”, “the plan of the Boers here (Mooi River) is to join the Transvaal if they win”, “may God grant that you come off best, but I do not believe that it can be that the Afrikaner must lose”, “have a Transvaal flag in readiness to be hoisted when the Boers arrive” could hardly be described as a conspiracy. What the letters did give away was names of possible rebels such as Solomon M who had joined the Harrismith Commando.¹⁷⁰ Probably more accurate was the view of WCH George of the Natal Police, who headed the investigation and who noted that: “Practically the whole of the Dutch correspondence which we have gone through and numbering many thousands of letters is couched in the most sympathetic terms, calling on the almighty to lead the Afrikaner armies to victory.”¹⁷¹

Furthermore, the number of Natal Afrikaners who crossed into the Republics do not substantiate any

166. PAR, PM 23: Letter T Watt to Attorney-General H Bale, 31.8.1899.

167. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate FP Shuter, Lower Tugela, 11.9.1899.

168. PAR, CSO 2579: Report Magistrate C Boast, Impendhle, 4.9.1899.

169. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 6.11.1899.

170. PRO, CO 179/208: Letters JA van der Westhuyzen to CJ van der Westhuyzen, 3.10.1899; EJ Boshoff to AA Boshoff, 6.10.1899; JS Maritz to CF de Jager, 8.10.1899; SHF de Jager to C de Jager, 11.10.1899; TA Perold to JF Keytell, 11.10.1899.

171. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter WCH George to Prime Minister AH Hime, 6.11.1899.

Boer conspiracy theories. In reality 26 names of Natal Afrikaners who had left for the Republic were forwarded to the Natal Police. Seventeen of these were from Proviso B.¹⁷² What is true was that the Natal Police could not keep track of all the Natal Afrikaners who had left for the Republics. A point in case was the son of Gert Aveling of Newcastle, who departed for the OFS on 13 September 1899, to join the reserve artilleryists.¹⁷³ Many others left earlier than usual on their seasonal migration, but their reasons were unclear. Most of those who left for the Republics with military intentions shared the following characteristic: they were young, poor and landless and from the “bywoner” class. Fears that rebellious activities would mean the confiscation of property therefore did not impact on these Natalians. In fact, reports which originated from Proviso B and Estcourt¹⁷⁴ claimed that the landowning fathers encouraged their sons to join the Republican forces, knowing well that while supporting the Republican struggle in this way their property remained safe.

Not all Natal Afrikaners with rebellious intentions crossed to the Republics. On 26 September 1899, when the 18th Hussars, the 13th and 69th field batteries, and the mounted Leicestershire Regiment, were moving in column from Ladysmith, their right flank was fired upon at the foot of the Biggarsberg. Scouts were deployed but could not locate the “bold shottists”¹⁷⁵ who had started firing before war was declared.

Natal Afrikaners with military intentions were at this point, however, in the extreme minority. The vast majority wanted to remain neutral, and did not want to fight against their Republican kin, while nonetheless wishing to retain the right to sympathise with the plight of their brethren across the border. Proof of this lies in the efforts of those who were later convicted as rebels, and who tried to continue life as normally as possible. AC Vermaak, the owner of Paardeplaats, and JJS Maritz, the owner of Adelaide and Dewdrop, both applied for extension of payments on their farms until the improvements were completed.¹⁷⁶ HW Boers, the postal contractor for Upper Tugela, wanted to know what steps were being taken to protect the mail in case of war. The answer was simple. Natal if attacked, would be defended with the full force of the Empire while compensation would be exacted for any injury or loss to the Colony or loyal subjects.¹⁷⁷ The Afrikaners in the worst possible position were those who owned landed property in Natal, Transvaal and the OFS. Their predicament is reflected in the words of August Prozesky: “They can only serve one government, now they must decide which one. If one could only see into the future, which party will retain the upper hand!”¹⁷⁸

172. PRO, CO 179/205: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 6.10.1899.

173. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 16.9.1899, p.17.

174. *Times of Natal*, 12.10.1899.

175. *Times of Natal*, 27.9.1899.

176. PAR, Surveyor-General's Office (hereafter SGO) III/1/138: Letter Tatham and Tandy to SGO, 5.9.1899.

177. PAR, Postmaster General's Office (hereafter PMG) 80: Enquiry by HW Boers on protection of mail in Upper Tugela in case of war, *circa* 1899.

178. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.10.1899, p.22.

The role which Natal Afrikaners could play during the war was always foremost in the minds of the politicians, especially in that of the powerful and dominating governor of Natal, Hely-Hutchinson. He feared that in the case of an invasion into Northern Natal which was not well defended, the occupation of Newcastle could be magnified into an important victory with a serious effect on Natal Afrikaners who might take up arms as their sense of alliance with the Transvaal was strengthened by such events.¹⁷⁹ He was, however, convinced that most Natal Afrikaners would not take part in war except if the British were to suffer serious reverses.¹⁸⁰

Despite this conviction, Proclamation No. 98 of 1899 of 29 September 1899, which warned all Natal inhabitants against disloyalty and treason, was issued. Prospective rebels were also cautioned that their property could be confiscated by the Natal Government.¹⁸¹ The issuing of the proclamation, which was punitive rather than protective in intention, was probably a case of too little too late as it could not be determined how many Natal Afrikaners received it. Furthermore no other warnings, advice or moral support were forthcoming from the Natal Government who seemed uniquely unprepared for war.

It is therefore not strange that a day before war broke out "AN EXILE", in a letter to the *Times of Natal*, complained: "...we hear nothing from the British Government as to the action they intend taking with the disloyal Dutch...more plain statement of facts by our government would be appreciated by British subjects, and I feel sure you will agree with me that the time has come for plain speaking on this and other matters of like nature."¹⁸²

The only Afrikaner to voice the opinion that his Natal compatriots were not to be trusted by the government in the period building up to war, was Casper Labuschagne (MLC).¹⁸³ When his reservations were relayed to the prime minister via FR Moor, the response was surprise and he was given the assurance that the Natal Government made no distinction between Afrikaners and English, and that they had always been treated alike. This would stay the policy "...as long as Dutch Colonists remain loyal to the British Crown."¹⁸⁴ Labuschagne backed down despite some evidence to

179. PRO, WO 32/7863: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to High Commissioner A Milner, 29.9.1899.

180. PRO, CO 179/206: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

181. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.10.1899; PAR, NCP 6/1/1/52: *Natal Government Gazette*, 29.9.1899; *Natal Witness*, 30.9.1899.

182. *Times of Natal*, 12.10.1899. August Prozesky mentions in his diary, p.22, a proclamation by the governor around 5.10.1899 that any British subject who assisted the Boers would be punished by death and his property confiscated. No evidence to support this statement could be found. He is probably referring to the proclamation listed in the previous footnote.

183. PAR, CSO 2580: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 25.8.1899.

184. PAR, CSO 2582: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to CJ Labuschagne, 2.10.1899.

substantiate his argument, and retracted his earlier statement.¹⁸⁵ And so the last political voice of the Natal Afrikaners on the subject of war was silenced, and Labuschagne joined the non-vocal brigade represented by *De Natal Afrikaner*, members of Parliament, and the agricultural association.

The incessant attacks and accusations by the Jingoist Natal press, the constant exposure to investigations and spying, the portrayal of Afrikaners as backward,¹⁸⁶ and the Transvaal as corrupt,¹⁸⁷ the name-calling and the total lack of support from the Natal Government, served to polarise Natal society more than ever before, with Natal Afrikaners treated as the enemy within. When the Transvaal ultimatum to Britain expired on 11 October 1899, war was declared, and Natal Afrikaners were forced to make a decision about their political alliances.¹⁸⁸

According to the Reverend August Prozesky, all this was the result of the Jameson Raid and the desire to avenge the defeat of Majuba. The inscription in his diary on Friday 23 June 1899, probably reflected the stance of many a household: "Since the beginning of 1896 I have prayed for peace daily at our devotions, on Sundays in the church, and at the evening prayer-meetings. I sensed that we would experience a time like this at some stage; now it has come. Lord, have mercy!"¹⁸⁹

185. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 2.10.1899.

186. *Natal Witness*, 3.10.1899.

187. *Natal Witness*, 7.9.1899.

188. When the invading Boers arrived in Newcastle, the shoe was on the other foot as Jenkins the town engineer explained: "The indignation at this time was great, for we had made enemies amongst the Dutch, who were constantly in and out of town when all this preparation (defence works for Newcastle) was in hand, and now openly taunted us." Fort Amiel collection, Newcastle: Portion of a letter written by Jenkins to his wife, *circa* 1899.

189. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 23.6.1899, p.14.

CHAPTER 3
THE KLIP RIVER COUNTY AFRIKANERS AND THE ANGLO-BOER WAR
OCTOBER 1899-JUNE 1900¹

On 11 October 1899, when the ultimatum issued to Britain had expired, the Boer force consisting of roughly 11 400 burgers from the South African Republic, commanded by Generals Erasmus, Kock and Meyer and 6 000 burghers from the OFS, under Chief Commandant Prinsloo and Commandant De Villiers, invaded Natal. The Republican objective seems to have been to defeat the force under Major-General William Penn-Symons at Dundee and to proceed to Ladysmith in order to capture the town, which was located at the important railway junction between the Republics and the Colony of Natal. Once this was achieved, the goal was to be defensive and to halt the advance of British reinforcements.²

Opposing this force were the 5 000 troops under Penn-Symons at Dundee, and the 9 600 troops at Ladysmith under Lieutenant-General George White. For their part, the British hoped to defeat the Republican forces in a single battle that would ensure peace before Christmas 1899. To achieve this the British congregated their forces around Dundee, leaving the Newcastle and Upper Tugela districts and part of the Dundee district,³ open to an invasion by the Boers.

3.1 The Klip River county Afrikaners and the Boer invasion

Either through ignorance or arrogance, and despite leaving almost the entire length of the border with the Republics undefended, the Natal authorities believed that not much would come from a Boer invasion. Proof of this confidence is the fact that very little was done to assist the civilians who remained in Northern Natal. In a response to an enquiry regarding his safety, WAC (Willem or William?) Bester of the farm Fourieskraal on the outskirts of Ladysmith, was informed by the local magistrate, that he could remain on his farm as he would be safe.⁴ Less than a week before war broke out, WPJ van der Westhuizen of Gelegenfontein near Ladysmith too was advised by the local authorities that he could proceed on his annual migration with his sheep to the summer grazing area which he used near Newcastle.⁵ Other Natal Afrikaners like BC, BCJ and TC Labuschagne and their families of the farm Kopje Allen and HN Raaths and JC Nel of Putini Spruit, all in the Klip River district, conceivably accepting that the British had everything under control, did not bother to

1. Klip River county consisted of the following districts: Klip River (Ladysmith), Newcastle, Dundee, Umsinga (Pomeroy). See the map of the Colony of Natal on page ii.

2. F Pretorius, *The Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902*, p.14.

3. PRO, CO 179/213: Report by WH Tatham to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson on the condition of Newcastle after the Boer occupation, 2.7.1900; CH Stott, *The Boer Invasion of Natal. Being a true account of Natal's share of the Boer War of 1899-1900, as viewed by a Natal colonist*, p.29.

4. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 26.12.1899, pp.111-112.

5. PAR, Archives of the Ladysmith magistrate (hereafter 1/LDS) 3/1/1/16: Letter Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, Ladysmith, to WJP van der Westhuizen, 6.10.1899.

consult the magistrate before continuing on their annual migration to the Free State.⁶ Most of the English residents of Klip River county, however, either received different advice, or acted on the principle of safety first, because they fled south to Durban and Pietermaritzburg. As a result only a handful of English and almost all the Afrikaners of Klip River county remained to face the Boers.

The Natal authorities were, based on the reports they had received, convinced that the vast majority of their Afrikaner subjects would behave perfectly loyal. Governor Hely-Hutchinson could therefore inform Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain that: "The most one can expect is that they take no active part against us. Here and there, no doubt there are actively disloyal men. But as long as the British troops suffer no reverses here is no probability that, as a body, the Natal Dutch would take an active part against us."⁷

For their part, the Boers accepted that the Natal Afrikaners would respond to the "calling of blood."⁸ A spy sent to Natal by Commandant Weilbach of Heidelberg reported, two days prior to the outbreak of war, that the Natal Afrikaners were very keen to assist the Boers and would merely wait for the invasion before joining. All they needed were rifles and ammunition.⁹ This report was given further impetus by claims that Natal Afrikaners were, during the first week of the invasion, joining the Transvaal forces in hordes and rendering service in the intelligence department.¹⁰ These assertions prompted *De Volksstem* to describe the invasion of the Boers as the Africanderising of Northern Natal and a process that "must awake strange feelings in the hearts of the Natal Boers."¹¹ For many Boers the invasion of Natal was possibly some kind of homecoming. An American journalist portrayed these sentiments as follows: "The sons have come back over these mountains - the sons of the Voortrekkers they have come back, to retake the land of their fathers. They are led by Louis Botha whose mother was in the laager at Bushmans River in 1838 and Schalk Burger whose father left Natal in 1842."¹² This euphoria was best summed up by Paul de Villiers, a rank-and-file member of the Boer forces, when he stated: "Natal really belongs to us."¹³

Similar feelings were in reality shared by only a small number of Klip River county Afrikaners such

6. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Correspondence regarding the return to Natal by JP Pretorius, TM Bester and HA Potgieter, 3.8.1900-14.8.1900; PAR, CSO 288: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AC Krogman, 5.4.1901.

7. PRO, CO 179/206: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 15.9.1899.

8. EH Brookes, and C de B Webb, p.204.

9. NAR, KG 822: Statement by JCJ van Rensburg, 9.10.1899.

10. NAR, A 739 Book 1: Telegram Roos to Reuter, 17.10.1899.

11. *De Volksstem*, 13.11.1899.

12. JC Voight, Boer War 1899-1902, *North American Review*, CLXX, No. 519, p.224. It is possible that the author was in fact Johan Carel Voight a South African who had settled in Britain and who was renowned for his anti-Imperialist sentiment. *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek, Vol III*, p.843.

13. PAR, CSO 2587: Letter Magistrate P Hugo, Dundee, to colonial secretary, 14.3.1900.

as CS (Chris) Botha¹⁴ and CM Wessels of Newcastle¹⁵ and FJ de Jager of Dundee¹⁶ who joined the Boers as they invaded, and a group who fired on a picket of the 1st King's Royal Rifles on the Helpmekaar-Dundee Road.¹⁷

Considering that the Natal and British authorities had deserted them, and the Boers had successfully invaded Natal, the Klip River Afrikaners, in one of the recurring themes in the tragedy of war, were compelled to make some harrowing decisions: co-operate, resist passively or offer active resistance. In making their decision they had to weigh loyalty to the crown and the long term impact of their decision against the imperatives of blood ties and incipient Afrikaner nationalism, sympathy for the cause of the Boer Republics and hope for a Boer victory against the fear of the immediate consequences of the rebellion.¹⁸

In response to the claims that some Natal Afrikaners were taking the first option, the Natal authorities issued Proclamation No. 106 on 15 October 1899. The proclamation reminded all British subjects of their loyalty towards the crown and warned them not to become involved in treasonable or seditious acts, join the Boers in any military capacity, or to interact in an economic manner with them.¹⁹ This proclamation issued by Governor Hely-Hutchinson did not please the Natal Government who felt "that a state of war existed in Natal" and that Martial Law should therefore be proclaimed to preserve order. A hesitant Hely-Hutchinson first consulted with High Commissioner Alfred Milner who pointed out that a state of war did not always necessitate the proclamation of Martial Law, and that Hely-Hutchinson had to weigh matters before making a decision.²⁰ This he did, and, after consulting Attorney-General Henry Bale and the Natal Government it was decided to declare Martial Law in the areas which the Boers had invaded namely, Klip River county and the Upper Tugela district. Proclamation No. 107 was therefore issued on 15 October 1899. The rationale behind this move was very simple - to prevent rebellion and to protect loyal subjects since several local Afrikaners were suspected of providing information and assistance to the Boers.²¹

The timing of the proclamations was questionable because by 16 October the Boers were already in control of the Newcastle district and large parts of the Dundee, Klip River and Upper Tugela

14. PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by AJ Johnstone, 11.1.1900.

15. PAR, CSO 2912: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Wessels, 28.11.1900.

16. PAR, AGO I/7/3: Regina vs FJ de Jager, pp.45-46. For an attempt to summarise the involvement in the war, of at least those Natal Afrikaners convicted of treason, see Appendix A.

17. PRO, CO 179/206: Diary of events in Natal kept by Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, entry for 13.10.1899.

18. VS Harris, p.4.

19. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/52: Proclamation No. 106 issued by Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 15.10.1899; *Natal Witness*, 16.10.1899; *Times of Natal*, 16.10.1899.

20. PAR, CSO 2581: Telegram High Commissioner A Milner to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 12.10.1899.

21. *Natal Witness*, 16.10.1899; PAR, NCP 6/1/1/52: Proclamation No. 107 issued by Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 15.10.1899.

districts. It is unlikely that the proclamations would have reached the residents of these areas, even though the *Natal Mercury* and other newspapers only ceased to arrive in Newcastle after 29 October.²² Such newspapers were generally only read by English Natalians, most of whom had already left the districts, and a few educated Afrikaners.

Fearing that Proclamations 106 and 107 would not reach the Natalians, the magistrate of Klip River district, on 17 October 1899, mailed Dutch copies of the proclamations to 28 farmers, 24 of whom were Afrikaners or were related to Afrikaners.²³ It is to be disputed if any of the 28 people in question received the proclamation, for at least 11 of those on the mailing list would eventually be found guilty of high treason. It has to be borne in mind that by 18 October, the Boers had already occupied Elandslaagte where several of the people in question collected their mail. Fear also prevented the Afrikaners who received their mail in Ladysmith from collecting it after 9 October 1899, because Dan Bester who was riding on his bicycle from Ladysmith was stopped and searched,²⁴ Pieter van Breda and JB van Blerk were arrested on suspicion of being Boer spies and imprisoned,²⁵ while WAC Bester was detained for apparently communicating with the Boers and for the firing on a British patrol from his farm.²⁶

Afrikaners around Dundee were likewise intimidated and harassed, especially by the Natal Carbineers, a colonial volunteer unit, as the following report testifies: "That morning we caught what we hoped would turn out a Boer spy, but he proved to be a law-abiding farmer. We had to keep him till our Boer linguists came to interrogate him. We put the fear of death into him to understand very clearly that all spies were to be hung up to a tree and a small fire made under them, and we showed him where it was done - our fireplace under a thorn tree. He was terrified enough to promise anything."²⁷

Dundee Afrikaner, PC Cronjé, was not so fortunate and was arrested by the Natal Carbineers in middle October 1899, on his farm Rest and taken to Pietermaritzburg. His wife, EM Cronjé, only managed to get a letter to the authorities to enquire about his whereabouts on 23 January 1900. The Natal authorities, to their credit, broke the rules of communication to inform Mrs Cronjé via Deleogoa

22. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 29.10.1899, p.62.

23. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Copies of proclamations mailed to 28 residents of Klip River district, 17.10.1899.

24. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: My experiences during the Anglo-Boer War by Maggie Bester, 26.9.1900.

25. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 20.10.1899; PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 11.3.1900, p.206; PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JB van Blerk, 11.10.1902.

26. PAR, CSO 1643: Enquiry by Hathorn and Co for the reasons for the detention of WAC Bester by the military authorities, 22.3.1900-27.3.1900. When the Bester men, WAC, DR and JJ, were allowed to return to Fourieskraal in June 1900, the military was outraged. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter General Officer Commanding (hereafter) GOC Drakensberg to Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 6.7.1900.

27. *Times of Natal*, 16.10.1899.

Bay that her husband had been released on parole in Pietermaritzburg on 6 February.²⁸ PRN Vermaak and (AJ) Andries van Tonder were likewise arrested near Helpmekeer by the UMR for allegedly harbouring Boers and providing them with information. They were removed via Greytown to Pietermaritzburg and eventually released on 7 February 1900, but had to remain in Pietermaritzburg in difficult conditions with little money and clothes.²⁹

As the Boers closed in on Dundee, the British forces dug in. In this process the Natal Afrikaners in and around Dundee were viewed as a problem. According to Rayne Kruger, the local Afrikaners moved about freely in Dundee and Penn-Symons failed to check them, allowing the gathering of information which helped the Boers to plan their attack of the town with precision.³⁰ CH Stott echoed this: "These self-appointed spies were giving the enemy all information possible, and actively, though silently, assisting them in many ways. They became so conspicuous, finally, in Dundee, riding in daily with absolutely no business to perform except to gossip about the streets, that a gentle hint was given them that their absence was preferable to their presence, and they quickly acted on the hint."³¹ A handful of Afrikaners reacted to the hint in an extreme manner by moving to Pietermaritzburg.³²

For others the hint came in the form of arrest. On 19 October Koos Maritz was apprehended on suspicion of spying for the Boers. An incensed Maritz was later released by order of Magistrate Hugo of Dundee.³³ Similar treatment befell JC Vermaak who went to Dundee on business. He was arrested by some soldiers, imprisoned from 09:00 until 14:00, and then, due to the intervention of Magistrate Hugo, brought before Colonel Yule who recommended that he be released and allowed to go home. Others like PRN Vermaak and Lodewyk (LJ) de Jager had to flee from Dundee to escape arrest.³⁴ In spite of the fact that the Afrikaners were British subjects the *Natal Witness* had little sympathy for the treatment they received and reported: "Dutchmen should strictly keep to their farms during this crisis."³⁵

In the wake of these arrests the first major battle of the war took place at Talana on 20 October 1899.

28. PAR, CSO 1640: Minute paper regarding the whereabouts of PC Cronjé, 23.1.1900-20.2.1900.

29. PRO, CO 179/210: List of persons arrested under Martial Law, 6.4.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941; PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 16.3.1900, 23.2.1900 and 29.3.1900, pp.217, 242 and 248-249.

30. R Kruger, *Good-Bye Dolly Gray*, p.79.

31. CH Stott, p.43.

32. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 20.10.1899; PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AM Potgieter, 22.6.1900; CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by A de Haas, 5.7.1900.

33. *Natal Witness*, 19.10.1899.

34. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5. 1941.

35. *Natal Witness*, 19.10.1899.

Only a handful of Natal Afrikaners, including Johannes Marthinus Maritz, Solomon Maritz,³⁶ TP Lezar,³⁷ AC Vermaak jnr,³⁸ C van Zyl Lotz,³⁹ and Dirk Cornelius Uys participated in the action. Uys who died in the battle became the first Natal Afrikaner to die in the war.⁴⁰ The rest preferred to remain passive and neutral. The battle ended in a stalemate with the Boers gaining the moral victory as the British, who lost their commander Penn-Symons, withdrew via Van Tonder's Pass to Ladysmith.

During their retreat from Dundee, the British forces treated the Natal Afrikaners abysmally by ransacking farms, assaulting and arresting people.⁴¹ All the food which belonged to Franz Dekker and his family were mixed in with sheep dip,⁴² while JC Vermaak was arrested by the UMR at Helpmekeer on 20 October for not being at home. After being reprimanded he was released.⁴³ Others were less fortunate. Jan and Ignatuis de Waal's were arrested and the women present apparently raped.⁴⁴ Similarly, Andries Johannes Potgieter of Dwarsberg was arrested on 23 October by the retiring British force leaving his wife and year-old-son on the farm. From here he and the other prisoners had to walk behind the retiring British column until they reached Ladysmith. On arrival they were imprisoned, along with prisoners of war and common criminals. Here Potgieter, and other Natal Afrikaners arrested on similar charges, had to endure the 118-day Siege of Ladysmith.⁴⁵

One ZAR official offered a far-fetched theory behind the arrest of these Natal Afrikaners, namely that they were being sent to Cape Town "in order to dismay Cape Afrikaners" who wanted to rebel.⁴⁶ In contrast, local Afrikaners treated the English fleeing from Dundee with great compassion with GJ Jordaan of Bergvliet assisting a group of 140,⁴⁷ while CL van Breda likewise rendered support.⁴⁸

36. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Documentary evidence relative to Natal rebels who either surrendered or were captured, 21.5.1900.

37. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs TP Lezar, pp.71-74.

38. PAR, AGO I/7/19: Rex vs AC Vermaak, pp.364-367.

39. PAR, AGO I/7/14: Regina vs C van Zyl Lotz, pp.114-116.

40. PAR, Master Supreme Court Estate Files (hereafter MSCE) 3940/1899: Estate file DC Uys, killed in the battle at Dundee, 1899. On the memorial at the Dundee DRC for those who died at the Battle of Talana, Uys is merely identified as D Uys.

41. NAR, A 739, Vol 5, Book 2: Telegram from Roos to Reuter in Pretoria, 10.11.1899. For a detailed discussion of the apparent rape of the De Waal women see Chapter 10.

42. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.12.1899, p.105.

43. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941.

44. NAR, A 739, Vol 5, Book 2: Telegram from Roos to Reuter in Pretoria, 10.11.1899.

45. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter AJ Potgieter to HF Schoon, 12.3.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941; PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AJ Potgieter, 6.2.1901.

46. NAR, A 739, Vol 5, Book 2: Telegram from Roos to Reuter in Pretoria, 10.11.1899.

47. PAR, AGO I/7/27: Rex vs GJ Jordaan, pp.617-618.

48. PAR, AGO I/7/27: Rex vs CL van Breda, p.776.

The retreat of the British forces left the Dundee district open to occupation by the Republican forces. The Boers, under General Lucas Meyer, however failed to take the initiative that the retirement offered and when the British were finally engaged in battle on 21 October 1899, a force under Colonel Ian Hamilton, defeated them at Elandsplaagte. This was the last major military success for the British forces in Natal in 1899. On 30 October 1899, White failed to defeat the combined Republican forces at Modderspruit and Nicholson's Nek, suffering 1 764 casualties in the process.⁴⁹ In the wake of these defeats, George White committed the tactical error of withdrawing into Ladysmith, only to be besieged. This handed the Klip River district (Ladysmith) to the Republicans on a plate, sealed the fate of the Klip River county Afrikaners, and opened up the districts south of the Tugela to the invading Boer forces. This opportunity the Boers failed to exploit as will be explained in Chapter 4.

In the light of the British reversal, Governor Hely-Hutchinson issued Proclamation No. 108, extending Martial Law to all of Natal as well as Proviso B and Zululand. In the proclamation he made it clear that certain British subjects in the Klip River county and Upper Tugela district were suspected of supporting and providing information to the Boers, while others had rebelled and attempted to incite more people to do the same. To put an end to this and to protect loyal and faithful subjects, Martial Law was extended.⁵⁰ With the Boers in control of all of Klip River county, Attorney-General Henry Bale deemed the issuing of Proclamation No. 108 "a little late."⁵¹

3.2 Taking advantage of the war - looting by Klip River county Afrikaners

Despite the military successes of the Boers the Afrikaners of Klip River county did not join the commandos in significant numbers. They preferred to remain passive and neutral in matters military and were more active in the areas of trading⁵² and looting. A prime example of this was the arrival of the first commando at Helpmekaar on 27 October 1899. At the head of the Bethal Commando, under Commandant Engelbrecht, rode a corpulent local Afrikaner, Johannes S (Hans) Vermaak and his wife in their carriage leading the way to where the Boers would eventually encamp. With him were several other members of the Vermaak clan, all unarmed. The Natal Afrikaners, who all seemed delighted by the Boer presence, lingered at Helpmekaar for some time without becoming involved in military matters, but within a short while the stores of Handley & Sons and that of a local Indian, as

49. For accounts of the battles at Elandsplaagte, Nicholson's Nek and Modderspruit, see amongst others: T Pakenham, *The Boer War*, pp.133-155; JH Breytenbach, *Die geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902. Vol 1. Die Boere-offensief Okt.-Nov.1899*, pp.303-341.

50. PAR, Archives of Government House (hereafter GH) 1454: Proclamation No. 108 extending Martial Law to all of Natal, Proviso B and Zululand, 23.10.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 23.10.1899; *Natal Witness*, 24.10.1899.

51. PAR, AGO I/8/68: Minute paper by Prime Minister AH Hime referring to Proclamation No. 325 as published in the Cape Colony, 28.11.1899.

52. See Chapter 12 for the trading that took place between the Boers and Natal Afrikaners during the occupation.

well as the hotel, were looted by the Boers. Many of the goods were carted away in wagons which belonged to Natal Afrikaners. A day or two after the commando arrived JS Vermaak sold two slaughter oxen to them.⁵³

As the Boers advanced and the British withdrew many white residents in the Klip River county fled their homes. By 15 October 1899, only 100 Europeans were still left in Newcastle and law and order had collapsed, as no police force remained, and Magistrate JO Jackson had been arrested. Riff-raff of all races from the goldfields had drifted into Northern Natal and went about uncontrolled. This made it easy for Natal Afrikaners, Africans and Boers to loot the livestock and houses of those who had fled.⁵⁴ The first area to be looted, on 12 October 1899, by burghers from Utrecht, was Newcastle. The local town engineer called on a local Afrikaner to get the Boers to stop the plundering but this person had no success and the town were ransacked.⁵⁵ The wholesale looting continued for three days and only after General Joubert arrived some order was restored.⁵⁶ Abandoned farms were even fairer game. One of the measures taken by Joubert was to place guards,⁵⁷ who were sometimes local Afrikaners, on farms to take care of the property. In one such case, L Fuhri and his family, were placed on the farm of Mr Innis with the order that he had to draw up a proper inventory of the property, guard it against damage, and herd the livestock on the farm.⁵⁸

Measures like these were not very successful and Dundee suffered the same fate⁵⁹ as described by Deneys Reitz: "Officers tried to stem the rush, but we were not to be denied, and we plundered shops and dwelling houses, and did considerable damage before the Commandants and Field-Cornets were able to restore some semblance of order."⁶⁰ According to A von Levetzow of the Boer Commissariat, Natal Afrikaners took part in the looting and carried away wagon loads of goods.⁶¹ Some Natal Afrikaners like LLA Zietsman and her father,⁶² JS Zietsman of Vants Drift,⁶³ and Marthinus Meyer

53. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Deposition by FS Bishop, 31.5.1900.

54. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 15.10.1899, pp.27-38; 26.10.1899, p.57; 8.11.1899, p.62; 12.11.1899, p.84. F Pretorius, *Kommandolewe...*, pp.234-236.

55. Fort Amiel collection, Newcastle: Portion of a letter written by Jenkins to his wife, *circa* 1899.

56. PRO, CO 179/213: Report by WH Tatham to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson on the condition of Newcastle after the Boer occupation, 2.7.1900.

57. D Reitz, *On commando*, pp.32-33.

58. NAR, KG 852: Note by General PJ Joubert, 15.2.1900.

59. PAR, CSO 1643: Report by Magistrate P Hugo regarding events since the British withdrawal from Dundee up to his arrival at Intombi Camp, 19.3.1900.

60. D Reitz, pp.32-33; A large quantity of goods looted from the Dundee area were eventually located to the houses of Afrikaners resident in Vrededorp, Johannesburg. PAR, Archives of the Dundee magistrate (hereafter 1/DUN) 3/1/10: Correspondence between Assistant Commissioner of Police HI Roberts and magistrate of Dundee, 31.5.1902.

61. NAR, J Ploeger collection A 2030 Vol 20: Handwritten notes by Ploeger regarding the complaints by A von Levetzow, 16.11.1899; *Natal Witness*, 11.11.1899; *Natal Advertiser*, 16.10.1899.

62. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LLA Zietsman, 18.3.1901.

63. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JS Zietsman, 15.2.1901.

who farmed near Newcastle, moved into the abandoned houses in Dundee.⁶⁴

The ZAR authorities also managed to gather a large number of goods and livestock from the local people. When Justice of the Peace JB Wolmarans replaced DP Wolfaardt, the former took over 319 head of cattle, 1 088 head of sheep, 3 horses, wagons, spiders and numerous other effects.⁶⁵ In the process Natal Afrikaners also suffered as can be gleaned from the statement of Mrs Arnold Boers, a resident of the Klip River district: "They destroyed their (our) property as far as they possibly could. They took out the poles of the fence for firewood and destroyed the furniture. What furniture they did not take away they dashed on the floor and broke into pieces." Her sister-in-law, Mrs Gert Boers, added: "The burgers hewed down all the black wattle trees, used all the vegetables, took away almost all the posts and fencing wire, robbed the orchard, and destroyed the trees. Some sheep and cattle were also missing but she could not say who took them."⁶⁶ The initial looting by Boer commandos could be attributed to both lack of discipline, and the fact that some had to rely on their own resources to find supplies during the inception of the invasion. The theft, looting and pillaging of shops, houses and livestock by marauding bands became so bad that General Schalk Burger issued a printed proclamation which encouraged the arrest of any burgher found outside the laagers without written permission.⁶⁷ Natal Afrikaners seems to have been divided on the morality of the looting. Missionary JJA Prozesky equated the looters with Achan, a biblical character who was found guilty of plundering and stoned to death by his own people to appease God.⁶⁸ Johannes Spies disagreed with this view for he considered looting as part of war.⁶⁹

Initially the Natal Government blamed the local Afrikaners for the looting in Klip River county. This assumption was based on isolated reports. For example on 17 October 1899, two Afrikaners by the surname of Bester were arrested, along with some Africans, for looting an Indian store at Dannhauser. The Africans maintained that Bester (snr) had given them permission to remove the goods since the region was now part of the Transvaal.⁷⁰ In another case three Natal Afrikaners were accused of initiating the looting of a store and hotel belonging to Moses Greis on Monteith farm, Dundee,⁷¹ while Frederick Potgieter and Barend and Theunis Labuschagne were suspected of looting the farm of Richard Horseley near Ladysmith.⁷²

64. PAR, CSO 2868: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JL Botha, 17.1.1901.

65. NAR, KG 818: Receipt signed by JB Wolmarans, 27.12.1899.

66. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900.

67. NAR, J Ploeger collection A 2030 Vol 20: Handwritten notes by Ploeger regarding the notice issued by General SW Burger, 22.11.1899.

68. *New International Version of the Holy Bible*, Joshua 7, pp.238-240.

69. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 14.12.1899, p.105; 4.1.1900, p.116; 28.2.1900, p.137; 9.3.1900, p.142.

70. *Natal Witness*, 19.10.1899.

71. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Deposition by Moses Greis concerning the looting of his property, 18.10.1899.

72. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Minute paper magistrate Klip River district to Prime Minister AH Hime, 26.10.1899.

It did not take the Natal Colonial authorities long to realise that most of the extensive looting was the work of Boers who were assisted by a small number of local Afrikaners.⁷³ Eventually merely eight Klip River county Afrikaners were found guilty of theft and high treason,⁷⁴ AP Cronjé of Tiger Kloof, Dundee, was convicted of theft for stealing bone dust from the house of Hesom.⁷⁵

The ZAR forces could not allow such anarchy to continue and they soon installed a crude administration with a justice of the peace at Dundee and Newcastle.⁷⁶ In the Newcastle area Moodie (JP) was to be supported by Missionary JJA Prozesky of the Berlin Missionary Association who was appointed to the role of keeper of the order amongst Africans. To support him in this task Prozesky appointed six of the Africans of his congregation as volunteer policemen.⁷⁷

3.3 Bringing the Klip River county Afrikaners into the fold

With the Boers in control of the Klip River county, the Natal Government feared that a proclamation could be issued under Law No. 18 of 1899 of the ZAR. This law made provision for the confiscation of property belonging to persons guilty of crimes against the ZAR, or for refusing to go on commando service. The Natal authorities, therefore, under orders from Sir Alfred Milner, prepared to issue a counter-proclamation.⁷⁸

When the Boers eventually issued Proclamation No. 20 of 1899 of the ZAR on 9 November 1899, it was different from the one the Natal authorities had anticipated. General Piet Joubert, proclaimed Martial Law in all the districts occupied by the Boer forces, thereby authorising officers to seize all supplies required to maintain the commandos. The proclamation also notified the inhabitants of the penalties which would be inflicted for assistance given to the British forces, simultaneously undertaking to protect the life and property of all those who placed themselves under the protection of the ZAR and obeyed its laws. All those who refused to submit would be granted permission to leave the Klip River county within seven days. Persons who were driven from their farms or homes, or who had fled, would be allowed to return.⁷⁹

73. PAR, GH 1035. Letters Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 8.11.1899, 17.11.1899, 18.11.1899; Telegram High Commissioner A Milner to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 19.11.1899; Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime to colonial secretary, 21.11.1899.

74. See Appendix A for a detailed account of those found guilty of theft.

75. PAR, CSO 2872: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AP Cronjé, 4.12.1901.

76. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/12: Letter General PJ Joubert to Unspecified, no date.

77. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 18.10.1899, p.41; 20.10.1899, p.45.

78. PAR, AGO I/1/67: Correspondence regarding the possible confiscation of property belonging to British subjects for refusing to go on commando, 31.10.1899-6.1.1900.

79. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, pp.343-347, Proclamation by Commandant-General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, containing the proclamation by Commandant-General PJ Joubert, 10.6.1901; PAR, GH 547: Proclamation by Commandant-General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; *De Volksstem*, 11.11.1899.

The proclamation of Martial Law caused a great deal of confusion. ZAR officials like Under Secretary of State JC Krogh, General Schalk Burger and Wolfaardt (JP) from then on repeatedly declared that the institution of Martial Law meant that the Klip River county had been annexed to the Transvaal and that its inhabitants no longer owed allegiance to the crown.

Within a week of it being issued the gist of Joubert's proclamation was known to many local Afrikaners, and at least two men from Newcastle by the surname of Terblanche indicated that they would join the Boers when the proclamation became "official" with the annexation of the Klip River county to the Transvaal.⁸⁰ Before long most Klip River county Afrikaners also took the declaration of Martial Law to mean the same as annexation. In time the renowned Natal historians Russell⁸¹ and Brooks and Webb⁸² likewise took the proclamation of Martial Law to mean annexation.

The proclamation was, however, never supposed to mean annexation or give the Natal Afrikaners the right to rescind their loyalty to the crown. Instead, Joubert had a clear picture in his mind of the position Natal Afrikaners found themselves in. He, after all, resided in the Volksrust district, only a short way across the border from Natal and knew the mind set of the Natal Afrikaners.⁸³ Although they generally received the Boers in a very friendly and helpful manner, they did so without compromising their loyalty to the Empire. An insightful Joubert expressed the fear harboured by many Natal Afrikaners at this stage namely, that the ZAR Government would not be able to defend them against persecution from the Natal authorities if they joined the Boers, or if the latter suffered serious reversals. Many local Afrikaners thought they knew the answer and thus by early November 1899, they had not risen spontaneously to join the invaders in large numbers.⁸⁴

Officials of the Republican Governments, other Boers and some leading Natal Afrikaners, felt differently and viewed the lack of enthusiasm for the war effort, on the part of the Klip River county Afrikaners, as a great disappointment since they could have strengthened the Boer forces and assisted them in combatting the lawlessness reigning in the county. Consequently it was determined to "commandeer the Afrikaners in Klip River county so as not only to bring pressure to bear upon the unwilling, but to afford, if possible, a pretext under which waverers who took up arms might shelter themselves against future prosecution."⁸⁵

80. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14-15.11.1900, pp.84-88.

81. R Russell, *Natal the land and its story*, p.296.

82. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, p.208.

83. Joubert even had a holiday home in Durban. JM Wassermann, Attempts to strip the assets of the Transvaal, in JM Wassermann and B Kearney, (eds), *A warrior's gateway. Durban and the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p.374.

84. NAR, KG 850: Letter General PJ Joubert to President SJP Kruger, 27.10.1899; *Gedenkboek van den Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, p.188.

85. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

Whence then did the order to commandeer the Natal Afrikaners originate? Verne Harris wrongfully attributes it to Piet Joubert and says his proclamation created the impression that the Klip River county and its citizens had thereby become Transvalers.⁸⁶ Joubert could not have created such an impression for on 13 November 1899, four days after issuing his proclamation he, accompanied by General Louis Botha and roughly 3 000 burghers from both Republics, crossed the Tugela River to push deeper into Natal. This left General Schalk Burger, as assistant commandant-general, in command of the Klip River county. Burger, possibly encouraged by the local Transvaal officials, Lodewyk de Jager, a wealthy farmer from Wasbank and the brother-in-law of General Lucas Meyer, and other Natal Afrikaners,⁸⁷ decided to commandeer the Natal Afrikaners into service. This is borne out by Judge Mason, who after dealing with hundreds of rebel trials stated: “no direct evidence exists that the order to commandeer the Afrikaners emanated with the government in Pretoria, but the assistant commandant-general and Republican officials, directed and pressed for commandeering.”⁸⁸

Using his initiative, and the power vested in him by the absence of Joubert, Schalk Burger took control of the situation by producing the following “General Notice”, and in so doing placed his personal stamp on the proclamation by dividing the county, appointing people, and creating a crude military administration:

Notice is hereby given to all whom it may concern that, in terms of the Proclamation by his Excellency the Commandant-General dated 9th November 1899, for the maintenance of law and good order, for proper administration, and for the protection of life and property within the territory of Natal at present occupied by the Burgher Military Force of the South African Republic and under Martial Law of that State, the said territory has been and is hereby divided into three divisions, namely:

1st Division, Newcastle. Boundaries: From Steildrift in the Buffalo River via Dannhauser Station to Biggarsberg Nek, along the line of the Biggarsberg as far as the boundary-line of the Orange Free State, along the boundary-lines of the Orange Free State and the South African Republic as far as the said Steildrift in the Buffalo River.

2nd Division, Dundee. Boundaries: From Biggarsberg Nek via Wessel's Nek as far as the Sundays River where it meets the main transport road; along the Sundays River as far as Sundays River Poort; from there along the location line as far as the Buffalo River; along the Buffalo River up as far as Steildrift in the Buffalo River.

3rd Division Ladysmith. Boundaries: From Sundays River Poort as far as the confluence of the Sundays River and the Tugela River; further along the Tugela and Klip rivers up to the boundary-line of the Orange Free State; from there along the boundary-line of the Orange Free State and the boundaries of the Newcastle and Dundee divisions as far as Sundays River Poort.

It is further made known hereby that the following persons have been appointed by me:

86. For the proclamation by General PJ Joubert see Appendix B.

87. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.7, 1941.

88. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

For the division or ward of Newcastle: Mr Christiaan Botha, or in his absence Mr Christoffel Bester;

For the division or ward of Dundee: Mr J.H.F. Meyer;

For the division or ward of Ladysmith, Mr T.R. Dannhauser, with instructions to:

A. Record the names of all the inhabitants of their respective divisions, noting the loyalty or political attitude which each one wishes to adopt;

B. Hold meetings in their respective divisions or wards on Wednesday 29th inst., for the election of Field-Cornets for the divisions or wards;

C. Together with the elected Field-Cornets, each for his ward, to deliver to me the prepared lists and report on the execution of their instructions.

In the obvious interest of all the inhabitants and residents of the territory of Natal meant in this Notice, and for the purpose of maintaining security of life and property for all, regardless of political opinion, particularly with an eye to the native tribes living in and around the territory, all are hereby urgently cautioned to facilitate the work of the above-mentioned officials, by supplying all information requested and answering accurately all questions put by these officials.

It is further made known that a Native Commissioner has been appointed for the Dundee division: Mr Lodewyk de Jager of Waschbank (Dundee), to keep a watchful eye on the native population and to handle all disputes regarding them, so that among them, too, order and safety should be maintained.

And finally, it should be understood clearly by every inhabitant or resident of the three above-mentioned wards that this territory is at present under the Martial Law of the South African Republic, and that everyone is advised most earnestly to respect the elected Field-Cornets as lawful officials in the execution of their instructions, and to obey the orders given by them, particularly with regard to the commandeering of persons or goods or the taking of policing measures for the protection of life and property and the maintenance of law and order within the said territory.⁸⁹

The only way in which this notice could be linked to the proclamation by Joubert is by point four which stated: "All commandants, generals or commanding officers of separate or independently acting troops or divisions, have the right to order the requisition of supplies necessary to the maintenance of the burghers and troops. The requisitioning of other supplies which might be deemed to be of essential importance to the army, may only be ordered by the commandant or general or by an officer acting as commandant..."⁹⁰ In the broadest sense this could have been interpreted by Burger as also referring to people.

In the week and a bit after Generals Joubert and Botha headed south, the world of the Klip River Afrikaners changed forever. In the first instance the clause in Joubert's proclamation that allowed seven days grace for those wishing to leave the county, was never implemented. Secondly, Burger and his inner circle of Natal Afrikaners as listed in the General Notice started with the

89. Various translations exist of the General Notice. None differ significantly. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, pp.343-347, General Notice by General SW Burger, 23.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, containing the General Notice by General SW Burger, 10.6.1901; PAR, GH 547: General Notice by General SW Burger, 23.11.1899.

90. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, pp.343-347, Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, containing the proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 10.6.1901; PAR, GH 547: Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; *De Volksstem*, 11.11.1899.

implementation of the document. For this the press was used. In the 17 November 1899 edition of *De Volksstem* it was announced that the Klip River county Afrikaners, under the leadership of Otto Krogman and Lodewyk de Jager, were set to join the commandos.⁹¹ On the same day a rumour started to circulate that all Afrikaners in the area would have to report to Elandslaagte within days. Missionary Prozesky captured the Afrikaner reactions to this: “My neighbours will have to go too; it will cost many tears.”⁹² Pressure was simultaneously exerted on other Europeans like the German community at Elandskraal, to swear allegiance to the Transvaal since the proclamation had supposedly also ended their allegiance to the crown.⁹³

The perpetrated deception that Joubert’s proclamation had turned the inhabitants of the Klip River county into Transvaal subjects was supported by a second ruse. Talk of a possible African uprising first started to surface in late October 1899.⁹⁴ These rumours gained substance and local Afrikaners were informed that an African uprising was imminent and that they had no choice but to join the forces of the Transvaal to combat it. By the time Burger had penned his General Notice, rumours about armed Zulus between Wasbank and Dundee had become so convincing that a telegraphist and some railway workers had fled from Wasbank to Elandslaagte.⁹⁵ In time the Natal Afrikaners would realise that this rumour merely served as a pretext to conscript them.

Thus, when General Piet Joubert had retreated to north of the Tugela by the end of November 1899, the circumstances in the Klip River county had changed dramatically. Therefore, when he, suspecting that the Boer cause was spent, urged President Paul Kruger to seek means to bring about peace,⁹⁶ he was informed that it was not possible for, amongst other reasons, because it would amount to the betrayal of the Natal and Cape Afrikaners who had joined the Republican cause.⁹⁷

3.4 Enforcing the General Notice - meetings at Wasbank and Dannhauser

The enforcement of the General Notice took place via two meetings, the first such of which took place at Wasbank. All the white male inhabitants of the Dundee district and surrounding areas received a letter from Lodewyk de Jager, the newly appointed native commissioner, instructing them to attend a meeting at Wasbank Station on 20 November 1899.⁹⁸ They needed to be armed with food

91. *De Volksstem*, 17.10.1899.

92. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17.11.1899, p.91.

93. PRO, CO 179/207: Telegram Major G Leuchars to Prime Minister AH Hime, 16.11.1899.

94. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.10.1899, p.57.

95. JH Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902. Vol III. Die stryd in Natal Jan.-Feb. 1900*, p.379.

96. NAR, Leyds collection 711: Telegram General PJ Joubert to ZAR Government, 25.11.1899.

97. NAR, Leyds collection 711: Telegram President SJP Kruger to General PJ Joubert, 25.11.1899.

98. During this period Lodewyk de Jager, for several days, acted as the commandant for Dundee and Newcastle Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

for three days, a rifle and 200 rounds of ammunition. Feeling that it was their duty to obey the order, a large number of Afrikaners from Dundee and Ladysmith attended the gathering. Only some arrived armed. De Jager had organised the meeting under the pretext that an African uprising was imminent and that a commando was needed to put it down. In the process he used his position of wealth and authority to influence many of those who attended to adopt a pro-conscription attitude.⁹⁹ The meeting was characterised by vehement and confused discussions.¹⁰⁰ According to PR Vermaak a telegram from Piet Joubert was read at the meeting directing Lodewyk de Jager to commandeer the inhabitants of the district.¹⁰¹ WC Hattingh (JP),¹⁰² JH Ries,¹⁰³ AL Jansen, DC Pieters, JH Potgieter and PR Vermaak, amongst others, spoke out very strongly against commandeering. The near chaotic meeting could not be contained to reach a decision and several people left.¹⁰⁴ As a result the meeting was adjourned until the next day, 21 November.¹⁰⁵ The majority, however, remained behind that evening and slaughtered an ox, sold for this purpose to the Transvaal Government by Lodewyk de Jager.¹⁰⁶

The following day Assistant Commandant-General Schalk Burger arrived from Modderspruit to attend the meeting.¹⁰⁷ He proceeded to read Joubert's proclamation, the first time it was aired in public, a full four days after the terms it contained had expired.¹⁰⁸ Burger then informed those present that the Klip River county had become part of the ZAR and that it was therefore their duty to obey the commandeering order, and that the local Afrikaners would in doing so, incur no liability to the British Government.¹⁰⁹ NJ (Piet) van Rensburg of Dundee spoke alongside Schalk Burger and, trying to convince people to join, said that a brother in need must be helped.¹¹⁰ Again not everyone present accepted this injunction and another debate followed centring around what would happen should they join the Boers and subsequently be apprehended by the British. Burger responded with the question: "Will not they treat me the same as you."¹¹¹

99. PAR, AGO I/7/23 : Rex vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420.

100. PAR, AGO I/7/19: Rex vs JH Ries, pp.352-355.

101. PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs PR Vermaak, pp.1-7

102. PAR, AGO I/7/29: Rex vs WC Hattingh, pp.666-667.

103. PAR, AGO I/7/19: Rex vs JH Ries, pp.352-355.

104. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by BJ Potgieter, 19.1.1903.

105. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by resident of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

106. NAR, KG CR 2777/00: Proof submitted by the commandant-general of slaughter animals purchased from LJ de Jager, 10.10.1899-8.3.1900.

107. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

108. VS Harris, p.28.

109. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

110. PAR, AGO I/7/29: Rex vs NJ van Rensburg, pp.646-654. The surname of Van Rensburg were spelt in a number of ways. This spelling was the one he used himself.

111. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

The presence of and speech by Burger paid dividends and a substantial number of the Afrikaners present were convinced that they had become Transvaal subjects¹¹² and were compelled to throw in their lot with the Boers and be commandeered.¹¹³ Others, in all likelihood, joined out of fear believing the rumour that those Natal Afrikaners who did not take up arms would be treated as rebels of the Republics and dealt with as such,¹¹⁴ while the euphoria of the Boer success must also have swayed some. An individual like FDJ Havemann did not regard himself as influential enough to speak out against commandeering and when the powerful members of the community did not resist, he felt he could not do much despite his belief that the Boer cause would falter. Since he was well educated and fluent in Dutch and English, he had to compile commandeering lists.¹¹⁵ In parting, Burger asked those present to meet on 29 November, as per his General Notice, to elect their officers.¹¹⁶

The speed with which control at Wasbank was gained over a large number of local Afrikaner is illustrated by the case of John Zacharias and Joseph Lombaard Odendaal Colling. At the meeting they were granted permission by Lodewyk de Jager, in his capacity as “Commandant van Natal” with the support of Schalk Burger, to remain on their farm to look after their sick father.¹¹⁷

A meeting to entice the Afrikaner residents of the Newcastle district to join was held at Dannhauser.¹¹⁸ Like at Wasbank, some concerns centred around the problems those who took the oath of allegiance to the crown and who intended to remain loyal, would face should they adhere to the commandeering order, were raised. It can be assumed that these concerns were treated in a comparable manner to the issues which were posed at Wasbank,¹¹⁹ because shortly afterwards, a large number of Newcastle Afrikaners were forced into the fold.¹²⁰

Schalk Burger and his cohorts had done their work superbly, and having thoroughly prepared the Afrikaners, he published his General Notice, printed by the Transvaal Government printers in the field at Elandslaagte, on 23 November 1899. From then on the Klip River county Afrikaners managed the process as outlined by Burger and his henchmen.

112. PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs PR Vermaak, pp.1-7.

113. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

114. PAR, GH 556: Affidavit by AJ Oldacre before HR Bousfield, 22.1.1900.

115. PAR, AGO I/7/2: Regina vs FDJ Havemann, pp.37-42.

116. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.7, 1941.

117. PAR, 1/LDS, 3/3/14: Minute paper regarding JZ and JLO Colling, 1.10.1900.

118. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.11.1899, pp.84-86.

119. PAR, AGO, 1/7/ 34: Rex vs TR Dannhauser, pp.803-804.

120. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

3.5 The Newcastle Afrikaners under the cosh

The meeting to commandeer the Afrikaners of the Newcastle district and to elect officers from their ranks took place on Wednesday 29 November 1899, at the Newcastle magistrate's office.¹²¹ The message conveyed was the same as at Wasbank: they were compelled to join since an African uprising was a possibility and because they were now Transvaal subjects. This point was reiterated by Jan van Rooyen the special envoy of General Schalk Burger.¹²² At the meeting Thomas Joubert was elected as field-cornet, and CS (Chris) Botha, Willem Joubert and CP (Carl) Cronjé as his assistants.¹²³

Immense pressure was placed on those who refused to join and, many were intimidated and coaxed into enlisting for non-combat duties against their will.¹²⁴ In the case of the English who did not want to enlist it was said: "Any man who has been out here 30 years is a Dutchman."¹²⁵ This must have appealed to GH Shorter who despite being born in England, adhered to the commandeering order. He even had his photograph taken under arms in front of the Newcastle Town Hall.¹²⁶

Afrikaners unwilling to join the Newcastle Commando were deployed in non-combat duties.¹²⁷ But these orders did not last and some were, within a week, conscripted to do guard duty.¹²⁸ Just before Christmas those who persisted in dodging service were told in no uncertain terms that they had to take up arms or leave the county. As a result of this threat many opted to perform police duty while others fled to escape commandeering.¹²⁹ PJC Adendorff and his wife departed on 14 December 1899 for Harrismith, while C Bierbaum, W Sander, the Collyer brothers and David Keay, fled into the forests and ravines of the northern Drakensberg.¹³⁰

Unwillingness to comply with the commandeering orders was treated with little mercy. Burgher Steyn, led by an African boy provided by Missionary Prozesky, went in search of Bierbaum, Sander,

121. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Regina vs CS Botha, pp.780-786; *Natal Witness*, 21-24.2.1902.

122. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs TP Lezar, pp.71-74; *Natal Witness*, 12.10.1900.

123. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs CP Cronjé, p.510; *Natal Witness*, 11.10.1900 and 29.3.1901.

124. PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by AJ Johnstone, 11.1.1900.

125. *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1900.

126. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs GH Shorter, pp.121-124; *Natal Witness*, 2.11.1900. An interesting Natal Englishman who fought on the side of the Boers was John Weston, the first South African to pilot an aircraft. *Sunday Times*, 21.12.2003.

127. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs MC Adendorff, p.104; AGO I/7/7: Regina vs JH Hattingh, pp.148-151; *Natal Witness*, 29.10.1900.

128. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.12.1899, p.104.

129. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 22.12.1899, p.111.

130. PAR, AGO I/7/7: Regina vs PJC Adendorff, pp.139-140.

Keay and the Collyers.¹³¹ Thomas and Michael Collyer were eventually apprehended and forced to join the Newcastle Commando in the Vryheid district.¹³² PJC Adendorff likewise failed to escape and with his brother's assistance found a position as clerk in the office of the justice of the peace at Charlestown.¹³³ The attempts by Johannes Theodorus O'Neill to flee to the British lines also failed and he was apprehended and sent on commando to Zululand.¹³⁴ Daniel Johannes Pringle, who had lost his wife and four children to measles in September and October 1899, however, managed to remain on his farm. This did not last and towards the end of November 1899, he was informed that he should prepare himself to be commandeered. Pringle's protests that he was a British subject were ignored and shortly afterwards he received a letter from Chris Botha that he had to report for duty. This he ignored and was subsequently arrested and imprisoned in Newcastle for two days. Botha then informed Pringle that he had orders to send him to Zululand, "dead or alive" to perform the duty of shoeing horses. He was kept under guard for a further three days before he managed to escape. Three days later he was again arrested and brought before Botha who ordered his imprisonment while awaiting instructions from Thomas Joubert. After spending twelve days in detention Pringle was released and ordered to repair wagons and harnesses. Only after serious remonstrations did he succeed in getting the Boer military to bring his remaining children into Newcastle, and it was only after the intervention of Field-Cornet Reitz of Standerton that Pringle was allowed to return to his farm.¹³⁵

The Newcastle Afrikaners who opted for or were forced into non-combat duties, rendered a range of services to the rudimentary administration set up by the ZAR¹³⁶ such as policemen and detectives,¹³⁷ bridge guards at the Buffalo River,¹³⁸ smallpox guards,¹³⁹ town guards,¹⁴⁰ livestock herders of looted animals,¹⁴¹ commandeering officers both of goods and local men,¹⁴² and native commissioners.¹⁴³

131. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.12.1899, p.105.

132. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs T and MC Collyer, pp.83-84.

133. PAR, AGO I/7/7: Regina vs PJC Adendorff, pp.139-140.

134. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs JT O'Neill, p.439.

135. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Statement by DJ Pringle, 18.6.1901; AGO I/8/81: Letter DJ Pringle to Attorney-General H Bale, 9.8.1901. Pringle's luck hardly changed. On the liberation of Northern Natal he was arrested as a suspected rebel. On 27.12.1900, the Boers looted his cattle. The military consequently removed his remaining cattle and sent him to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DJ Pringle, 13.10.1902.

136. PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by AJ Johnstone, 11.1.1900.

137. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs G Adendorff, pp.91-93; Regina vs GH Shorter, pp.121-124; Regina vs JH Hattingh, pp.148-151; AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JP van der Westhuyzen, pp.690-695;

138. PAR, AGO I/7/29: Rex vs PJ Cromhout, p.687; *Natal Witness*, 28.10.1901.

139. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JH Hattingh, pp.148-151; Regina vs JJ, NJ (jnr) and DIP Degenaar, pp.135-137; Regina vs MC Adendorff, pp.102-104;

140. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JC Donovan, pp.71-74; *Natal Witness*, 20.10.1900.

141. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JC Donovan, pp.71-74; AGO I/7/23: Rex vs JL and DB Fourie, pp.468-469.

142. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs JA Eksteen, pp.434-436; AGO I/7/35: Rex vs J Joubert (jnr), pp.849-853 .

143. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs WPJ Adendorff, pp.97-100; Regina vs JJA Prozesky, pp.65-69; OE Prozesky private

Often more than one role was performed simultaneously. JC Donovan of Roselands herded cattle for the Boers, acted as policeman, arrested and guarded prisoners and took part in the commandeering of goods which belonged to the Newcastle Municipality,¹⁴⁴ while others did duty as either policemen or smallpox guards, as clerk to the justice of the peace or as field-cornets and guards to prisoners. In the process the Newcastle Afrikaners, who opted for non-combat positions to avoid taking up arms, possibly rendered greater support to the Republican cause than those performing combat duty.

One of the key duties performed was that of smallpox guards. Although the threat of smallpox was real and the district-surgeon of Newcastle was during December 1899, allowed to visit the area to vaccinate against the disease on three occasions,¹⁴⁵ the appointment of Natal Afrikaners to the position of smallpox guards freed up the Transvalers previously used to do this, for combat duty. Similarly the services rendered by native commissioners such as WPJ Adendorff¹⁴⁶ and Missionary JJA Prozesky proved invaluable. Not only were Africans behind the Boer lines controlled by means of passes and punishment, but in the case of Prozesky, regularly commandeered from his congregation for labour-intensive tasks along the Tugela Front.¹⁴⁷ Stirling work was also done by those serving as policeman. Deserting burghers were arrested,¹⁴⁸ and in the case of AP Maritz of the farm Margate, he not only arrested Laurens Badenhorst, but escorted him to Scheepers Nek in the ZAR.¹⁴⁹ In other non-combat duties those suspected of disloyalty were trapped,¹⁵⁰ goods were commandeered on the behalf of the Boer commissariat¹⁵¹ and general law and order was established and maintained on behalf of the occupiers.

The induction of the Newcastle Afrikaners who opted for combat duty in the Transvaal forces was formalised on 5 December when they were issued with Mausers, ammunition, and bandoliers at the magistrate's office.¹⁵² The 127 strong Newcastle Commando thereafter departed via Dundee¹⁵³ across the Buffalo River, Scheepers Nek and Vryheid to the Zululand border. Their duty was to safe guard the border and deal with a possible African uprising¹⁵⁴ which, according to rumours, had

collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, November 1899 to March 1900, pp.69-139.

144. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JC Donovan, pp.71-74. *Natal Witness*, 20.10.1900.

145. VS Harris, p.27.

146. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs WPG Adendorff, pp.97-100.

147. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JJA Prozesky, pp.65-69; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, November 1900 to March 1900, pp.69-139; P Warwick, *Black people and the South African War 1899-1902*, p.80. Warwick erroneously stated that Prozesky was attached to a DRC Mission.

148. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs GH Shorter, pp.121-124; AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JJA Prozesky, pp.65-69.

149. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs AP Maritz, pp.449-451.

150. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs J van Reenen, pp.461-464; *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1901.

151. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs JL Fourie, pp.465-468.

152. PAR, CSO 2876: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AS Eksteen, 6.10.1902.

153. PAR, AGO I/7/6: Regina vs WH (snr), WH (jnr) and IJ Boshoff, pp.128-129.

154. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs TR Boshoff, pp.550-555; AGO I/7/5: Regina vs G Adendorff, pp.91-93; AGO I/7/6: Regina vs WH (snr), WH (jnr) and IJ Boshoff, pp.128-129; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky:

already claimed the lives of several white women.¹⁵⁵ To ease the minds of the poor amongst the conscripted men, the ZAR Government provided for their wives and children.¹⁵⁶ A week after their departure, Field-Cornet Thomas Joubert asked General Lucas Meyer if he could, since he had received no orders yet, join this force. Meyer immediately granted his permission.¹⁵⁷ On arrival at the Umfolozi River several of the commando members asked that a commandant be elected.¹⁵⁸ In the subsequent election, overseen by ZAR officials from Vryheid, Thomas Joubert, was elected as commandant by 120 votes to 7.¹⁵⁹

Thereafter the Newcastle Commando assumed its duty of keeping an eye on the long and potentially volatile border between the Vryheid district and Zululand.¹⁶⁰ Cross border cattle raids, especially by Boers and reciprocated by Zulus, led to several rumours that the latter were preparing to invade the Transvaal. These reports proved to be unfounded and it was even suggested that it was spread by burghers from Vryheid who used it as an excuse to remain at home.¹⁶¹ Otherwise very little else is known of the role of the Newcastle Commando along this border. It seems as if the personnel fluctuated greatly with some members returning to the Newcastle district in mid-January 1900.¹⁶² Such a person was Jacob van Reenen, a Natal Policeman up to June 1899, who first served on the Zululand border and then returned to Newcastle to become a policeman, in all likelihood to avoid returning to the front.¹⁶³ In exhibiting such behaviour, Van Reenen was not alone. On returning from Vryheid in January 1900, JN Boshoff reported for duty at Helpmekaar and did not return to the Newcastle Commando.¹⁶⁴

By mid-January 1900 Chris Botha, took over from Thomas Joubert as commander.¹⁶⁵ In an attempt to reverse the slipping away of the Newcastle Afrikaners from commando he requested that more men be despatched to Scheepers Nek. To achieve this, Botha issued an instruction that those who ignored his commandeering order should be arrested.¹⁶⁶ This seems to have had some success and

Diary entry, 4.12.1899, p.101.

155. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 4.12.1899, p.101.

156. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 9.12.1899, p.103.

157. NAR, KG 886: Letter Field-Cornet T Joubert to General L Meyer, 12.12.1899.

158. NAR, KG 818: Notice by PF Henderson, 21.12.1899.

159. NAR, KG 818: Letter PF Henderson to secretary of state, Pretoria, 23.12.1899.

160. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, p.377. Breytenbach, quoting documents from the Leyds and Commandant-General collections, wrongfully states that 230 Natal Afrikaners, under command of Lodewyk de Jager, were deployed to where the Bloukrans and Buffalo Rivers formed the border with Zululand.

161. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, pp.378-379.

162. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs JC and JN Boshoff, pp.519-520; Rex vs WD Adendorff, pp.491-492.

163. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs J van Reenen, pp.461-464; *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1901.

164. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs JC and JN Boshoff, pp.519-520.

165. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs CS Botha, pp.780-786; *Natal Witness*, 21-24.2.1902.

166. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JP van der Westhuyzen, pp.690-695; *Natal Witness*, 1.11.1901.

the likes of DL van Niekerk and others,¹⁶⁷ who had previously managed to escape commandeering, were brought into the fray and were forced to join the commando at Scheepers Nek.¹⁶⁸ A certain JP van der Westhuyzen initially resisted commandeering and paid a small fine to Moodie (JP) in lieu of service. The strict orders issued by Chris Botha, however, forced Van der Westhuyzen to relent and since he did not want to pay a second fine of £37.10 he left for Helpmekaar. There he remained for a few days, then pretending to be ill, received permission to return to Newcastle to eventually do duty as a policeman.¹⁶⁹ Botha not only managed to bring dodgers into the fold, but overplayed the possibility of an African uprising to such an extent that almost all the men who had remained around Newcastle to perform non-combat duties were despatched to the Vryheid district. This call-up was so successful that only a few men were available as pall bearers to attend the funeral of the child of Piet Zwart on 23 January 1900.¹⁷⁰

Field-Cornet Chris Botha generally adopted a more aggressive style than Thomas Joubert. Therefore, when Generals Ferreira and Coenraad Meyer, acting on information that a substantial British force was approaching Nqutu from Eshowe, decided to invade Zululand, members of the Newcastle Commando under the leadership of Botha, became part of the 700 strong force. There were also several Dundee Afrikaners within the ranks of the Newcastle Commando on this occasion.¹⁷¹ The magistracy at Nqutu was as a result attacked on 31 January 1900, and overrun after a brief skirmish. The magistrate, staff and others who had sought refuge in the magistracy were arrested,¹⁷² and some of those taken prisoner were escorted to Helpmekaar by DC Uys of the Natal Commando.¹⁷³

The attack did not take place without internal conflict. Most of the Natal men were not keen on taking part in the attack and sent memorials to the effect to their leaders. No notice were taken of the protests. According to an African witness, Jonas, CL de Wet and his brother-in-law then aggressively confronted the rebel leaders and threw down their weapons in front of Chris Botha and Thomas Joubert, claiming that the Boers had deceived them and that they “never really wanted to fight natives.” De Wet then challenged the two leaders to arrest and send him to Pretoria. Joubert refused to do this and explained to De Wet that he could not “get out of it” since he had already

167. PAR, AGO I/7/6: Regina vs JJ, NJ (jnr) and DIP Degenaar, pp.131-133; AGO I/7/7: Regina vs AM Cronjé, pp.153-154.

168. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs DL van Niekerk, pp.499-501; *Natal Witness*, 29.3.1901.

169. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JP van der Westhuyzen, pp.690-695; *Natal Witness*, 1.11.1901.

170. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 13.1.1900, pp.120-121; 23.1.1900, p.123.

171. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs PJ de Waal, pp.372-373; AGO I/7/23: Rex vs DC Uys, p.413.

172. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs CS Botha, pp.780-786; JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, pp.383-384; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

173. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs DC Uys, pp.413-414.

taken up arms.¹⁷⁴

Hereafter the Newcastle Commando continued to operate in the Vryheid district. When the Siege of Ladysmith collapsed the commando disbanded on 4 March 1900. From then on most remaining members started to return to the Newcastle district.¹⁷⁵ Eventually only a handful of Newcastle Afrikaners persisted in serving the Boers by joining other commandos.¹⁷⁶

Subsequent attempts from mid-March onwards to again commandeer the Newcastle Afrikaners met with strong resistance and the majority boldly refused to adhere to such orders. In the words of Judge Mason of the Special Court: “the Relief of Ladysmith worked a moral revolution.”¹⁷⁷ The new spirit of resistance was publically exhibited and the *Natal Mercury* could report that at a meeting held in Newcastle on 2 March 1900, Chris Botha, Thomas Joubert, Piet van Rensburg and Moodie (JP), as before, stated that the Newcastle district was part of the Transvaal and that a moral obligation existed to defend it against a possible African uprising. This time around the local Afrikaners failed to respond to the demands and threats. According to the report: “To the lasting credit of many of the farmers, notwithstanding the heavy pressure brought to bear on them, they steadfastly refused to take up arms against British troops, signifying their intention to remain loyal to the Crown. The spokesman of the loyal Dutch at this meeting was Adendorff, who, with his followers, is now in Newcastle.”¹⁷⁸

The new-found courage to resist caused relations between the Boers and the Newcastle Afrikaners to deteriorate. On 1 April 1900, AP de Jager of One Tree Hill, Newcastle, informed Thomas Joubert that he refused to do any further duties as he wanted to remain neutral from then on.¹⁷⁹ Joubert responded by accusing De Jager of spying for the British.¹⁸⁰ Another Newcastle resident, SKT Budge, was more circumspect. He was prepared to continue serving but enquired from Field-Cornet Chris Botha if any written guarantees existed that placed him on an equal footing with Transvaal burghers. Botha’s response, that the only such guarantee was the proclamation of 9 November 1899, illustrated the problematic position the Klip River county Afrikaners found themselves in.¹⁸¹

174. *Natal Witness*, 11.10.1900.

175. PAR, AGO I/7/7: Regina vs CL, PJ and DR de Wet, pp.131-133; Regina vs JJ, NJ (jnr) and DIP Degenaar, pp. 135-137; Regina vs AM Cronjé (snr), pp.153-154; AGO I/7/30: Regina vs CJS Hattingh, pp.682-683.

176. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs JC and JN Boshoff, pp.519-520; AGO I/7/7: Regina vs CL, PJ and DR de Wet, pp.131-133.

177. PAR, AGO I/7/7: Regina vs AM Cronjé (snr), pp.153-154; AGO I/7/23: Rex vs AMJ Cronjé, p.429.

178. *Natal Mercury*, 31.5.1900.

179. NAR, KG 886: Letter AP de Jager to field-cornet, Newcastle, 1.4.1900.

180. NAR, KG 886: Note by Commandant T Joubert, 2.4.1900.

181. NAR, KG 886: Letter SKT Budge to Field-Cornet CS Botha, 2.4.1900.

3.6 The Klip River (Ladysmith) district Afrikaners under Boer rule

Several white male residents from the Ladysmith area had attended the initial meeting at Wasbank.¹⁸² A short while later all white men from the area received a note from TR Dannhauser who, on behalf of Lodewyk de Jager and Schalk Burger, commandeered them to attend a meeting on 29 November 1899 on Joseph Muller's farm Doornkraal, Elandslaagte. The aims of the meeting was to gain clarity on what it meant to be living under the protection of the Transvaal, to form a police force to deal with the increase in stock theft and to address the spread of smallpox.¹⁸³

Approximately 60 local white men, the vast majority being Afrikaners, attended the meeting. On arrival the men were presented with a document, addressed to the ZAR authorities, which they were expected to sign requesting the creation of a police corps to address the stock theft issue. Under Secretary of State Krogh of the ZAR then addressed the meeting and also facilitated the election of a field-cornet for the area. Three candidates were nominated: Lukas W Meyer, Otto (OW) Krogman and Hermanus Potgieter. In the subsequent election Krogman received 27 votes, Meyer 24 and Potgieter 8. Krogman and Krogh then ordered those present to be at Elandslaagte within 24 hours with whatever arms they had. Half would be deployed on the front and the other half kept in reserve.

FJT Brandon and many others present felt that they had been deceived and betrayed, as they had not attended the meeting expecting to be commandeered but to do police work.¹⁸⁴ WC Hattingh (JP), who at the Wasbank meeting had spoken out strongly against commandeering, likewise felt tricked. He attended the Doornkraal meeting and took part in the voting under the impression that it had to do with police duties, only to realise afterwards that they were being enlisted.¹⁸⁵ Attendees who, in accordance with Joubert's proclamation, requested a pass to leave the area likewise felt that they were misled because they were informed that this request could not be granted since they had voted for a field-cornet.¹⁸⁶ All those present thus, willingly or unwillingly, became members of the Boer forces or administration.

Despite being tricked, most of those who had attended the meeting at Doornkraal gathered at the appointed time at the commissariat at Elandslaagte. The officers present were, however, not ready for "Otto's Commando."¹⁸⁷ The men therefore lazed around on farms in the area for a day or two

182. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs FJT Brandon, pp.219-226; Regina vs HB Cronjé, pp.237-238; AGO I/7/30: Rex vs WC Hattingh, pp.666-667; *Natal Witness*, 21.12.1900 and 18.12.1900.

183. PAR, PM 87: Deposition by James Thorrold before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

184. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

185. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs WC Hattingh, pp.666-667.

186. PAR, PM 87: Deposition by James Thorrold before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

187. Name given to the Natal Commando from Ladysmith by an African witness in the trial against Otto Krogman. See,

before they were each issued with a Mauser, bandoliers and ammunition.¹⁸⁸ Those who refused to be commandeered were allocated civil or non-combat positions such as police work and smallpox guards. The following day a posse, consisting of some of the commandeered men, rode to the Boer “hoofdlaager” at Modderspruit. Here “Otto’s Commando” again lazed around for a couple of days. To ease the boredom, FJT Brandon, volunteered to take a wagon to Elandslaagte to collect provisions.

The idle times spent at the Boer laager ended for the Ladysmith Afrikaners when General Joubert instructed them, since they knew the area, to accompany some burghers on a patrol down the Tugela River to Umhlumayo with the purpose of determining if a drift existed where the British could cross. The 60-strong commando, under Otto Krogman, returned a couple of days later after having lost their way.¹⁸⁹

By the time the commando returned, the Ladysmith Afrikaners had already been in the laager for a week and started to grumble about their treatment. Sensing their unhappiness, Krogman managed to get those present in the laager deployed to civil duties. The likes of FM Colling, AI Marais, WC Hattingh, JP van der Westhuyzen, James Thorrold,¹⁹⁰ IJ Buys, JF, FA, CJ and JT Truscott¹⁹¹ received worked as policemen and smallpox guards. Apart from dealing with smallpox, they also had to search the homesteads of Africans for firearms and deal with stock theft.¹⁹² Some were allocated an additional role, namely that of military policemen, with the task of arresting deserting burghers.¹⁹³

The men allocated to duty as smallpox guards proceeded to Elandslaagte and exchanged their Mausers for Steyr rifles. They divided themselves into four parties, each serving the area closest to his home. Smallpox guards like HB Cronjé¹⁹⁴ and FJT Brandon went to work in the four infected areas: Doornhoek, Matawan’s Kop, Schaapplaats and Mielietuinhoek. At the infected farms the guards formed quarantine camps marked by yellow flags. Until mid-February 1900 these camps were guarded. The work was made much easier by the fact that the Africans gave their full cooperation. An estimated eight Africans died and were buried by their fellow inmates before the

PAR, AGO I/7/11: Regina vs OW Krogman, pp.263-268; *Natal Witness*, 11-12.1.1901.

188. PAR, AGO I/7/ 9: Regina vs JL and AI Marais, pp.233-235; *Natal Witness*, 20.12.1900.

189. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

190. PAR, PM 87: Deposition by James Thorrold before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

191. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs JC, FA, CJ and JT Truscott, pp.243-245; *Natal Witness*, 24.12.1900.

192. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

193. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs JL and AI Marais, pp.233-235; *Natal Witness*, 20.12.1900.

194. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs HB Cronjé, pp.237-238; *Natal Witness*, 21.12.1900.

epidemic ended. When everybody was cured, the survivors were bathed in sheep dip, the huts broken down and the area fumigated. The only problem encountered by the guards was with the Irish Brigade who consistently roamed the area in search of African beer. Warning shots sometimes had to be fired to keep them outside the demarcated areas. In mid-February 1900, two weeks before the Siege of Ladysmith ended, the smallpox guards went home.¹⁹⁵

It seems that the tasks of smallpox guards and a policeman also entailed other unrelated tasks. HB Cronjé, for example, had to transport sandbags and railway material to the front¹⁹⁶ and remove commandeered goods, as ordered by Otto Krogman, from the farms of English residents who had fled, and from the coal mines around Elandslaagte to the Boer Commissariat.¹⁹⁷

The valuable service rendered to the ZAR by the Ladysmith Afrikaners was not always appreciated. Three members of the Ladysmith Commando, Izak Buys, Fred Colling and H Dreyer, complained to General Joubert that while the Transvalers received leave to collect goods from either the Dundee or Newcastle Commissariats, they did not enjoy the same privilege. Consequently Joubert intervened and instructed the justice of the peace in Dundee to issue provisions, clothes, and other goods to Natal Afrikaners on commando, on a similar basis to those of the Republicans.¹⁹⁸

The Boer authorities had a far easier task in enlisting the Ladysmith Afrikaners residing in the lower reaches of the Klip River district. Here many voluntarily joined the Boer forces, possibly because of the overwhelming presence of the Boer Army. Two brothers, JG and IJ Hattingh, for instance, became involved in military operations around Ladysmith and participated in the attempted construction of a dam in the Klip River,¹⁹⁹ MA Smidt joined and worked on the railway and as a border guard on the Drakensberg,²⁰⁰ while H Engelbrecht of Kromelmbog joined the Free Staters on invasion and took part in an early skirmish with the Natal Carbineers at Uziko's Kraal, and in military operations around Ladysmith.²⁰¹ Most importantly, they readily supplied their knowledge of the terrain to the invaders and in the case of the elderly HA Potgieter of Beauvale, assisted the Boers by pointing out the drifts in the Tugela River.²⁰² Another form of logistical service, the baking of bread in exchange for flour, especially for Boer ambulances and hospitals, was undertaken by HN

195. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs FJT Brandon, pp.219-226.

196. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs HB Cronjé, pp.237-238; *Natal Witness*, 21.12.1900.

197. PAR, AGO I/7/11: Rex vs OW Krogman, pp.264-268; AGO I/7/9: Regina vs JC, FA, CJ and JT Truscott, pp.243-245; AGO I/7/10: Regina vs BJ Nel, pp.248-254; AGO I/7/11: Regina vs JJ Potgieter, pp.269-270.

198. NAR, KG 852: Letter General PJ Joubert to JP Dundee, 25.1.1900.

199. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JG and IJ Hattingh, pp.663-676.

200. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Regina vs MA and ME Smidt, pp.195-196; *Natal Witness*, 6.12.1900.

201. PAR, AGO I/7/ 9: Regina vs JC, JF and H Engelbrecht, pp.208-209; *Natal Witness*, 12.12.1900.

202. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Rex vs HA Potgieter, p.197.

Raath,²⁰³ WC Hattingh²⁰⁴ and Mrs HW Boers.²⁰⁵

While some Ladysmith Afrikaners served in various capacities, a small number were caught up in the Siege of Ladysmith.²⁰⁶ Afrikaners like the Besters²⁰⁷ and JE Muller and J Howell entered the town on business, but were arrested on suspicion of being Boer spies. They were later released and allowed to reside with their relatives. Soon afterwards other local Afrikaners, Salomon (SHF) de Jager, Jan Bester, AJ Potgieter, Andries Meyer, Jan and Ignatuis de Waal and H Dreyer were brought into town on charges of removing fences, spying for the Boers, and using Africans as messengers. Dreyer and Jan de Waal were subsequently released and allowed to return home.²⁰⁸

Meanwhile the Ladysmith Afrikaners, under Mrs G de Haas, nursed ten wounded Boers captured by the British in the DRC, which had been turned into a hospital. Initially no assistance was received from the British authorities but they soon relented and provided food for the prisoner of war (hereafter POW) patients. Further assistance came from the Greytown Afrikaners who forwarded £5 to Ds HF Schoon.²⁰⁹

This situation did not last long and on 5 November 1899, HF Schoon, his wife Mary and their seven children, the sister of Schoon, Mrs Gerhard de Haas, her husband and four children, Widow Adendorff and her two daughters, Widow Van der Merwe and her two daughters, William and Daniel Bester, the wife of Jan Bester and her children, Jan de Waal his wife, five children and one grandchild, JE Muller, James Howell and JF Tredoux were moved to the Intombi Spruit Neutral Camp outside of Ladysmith. The Afrikaners earlier arrested for treason, as well as the wounded Boers accommodated in the DRC, remained in town and were forced to endure the Boer bombardment for the duration of the siege. The church parsonage was taken over by the British Army and the house of the Adendorff's by Leander Starr Jameson of the Jameson Raid fame.²¹⁰

203. PAR, AGO I/7/12 : Rex vs HN Raath, p.292.

204. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs WC Hattingh, pp.666-667.

205. *Natal Witness*, 10.6.1900.

206. The voluminous publications that exists on the Siege of Ladysmith make no reference of the plight of the small number of Natal Afrikaners caught up in it. See for example the following publications by the Ladysmith Historical Society: *Diary of Major GF Tatham*; *Diary of Bell Crow*; *Letters by Major-General CW Park*; *Unpublished letters from the Siege and an extract from Lt-Col BW Martin's memoirs*; *Notes by AJ Crosby*; *A nurse looks back on Ladysmith*; *The siege diary of William Watson* and B Kaiglin, *A diary of the Siege of Ladysmith*.

207. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to Maj-Gen A Hunter, 15.10.1899.

208. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Letter F Russouw to his father, 15.8.1900; PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: MPCs de Jager on behalf of SHF de Jager, 2.10.1900.

209. Another Afrikaner, Nurse Otto, from a notoriously loyal family was also involved in nursing during the siege. PAR, PM 90: Recommendation by Lt-Col Hyslop, 3.5.1901.

210. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 21.10.1899-12.11.1900, pp.21-64; PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by G de Haas, 5.7.1900. A second group of Natal Afrikaners, not mentioned by Schoon in his diary, possibly because they were either loyalists, not members of the DRC or of an unacceptable class, was also incarcerated in Intombi Camp. In this group were, amongst others, the illiterate John van Wyk and the divorced

The Afrikaners residing in Intombi Camp generally experienced similar hardships and pleasures as all other residents. Schoon, on 12 November, baptised Johannes Francois, the son of JA and ME van der Merwe. Three days later he buried his own daughter, Naomi, aged four, in a groceries box under a Mimosa tree,²¹¹ and little more than a month later he buried Kootjie Lategan, a wounded Boer POW. Some members of the Afrikaner group, who resided in close proximity of each other, became ill of typhoid or diarrhoea and were cured either by using “harmansdrup” or medicine prescribed by the medical staff in the camp. The monotony of camp life was broken by regular visits under the white flag by Boers,²¹² by the release of Jan Bester from prison in Ladysmith and by the odd celebration such as “Dingaansdag” on 16 December 1899 when Schoon read from Psalm 77 verse 15.

Afrikaner residents in the Intombi Camp were also involved in their own private war. In his diary, Schoon complained that hate speeches against, and verbal abuse of, Afrikaners were common. In an extreme case James Howell was, under great applause, arrested by two African policemen while waiting close to the perimeter of the camp for a toilet to become available. Howell was accused of speaking to someone in the nearby veld. After an investigation at both the Intombi Spruit Camp and in Ladysmith he was released because of conflicting evidence. Accommodation provided to the Afrikaners caused further conflict. Mary Schoon complained to Magistrate Bennett that some of the English were receiving additional tents to house their ill. After an investigation Bennett allocated an extra tent to the Afrikaners. Taking delivery of the tent, however, proved problematic because Sergeant Thompson refused to hand it over. With no assistance forthcoming, the Afrikaners took matters into their own hands and took possession of the appointed tent. Subsequent attempts by the magistrate to mend the relationship between Thompson and the Afrikaners failed and they made it clear that they would not relinquish the tent without a fight.²¹³

In the meantime, several attempts by the massive force under General Buller to breach the defences of the Boers along the Tugela line so as to relieve Ladysmith, failed. On 15 December 1899, a frontal attack by the British at Colenso met with disaster when they lost 1 139 men. As a result Buller lost the position of supreme commander of the British forces in South Africa to Field-Marshal Roberts. An effort by the Boers, on 6 January 1900, to take Ladysmith via Platrand south of the

dressmaker Hester Russouw. PAR, CSO 2903: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by H Russouw, 8.4.1901; CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by J van Wyk, 12.1.1903; 1/LDS 3/3/14: Letter F Russouw to his father, 15.8.1900.

211. The Van der Merwe child baptised by Schoon died on 7.6.1900. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 9.6.1900, p.354.

212. These visits only ended when General White became aware of it after receiving six apples as a gift from Gert Aveling, a Afrikaner, who had property at both Newcastle and in the OFS. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 11.2.1900, p.165.

213. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 15.11.1899-28.2.1900, pp.66-112.

town, was also unsuccessful. The British afterwards claimed that one Natal Afrikaner by the name of Griffin was identified among the dead.²¹⁴ The pressure on the Boer forces continued to build up with the arrival of an additional 24 000 British troops. Using the reinforcements, Buller again attempted to overrun the Boer positions. The attempt culminated in the bloodiest engagement of the war, and in a serious defeat of the British forces at Spioenkop on 24 January 1900. A subsequent relief attempt at Vaalkrans, between 5 and 7 February 1900, likewise failed. In the end, however, the military genius of Louis Botha, and the resistance of the small Boer force could not stand-up to the sheer numbers of the British forces and the Tugela line was finally breached at Hlangwane Hill between 17 and 19 February. A general collapse of the Boer commandos around Ladysmith resulted and many burghers started to leave to regroup on the Biggarsberg and the Drakensberg. Via an assault on Pieters Hill, the British forces, managed to, relieve Ladysmith on 28 February 1900, ending a siege that lasted 118 days.²¹⁵

When the siege ended the inhabitants of the Intombi Spruit Camp returned home without delay. The Schoons, for example, proceeded to Ladysmith to reoccupy the parsonage. Their sudden arrival caught the military off guard and after a heated debate during which Dr Robert Buntine of Pietermaritzburg threatened Mary Schoon with a prison sentence, a room was hastily prepared for them. The following day, 3 March 1900, Buntine had his way when the Schoons were evicted and had to take up residence in the church house of Paul Bester. The Schoons did not take matters lying down and confronted General White about the fact that they were evicted from the parsonage. White, to his credit, promised to have the military evacuate it as soon as possible.²¹⁶

The behaviour of the Schoons did not endear them to the authorities and they were suspected of acting as spies for the Boers while residing in the Intombi Spruit Camp. Therefore, it was decided to deport the Schoons, and William Bester, the father of Mary Schoon, on political and military grounds to Pietermaritzburg. After several delays the Schoons, accompanied by three servants, arrived by train in Pietermaritzburg on 21 March 1900. They hired the house of a fellow Natal Afrikaner, Widow Berning, situated at 288 Loop Street for £11 per month.²¹⁷

Widow Adendorff and her two daughters were allowed to leave Ladysmith together with her son-in-law Elimas (EJ) van Rooyen, who along with S Maartens had arrived on horseback from Greytown

214. PAR, Archives of the Empangeni magistrate (hereafter 1/EPI) 3/2/6: Telegram Reuter to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, Eshowe, 17.1.1900.

215. A more detailed description of the outlined events is beyond the scope of this thesis. For a more in depth analysis see, amongst others: JH Breytenbach, *Die stryd in Natal Jan.-Feb. 1900, Vol III, passim*; CJ Barnard, *Genl. Louis Botha op die Natalse front 1899-1900, passim*.

216. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 2-3.3.1900, pp.192-195.

217. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 8-21.3.1900, pp.202-235.

11 days after the siege ended.²¹⁸ The arrival of the two men was preceded by lengthy correspondence between the governor of Natal and the families of the interned Afrikaners. Both EJ van Rooyen, on behalf of his wife, and Mrs Maartens of Seven Oaks, a sister-in-law of Van Rooyen enquired about the whereabouts and well-being of the three Adendorff women, and in the case of Mrs Maartens, also about Jack (Jan) Bester. After several enquiries the concerned parties were eventually informed that: “Mrs Adendorff in Intombi Camp well. Miss Adendorff and Jack Bester at Intombi. Have had enteric, but are improving.” This news was received a week before the siege ended. Van Rooyen, on reception of the news, immediately applied for permission on behalf of Mrs Maartens to travel by wagon to Ladysmith to collect the families in question. This request was diplomatically denied as it was impossible for the military to give permission to a particular individual to leave, without extending the privilege to all. The Boers would furthermore not allow it, because it was on General Joubert’s instruction that the neutral camp was created.²¹⁹

The Natal Afrikaners imprisoned in Ladysmith, namely Salomon de Jager, Andries Potgieter, Daniel Bester and Andries Meyer, were released from the prison and deported to Pietermaritzburg²²⁰ from where they were eventually allowed to return home in two groups on 31 May and 22 June 1900. By then De Jager had spent six months and two days either in prison or on parole.²²¹ The exact reason for his arrest and imprisonment was unclear, even to the authorities, because neither the criminal investigation officer nor the Pietermaritzburg commandant could explain to Prime Minister Hime why he had been arrested.²²²

When Ladysmith was relieved many local Afrikaners including women with bandoliers strung around their bodies, steamed towards the OFS.²²³ The *Natal Witness* reported the scene one Afrikaner farm, close to Ladysmith, during this time. Johannes Petrus Buys, aged 71, and his extended family fled his farm Rietkuil close to Modder Spruit leaving “furniture, implements, crops, stores, and most of the household goods, the outcome of years of peaceful residence” behind.²²⁴ This was done because after the relief of Ladysmith General Schalk Burger had indicated, that he intended to set up the “Hoofdlaager” near the farmhouse on Rietkuil. Fearing that they would be caught up in battle should the British attack, the Buys family trekked to the farm Besk near Mullers Pass in the OFS. Here they remained for roughly a month before trekking to the farm Kliprug near

218. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 15.3.1900, p.206.

219. PAR, PM 17: Enquiry and correspondence by EJ van Rooyen about the Adendorff’s caught up in the siege, 11.2.1900-27.2.1900.

220. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 7.3.1900, p.201.

221. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 31.5.1900 and 22.6.1900, pp.339 and 377.

222. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Minute paper regarding the arrest of Salomon de Jager, 28.5.1900.

223. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/9: Rex vs FJT Brandon, pp.219-226.

224. *Natal Witness*, 20.3.1900.

Dannhauser, and returning to Rietkuil on 18 June 1900.²²⁵

The main reason why the Ladysmith Afrikaners fled was out of fear of reprisal by the British because of their extensive contact with the Boers.²²⁶ These fears were not unfounded since the British forces started arresting all the Afrikaners between the Tugela River and the Biggarsberg.²²⁷ The brothers Gert and Arnoldus Boers of the Spioenkop area were, for example, arrested for aiding the Republican invaders.²²⁸ The military drove most of the remaining Ladysmith Afrikaners south of the Tugela as they cleared the area around the town for military operations. In the process the Afrikaners only managed to take along a portion of their belongings, while losing the rest to looting by the military.²²⁹

3.7 The unreliable Natal Commando

As was the case in the Newcastle and Klip River districts the Afrikaners of Dundee and the surrounding areas met, as requested by the General Notice of Schalk Burger, to elect their officers. The meeting was originally planned for Paddafontein, the location of the Judith DRC, half-way between Dundee and Helpmekaar, but it was moved to the magistrate's office in Dundee on 29 November 1899.²³⁰

Two distinct groups were present at the meeting held under the chairmanship of DP Wolfaardt (JP): loyalists, and those willing to comply with the notice. This made for a volatile mix which was ignited by the opposing views of the local residents regarding their allegiance to the crown. Wolfaardt made it clear: "...that if any Afrikaner is so rotten as not to take up arms, he must be plundered and persecuted by any burgher who come across him." He took the argument one step further and declared that the local Afrikaners' allegiance to Britain was null and void since the British had vacated the area. This was disputed by AL Jansen, who emphasized that such an oath could not be broken. Jansen proceeded to warn all those present against joining the Boers. Another local Afrikaner, Barend Liebenberg, also did not mince his words and made it clear that he was a British subject and intended to remain one. His vociferous manner made him a marked man from

225. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Depositions by JP and JM Buys before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 21.6.1900; 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Declaration by JP Buys, 21.6.1900.

226. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 5.3.1900, pp.197-198; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.3.1900.

227. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 19.3.1900, p.144.

228. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.3.1900. The brothers Boers became the first Natal Afrikaners to be sentenced for high treason. Arnold Boers lost his 17-year-old son, Arnoldus Boers (jnr), in a skirmish at Pieters Hill. He was compelled into service as a substitute for a burgher.

229. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 4.5.1900, pp.310-311.

230. PRO, CO 179/212: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2589: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

then on.²³¹ Realising that they would possibly be conscripted, a number of those present requested passes to cross the Tugela. The request was refused and only passes to cross into Ladysmith were offered. Thereafter the loyalists left the meeting.²³²

It seems that the focus of the meeting then shifted to its original task, namely the election of officers. NJ (Piet) van Rensburg was elected as field-cornet and DC Uys as his assistant. The “Vierkleur” was, amongst cheers raised by a local Afrikaner, Barend van der Linden, and those present were informed that they had to attend a meeting on 2 December 1900, at Dundee to receive arms. Afterwards JC Vermaak was appointed secretary and with the assistance of Uys drew up the commandeering lists.²³³

The mood of the majority of Afrikaners at the time of the meeting is best summed up by an impartial observer, GC Bailey, a local minister in the Anglican Church: “A few are quite ready to join in, and a few, and those some of the best standing are most determined in their loyalty. The rest I fear will be frightened into taking up arms, although they would far rather remain quiet. From all I can hear there was a good deal of threatening... If the Boers had not invaded Natal, no Natal Boer would have joined; they are well content with British rule. As some of them say, What more can we obtain, even if the Transvaal do win, and if they lose, then where are we?”²³⁴

The meeting scheduled to supply the commandeered Dundee Afrikaners with weapons took place at Dundee on 2 December. The promised arms were, however, not forthcoming and the meeting was rescheduled for 5 December at Paddafontein.²³⁵ The Paddafontein meeting was not without incident and it seems that some Dundee Afrikaners again objected to being commandeered. Their leader, DC (Dirk) Pieters, read Piet Joubert’s proclamation to all those present explaining its contents which said that nobody could be forced to take-up arms.²³⁶ Wolfaardt (JP) responded by repeating his earlier statement “...that if any Afrikander is so rotten as not to take up arms, he must be plundered and persecuted by any burger who come across him.”²³⁷ The Dundee Afrikaners willing to join, then

231. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Dr Dalzell to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.8.1900.

232. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900.

233. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901; PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900. JC Vermaak, more than forty years after the incident, stated that Hermanus Potgieter had raised the flag at Wilson’s Store. See, VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.8, 1941.

234. Talana Museum, Dundee: Seven months under Boer rule, unpublished diary of GC Bailey, p.119.

235. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

236. PAR, AGO I/7/3: Regina vs JJ Webb, pp.52-53.

237. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Dr Dalzell to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.8.1900; Talana Museum, Dundee: Seven months under Boer rule, unpublished diary of GC Bailey, p.121; NAR, KG 819: Letter signed by 96 Natal Afrikaners to General JJ Ferreira, 8.1.1900.

received their Mausers, bandoliers, and ammunition.²³⁸ According to JC Vermaak they were also issued with identification cards so that they could be identified in the event of death while they were informed that three horses would be compensated by the Transvaal Government. The so-called Natal Commando then divided into five corporalships under Cornelius (CJ) de Villiers,²³⁹ Marthinus van Rooyen, Hendrik Davel, Piet Nienaber and Hendrik Laatz²⁴⁰ and proceeded to march from Paddafontein to the laager at Helpmekaar which they occupied in conjunction with the Bethal Commando and other Transvaal forces.²⁴¹ At the front, carrying the Transvaal flag, rode the youthful Jacobus Kemp.²⁴²

The number of Afrikaners in the Helpmekaar laager possibly never exceeded 150. The Special Court, which was created to try rebels, would eventually describe their role as “conducting patrols and general military work.” These patrols were mostly carried out on the Biggarsberg, around Helpmekaar and on the road down to the lower Tugela River.²⁴³ In exceptional cases patrolling occurred further afield. A troop consisting chiefly of Natal Afrikaners under CJ de Villiers proceeded in the direction of Job’s Kop in the second week of December to investigate the movement of British forces from Weenen.²⁴⁴ On a later occasion a group of rebels joined the Bethal and Piet Retief Commandos on a reconnaissance expedition to the Tugela River.²⁴⁵ In February 1900, the Natal Commando, along with members of the Newcastle Commando under Field-Cornet Piet van Rensburg, rode a patrol to Umhlumayo. Their orders were to determine if the British could break through the Boer lines further south down the Tugela.²⁴⁶

It appears that the Natal Commando had no burning desire to distinguish themselves. Instead, they were very content to stay in the laager without rendering any active service to the Republics.²⁴⁷ The Helpmekaar Laager accordingly functioned in a very *laissez faire* manner with some of the commandeered Dundee Afrikaners only staying for brief periods at a time. GJ Jordaan for instance,

238. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

239. CJ de Villiers in time rose to the rank of commandant in the Boer forces. PAR, CSO 1661: Receipt handed by Mrs WA Bester to J van Rensburg, 2.2.1900.

240. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.8, 1941.

241. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

242. PAR, AGO I/7/26: Rex vs GP, JF and JS Kemp, pp.567-569. According to JC Vermaak Gert de Waal was the flag bearer. See, VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.8, 1941.

243. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

244. PAR, CSO 2585: Telegram Major G Leuchars to Prime Minister AH Hime, 11.12.1899.

245. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.9, 1941.

246. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.11-12, 1941.

247. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

remained for two weeks,²⁴⁸ HH Laatz (jnr) for three weeks,²⁴⁹ and JS Swart for a month.²⁵⁰ An extreme case is that of Hendrik van den Berg of Brakfontein number 2 who received a rifle at Paddafontein and then proceeded home to resume farming. The fact that he took a rifle and that two family members were at Helpmekaar possibly exempted him from service.²⁵¹ It seems that most of the Dundee Afrikaners stationed at Helpmekaar did what WA and PH Labuschagne did - as little as possible.²⁵²

So relaxed was the atmosphere that it was exploited by the Newcastle Afrikaners like, JB Low, who were unwilling to serve,²⁵³ and who decided to report to Helpmekaar rather than to proceed to Zululand.²⁵⁴ Likewise, on returning from Vryheid in January 1900, JN Boshoff reported for duty at Helpmekaar and did not return to the Newcastle Commando,²⁵⁵ while JP van der Westhuyzen tried to escape service by proceeding to Helpmekaar.²⁵⁶

It soon became clear that the ZAR did not want to commit the Natal Commando to the front line simply because most of its members could not be trusted. This stemmed from the fact that they were intimidated and forced into joining the Boers.²⁵⁷ While the loyalty of the members of the Natal Commando was generally viewed with scepticism, some individuals, especially the local Germans, were completely distrusted. When HGP Volker was eventually forced into service on 31 December 1899, he and another German, Frederich Fröhling, were sent to Modderspruit Laager because the fear existed that they would try and run away. Volker eventually deserted on 23 February 1900, and ignored all subsequent call-ups. On 10 April 1900 he crossed the Tugela to report to the UMR.²⁵⁸ Similarly August Wellmann, who was compelled into a period of service lasting for three weeks, was given very little to do because he was not trusted.²⁵⁹

As a result of this collective distrust, the Dundee Afrikaners, like DJ (Gert) de Waal and CJ (Cornelius) Pieters, who sought action, were granted permission to join the Boer forces around Ladysmith.²⁶⁰ Pieters, who only joined on 22 December 1899, served for nine days with the ZAR

248. PAR, AGO I/7/27: Rex vs GJ Jordaan, pp.617-618.

249. PAR, AGO I/7/16: Rex vs HH Laatz jnr and snr, pp.315-316.

250. PAR, AGO I/7/28: Rex vs JS Swart, p.622.

251. PAR, AGO I/7/27: Rex vs AP, TC and HJ van den Berg, pp.585-588.

252. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs WA and PH Labuschagne, pp.392.

253. NAR, KG 886: Letter Field-Cornet T Joubert to General L Meyer, 12.12.1899.

254. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs JB Low, p.458; *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1901.

255. PAR, AGO I/7/25: Rex vs JC and JN Boshoff, pp.519-520.

256. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JP van der Westhuyzen, pp.690-695; *Natal Witness*, 1.11.1901.

257. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, p.377.

258. PAR, AGO I/7/1: PAR vs HGP Volker, pp.14-16.

259. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs A Wellmann, pp.401-403.

260. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.9, 1941.

Artillery at Umbulwana outside of Ladysmith.²⁶¹

Unlike the Afrikaners commandeered in Newcastle and Ladysmith, very few Dundee Afrikaners became involved in civilian or non-combat duties. According to the available records, FJ de Jager, CF Marais and JH Ries acted as policemen,²⁶² CC and GS Kok of Driefontein did duty as postmen,²⁶³ PJ and JA Landman respectively as a bridge and station guard at Wasbank,²⁶⁴ HJ Niewenhuizen²⁶⁵ took control of some wagons that transported goods to the Transvaal, while John Craig accompanied prisoners to Pretoria.²⁶⁶

The Dundee Afrikaners stationed at Helpmekaar were clearly not content, especially not with the policy of the ZAR authorities towards the loyalists. In early January 1900, a letter to General JJ Ferreira, signed by 96 Afrikaners, argued that they were informed at the commandeering meeting held at Dundee on 29 November 1899, “that you either supported the Boers or you were against them.” Those who opted for the second choice were to be expelled across the Tugela within seven days. This did not happen and a third option seems to have opened up, that of remaining neutral. If this was a viable option some of the signatories indicated that they also would like to remain neutral since it was safer and more comfortable. The signatories further argued that if they fell into the hands of the British they could be executed for taking up arms. They therefore called on the Transvaal authorities, for the sake of the rebels, to implement the earlier choice for local whites to either enroll or be expelled across the Tugela. Only if such action was taken would the volunteers be protected against later charges.²⁶⁷ The reaction of the Republican Governments to the concerns raised by the 96 Afrikaners was to despatch a telegram to the secretary of state for foreign affairs stating:

We are informed that the British authorities have arrested on a charge of high treason certain African-born (*sic*) inhabitants of the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope who had joined us, and as those persons of the Colonies who have joined us in the conflict are considered and treated by us as citizens of the State among the forces of which they are found, we claim that they shall be treated as prisoners of war like our old citizens. Any treatment of them not in accordance with the usages of civilized warfare regarding prisoners of war may be taken by our Governments as justification for reprisals on the British prisoners in our hands.²⁶⁸

261. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs CJ Pieters, pp.343-344.

262. PAR, AGO I/7/2: Regina vs FJ de Jager, pp.43-46; AGO I/7/3: Regina vs CF Marais, pp.54-57; AGO I/7/19: Rex vs JH Ries, pp.352-355.

263. PAR, AGO I/7/14: Rex vs CC and GS Kok, pp.387-389.

264. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs PJ and JA Landman, pp.655-662.

265. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs HJ Niewenhuizen, pp.336-337.

266. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs J Craig, pp.322-329.

267. NAR, KG 819: Letter to General JJ Ferreira signed by 96 Natal Afrikaners, 8.1.1900.

268. PRO, CO 179/209: Translation of a telegram from the presidents of the Republics to the secretary of state for foreign affairs, 30.1.1900.

Reaction to the Boer demand came from Alfred Milner who made it clear that it would be a “colossal blunder” with serious effects if rebels were to be treated as POWs. According to Milner such a step would not only acknowledge the annexation to the Republics of certain areas of Natal and the Cape Colony but also cause an extension of the rebellion in the latter Colony. The decisive decision by Milner therefore scuttled the Boer attempt to safeguard the position of the rebels.²⁶⁹

In the light of the above it is understandable why the Dundee Afrikaners seemed more inclined to harass the loyalists in the area than to serve the Boers. On several occasions they formed a body of men to carry out arrests and requisition property belonging to loyal British subjects.²⁷⁰ Intimidation tactics like these had some success and a number of men who did not join at Paddafontein subsequently did so out of fear.²⁷¹ Eventually 20 Dundee Afrikaners were convicted for delivering notices to loyalists, commandeering horses, cattle, and provisions from them and for collecting fines and arresting men who did not cooperate with the Transvaal authorities.²⁷²

On 13 February 1900, the laager at Helpmekaar was visited by Commandant-General PJ Joubert. On arrival he was presented with two addresses, one from 22 local Afrikaner women and the other from 61 local Afrikaner men; 35 signatories less than had signed the earlier complaint to Ferreira. This clearly indicated the unhappiness of the Dundee Afrikaners with their situation. The address by the men, some of whom had also signed the letter of 8 January, conveyed the sense of betrayal they were experiencing, and is borne out by the following extract: “...since it has all been done by us under the impression that we were thereby acting for the best interests of land and people.”²⁷³ A far cry from the nationalistic undertones Governor Hely-Hutchinson,²⁷⁴ and historians like Verne Harris²⁷⁵ and Mark Coghlan²⁷⁶ read into the address. According to Judge Mason an effort was apparently also made during the visit of Joubert to procure some commandeering order or notice

269. PRO, CO 179/209: Telegram High Commissioner A Milner to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 1.2.1900.

270. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

271. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

272. For examples of those who took part in such actions, see: PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs NP Jordaan, pp.17-21; AGO I/7/3: Regina vs JJ Audie, pp.62-63; AGO I/7/19: Rex vs JJ and AA Maritz, pp.349-350; AGO I/7/22: Rex vs AC Vermaak, pp.573-577; AGO I/7/23: Rex vs WFJ Prinsloo, pp.393-395; PAR, CSO 1632: Letter WW Strydom to commanding officer UMR, 25.11.1899; Letter Dr Dalzell to commanding officer UMR, 21.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

273. PRO, 179/213: Addresses of welcome to General PJ Joubert from Natal rebels and Natal Afrikaner women, 13.2.1900.

274. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

275. VS Harris, p.37.

276. MS Coghlan, *The Natal Volunteers in the Anglo-Boer War, September 1899 to July 1902: Reality and perception*, Phd-thesis, UNP, 2000, p.36.

from him which “would afford some excuse or defence to the people who were conscious that they had committed an act of High Treason.”²⁷⁷ Mason’s statement is supported by the minutes of a “Krygsraadsvergadering” held at Helpmekaar on the day of Joubert’s visit which indicate that the forced conscription of Natal Afrikaners was discussed.²⁷⁸

In the light of the concerns regarding their position as expressed in the letter to Ferreira on 8 January 1900, and the luke-warm reception Joubert received, it is clear that the vast majority of Dundee Afrikaners feared for their future and their lives, and did not want to be at Helpmekaar. Their objections to the Transvaal authorities, however, fell on deaf ears.

Soon after Joubert’s visit information that all was not well at the Helpmekaar Laager reached the British. The informer reported that Joubert had apparently removed all the Boers from the laager to Ladysmith and had ordered the Natal Afrikaners to return to Dundee.²⁷⁹ This proved to be but partially true. The Bethal commando was, in an attempt to alleviate the acute shortage of manpower, removed from Helpmekaar to the front but the Dundee Afrikaners and a small group of Transvalers from Vryheid remained at Helpmekaar.²⁸⁰ The reluctant rebels, and a few burghers from Vryheid, thus had the very responsible task of defending the lower Tugela River area and the Buffalo River border.²⁸¹

Generally it did not prove difficult for African scouts working for the British to gather information on what was happening at Helpmekaar. One informant stated that the local Afrikaners were forced to join under threat that their property would be confiscated and that they would be made serfs.²⁸² Another African, Tom, declared that Joubert had threatened the uncooperative Afrikaners at Helpmekaar that he would send the Boer commandos to compel them to go to Ladysmith if their attitude persisted.²⁸³ According to JC Vermaak, it was possible to gather this information because of insufficient security measures which allowed numerous Africans to congregate at the laager for meat, tobacco and other goods. Amongst these men were spies who could inform the British of the developments in the Natal Commando. In an attempt to curtail this Jasper Slabbert was given the duty of keeping Africans out of the laager.²⁸⁴

277. PRO, CO 179/213: Addresses of welcome to General PJ Joubert from Natal rebels and Natal Afrikaner women, 13.2.1900.

278. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, p.377.

279. PAR, CSO 2587: Telegram magistrate Kranskop to Prime Minister AH Hime, 24.2.1900.

280. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, p.377.

281. JH Breytenbach, *Vol III*, p.395.

282. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statement by Umtiloyi, 16.12.1899; PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by Umtiloyi, 16.12.1899.

283. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Statement by Tom, 26.2.1900.

284. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp. 14-15, 1941.

The relief of Ladysmith signalled the end of the responsibility the conscripted Afrikaners from Dundee felt towards the Republics. As a result the Natal Commando was practically disbanded and many rebels were granted leave to attend to their farms and livestock. Some of the farms in the area were also cleared to allow for Boer military operations. When JJ Kemp arrived back on his farm near Dundee he found it occupied by a Boer commando who ordered him away to the farm Vlaklaagte near Newcastle, where he remained ignoring all subsequent commandeering orders. Many other Natal Afrikaners likewise returned to their farms, while others started to retreat with their effects into the Transvaal.²⁸⁵ Only a small number opted to remain with the Boer commandos.²⁸⁶

Sensing an opportunity the UMR and Thorneycrofts Horse decided on 7 March 1900, to attack the Helpmekaar laager which was guarded by only 12 Dundee Afrikaners at the time. Reinforcements consisting of both Boers and Natal Afrikaners soon arrived whereafter CJ de Villiers took command of about 30 Dundee Afrikaners. In the ensuing skirmish, also called the “Battle of Pomeroy” by the Special Court, neither side suffered casualties.²⁸⁷

The last significant action in which members of the Natal Commando, assisted by members of the Ladysmith Commando was involved in, dealt with the safeguarding of moveable property. A sensationalist article in the *Natal Mercury* alleged that Trooper Nicholson of the Natal Police was shot at Colling’s Farm by a Natal rebel, Meyer, who was accompanied by another rebel, Gregory.²⁸⁸ This article prompted Prime Minister Hime to call for an immediate investigation into the event.²⁸⁹ The enquiry revealed that the area along the Sundays River was being cleared of Natal Afrikaners and that the Natal Police were confiscating their cattle.²⁹⁰ When Trooper Nicholson saw some Natal Afrikaners approaching he drove their cattle towards the farm of Fred Colling. Mrs Sannie Colling came to the door and told him that it was wrong to take the Natal Afrikaners’ cattle. In the process the cattle got entangled in the barbed wire around the house and Nicholson’s horse was shot from under him. An Afrikaner of Cundy Cleugh, Le Roux, then shot him in the knee and Otto Krogman struck him on the head with a rifle butt. The group of roughly ten Natal Afrikaners, including Fred Colling, then removed Nicholson and the African policeman, Tshwapana, to Helpmekaar, forcing

285. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/3: Regina vs PJ Meyer, pp.59-61; AGO I/7/18: Rex vs JA Nel, pp.331-332; Rex vs CFH Posselt and JCL Labuschagne, p.348; Rex vs SJ and WL Meyer, pp.360-361; AGO I/7/27: Rex vs AP, TC and HJ van den Berg, pp.585-588.

286. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.19, 1941.

287. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.10, 13-14, 1941; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband’s sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

288. *Natal Mercury*, 24.3.1900.

289. PAR, MJPW 74: Minute paper in which Prime Minister AH Hime asks for an investigation into the shooting of Trooper S Nicholson, 4.3.1900.

290. PRO, CO 179/213: Statement by Trooper ATS Boyle to Sub-Inspector Hellet, 24.3.1900.

the former to ride a horse. When he became too weak he was transferred to a wagon. According to Nicholson he received very little medial attention, was treated in a rough manner and was eventually transferred to Pretoria where he remained until after the occupation of the city by the British. The fate of Tshwapana remains unknown.²⁹¹

In April 1900 African Scouts again reported “considerable friction” at Helpmekaar. The remaining local Afrikaners were tired of rebellion and were threatened with punishment by the Transvalers if they deserted.²⁹² These reports were not unfounded, for on 13 April 1900, General Lucas Meyer confirmed that the remaining Dundee Afrikaners were returning home. He therefore instructed the Boer commissariat and the JP’s that no more clothes and food be issued to “Natal burghers.”²⁹³ Meyer also instructed Field-Cornet Van Rensburg to return the wagon and six oxen commandeered from Abraham Spies.²⁹⁴

3.8 Waiting for Buller

The termination of the Siege of Ladysmith caused the caving-in of the Boer forces in Natal. Numerous burghers lost courage and fled from Natal, others laid down arms and general indiscipline set in. Despite this, several thousand Boers dug in on the Biggarsberg, roughly 50 kilometres north of Ladysmith. Buller in the meantime was not allowed to take advantage of this, but ordered by Roberts to remain passive in Ladysmith. His sole action was to send out small parties to distribute proclamations and collect arms from surrendered burghers and Natal Afrikaners.²⁹⁵ The proclamation drawn up by Buller, claimed that some of the Natal Afrikaners were misled into taking up arms, and having realised their error were keen on redeeming themselves. If they therefore laid down their arms Buller undertook to present their cases to the civilian authorities for a more “considerate treatment” than those who remained in the field after the issuing of the proclamation could expect.²⁹⁶ The issuing of this proclamation angered the Natal authorities who felt that Buller “had no business issuing such a proclamation without consulting the Governor of Natal.” The second paragraph, which promised to treat rebels on the same footing as surrendered burghers, was frowned upon since it morally bound the Natal Government against its will.²⁹⁷

291. PRO, CO 179/213: Statement by Trooper S Nicholson, 24.8.1900. For the disgraceful treatment of Mrs S Colling during the investigation, see Chapter 10.

292. PRO, CO 179/211: Telegram Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, 12.4.1900.

293. NAR, KG 885: Letter General L Meyer to Mr Hendricks, 13.4.1900.

294. NAR, KG 885: Letter General L Meyer to Field-Cornet NJ van Rensburg, 13.4.1900.

295. T Pakenham, pp.368-370. For a detailed account of the Boer retreat and British advance, see GP Torlage, *The British advance and Boer retreat through Northern Natal, May-June 1900*. MA-thesis, UNISA, 1992, *passim*; K Gillings, After the Siege: The British advance and Boer retreat through Natal, March to June 1900, *Military History Journal*, 11(3-4), October 1999, pp.87-98.

296. PAR, GH 532: Proclamation issued by General R Buller, 11.5.1900; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 15.5.1900.

297. PRO, CO 179/212: Minute paper regarding the proclamation of General R Buller, 1.5.1900-13.6.1900.

With the various rebel commandos disbanded and the Natal Army of Buller ready to pounce, the concerns of the Natal rebels reached panic level. On 7 May 1900, Field-Cornet NJ van Rensburg outlined the position the rebels found themselves in to General JC Fourie. Ignorant of the role of Schalk Burger he stated that they had adhered to the proclamation issued by Piet Joubert and were subsequently commandeered. Those Afrikaners who chose to ignore it were not, as stated in the proclamation, sent south within a week. The fact that the Transvaal authorities had not enforced the second measure, even when instructed to do so by Paul Kruger, meant that the sole defence the rebels had, namely compulsion, would, according to Van Rensburg, not stand up in court as the authorities would merely point to the loyalists to shatter the argument. To the Natal Afrikaners who sided with the Republics this was literally a matter of life and death, as they feared execution or the confiscation of their property. On behalf of his fellow rebels, Van Rensburg therefore pleaded with Fourie to enforce the second clause of the proclamation.²⁹⁸ That this matter had been discussed before is revealed by Fourie's response. He fully supported Van Rensburg and had written to General Louis Botha about this matter. Possibly because he had no response from Botha, he urged the secretary of state to bring the matter before the executive council of the ZAR so that the necessary measures could be implemented.²⁹⁹ Nothing more came of the matter, because the ZAR was preoccupied with the advance of Roberts and the imminent advance of Buller. The unwillingness at any stage to implement the proclamation fully, meant that the ZAR had from the outset deserted the Klip River Afrikaners whom they had compelled into service.

A lone Transvaal voice raised the future prospects which the Klip River county Afrikaners faced. In a letter to President Kruger, E Neethling, pleaded with him to put an end to the abandoning by their Republican kin of specifically the Newcastle Afrikaners. Neethling felt ashamed that the Natal Afrikaners were standing to lose everything due to their having sided with the Boers.³⁰⁰ This plea also fell on deaf ears.

In anticipation of Buller's advance, Commandant Thomas Steenkamp instructed his brother-in-law Hendrik Reis to burn all documents implicating the Dundee Afrikaners.³⁰¹ Not all commanders were careful or thorough enough though, especially while fleeing the British forces was uppermost in their minds. Consequently documents incriminating Otto Krogman and Lodewyk de Jager were found in the Pretoria Commando Laager near Colenso, which was vacated by the Boers in February 1900. Krogman because he had on 10 January 1900 commandeered 30 goats from Mr Innes, and De

298. Letter Field-Cornet NJ van Rensburg to General JC Fourie, 7.5.1900, as published in *De Natal Afrikaner*, 17.9.1900.

299. Letter General JC Fourie to secretary of state, ZAR, 7.5.1900, as published in *De Natal Afrikaner*, 17.9.1900.

300. NAR, SP Engelbrecht collection, A 371, 11, incoming letters to Pres SJP Kruger: Letter E Neethling to President SJP Kruger, 16.3.1900.

301. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.26, 1941.

Jager for buying an ox for £3 as rations from one Oltsch.³⁰² Documents implicating JH Breytenbach, FJ de Jager, G Adendorff and JJ Kemp³⁰³ and large numbers of Newcastle Afrikaners were likewise located in other parts of Northern Natal.³⁰⁴ Even documents which carried the instruction that they had to be destroyed after reading, like a letter from Field-Cornet NJ van Rensburg, were kept and found in Pretoria when the Transvaal capital fell.³⁰⁵

The Republican newspapers, and especially *De Volksstem* were earlier equally irresponsible in giving away information about the Natal Afrikaners. In the edition of 17 November 1899, the paper announced that Natal Afrikaners were to join commandos under Otto Krogman and Lodewyk de Jager. The 25 November issue elaborated on this and predicted that 1 500 Natal Afrikaners would join the mentioned commando. When the *Natal Witness* and *De Natal Afrikaner* picked up on these stories the names of the men mentioned were immediately forwarded to the criminal investigation office.³⁰⁶ The worst enemy from within, however, proved to be the *The Standard & Diggers' News*. In article after article the newspaper reported on the rebellious activities of Natal Afrikaners, incriminating them in the process. An example of such reporting was the 5 December 1899 edition which explained in detail the meetings which Afrikaners in Dundee, Ladysmith and Newcastle had held to join the Boers. According to the paper, "Knowledge of local topography is placed by the farmers at the disposal of Boer commandos, which are thereby enabled to effect rapid and effective movements to the amazement of the foe."³⁰⁷ *De Natal Afrikaner* called these articles part of the "Dubbel verraad" committed by the Republics. Not only had they misled the local Afrikaners into treason and rebellion, but the *De Volksstem* and *Diggers' News* proceeded to reveal their identities to the Natal authorities.³⁰⁸ Thus, when the forces of Buller attacked the northern parts of Klip River county they knew in advance the identity of some of the rebels.

On 11 May 1900 Buller received permission from Lord Roberts to advance his force north towards the Biggarsberg.³⁰⁹ Two days later the Natal Army was clearing the area around Helpmekeer. Using the information supplied by Africans, small commandos were driven from the area and cattle collected. General Buller made his headquarters at the farm Vermaak Kraal.³¹⁰ Within the next few

302. PAR, GH 547: Translations of documents found at the Colenso Laager, 17.4.1900.

303. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Documentary evidence relative to Natal rebels who either surrendered or were captured, 21.5.1900.

304. PAR, AGO I/7/46: Lists of Natal rebels captured as well as incriminating documents compiled by Lt-Col AE Sandbach, 10.5.1900 and 4.6.1900.

305. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 17.9.1900.

306. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Information concerning Natal rebels, as published in *De Natal Afrikaner* and the *Natal Witness*, forwarded to the PUS, 30.11.1899-2.12.1899.

307. *Natal Witness*, 16.12.1899, quoting the *The Standard and Diggers' News* of 5.12.1899.

308. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 5.12.1899. This article reappeared in the 24.9.1901 issue.

309. PRO, CO 179/212: Minute paper Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to the War Office, 13.6.1900.

310. RC Billington, *A mule-driver at the Natal Front. Transport experiences in Natal*, p.53.

days the British reoccupied the Dundee and Newcastle districts.³¹¹ With great tactical aplomb Buller continued to outflank the minimal resistance offered by the Boers. Between 6 and 12 June the Natal Army managed to dislodge the Boer forces from the Laing's Nek area in Northern Natal ending the conventional phase of the war in Natal and the 242-day Boer occupation of the area.³¹²

Prior to and during the rolling up of the Boer resistance three other processes took place; the arrest of suspected rebels by the military which will be analysed in detail in Chapters 5 and 6, the looting and confiscation of Afrikaner property which will be discussed in Chapter 12, and the flight of the Klip River county Afrikaners from the area.

3.9 The flight

The fall of Ladysmith set in motion, amongst a large number of Klip River county Afrikaners, a migratory process that gained full momentum as the dust of the Natal Army appeared to the south of the Biggarsberg. According to Assistant Field-Cornet DC Uys of the Natal Commando, an order was issued in March 1900 by the Boers that all white inhabitants of the Klip River county and their stock had to move across the border to the ZAR.³¹³ Either because of the order, or as a result of a collective fear, many Afrikaners, with wagons loaded high with furniture started to leave.³¹⁴ Some subsequently returned to Natal when the British started to advance to place themselves at the mercy of the Imperial and Colonial authorities.³¹⁵

On 15 March 1900, General Louis Botha telegraphed President Kruger from Glencoe, informing him that the families of the Natal Afrikaners who had joined the Boer side had informed him that they were concerned that the military tide had turned against them. Kruger issued orders that the burghers were to protect the families of the Natal rebels and where necessary, assist them in trekking with all their possessions into the Transvaal. He also made it clear that the process was to take place in an orderly manner and should not resemble an act of fleeing. The day after he had communicated with Kruger, Botha gave orders to Commandant Joubert, General Lukas Meyer, and the justice of the peace at Newcastle to assist Natal Afrikaners who had sought Transvaal protection, in leaving the Colony.

Botha relayed Kruger's order and a large numbers of Natal Afrikaners crossed into the ZAR with their effects. What did cause a problem in early May was the large number of livestock, including a

311. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

312. PRO, CO 179/212: Minute paper Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to the War Office, 13.6.1900.

313. PAR, 1/DUN 1/5/2/2: Evidence by DC Uys in the preliminary examination of JM van Rooyen, 9.3.1901; PAR, CSO 2897: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DJ Opperman, 10.12.1901.

314. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 9.3.1900, p.142.

315. PAR, CSO 2897: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DJ Opperman, 10.12.1901.

large number of looted animals, which accompanied the fleeing Afrikaners because there were not enough herdsmen to guard the livestock. To accommodate the Natal Afrikaners, farms belonging to people who have fled were considered as places of refuge.³¹⁶ This was implemented when some Natal Afrikaners were allowed to settle on the uninhabited farms of the New Scotland Company in ward 3 of the Ermelo district.³¹⁷

The endeavour to assist the Natal Afrikaner families meant that General Lucas Meyer could not adhere to the order of President Kruger to remove livestock and grain from Natal. The fleeing Natal Afrikaners were, therefore, a great burden to the ZAR, but in spite of this they were also fellow Afrikaners who could not be forsaken.³¹⁸

Despite the sentiments expressed by Kruger, the evacuation of the Natal Afrikaners turned into chaos simply because this was the least of the concerns to the commandos. By mid-May 1900 Commandant D Schoeman of Lydenburg was assisting 24 Natal Afrikaner families, who formed the rearguard of the Transvaal forces, to flee Natal. Other fleeing Natal Afrikaners closer to Dundee and Newcastle were, according to the landrost of Wakkerstroom, in trouble since they were about to be overtaken by the advancing British force.³¹⁹ By 19 May an estimated 100 women and 300 children, among whom there were probably Natal Afrikaners, had arrived in Volksrust. They had no idea where to go and so decided to remain in Volksrust despite an offer of free transport. Two days later refugees from Natal arrived in Middelburg to join other British subjects who had preceded them. As was the case in Volksrust, Middelburg was crowded with refugees unsure of where they were heading. In an attempt to alleviate the crisis the landrost requested permission from the Transvaal Government to commandeer abandoned houses and purchase cooking utensils.³²⁰

The flight of especially Klip River Afrikaners turned into a small-scale diaspora. The most popular destination were the Utrecht and Vryheid districts. These two districts were in close geographical proximity to Klip River county and easily accessible because of the flatness of the landscape. Large numbers of suspected rebels like PWC Jordaan,³²¹ TC Vermaak and GP and JF Kemp³²² of Dundee, to name but four, consequently crossed the Buffalo River. Some of the fleeing Natal Afrikaners, however, did not make it to the border owing to the oxen being exhausted. They were overtaken and

316. J Ploeger, *Die lotgevalle van die burgerlike bevolking gedurende die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902, Vol III*, pp.20:4-20:7.

317. J Ploeger, *Vol III*, p.21:13.

318. J Ploeger, *Vol III*, p.20:7.

319. J Ploeger, *Vol III*, pp.20:4-20:7.

320. J Ploeger, *Vol III*, p.20.

321. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Letter J Anderson to Attorney-General H Bale, 20.7.1901.

322. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 5.3.1901.

arrested by the British.³²³

Others managed to get away and fled further afield to Swaziland³²⁴ and Mozambique. Especially the latter became a popular destination amongst fleeing Natal Afrikaners as it provided a platform to depart for other parts of the world. One such example was CT Vermaak and his family, of the Dundee district. They crossed into Mozambique and then proceeded into exile in the Netherlands.³²⁵ Similarly other Natal Afrikaner left for either the Netherlands³²⁶ or the USA.³²⁷

Why did large numbers of Natal Afrikaners flee from the Klip River county, mostly towards the Transvaal? Firstly, some of them still truly believed that the Boers would be victorious and were prepared to continue the war as “bittereinders.”³²⁸ A second motivation, was the fear that they would lose their livestock, landed property and other belongings to the advancing British Army and the Natal authorities. Lastly and possibly the most important motivation was the fear of arrest and the subsequent justice that could be meted out. As a result the Natal authorities by November 1901, estimated that there were some 300 Natal rebels still in the field.³²⁹

Many of these rebels remained active in the Klip River county. As late as April 1902, it was unsafe to travel on the road between Dundee and Helpmekaar because of guerrilla activities. Described by the local press as “marauding gangs of Boers” or “highwaymen”³³⁰ the purpose of their operations was unclear. In his 1902 report, the Dundee magistrate fingered local rebels who functioned freely despite the presence of blockhouses, as the culprits. They were looting cattle and driving them across the Buffalo River, and taking horses, clothes, food and whatever valuables they could lay their hands on. Apart from looting and evading the British forces “the threats uttered against the surrendered ex-burghers living in the division, and the local Dutch who had remained loyal, gave rise to a period of terror among the outlying residents, many of whom spend their nights in the veld to avoid being trapped in their homes.”³³¹ The plight of these Natal Afrikaners is possibly best summarised by Byron Farwell’s romanticised tale of Piet, a Natal Rebel, who witnessed the scorched earth policy, sniped at the British, lost family members in the concentration camp, lost his beloved “Anna” and when peace came about became an “irreconcilable” - preferring exile to signing an oath

323. *Natal Witness*, 24.5.1900.

324. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

325. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.42, 1941.

326. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.43, 1941.

327. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Minute paper C Tatham to Attorney-General A Bale, 13.7.1900.

328. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.19, 1941

329. PRO, CO 179/220: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 8.11.1901. The motivations and treatment of rebels will be fully unpacked in Chapter 5.

330. *Dundee and District Advertiser*, February to March 1902.

331. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

of allegiance to the king.³³²

Others were less enthusiastic. In March 1900, JF Dreyer and his son, refugees from Natal who were resident in the Wakkerstroom district requested the military authorities of the ZAR to relieve them of military duties but indicated that they were willing to serve in other capacities such as bridge guards in the Wakkerstroom district.³³³

The position that the Natal Afrikaners north of the Tugela found themselves in by June 1900 is best explained by the freely translated questions posed and statements made in a letter from “een correspondent” of Newcastle to *De Natal Afrikaner*:

Who should we have approached for protection, our government that deserted us? Who should we have approached for protection under the Martial Law of the invading Boers? Now Natal Afrikaners are viewed as the lowest people on the face of the earth and not a good word is uttered in our defence. We will be treated as rebels regardless of the fact that three-quarters of those who joined were forced to do so under Martial Law. Now this whole district has been robbed of men and livestock. The Natal Afrikaner families must live in abject poverty-there is no grace.³³⁴

332. B Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, pp.368-369.

333. NAR, KG 821: Letter JF Dreyer to Commandant-General, 7.3.1900.

334. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.7.1900.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAR EXPERIENCES OF THE NATAL AFRIKANERS SOUTH OF THE TUGELA RIVER AND IN PROVISO B: OCTOBER 1899-JUNE 1900

The experience of Natal Afrikaners south of the Tugela River during the conventional phase of the war is in stark contrast to that of their kin resident in the Klip River county. Only the Weenen county districts,¹ Upper Tugela, Estcourt and Weenen were invaded by the Boers. Of these districts only Upper Tugela and Estcourt were occupied by the Republican forces, the latter only for a brief period of time. In turn the counties of Pietermaritzburg, Umvoti and Proviso B, the only other areas in Natal with a significant Afrikaner population, experienced a different kind of war namely a pseudo-war waged on ethnic grounds against Afrikaners. The strategies employed displayed very little resemblance to real war but were based on suspicion and rumours and fueled by intimidation and persecution. In this chapter an attempt will be made to explain, describe, analyse and contextualise the experiences of each Afrikaner community south of the Tugela River, as well as that of Proviso B, for the conventional war period in Natal.

4.1 The war experiences of the Afrikaners of Weenen county - October 1899 to June 1900

4.1.1 Natal Afrikaners in the Upper Tugela district and the conventional phase of the war

The Upper Tugela district, with Bergville as the seat of the magistracy, spanned sections of the Weenen and Klip River counties and encompassed the lower and upper reaches of the Drakensberg, from south of Van Reenen up to Champagne Castle. The Weenen county section of the district bordered on Basutoland (present day Lesotho) while the area in the Klip River county had a common border with the OFS, making it very vulnerable to an invasion. Many of the residents of the district, like the extended Bester family, had both property and family members on both sides of the border.² As a result several families resident in the area owed allegiance to both Natal and the Republics.³

Five days after the outbreak of war the Afrikaners of the Upper Tugela district, under AWJ Pretorius of Oppermanskraal, PCD Bester and an English colonist, MJM Wales, asked the local magistrate, DG Giles, to attend a meeting to be held at Green's Store, Acton Homes/Venterspruit. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss what was to be done in case of a raid by OFS Commandos, or if a battle should take place on their properties. They also wanted to know if the government would compensate them for any losses sustained. Giles was afraid of attending the meeting as he feared that the purpose

1. Weenen county consisted of three districts, Estcourt, Weenen and a section of the Upper Tugela district. The latter district will, for the sake of creating a uniform picture, be discussed under this chapter. See the map of the Colony of Natal on p.ii.

2. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: My experiences during the Anglo-Boer War by Maggie Bester, pp.11-20, 26.9.1900.

3. Examples of such Afrikaners resident in Upper Tugela was AM, EM and HJ Pitzer who were Transvaal subjects and NJ Robbertse who was a Free State citizen. See, PAR, AGO I/7/33: Rex vs HJ, AM and EM Pitzer, pp.762-772; AGO I/7/33: Rex vs NJ Robbertse, pp.762-772.

was to ask him to disclose the point of view of the Natal Government, a view he was unsure of. The magistrate furthermore distrusted the loyalty of the local Afrikaners since AWJ Pretorius' son was on commando at Tintwa Pass and PCD Bester's son, a burgher whose rifle he had removed, was still in Natal. He also suspected that they "kept their friends and relations informed of the troop movements on the Natal side." Giles believed the solution to this problem would be to move the Afrikaners away from the Drakensberg into the interior of the district or into a laager where they could be watched. This idea appealed to some Afrikaners but others were afraid that their houses would be burned by Africans should they evacuate them. From the perspective of the Afrikaners it can be assumed, with some certainty, that they distrusted the Natal authorities, and especially Magistrate Giles, who had to admit that he made bitter enemies amongst them by confiscating their unlicensed and unregistered firearms.⁴

For instructions on what to do Giles contacted Prime Minister AH Hime and Governor W Hely-Hutchinson. Their directive was simple: Giles should use his magisterial duties as an excuse not to attend the meeting and instead send a person whom he could trust and who spoke Dutch, to attend.⁵ As far as the concerns raised by the residents and the defence of the district, no instructions were given.⁶

As a result of the lack of a defensive plan for the district, the Upper Tugela was easily overrun by the Free State Commandos.⁷ By late October 1899, eager Free Staters posted proclamations in the Upper Tugela proclaiming the area part of the Republic.⁸ The Natal authorities reacted speedily and issued their own proclamation informing the residents of the area that such a step was invalid and should be ignored, and if adhered to could result in prosecution on the charge of high treason.⁹ It is highly unlikely that this proclamation ever reached the Upper Tugela Afrikaners, and the fix they found themselves in is best explained by a letter to the *Natal Mercury*. In the correspondence the author explains that loyal Afrikaners of the area, despite having sympathy with the Boers, did not want to fight, but the annexation changed matters since they were now commandeered as if they were Free Staters.¹⁰

From a personal perspective Magistrate Giles found it regrettable that Upper Tugela was not

4. PAR, CSO 2588: Report Magistrate DG Giles, Upper Tugela, to Prime Minister AH Hime, 2.11.1899.

5. PAR, CSO 2581: Correspondence between Magistrate DG Giles, Upper Tugela, and Prime Minister AH Hime, 13.10.1899-15.10.1899.

6. PAR, CSO 2588: Report Magistrate DG Giles, Upper Tugela, to Prime Minister AH Hime, 2.11.1899.

7. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.176.

8. PAR, CSO 2588: Proclamation announcing Upper Tugela as part of the OFS forwarded by FH Orwin, 30.10.1899.

9. PAR, NCP 6/1/52: Proclamation No. 119 issued by Governor W Hely-Hutchinson declaring the OFS proclamation null and void, 3.11.1899; NCP 6/1/52: *Natal Government Gazette*, 3.11.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 7.11.1899.

10. *Natal Witness*, 16.11.1900.

defended as it not only opened up the Colony all the way to Estcourt, but had resulted in a successful invasion. He also believed that this was the signal for the local Natal Afrikaners to join the invaders.¹¹ Giles's observation seems plausible in the light of the fact that a commando of the OFS, under Commandants Strauss and Erasmus had, amongst its 180 members, several Natal Afrikaners, including an Oosthuysen and Van der Merwe and their sons. According to the British informant, Chief Ncwadi, Natal Afrikaners also rendered a range of services to the invaders: JN Scheepers transported goods to Bezuidenhout's Pass; MJ van Rooyen had some scouts arrested; the Lombard family assisted the enemy by feeding them; while AWJ Pretorius had apparently led the commando that looted Acton Homes, down the berg. The majority of the remaining Afrikaners in the district apparently also contributed to the war effort in one way or another.¹²

The information provided by Ncwadi proved to be only partially true. Almost all Natal Afrikaners, including those in the Upper Tugela were aware of the proclamation that warned against treason issued on, 29 September 1899, by the governor.¹³ The only Afrikaner of the district who joined the Boers upon invasion was the 19-year-old Johannes Jurie Bester of Abergeldy farm who was forced to do so by his father.¹⁴ It thus seems that the vast majority of the other 29 Afrikaners of the district who were eventually found guilty of high treason were commandeered during late November and early December 1899. Although the Special Court later rejected their claims of forced conscription it seems to be true, for why would they have resisted the euphoria and momentum of the initial invasion only to join in December 1899?

Once the majority of Afrikaners resident in the Upper Tugela district were coaxed into the fray, a large number were ordered to move, with their families and belongings, to the OFS.¹⁵ It seems that for many of the Upper Tugela Afrikaners this was the only way they could escape the war in Natal. A case in point is GI Minnaar who made it clear that he did not want to fight but was willing to reap crops for the government in the OFS.¹⁶ The moment their families and possessions were secured, a large number of the Natal men were employed as guards along the border between Natal, the OFS and Basutoland. Others took part in operations, especially patrolling towards Witzies Hoek and

11. PAR, CSO 2588: Report Magistrate DG Giles, Upper Tugela, to Prime Minister AH Hime, 2.11.1899.

12. PAR, CSO 2588: Report Sergeant von Puttkamer on his patrol in Upper Tugela, 12.11.1899.

13. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/52: *Natal Government Gazette*, 29.9.1899.

14. AGO, I/7/11: Regina vs JJ Bester, pp.259-262; *Natal Witness*, 10.1.1901. In local Afrikaner folklore JJ Bester lived on as one of the foremost sharpshooters at Spioenkop. See, VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.19-23, 1941.

15. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs WAL Bester, pp.169-172; AGO, I/7/11: Regina vs HAJ Leibrandt, pp.227-231; Regina vs GI Minnaar, pp.247; Regina vs JJH, GJ and WJ Swarts, pp.255-258; Regina vs JJ Bester, pp.259-262; Regina vs JJ Potgieter, pp.269-270; AGO I/7/12: Regina vs JJ, SJ and HS van den Berg, pp.281-283; AGO I/7/13: Regina vs JN, JN (jnr) and GJ Scheepers, pp.287-290; AGO I/7/14: Regina vs PJ and CCJ Bester, pp.300-304.

16. PAR, AGO I/7/11: Regina vs GI Minnaar, pp.247; Regina vs JJH, GJ and WJ Swarts, pp.270 and 282-283.

Oliviershoek, from the laager at Putterill's Farm below Tintwa Pass.¹⁷

Some, however, did return to Natal and, alongside the Free State Commandos, became actively involved in the war by both looting and military activities.¹⁸ HJ Leibrandt, for example, joined the Harrismith Commando and took part in the Battle of Platrand on 6 January 1900 and assisted with capturing and taking English-speaking Natalians to Harrismith.¹⁹ GI van Benecke, GJ (Piet) Swart as well as JN and GH Scheepers, in turn, took part in the attack and looting of the magistracy of the Upper Tugela by Free State Commandos and of farms and stores in the area,²⁰ while PJ and CCJ Bester and JJ, SJ and HS van den Berg took part in action at Thabanyama and the looting of farms belonging to English colonists like George Coventry.²¹

When the OFS Commandos, during May and June 1900, withdrew across the Drakensberg they were, as was the case in Klip River county, followed by some of the Afrikaners who had compromised their position as British subjects. Others returned to their farms while, AM, EM and HJ Pitzer and NJ Robbertse, fled to the Transvaal.²² The Upper Tugela magistracy eventually reopened on 11 June 1900 and the process of taking preliminary statements against the suspected rebels proceeded. By the end of 1900, five suspected rebels were released for want of evidence and 23 were fined or sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for high treason and/or theft.²³ Eventually 30 Afrikaners from the Upper Tugela were found guilty of rebellious activities.²⁴

The experiences of the Upper Tugela Afrikaners, after the retreat of the OFS commandos, are possibly best illustrated by the events surrounding Johannes Jurgens Potgieter of the farm North Dalton. He was a member of the Venterspruit Rifle Association and took the oath of allegiance prior to the war but was deserted by his government. Numerous military activities took place on and around his farm driving away all his neighbours leaving them as the only white residents in the area. The Boers, for their part, suspected the Potgieters of spying for the British, saving some of the cattle

17. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Regina vs WAL Bester, pp.169-172; AGO I/7/11: Regina vs HAJ Leibrandt, pp.227-231; Regina vs GI Minnaar, pp.247; Regina vs JJH, GJ and WJ Swarts, pp.255-258; Regina vs JJ Bester, pp.259-262; Regina vs JJ Potgieter, pp.269-270; AGO I/7/12: Regina vs JJ, SJ and HS van den Berg, pp.281-283; Regina vs JN, JN and GJ Scheepers, pp.287-290; AGO I/7/14: Regina vs PJ and CCJ Bester, pp.300-304. *Natal Witness*, 21 and 24.1.1901; PAR, CSO 2904: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by SJ Schoeman, 28.8.1901.

18. *Natal Witness*, 9.12.1899.

19. PAR, AGO I/7/11: Regina vs HAJ Leibrandt, pp.229-231; *Natal Witness*, 18.12.1900.

20. PAR, AGO I/7/10: Regina vs GI von Benecke, pp.240-241; AGO I/7/11: Regina vs GJ Swarts, pp.256-258; AGO I/7/12: Regina vs JN and GJ Scheepers, pp.287-290; *Natal Witness*, 21.1.1901.

21. PAR, AGO I/7/12: Regina vs JJ, SJ and HS van den Berg, pp.281-283; AGO I/7/14: Regina vs PJ and CCJ Bester, pp.302-304; *Natal Witness*, 24.1.1901.

22. PAR, AGO I/7/33: Rex vs HJ, AM and EM Pitzer, pp.762-772; Rex vs NJ Robbertse, pp.762-772; *Natal Witness*, 15.11.1901.

23. PAR, NCP 7/4/7: Annual report magistrate Upper Tugela, 1900.

24. For the names of Upper Tugela Afrikaners convicted of high treason see Appendix A.

belonging to an English neighbour, Spearman, and providing information to the British military regarding horses in the area. Despite these suspicions he was commandeered by the Free State forces. Potgieter's claims before the Special Court that he was innocent and compelled to join the OFS forces were later rejected in favour of the evidence of 17 Africans. After spending nine months in prison awaiting trial, and having lost all his movable property, he was eventually sentenced to five months imprisonment.²⁵

4.1.2 The war experiences of the Estcourt Afrikaners

At the outbreak of the war Magistrate RH Addison could report that all was quiet in the Estcourt district and that Afrikaners and Africans alike were continuing with their normal activities. This did not imply that the Afrikaners of the district were not concerned. Even before the war some had enquired from Addison what they should do. His advice was that they should remain on their farms.²⁶ Not all were satisfied with the advice given, for instance - Mr Hattingh of Springfield was concerned about the boastful talk of some of his fellow Afrikaners, and also afraid that the Republican forces would force the Afrikaners to take up arms against the Natal Government. He was, however, unsuccessful in persuading his neighbours to go into laager as they were fearful that this would be construed as a hostile act by the British forces. Despite his loyalist intentions, the magistrate was convinced of Hattingh's sincerity since he was the apparent cause for the Afrikaners of Springfield not taking the oath of allegiance.²⁷

The raging war, and the suspicions of Afrikaners, made the authorities very reluctant to allow Afrikaners to own firearms, even though they had ordered them prior to the outbreak of war. J and H Hattingh of Estcourt ordered rifles from JF King of Durban. King refused to forward the rifles without a certificate of consent from the Estcourt magistrate. The Hattinghs obtained the certificate and it was forwarded to King, yet the rifles could still not be forwarded as the Durban magistrate under instruction from the controller of firearms, wanted the Hattinghs to appear before him. Acting on behalf of the Hattinghs, CJ (Casper) Labuschagne (MLC), wrote to the colonial secretary pointing out the absurdity of expecting the two men in question to travel such a long distance to receive their rifles. This letter had the desired effect and King was instructed to forward the rifles to the Hattinghs. The colonial secretary, however, made it clear that he was doing Labuschagne a favour since it was normally expected of both the purchaser and licensed seller to appear before the magistrate.²⁸

The negative sentiments of Magistrate Addison towards Estcourt Afrikaners were confirmed by his

25. PAR, AGO I/7/11: Regina vs JJ Potgieter, pp.198-206; *Natal Witness*, 11.1.1901.

26. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, p.143.

27. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 16.10.1899.

28. PAR, CSO 1628: Minute paper regarding refusal of Durban magistrate to transfer rifles to JH Hattingh, 14.10.1899-17.10.1899.

report of 23 October 1899, in which he gleefully described that the local Afrikaners in town “bore unmistakable signs of sorrow” at the actions at Talana and Elandsplaagte.²⁹ Addison’s glee, however, changed when the war came to the Estcourt district. Employing a pincer movement, a OFS commando under Commandant De Villiers and a commando of Transvalers, occupied Colenso on 6 November 1899.³⁰ This, coupled by the retreat to Estcourt of the British forces in the area which left the district open to the Boer invaders, caused most of the English residents to flee south to Mooi River with their livestock. Although few Afrikaners followed this example, exceptions did occur. Thys Marais and the Afrikaners of Umhlumba moved their stock to the farm of Lang Piet van Rooyen near Mooi River. Those who did not move were immediately subjected to rumours that they had joined the Boers.³¹

Meanwhile, rather than exploit the fact that the British forces had congregated in Estcourt and that reinforcements were yet to arrive in Southern Natal, the Boers remained passive until Commandant-General Piet Joubert arrived with two cannons and enough burghers to increase the numbers of the invading Boer force to 2 100 men.³² Especially from then on groups of Boers roamed freely and scoured the district either for booty or to supplement their commissariat. They would visit local Afrikaners, some of whom were relatives, lodge for a couple of days, gather information and during this time loot the property of those absent from their farms or from the buildings of the Natal administration. At times the Natal Afrikaners were coaxed into participating in these operations. Many a time the looted goods were returned to the houses of those Natal Afrikaners who provided the accommodation, implicating them in the process.³³

When Joubert’s commando retreated at the end of November 1899, the Estcourt magistrate reported that “the amount of damage to furniture is most deplorable, the destruction has been most wanton” and he had little doubt that several local Afrikaners were involved.³⁴ Numerous accusations of such co-operation eventually came out of the Estcourt district: JE Jordaan assisted in the removal of belongings from the farm Zuur Laager, JF Robbertse (jnr) helped with the looting of the Gourton Police Station, the wagon and oxen of JH Hattingh were used to plunder the store of Wilson near Frere and the goods were stored at his house, while the wagon of CJP Hattingh was commandeered by the Boers to gather booty.³⁵ Although, almost without exception, only the houses of the English residents who had fled south that were looted, there was a case in which the house of a loyal

29. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 23.10.1899.

30. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.366.

31. PAR, CSO 2583: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.11.1899.

32. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, pp.364-371.

33. PAR, AGO 1/7/8: Regina vs JF and JF(jnr) Robbertse, pp.183-188.

34. PRO, CO 179/208: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.12.1899.

35. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Regina vs JE Jordaan, pp.173-176; Regina vs JF Robbertse (jnr), pp.183-188; AGO I/7/31: Rex vs JH Hattingh, pp.691-702; Rex vs CJP Hattingh, pp.747-754.

Afrikaner, JG Hattingh of the farm Rama, was also looted.³⁶ These actions did not have the support of the Boer commanders and constituted a flagrant disregard of orders issued by the commandant-general.³⁷ The damage wrecked by the Boer commandos is best described by Mrs SA Wood of the farm Longwood on her return two months after the Boers retired:

The first thing I happened upon, nearly a mile from the house, was a folding chair, in a plantation. Close by were two glass fruit jars, and a little further on lay one of my husband's Parliamentary Blue Books...close to the stable were some broken plates, a silver egg cup and the horsehair from my new mattress...on the manure heap lay the remains of a stain-lined work basket...below were sixty turkeys, shot, but not eaten...the doors were smashed with crowbars. Not a whole one was left in the house...everything, excepting two tables, bedsteads (one was minus castors), a washstand, and an iron-bound military packing case, was literally smashed to atoms...According to the accounts, unanimous, of our natives, our Boer neighbours, men who have eaten of our salt, and have been treated with every neighbourly kindness, went up to Longwood with the Boers and helped in the looting and general destruction.³⁸

Despite numerous such accusations, and even a rumour that five pianos were found in a single house,³⁹ only four Estcourt Afrikaners were convicted of theft.⁴⁰ Andreas, John and Daniel Oosthuisen and Marthinus Jansen were arrested near Gourton by the Natal Carbineers, who came under fire during the process. The belongings of local English colonists such as furniture, mealies and a mixed herd of 120 cattle were found in the possession of the men.⁴¹ The four were tried by a military court and found guilty of looting. A prison sentence of one year with hard labour, confirmed by Lt-Gen Clery, was imposed on them.⁴² Prime Minister Hime immediately requested that the men be sent to Durban where they could be employed on the breakwater in the harbour.⁴³

Simultaneously to the pilfering more legitimate military operations also took place. Having decided to withdraw his forces to Estcourt, Major-General Wolfe-Murray, in trying to scout on any Boer movements, ordered that an armoured train should run to Colenso on a daily basis. In the first significant action near Estcourt, a Boer commando under General Louis Botha, on 15 November 1899, captured the train, killing four troops and taking another 68 prisoners, including Winston Churchill.⁴⁴ This success was not followed up. Instead it was decided by Commandant-General

36. PAR, CSO 2584: Confidential report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 1899.

37. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.373.

38. *Natal Witness*, 26.1.1900.

39. *Natal Witness*, 9.12.1899.

40. PAR, CSO 2583: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.11.1899.

41. *Natal Witness*, 9.12.1899.

42. PRO, WO 108/302: Extracts from the proceedings of military courts, 1900; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 19.12.1899; PAR, AGO I/7/42: Military court trial of A, D and J Oosthuisen and M Jansen, 23.12.1899; PAR, AGO I/8/70: Military court proceedings against A, D, J Oosthuisen and M Jansen, 4.4.1900-16.5.1900

43. PAR, GH 1445: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to GOC, communications, 17.12.1899.

44. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, pp.368-371.

Joubert to avoid the British forces at Estcourt while conducting reconnaissance into Southern Natal. The strategy decided upon was that a 600 strong commando under Commandant David Joubert should proceed east towards Weenen, while the main force under Piet Joubert would bypass Estcourt in a westerly direction. The two units would then again join forces south of Estcourt on 17 November 1899.⁴⁵

The arrival of the Boers in Southern Natal caused anxiety levels to rise. In Mooi River rumours spread that the local Afrikaners would join the Boers should they prove to be victorious. It was claimed that not one of the local Afrikaners supported the British.⁴⁶ In the neighbouring Impendhle district an uneasiness also set in. Magistrate Boast was unsure if the local Afrikaners had created a laager at Van der Westhuyzens near Mooi River,⁴⁷ while he also feared that some might join the Boers and take control of the magazine. Boast therefore called for a better defence of the magistracy.⁴⁸

Such measures were not necessary because after several light skirmishes, followed by the Battle of Willow Grange on 23 November 1899, which the Boers claimed as a victory, the Republican forces started to retreat. The retreat was partially due to the arrival of the large number of British reinforcements in Natal and partially due to the hesitancy on the part of Piet Joubert. The main commando retired via Weenen and a commando of Free Staters via Ulundi, driving, conservatively estimated, 2 000 looted cattle and horses, and thousands of sheep.⁴⁹ This retreat to north of the Tugela River marked the end of the Boer offensive in Southern Natal specifically, and in Natal in general.

General Piet Joubert, after the retreat, suspected that the Boer cause was spent and urged President Paul Kruger to seek means to bring about peace.⁵⁰ Kruger refused to even consider such an idea, amongst other reasons, because it would amount to a betrayal of the Natal and Cape Afrikaners who had joined the Republican cause.⁵¹ Kruger's point of view was possibly more applicable to Cape Afrikaners because very few Natal Afrikaners, and hardly any from Estcourt, rushed to enlist with the invaders. In fact, only 18 of the local Afrikaners were found guilty of collaborating with the

45. T Pakenham, pp.171-175; JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.373; *Natal Witness*, 13.6.1900 and 15.6.1900.

46. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter EJ Boshoff to AA Boshoff intercepted by the Criminal Investigation Division (hereafter CID), 6.10.1899.

47. PAR, CSO 2582: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 30.10.1899; Report Magistrate C Boast, Impendhle, 30.10.1899.

48. PAR, CSO 2583: Reports Magistrate C Boast, Impendhle, 5.11.1899 and 13.11.1899.

49. T Pakenham, p.183; JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.373; *Natal Witness* of 13.6.1900 and 15.6.1900 contains evidence of the stock losses by English Natalians. WJ Carter of Estcourt, for example, lost 344 sheep and Herbert Blaker of Mooi River 14 head of cattle and 61 sheep.

50. NAR, Leyds collection 711: Telegram General PJ Joubert to ZAR Government, 25.11.1899.

51. NAR, Leyds collection 711: Telegram President SJP Kruger to General PJ Joubert, 25.11.1899.

Boers during the three week long operations in the Estcourt district.

The Boers, now under the leadership of the Natal-born General Louis Botha, withdrew to defensive positions north of the Tugela to face the 21 000 British troops and 46 guns under General Redvers Buller. At the end of November 1899 the Boers had therefore begun to prepare to engage in a defensive struggle along the hills just north of the Tugela River.⁵²

The greatest support for the Boer operations in the district came from the extended Hattingh and Zietsman families residing around Frere and Chieveley, the scene of the armoured train incident. The chief suspect from the area was Johannes Hendrik Hattingh. Africans taken prisoner were kept at his property,⁵³ he frequently had Boer visitors, visited the Boer laager, and was accused of providing the information that led to the capturing of the armoured train.⁵⁴ Another Afrikaner of the area who was linked to the armoured train incident was JG Zietsman of the farm Snelster who, with the aid of his mother, provided some of the Boers involved with milk and eggs.⁵⁵ JH Hattingh and JG Zietsman were not the only Natal Afrikaners who compromised their position as British subjects; W Zietsman and CJP, JM and CP Hattingh, also joined the Boers in their retreat across the Tugela River on 26 November 1899. Both the Hattinghs and Zietsmans made it very clear that they decided to flee because rumours had reached them that the Natal Volunteers and the British forces had threatened to shoot them.⁵⁶ Zietsman later added that they were afraid they would be blamed for the extensive damage caused by the Boers and accused of supplying the enemy with food while it was in effect commandeered. Fearing arrest by the Natal authorities for crimes they did not commit, they fled.⁵⁷

Other Afrikaners of the district who harboured similar fears initially congregated at the DRC at Moira, close to the bridge over the Little Tugela River,⁵⁸ before departing for the OFS. Some of the Natal Afrikaners who followed the Boers became/remained actively involved in the war. NJ Robbertse (jnr) took part in the Battle of Platrand on 6 January 1900,⁵⁹ while JH Hattingh who was without means, received a directive from General Piet Joubert to take charge of some cattle on behalf of the Boers, while he also acted as a special policeman.⁶⁰

52. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, pp.372-385.

53. PAR, PM 18: Refusal of application by JG Hattingh to purchase gunpowder by Magistrate RH Addison, 10.8.1900.

54. PAR, AGO I/7/31: Rex vs JH Hattingh, pp.691-702; *Natal Witness*, 1.12.1899; *Natal Witness*, 31.10.1901.

55. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Rex vs JG Zietsman, pp.211-217; *Natal Witness*, 14.12.1900.

56. PAR, AGO I/7/31: Rex vs W Zietsman and CJP, CP and JM Hattingh, pp.747-754; PAR, CSO 2911: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MP Wallace, 6.4.1900.

57. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, p.143.

58. PAR, CSO 1628: Letter CJ Labuschagne to Prime Minister AH Hime, 18.10.1899, and reply on 19.10.1899.

59. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Regina vs JF (jnr) Robbertse, pp.183-188; *Natal Witness*, 30.11.1900.

60. PAR, AGO I/7/31: Rex vs JH Hattingh, pp.691-702; *Natal Witness*, 31.10.1901.

In the wake of the retreating Boers followed various units of the British military, as well as agents of the Natal colonial administration, such as the Natal Police and the Natal Carbineers. One of the first issues they had to deal with was that of the Afrikaners and English who resided on the southern bank of the Tugela River, opposite the positions occupied by the Boers. These inhabitants were removed by the military and placed on the farms of those Afrikaners who had joined the Boer forces. Only after the Siege of Ladysmith ended were they allowed to return home.⁶¹ The military, furthermore, seized 800 to 900 head of cattle,⁶² and thousands of head of sheep from the farms deserted by Afrikaners.⁶³ Advantage was also taken of the occasion by the British forces “to secure a supply of delicacies, such as poultry, fresh butter and eggs” from these farms.⁶⁴

With the Estcourt district once again under British control, investigations into the activities of the local Afrikaners during the brief Boer occupation started. Finding witnesses willing to testify, especially amongst the African population, did not prove to be difficult for the Field Intelligence Department, the Natal Carbineers and the Natal Police. A labourer of David Evans’ implicated JJ Jordaan, and FH Orwin identified 14 possible rebels,⁶⁵ while some Africans recognised Dewald Pretorius of Proviso B in the area. In the end it did not take the investigators long to compile a rudimentary list of the Afrikaners who had allegedly committed treasonable offences.⁶⁶ Initially it was estimated that 25 Afrikaners from the Estcourt district withdrew with the Boers.⁶⁷ By 27 July 1901, 18 Afrikaners from the area were still at large.⁶⁸ In the end only 18 men of the area were found guilty of high treason,⁶⁹ while IJ and John Meyer of Evertsholt were acquitted.⁷⁰ Others who were suspected of treason, like Miss L Neizel, JA van Niekerk and J van Aken, were banned to Pietermaritzburg.⁷¹

The main target of the British authorities in the Estcourt district was, however, Casper Labuschagne (MLC), resident on the farm Haasfontein near Colenso. In his report of 6 November 1899, Magistrate Addison mentioned that a rumour was circulating in Colenso that Casper Labuschagne had been

61. PAR, NCP 7/4/7: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1900.

62. PRO, CO 179/208: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.12.1899.

63. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Regina vs JF and JF (jnr) Robbertse, pp.183-188; *Natal Witness*, 30.11.1900.

64. *Natal Witness*, 30.11.1899. The economic impact of the war on Natal Afrikaners will be analysed in Chapter 12.

65. PAR, GH 525: Statements taken by the Field Intelligence Department, 12.1.1900.

66. PRO, CO 179/208: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.12.1899.

67. PAR, PM 20: List of Afrikaners of Weenen and Estcourt who had left their farms, 2.5.1900; PAR, GH 1446: List of Afrikaners of Weenen and Estcourt who had left their farms, 2.5.1900.

68. PAR, Archives of the Weenen magistrate (hereafter 1/WEN) 3/2/4: List of Natal Afrikaners from D District still not apprehended, 27.7.1901.

69. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1901

70. PAR, NCP 7/4/7: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1900.

71. PRO, CO 179/210: List of persons arrested under Martial Law, 6.4.1900.

shot.⁷² This rumour was partially squashed when Addison received a letter from Labuschagne. Chief Faku was, however, not convinced and insisted that Labuschagne was wounded in the arm and that his horse had been shot. Although Addison passed this off as African gossip,⁷³ rumours that Labuschagne had given active support to the Boers continued and as a result Governor Hely-Hutchinson could inform Joseph Chamberlain, on 2 December 1899, that Labuschagne was, arrested under Martial Law by the military.⁷⁴ The arrest of Labuschagne⁷⁵ was followed by the arrest of WJ Pretorius, an MLC from 1893 to 1897, on similar charges.⁷⁶ Both men were paroled to Durban while the case against them was investigated. The Natal Government contributed two shillings per day towards their expenses.⁷⁷

From the outset Labuschagne was not perturbed by his arrest and wrote a cheerful letter to his wife in English playing down his situation. In a second letter to his wife, written in Dutch, and on government paper, but not in Labuschagne's handwriting, someone complained on his behalf about the food and the dishonour of being suspected. The Natal Police, under the guise that they were worried about the health of Mrs Labuschagne who could have been disturbed by the news in the letter, promptly investigated the matter. The prime suspect was Ds WP Rousseau of the DRC in Pietermaritzburg. Although nothing could be proved, rumours were abound about Rousseau's disloyalty.⁷⁸

It was difficult to prove the charges against Labuschagne. One of the accusations levelled at him was that he had received between £4 000 and £5 000, from the National Bank, in Durban in February or March 1897 to pay secret service agents. This money was subsequently transferred to Labuschagne's account in Ladysmith. According to the informant, Captain RJ Taylor, two other MLC's and a man with the surname of Hugo had also received money. When this information was revealed 8 December 1899 by HC Shepstone it opened a can of worms and the Natal Government instantly decided to investigate the matter. The criminal investigation officer was instructed to obtain statements from the banks in Durban, Ladysmith and Estcourt on any payments into the accounts of Labuschagne and Pretorius. This could only be done once the bank had received an order to do so from a judge in

72. PAR, CSO 2583: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 6.11.1899.

73. PAR, CSO 2583: Report Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, 13.6.1899.

74. PAR, GH 1301: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 2.12.1899; *Natal Witness*, 1.12.1899.

75. How family ties between Natal Afrikaners and Republicans transcended borders are illustrated by the case of Casper Labuschagne (MLC). His brother, Jan Hendrik Labuschagne, a burgher of the OFS, was taken prisoner early in 1901. See, PAR, CSO 1672: Request by C Labuschagne to have JH Labuschagne paroled to his farm, 26.3.1901.

76. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 9.12.1899.

77. This was certainly an exception. Generally Afrikaners paroled to other parts of Natal had to carry their own expenses. Ds HF Schoon, for one, took exception to the double standards. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 3.5.1900, p.264.

78. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Documents on the proceedings of and the investigation into WP Rousseau, 11-16.12.1899.

chambers. Once granted, enquiries were made at the National Bank branches in question. No evidence was found of corresponding amounts of money paid into the accounts of either Pretorius or Labuschagne. As a result the spotlight shifted to the informant, and Attorney-General Bale approached the GOC for Natal to get Captain Taylor to confirm the information he had provided to Shepstone under oath, as this would have allowed the Natal Government to institute criminal proceedings. When the military authorities finally got hold of Taylor he denied having made such a statement and insisted that Shepstone had misunderstood him. Taylor maintained that he was merely repeating what he had heard. This shocked Shepstone who insisted that he took down the statement and read it back to Taylor who refused to sign it simply because he wanted to remain anonymous. To Bale, who knew Shepstone, there was no doubt to the accuracy of the latter's statement.⁷⁹

Labuschagne did not take his position lying down and he entered into correspondence with General Redvers Buller enquiring when he would be allowed to return home. Buller's response was that the office of the attorney-general had to undertake a preliminary enquiry into the case. This answer did not satisfy Labuschagne who could not help but wonder when this enquiry would take place for he had been arrested four and a half months earlier and had still not been charged. In the process he was deprived of his liberty as a British subject and faced economic ruin.⁸⁰ Labuschagne's letter to Bale elicited a prompt reply. The investigation against him would be completed by 4 May 1900 since witnesses who resided some distance away were subpoenaed. In the meantime Labuschagne could either remain in Durban on parole or in the prison at Estcourt.⁸¹

The position Casper Labuschagne found himself in, apart from the fact that he received a government stipend, was no different from that of numerous other Natal Afrikaner men. What did count in his favour was that he was an MLC, who was summoned by the governor to take his seat in the Legislative Council on 3 May 1900. Yet, if he had obeyed this command he would have been arrested for leaving Durban. As the opening of the Natal Parliament approached the *Natal Witness* picked up on the circumstances surrounding Labuschagne. The newspaper recommended bringing Labuschagne to trial so that the public could know once and for all whether he was guilty or not.⁸² The media coverage of the case, as much as the lack of evidence, resulted in the release of Labuschagne, in time for him to take up his seat. Pretorius was likewise released.⁸³

Although Labuschagne and Pretorius were the most well-known Afrikaners in the Estcourt district to

79. PAR, MJPW 116: Investigation into secret service money allegedly forwarded to agents in Natal, 8.12.1899-29.9.1900.

80. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Letter CJ Labuschagne to Attorney-General H Bale, 17.4.1900.

81. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Telegram Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.4.1900; Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 26.4.1900.

82. *Natal Witness*, 26.4.1900.

83. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 22.5.1900.

come into conflict with the British, they were certainly not the only ones. In total 13 Afrikaners from the area were convicted of treason, a very small number considering that the district was overrun and occupied by the Boers. This in itself is also a clear indication of the determination of the Afrikaners of the area to, under trying circumstances, remain neutral.

4.1.3 The war experiences of the Weenen district Afrikaners

Shortly after the outbreak of war the Weenen magistrate, Maynard Matthews, reported that all was peaceful in his district. Only two Afrikaner families had left the area to proceed to Middelburg in the ZAR to honour a prior engagement. Before departing both families declared themselves willing to join the Boer invasion because they feared the consequences if they failed to do so. Matthews was very confident that the majority of Afrikaners in the district would endeavour to remain neutral.⁸⁴

The resolve of the local Afrikaners to remain loyal was soon tested, because on 16 November 1899, Commandant David J Joubert and 600 burghers of the Carolina and Middelburg Commandos entered the district. This invading force was the left pincer of an investigative probe into Southern Natal. The Boers took control of Weenen on 17 November 1899, and then headed in a southwesterly direction to meet up with the main force under General Piet Joubert.⁸⁵ The retreat of the Boers from the Mooi River area started on 24 November 1899. After an arduous journey, which included crossing the Bushmans River 18 times, the main party reached Weenen on Sunday 26 November. After several hours rest, during which time some of the burghers attended the service in the local DRC, the retreat was resumed.⁸⁶

Hours before the Boers entered Weenen for the first time the local Afrikaner and English residents gathered around the court house to hear first-hand from Magistrate Maynard Matthews, who had communicated with Commandant Joubert, what they were to do. They were informed to remain quietly at their homes and protect their property. Contrary to a promise given by Joubert, some properties were looted by drunken Boers and only the intervention of RJJ van Rooyen (JP), prevented the looting of the house of the schoolmaster. To end the looting, Matthews and the local DRC reverend, Andrew Milne Murray, rode out to Joubert to ask him to keep to his undertaking. Their venture met with limited success.⁸⁷

On the invasion of the district three local Afrikaners, CJ Triegaard of Schoongezicht, and JF and JA van der Merwe of Sophia's Rest, joined the Boers. Triegaardt and the Van der Merwes accompanied the raid towards Mooi River. On the return of the commando, Triegaardt, fearing prosecution,

84. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, 17.10.1899.

85. JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.372.

86. T Pakenham, p.183; JH Breytenbach, *Vol I*, p.383; CJ Barnard, p.42.

87. PAR, NCP 7/4/6: Annual report magistrate Weenen, 1899.

proceeded to his farm in the OFS, while the Van der Merwes assisted the Boers in their attempt to free two burghers captured near Gourton by the Natal Police. This was the end of the involvement of the 18-year-old Jacob Albertus van der Merwe. Johannes Francois, however, continued to serve the Boers at the laager of the Wakkerstroom Commando near Ladysmith and rendered service as a policeman.⁸⁸ Along with these men, 33-year-old Philip Rudolph Buys (jnr), was convicted of high treason for accompanying the Boers south to Mooi River and for taking horses from an African, Usapo.⁸⁹

Suspicious also fell on numerous other Weenen Afrikaners and, consequently, the following eight were arrested as rebel suspects: GM Rudolph (jnr), JH and JHD McDuling, A Steyn, Nathaniel Scheepers, Barend Scheepers, Isak Marais and Daniel Snyman. All these Afrikaners were initially deported to Pietermaritzburg but were eventually released and allowed to return home,⁹⁰ possibly because the evidence consisted of rumours such as those spread by Frank Grant. According to Grant, G Rutter, the headmaster of the government school at Weenen, provided him with information on the Natal Afrikaners who had joined the Boers. Rutter denied this as he was in Pietermaritzburg at the time. He also stated that it was not the first time that Grant had fabricated stories in his name.⁹¹ When confronted, Frank Grant denied ever mentioning the name of Rutter as a person with information relating to treasonable offences, for he had only spoken to trooper Williams of Estcourt who had accompanied Willem Pieterse and CH Heine to the Pietermaritzburg Prison. Williams had apparently told Grant that Louis Nel, Gys Pieterse, Hendrik de Villiers and Roelf van Rooyen of Weenen were going to be arrested. One Walmsley, stated that Grant was again lying as he had a conversation with him in a tobacconist shop in Pietermaritzburg during which Grant stated that Rutter was the provider of the information. The Natal Government nevertheless took these rumours seriously and considered the appointment of a competent legal person to investigate the matter.⁹²

Eventually only nine Afrikaners from the Weenen district were convicted of high treason. They, just like the Afrikaner in the neighbouring Estcourt district, were well aware of the negative consequences they could face if they answered the call of the Republican brothers.

4.2 The Afrikaners of Pietermaritzburg county and the conventional phase of the war⁹³

88. PAR, AGO I/7/8: Regina vs JF and JA van der Merwe, pp.163-168; *Natal Witness*, 25.11.1900; AGO I/7/25: Rex vs CJ Triegaardt, pp.536-537; *Natal Witness*, 4.4.1901.

89. *Natal Witness*, 13.6.1900 and 15.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs PR Buys and A Fuhri, June 1900.

90. PRO, CO 179/207: Letter Magistrate RH Addison, Estcourt, to under colonial secretary, 20.11.1899; PAR, NCP 7/4/7: Annual report magistrate Weenen, 1900; PAR, AGO I/4/40: Minute paper minister of lands and works to chief commissioner of police, 16.10.1899; PRO, CO 179/210: List of persons arrested under Martial Law, 6.4.1900; PAR, MJPW 72: List of suspects incarcerated in the Estcourt and Pietermaritzburg Prisons, 18.12.1899-1.3.1900.

91. PAR, CSO 2582: Statement by G Rutter, 12.12.1899.

92. PAR, CSO 2582: Minute paper on information respecting Natal Afrikaners of Weenen who have apparently joined the Boers, 7.12.1899-18.12.1899.

93. Pietermaritzburg county consisted of the districts of Ixopo, Upper Umkomanzi, Umgeni, Pietermaritzburg, New Hanover, Lions River, Impendhle and Ipoleta. See the map of the Colony of Natal on p.ii.

The county of Pietermaritzburg, including the city itself, had no more than a few hundred Afrikaner inhabitants. Although it was at no stage seriously threatened by the Boer forces, the local Afrikaners experienced the wrath of the Natal authorities and public, even if it was in a different manner from that of their kin in the Weenen and Umvoti counties.

The vulnerable position the Pietermaritzburg county Afrikaners found themselves in was driven home by the arrest of Jan Odendaal and Solomon Maritz of Noodsberg. Odendaal, while on business in the capital, was arrested under the Treasonable Offences Act and remanded for seven days. Although the criminal investigation officer admitted that it was difficult to prove anything against Odendaal, he deemed the arrest apt for its “moral effect” on the local Afrikaners, of which only the Wolhuters were regarded as loyal.⁹⁴ Odendaal’s arrest scared the Afrikaners from the neighbouring Umvoti county to such an extent that they felt they were unsafe in the capital where, according to them, any Afrikaner could be arrested illegally while the Natal Government merely stood by. As a result they sold their wool at Greytown and not as normal in Pietermaritzburg.⁹⁵

JF (Frikkie) and PH Tredoux, Thomas Hannah (married to a Tredoux) and SS Maritz who resided in Pietermaritzburg, but with economic and other links to Umvoti, decided on a different strategy. They approached the CID office to enquire why Odendaal was arrested, and why they were suspected of being rebels when they were perfectly loyal. Superintendent UCH Senge, the officer in charge, suggested that they inform the colonial secretary of their loyalty.⁹⁶ The men complied, and at a meeting that took place on 21 October 1899 declared their loyalty to the Natal Government and the crown. At the same time they complained that they were insulted in the streets for being Afrikaners, that the local newspapers were extremely anti-Afrikaner, and that they feared that false information could be lodged against them leading to their imprisonment. The men were even prepared to inform the governor in person of their loyalty, and to take the oath of loyalty.⁹⁷

Hannah was not passive while awaiting the outcome of their dealings with the Natal authorities. He regularly acted as a correspondent for the *South African News*⁹⁸ and in the edition of 24 January 1900 relayed the story of the arrest of Jan Odendaal and Solomon Maritz at the Pietermaritzburg Station, as well as that of numerous other Natal Afrikaners who were detained, imprisoned and then released, suffered economically in the process. He, furthermore, maintained that the jingoistic nature of the Natal press made the Natal Afrikaners suffer indignities and that this was a major reason for the

94. PAR, MJPW 71: Letter WP Rousseau to Attorney-General H Bale, 22.10.1899.

95. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter Magistrate HC Koch, Umvoti, to Attorney-General H Bale, 13.11.1899; AGO I/9/67: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to minister of justice and public works, 8.11.1899.

96. PAR, MJPW 71: Report Inspector UCH Senge, 21.10.1899.

97. PRO, CO 179/207: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 21.10.1899.

98. PAR, GH 549: Letter GS Malan to T Hannah, 17.1.1900.

rebellion of Afrikaners in Northern Natal.⁹⁹

Negotiations with the Natal authorities, as well as the articles by Hannah in the *South African News*, did little to improve the situation. The authorities continued to arrest Afrikaners visiting the capital under Martial Law or clauses thereof. One such clause determined that non-residents had to register when visiting the town. Henry Joseph van der Merwe, Jacobus Nicholas and Johannes Henning Boshoff of Mooi River were arrested by the police in Pietermaritzburg when they were unable to provide such a registration document. They spent the evening at a boarding house under police guard, after a relative, Judge Henry Boshoff, failed to secure their release. The following day the men, who were in Pietermaritzburg on business, were brought before Magistrate Beaumont who remanded them in custody until such time that he received instructions from the commandant on how to deal with the case. That afternoon they were again brought before the magistrate, who by now had affidavits from the men and from Messrs Lister and Peters with whom they were conducting “bona fide” business. This, and the ignorance of the men regarding the law, secured their release on condition that they took the first train home.¹⁰⁰

Another member of the Boshoff clan likewise suffered at the hands of the authorities, this time the kind of verbal abuse Hannah referred to in his correspondence with the *South African News*. While on business at the Mooi River Station “eenige Engelsche Lords”, including the station master, verbally abused him, simply according to Boshoff, because he was a “Bloody Boer.” Under these circumstances Boshoff found it difficult to remain a loyal British subject. What annoyed him even more was the fact that the Martial Law proclamations seemed to be applicable only to Afrikaners since the English could say what they like. Boshoff made it clear that if he was ever again insulted by the station master, the latter would suffer the consequences.¹⁰¹ A similar spat between William Keyter and William Brewer, both of St Andrews Street in Pietermaritzburg, turned out differently. According to Brewer, Keyter and his friends called him a “verdomde rooinek.” Keyter denied this and accused Brewer of saying “You lousy Boer verneuker, come into the street and I will show you up” without any provocation. As a result Keyter took the matter to court. Brewer was sentenced to a fine of £5 and told to keep the peace with Keyter for six months.¹⁰² The experiences of Boshoff and Keyter were not unique and verbal slander of Afrikaners became such a problem that a member of the Legislative Assembly, Baynes, even wanted to introduce a resolution that would curb unnecessary slander of Afrikaners. An intervention by Prime Minister AH Hime prevented this.¹⁰³

99. *South African News*, 24.1.1900.

100. *Natal Witness*, 16.11.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 21.11.1899.

101. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 31.10.1899. Constant quarreling between Afrikaners and English in Mooi River already started before the war. See, PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter EJ Boshoff to AA Boshoff intercepted by the CID, 6.10.1899.

102. *Natal Witness*, 28.12.1899.

103. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900.

Intimidation and abuse of Afrikaners by local English also took other forms. On the relief of Ladysmith local English broke into the DRC in Pietermaritzburg, rang the bell and hung all kinds of celebratory material on the church. This led to Ds WP Rousseau requesting a guard for the evenings from the local commandant.¹⁰⁴ When Pretoria was taken by the British forces under Roberts, “God save the Queen” was sung in front of the house hired in Pietermaritzburg by Ds HF Schoon who was banned to the capital from Ladysmith. Stones were also thrown at the house of P Keyter where many of the Natal Afrikaner suspects sent to Pietermaritzburg resided. The houses of other Afrikaner residents were likewise stoned.¹⁰⁵

In the outlying areas of the county things were no different and all Afrikaners were viewed with suspicion. The New Hanover magistrate reported that the four Afrikaners, known to have sympathy with the Boers, had been remaining quietly on their farms. They were nevertheless watched by the police.¹⁰⁶ When a young Afrikaner with the surname of Maritz arrived in Howick from New Hanover, on his way to conducting business in Nottingham Road, he was instantly labelled a spy and the minister of lands and works ordered the police to keep an eye on him.¹⁰⁷

Local Afrikaner residents by virtue of their ethnicity, were treated with the same suspicion as those from out of town, as illustrated by the case of Hansmeyer and Becker, employed as sorters in the post office in Pietermaritzburg. The chief press censor was concerned that their employment gave them the opportunity to observe which letters were removed for scrutiny and the fear existed that they could inform the parties involved. Postmaster-General WG Hamilton did not share these fears but nevertheless had them watched.¹⁰⁸ In the end no real evidence was found that they were abusing their position to convey information to fellow Afrikaners. While Hamilton did not regard either as particularly good clerks he could not give sufficient grounds for their dismissal but he noted that “if their removal be desired on political grounds, their employment can be terminated by a month’s notice.” This was the route favoured by Attorney-General Bale. The Natal Cabinet were, however, more sensible and suggested that one of the men be employed in the surveyors general’s office, while an effort would be made to find a position for the other outside the post office.¹⁰⁹

104. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter WP Rousseau to HF Schoon, 6.3.1900.

105. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 7.6.1900, p.353.

106. PAR, CSO 2586: Report Magistrate A Ritter, New Hanover, 13.2.1900.

107. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Report on the behaviour of Maritz, 21.10.1899.

108. This fear was based on the fact that hundreds of letters written in Dutch were detained by the CID for investigation. See, PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter Inspector UCH Senge to minister of lands and works, 8.11.1899.

109. PAR, GH 1455: Correspondence regarding the position of Becker and Hansmeyer employed by the post office, Pietermaritzburg, 10.2.1900-15.2.1900. Working in the post office as a Natal Afrikaner must have been far from easy as proven by the case of SBLE Maré, supernumerary clerk in the Durban Post Office, who left in February 1900 without giving notice. PAR, PMG 84: Minute paper regarding SBLE Maré leaving his position, 28.2.1900.

Apart from the suspicion, discrimination, unfair treatment and persecution the war brought to the only urban Afrikaner community of significance in Natal, that of Pietermaritzburg, it also provided them with the opportunity to reach out to both Boers and Natal Afrikaners alike. Substantial numbers of Boer POWs, captured in Northern Natal, especially after the Battle of Elandslaagte, arrived in Pietermaritzburg from October 1899 onwards. These POWs were imprisoned in the Pietermaritzburg Prison.¹¹⁰ They were joined by Natal Afrikaners, such as PRN Vermaak, captured as a suspect even before war broke out, as well as suspected rebels who were apprehended as the Boers retreated, like TH, JHD and JJ McDuling, CJ van Rooyen and IM and JJ Botha, all from the Weenen district.¹¹¹ Concerns about the plight of such Afrikaners made the Pietermaritzburg Afrikaners exhibit great resilience and stretched their limited resources to the maximum. Essential goods and £14 in cash were forwarded to Ladysmith,¹¹² and in collaboration with the Afrikaners from Umvoti a “Dutch Relief Fund” in aid of “Dutch wounded, widows and orphans” was started. By 11 November 1899 the fund was already £301.17 strong. Major contributors to this fund were SC and PJ Boshoff who contributed £15 each and PH Boshoff, Isaac Buys and PH van Rooyen who contributed £10 each.¹¹³

4.3 Umvoti county Afrikaners and the war - October 1899 to June 1900¹¹⁴

4.3.1 The Umvoti district (Greytown) and the conventional phase of the war

The Umvoti district was, at the time of the Anglo-Boer War, the political and cultural stronghold of Afrikaners in Natal. Thus, when war broke out, and especially after the Boers successfully invaded Natal, rumours regarding the Umvoti Afrikaners spread like wildfire. One such rumour had it that Boers were crossing into Umvoti county in twos and threes and were sheltered by the local Afrikaners. Another stated that there were 7 000 Mausers concealed somewhere near Pietermaritzburg, with one house allegedly containing seven. Inspector Campbell of the Natal Police, correctly so, passed this off as mere rumours.¹¹⁵ Even Governor Hely-Hutchinson got into the act. On several occasions, he expressed the fear that disloyal Natal Afrikaners from the Umvoti district could try and attack Pietermaritzburg.¹¹⁶ Another rumour had it that the local Afrikaners were erecting a laager between Greytown and Rietvlei. On investigation it proved to be nothing more than a small hall with a wire fence around it intended for church services and public meetings.¹¹⁷ Similarly information supplied by an African informer that a posse of 200 armed Boers were seen near Seven

110. *De Kerkbode*, 19.4.1900.

111. PAR, PM 17: List of suspects in Pietermaritzburg Prison, 28.2.1900.

112. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 27.10.1899, pp.34-35.

113. *Natal Witness*, 11.11.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 21.11.1899.

114. Umvoti county consisted of two districts, Umvoti, which included Umvoti (Greytown), and Kranskop. See the map of the Colony of Natal on p.ii.

115. PAR, CSO 2581: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Campbell, 16.10.1899.

116. PRO, CO 179/206: Telegram W Hely-Hutchinson to admiral Simon's Town, 16.10.1899; PRO, WO 32/7863: Minute paper Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to GOC, Natal, 17.10.1899.

117. PAR, CSO 2582: Report by Inspector Meiners on possible laager building by Afrikaners, 13.10.1899.

Oaks proved, upon investigation, to be nothing more than the local Public Works Department (hereafter PWD) road workers. Even Boer refugees from Vryheid and Harrismith, who crossed the Tugela into the Umvoti district, were falsely identified as a major force.¹¹⁸

These persistent rumours were taking its toll and the English inhabitants of Greytown were starting to feel unsafe, especially after 50 Afrikaners held a meeting at the store of CJ Nel where they apparently discussed the taking of the local magazine and laager. The young men wanted to proceed immediately, but their elders persuaded them to wait for a more opportune moment.¹¹⁹ This perceived threat left the defences of the town in a quandary. The 50-strong local rifle association, from which all Afrikaners had resigned, felt that they could not defend the magazine. The Natal Government was in two minds on how to react to the “impending danger.” The feeling was that the small force defending the magazine would not be able to stand up against the attackers, while removing the arms and ammunition would merely serve to show distrust in the inhabitants of the Umvoti district. In the end it was decided to adopt a wait and see attitude.¹²⁰ To ensure that the local Afrikaners could not participate in such rebellious acts, the applications by JJ Potgieter and PR Botha to purchase ammunition and gun powder were denied on the grounds that they were not members of the local rifle association.¹²¹ None of these rumours were, however, taken seriously by Magistrate Herbert Millar, and a week into the war he reported that his district was quiet. Thanks to TJ Nel (MLA) he knew that the impromptu meetings held by Afrikaners were merely to share news and had no sinister objective. He could therefore afford to dismiss the talk going around as “wild rumours.”¹²²

The petty nature of most of the rumours, accusations and counter-accusations is borne out by the spat between the local blacksmith, Cornelius de Haas, and William Livingstone, a carpenter. While discussing the war De Haas disputed the fact that the British had large guns. Livingstone immediately reported the matter to Magistrate HC (Henry) Koch, stating that De Haas was spreading false rumours. Although he regarded the incident as mere gossip, Koch left it to the military to decide whether they wanted to press charges. This they oddly enough did and Koch was instructed to issue, under Martial Law, a summons against De Haas.¹²³ The decision by the military would have carried favour with at least one English inhabitant of Greytown, W Perry, a shoemaker by trade. Perry bombarded the authorities with illogical letters, consisting mainly of quotations from the Bible, on how they should deal with suspected rebels.¹²⁴

118. PAR, CSO 2582: Report by Sergeant Fothergill on a alleged meeting of armed Boers at Seven Oaks, 25.10.1899.

119. PAR, CSO 2582: Magistrate H Millar forwards anonymous letter he received, 23.10.1899.

120. PAR, CSO 1628: Letter WJ Slatter to AH Hime, 16.10.1899.

121. PAR, CSO 2581: Instructions to magistrates to issue no ammunition to non rifle association members, 12.10.1899.

122. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate H Millar, Umvoti district, 17.10.1899.

123. PAR, Archives of the Greytown magistrate (hereafter 1/GTN) 3/2/8: Deposition by W Livingstone, 6.2.1900-9.3.1900.

124. PAR, CSO 1643: Letter W Perry to Lord Roberts, 29.3.1900.

What these rumours and the outbreak of war served to do was to alter the relationship between the Afrikaners and English in the Umvoti district, resulting in a series of spats between the two groups. Both groups viewed each other with suspicion. As a rule the Afrikaners spoke as little as possible about the war and thus the English viewed the Afrikaners, with the odd exception, as disloyal. In reality, as in all other districts, very few Greytown Afrikaners were willing to assist the Republican forces, except if the latter gained the upper hand in Northern Natal, or were to invade Greytown *en mass*.¹²⁵

Happenings on the battlefield did not help to ease the racial tension. Claims that the British were victorious at Talana were received without any demonstration of emotion by the Afrikaners, while some disbelieved the accuracy of the report.¹²⁶ On the English side, however, the reception of the news “of the Glencoe victory” was celebrated by hoisting two small Union Jacks into the clock tower of the town offices. This created much unhappiness amongst the local Afrikaner community and those on the town board. In a letter of complaint the local DRC minister, GS Malan,¹²⁷ wrote that the basis of the Afrikaner complaints was that they had family members who had taken part in the battle and may have been killed. Raising the flags smacked of a rejoicing over the dead. Those who raised the flags were convinced by the argument and the flags were immediately removed.¹²⁸ One local English person who found the removal humiliating was a local tailor, EW Ireland, who complained bitterly to Attorney-General Bale.¹²⁹ Bale in turn complained to Prime Minister Hime who demanded an explanation from the local magistrate.¹³⁰ Magistrate Millar regarded the matter as a storm in a tea cup and not worthy of an official report since the flags were out of place and offensive to the local Afrikaners. The only complaint concerning the removal he was aware of, was that of Ireland.¹³¹

Millar was wrong in his assumption. Giving in to the Afrikaners also did not please an employee of the local board, AA (Allan) Duff, who raised the matter with Prime Minister Hime. Duff maintained that after the flag incident the racial stress in Greytown became so intolerable that he felt it necessary to request an appointment elsewhere. What bothered Duff was the “beastly race feeling which lately has become very conspicuous is more than I, a subdued Britisher, can stand, and as there is a move on to return nothing but Dutch Members at the next election of the (Town) Board my position will be

125. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Report Magistrate H Millar, Umvoti district, 14.10.1899; AGO I/7/42: Minute paper regarding statements by GW Rae, 26.3.1900.

126. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate H Millar, Umvoti district, 21.10.1899.

127. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter AA Duff to Prime Minister, 23.10.1899; Letter GS Malan to Glennie, 24.10.1899.

128. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter Magistrate H Millar to Prime Minister AH Hime, 28.10.1899.

129. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter EW Ireland to Attorney-General H Bale, 26.10.1899.

130. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 26.10.1899.

131. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter Magistrate H Millar to Prime Minister AH Hime, 28.10.1899.

intolerable...”¹³²

The day was probably won by the Afrikaners of the Umvoti district for when news of the relief of Ladysmith reached Greytown it was decided to send a wire of congratulations from the town board only, and not on the behalf of all the people, since not all of them shared in the joy.¹³³ When arrangements were made to celebrate the relief, the local Afrikaners refused to participate.¹³⁴ Actions such as these, constant accusations of seditious talk,¹³⁵ and of communication with the Boer forces by means of African runners, meant that the Umvoti district Afrikaners were soon all labelled disloyal.¹³⁶

Such a tag did not bother the vast majority of the most politicised Afrikaner community in Natal. They proceeded to collect money for the women and children of the Afrikaners imprisoned as suspects in the Newcastle district,¹³⁷ forwarded a consignment of 18 bags of flour, various bags of sugar, salt, rice, coffee and soap to Newcastle,¹³⁸ and raised funds for Afrikaners banned to Pietermaritzburg, of which £5 went to Ds HF Schoon of the DRC in Ladysmith.¹³⁹ HJ Martens went a step further and requested permission from the Natal Government to go to the Boer lines to assist sick and wounded Boers as he felt that it was his duty “to assist as well we can our sick and wounded brethren.” He based his request on the fact that Afrikaners in the Cape Colony were allowed to assist sick and wounded Boers.¹⁴⁰ The sympathetic attitudes of Afrikaners of Umvoti towards the Boers should also be understood in terms of family ties. PR Botha was the nephew of General Louis Botha, ZL Nel and his wife had family members on commando, PH and TC van Rooyen had a brother in the OFS Artillery, CJ Nel had family members on commando, PN van Rooyen had a brother on commando and C Havemann had sons, brothers and nephews on commando.¹⁴¹

What really attracted the attention of the Natal Government were the organised meetings taking place in and around Greytown. The first such meeting of leading Umvoti Afrikaners that came to the

132. PAR, SGO III/1/140: Letter AA Duff to Masson requesting a transfer from Greytown, 22.3.1900. Racial feelings in Greytown ran so high that a case involving nothing more than theft by Joseph Shennan from Nel and Thole became a “Dutch versus English” struggle. See, *Natal Witness*, 5.11.1900.

133. PAR, 3/GTN 1/1/1/2: Minutes of the meeting of the Greytown Local Board, 5.3.1900.

134. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.3.1900.

135. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Depositions by J Zuma, 12.10.1899, 6.11.1899 and 11.11.1899.

136. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 31.10.1899.

137. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky : Diary entry, 5.7.1900, p.143.

138. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky : Diary entry, 3.10.1900, p.353.

139. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 10.9.1900, p.442.

140. PAR, CSO 1629: Letter HJ Martens requesting permission to go to Boer lines to support sick and wounded, 20.10.1899.

141. PRO, CO 179/211: Letter C Taham to PUS, 24.4.1900.

attention of the authorities took place on 18 November 1899 at the house of Ds GS Malan.¹⁴² The information of what happened at this meeting was divulged by a local teacher, Joachim van der Merwe, to JH Kleinschmidt the school inspector for Dutch, who unbeknown to him, worked as an agent for the British. Kleinschmidt was immediately tasked to investigate the matter. To hide the real reason for his visit to Greytown he examined some pupils at the government school before proceeding to gather information. He was informed that meetings were held at the houses of Ds Malan, Ds Hofmeyr a local missionary who resided at Seven Oaks, LMJ van Rooyen (snr), and Philip Nel. Informal meetings also took place at the offices of Nel and Rossteuscher, two local lawyers. The arrangements for these meetings were announced during the Sunday church services, under the guise that they would be dealing with educational and religious matters. The meeting of 18 November centred around the issue of what needed to be done if the Boers invaded Umvoti. Apparently it was decided that Malan and other leading local Afrikaners would meet the Boer force, welcome them, and offer assistance. The ideal person to infiltrate the meetings was, according to Kleinschmidt, the original source of his information, namely Joachim van der Merwe.¹⁴³ This proved to be a mistake as Van der Merwe was totally loyal to the Republican cause and was subsequently suspended as a teacher for his political activities. He would probably immediately have informed his fellow Afrikaners that they were being investigated.¹⁴⁴

In reality officers were elected for the area at these so-called prayer meetings. Adrian Nel, son of Lang Louis Nel, was elected as commandant, Lucas van Rooyen, LMJ van Rooyen (jnr) - a former Lieutenant in the UMR - and Lucas and Philip Nel were elected as assistant commandants or field-cornets. This the authorities only found out almost two years later when young TJ Nel, after a family feud, broke ranks and joined the British forces.¹⁴⁵

Based on the various rumours, and in an attempt to nip any treasonable activities in the bud, Prime Minister Hime called for an immediate investigation into the doings of the Umvoti Afrikaners. This task fell to AJ Fraser of the Natal Police. In his report Fraser identified whom he perceived to be the problem in the Umvoti district, namely Magistrate HC Koch, and Superintendent of Police Meiners. Both men were German, attended the DRC, and were friends with prominent Natal Afrikaners. Hence their subordinates were afraid of supplying them with information regarding disloyalty, and when they did so the resulting investigations were unsatisfactory. This meant that communication between Umvoti and the Boer lines could take place without any obstacle.¹⁴⁶

With the authorities gaining little from the investigation by Fraser, a more direct approach was

142. PAR, GH 549: Papers with reference to the possible arrest of certain leading Afrikaners in Umvoti, 29.11.1899.

143. PAR, GH 549: Letter JH Kleinschmidt to Inspector WCH George, 30.11.1899.

144. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Letter Minister of Education H Bale to minister of lands and works, 27.4.1900.

145. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Information given by TJ Nel on treasonable acts of Afrikaners in Umvoti, 5.8.1901-3.10.1901.

146. PAR, GH 549: Report by AJ Fraser, no date.

decided upon. While away in Pietermaritzburg, the house of IM van Rooyen, previously the president of the Seven Oaks Rifle Association who refused to take the oath of allegiance under the new rules, was searched by 40 members of the Sterk Spruit Rifle Association.¹⁴⁷ Apart from searching every room, Mrs Van Rooyen was also questioned about provisions such as mealies, forage, tinned meat and bread. Van Rooyen complained bitterly to Magistrate Koch who could do nothing, since under Martial Law, the military had the authority to conduct searches.¹⁴⁸

As part of this more direct approach the colonial authorities kept a close eye on the correspondence of the Umvoti Afrikaners.¹⁴⁹ A letter mailed in Greytown on 6 November 1899, by Sarah Strydom to Mrs PH Tredoux, which stated that there were only six families left in the neighbourhood and that the rest had left for the Transvaal, prompted an enquiry by the Natal Police. In a thorough investigation Sub-Inspector Meiners tracked down every Strydom resident in Natal. Some resided near Dundee and one in Proviso B, but none in Umvoti. Meiners finally resolved the enquiry when he discovered that Gert Strydom of Proviso B and his wife Sarah had moved to Umvoti and that her letter therefore did not refer to Umvoti, but to Proviso B.¹⁵⁰

The year 1900 arrived with the Natal authorities making little headway in their investigation into the doings of the Greytown Afrikaners. Gathering information on them did not prove to be difficult but reliable intelligence proved to be the problem. One SB Jones, a self appointed spy, informed the authorities that Philip R Botha, his son, and CE Grundlingh who had arrived from the Cape Colony, needed to be treated with suspicion. He also implicated colonial stalwarts like Dr Dalzell, AJ Oldacre, WH Tatham, and Magistrate Hugo. Jones, furthermore claimed he had heard that the Boers would be making a rush for Greytown where they would be joined by the local Afrikaners and jointly launch an assault on Pietermaritzburg.¹⁵¹ This was corroborated by African witnesses who added they had heard that the local Afrikaners would rise up if the leading Umvoti men were arrested.¹⁵²

Once again the Natal authorities launched an investigation, this time conducted by Inspector Campbell. Campbell decided that in “trying to collect information against Dutch residents” interviewing Africans residing in the area would be the best strategy. This approach did not succeed as the Africans were afraid to provide evidence against Afrikaners out of fear that they would be evicted from the farms. He did, however, manage to compile a lengthy list of “malcontents and Boer

147. PAR, CSO 1632: Letter C Tatham to PUS, 4.12.1899.

148. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/7: Declaration by IM van Rooyen regarding the conduct of the local rifle association, 2.12.1899-9.12.1899.

149. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Originals and translations of letters obtained by the criminal investigation officer, 8.11.1899.

150. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Investigation into letter written by SJ Strydom, 6.11.1899-13.11.1899.

151. PAR GH 549: Letter SB Jones to HC Simpson, 22.1.1900.

152. PAR, GH 549: Letter HC Simpson to Capt K Herbert, 27.1.1900.

sympathisers in Greytown” containing the names of Afrikaners already under suspicion.¹⁵³ Campbell’s list was supported by other lists which included some of the names he mentioned. The bottom line was that these lists did not constitute evidence. Attorney-General Henry Bale therefore, with the support of Governor Hely-Hutchinson, decided not to arrest any of the men.¹⁵⁴

One of the names that cropped up in all the investigations and compiled lists was that of Magistrate HC Koch. The evidence against Koch proved to be more concrete. Anthony Petrus Keyter and his son-in-law, Charles Jerome, reported him to the Intelligence Department of the Natal Government for having said that Britain was not going to have things his own way during the war, and for warning Keyter against the jingoism of his son-in-law. The pair also accused Koch of deeming it legally fair to release the three Natal Afrikaner prisoners who were brought from Helpmekaar by the UMR. Koch’s behaviour and statements were, as far as they were concerned, anti-British. When he received the complaints Attorney-General Bale requested an explanation from Koch.¹⁵⁵ In a lengthy report Koch disputed the claims against him and offered a plausible explanation for each of the allegations. To him this was nothing more than an effort by Thos Tatham to get rid of him so that he could rule the Greytown district. The Natal Government accepted Koch’s explanation, concluding that his conduct was “indiscreet.”¹⁵⁶ This was, however, not the end of Koch’s troubles. Lt-Col E Bethune described his conduct as “generally unreliable and unsatisfactory.”¹⁵⁷ A letter from Koch to DC (Vaal Dirk) Uys (MLC), in which he suggested that ICJ Vermaak, a rebel from Proviso B, be sent a message so that he could save his farm which was to be sold to pay FW White the money owed to him, was interpreted by Thomas Maxwell, the magistrate for Melmoth, as communicating with a rebel. For reasons unknown the government again took a lenient view, pointing out that prior to his appointment as a magistrate Koch acted as a legal advisor to Natal Afrikaners.¹⁵⁸

Since the colonial authorities were making no headway with their investigations into the actions of the Umvoti Afrikaners, it was hoped that the arrival in March 1900, of Lt-Col Bethune and his force, would bring better luck. Bethune indicated that if the GOC had no orders for him he wanted to distribute troops on all the main roads to “keep all the Dutch farmers in order who are practically rebels though they did not rise.” In addition he believed that he had a very strong case against a Afrikaner that had been signalling to the Boers. The suspect was followed for ten days but managed, just as Bethune and his men thought they had the “swine”, to escape.¹⁵⁹ When the Imperial Light

153. PAR, GH 549: Report Inspector Campbell to the chief commissioner of police, 23.3.1900.

154. PAR, GH 549: Papers with reference to the arrest of certain leading men at Greytown, 29.11.1899-7.4.1900.

155. PAR, CSO 2586: Depositions made by AP Keyter and C Jerome, 23.2.1900-26.2.1900.

156. PAR, CSO 2586: Papers relative to the conduct of Magistrate HC Koch, 26.2.1900-13.3.1900.

157. PAR, CSO 2586: Telegram Lt-Col E Bethune to GOC Natal, 17.2.1900.

158. PAR, CSO 2586: Investigation into the correspondence between Magistrate HC Koch and DC Uys, 8.2.1900-26.2.1900.

159. PRO, WO 132/20: Letter Lt-Col E Bethune to Lt-Col AE Sandbach, 13.4.1900.

Infantry arrived in Greytown to join Bethune's Mounted Infantry, their arrival was "viewed with ill-disguised rancour" by the local Afrikaners. At the same time these Afrikaners apparently benefitted from the business they did with the soldiers.¹⁶⁰

Unperturbed, the Umvoti Afrikaners continued to pursue pro-Boer political agendas. One such agenda centred around the creation of a Natal Conciliation Committee, similar to the ones created in London and Cape Town.¹⁶¹ To promote this idea Thos Hannah approached Ds GS Malan and asked him to speak to the leading Afrikaners of Umvoti.¹⁶² Malan did this and on 13 April 1900, under the chairmanship of Hannah, a meeting was held in Greytown to establish a conciliation committee. The rationale for the establishment of the committee was to assist with the dissemination of information regarding the war, to help maintain peace in Natal, to support those who had suffered during the war, and to re-establish goodwill between Afrikaners and English in South Africa by recognising the claims of both parties. LJ Nel was elected chairman and the various other positions were filled by PR and TJ Botha, LL Nel, PH van Rooyen, T Hannah, CJ Nel, TC and PN van Rooyen, JHB, SW and HE Cadle, and C Havemann. Two resolutions were adopted, one which stated that if any future settlement did not respect the independence of the Transvaal peace and progress in South Africa would be fraught with danger. Hannah forwarded the minutes of the meeting to Governor Hely-Hutchinson with the request that they be submitted to High Commissioner Milner for publication in the next blue book.¹⁶³

The reaction of the governor to the high ideals of the committee was to call for a police investigation into the affairs of Hannah and the other members of the committee. This time the task fell to Inspector WJ Clarke who, like his predecessors, could not come up with much apart from the fact that all the members of the committee had relatives fighting on the Boer side. In the case of Hannah, Clarke procured more information. Hannah, who originally came from Malmesbury in the Cape Colony, and brought with him a certain sophistication and some political aspirations, was politically very active both in Pietermaritzburg and in Greytown.¹⁶⁴ He came to Natal via Johannesburg and tried to start a business in Pietermaritzburg but went insolvent. Since the outbreak of the war he had been "stumping this county (Umvoti) obtaining the signatures of Dutch men, women and children, to some document or documents." Clarke also supplied the governor with intercepted letters exchanged between Hannah and FJ Centlivres in which the latter thanked him for his letters which were "doing an immense deal of good in London." In his reply Hannah asked Centlivres a favour namely to assist him in getting a good Afrikaner lawyer and doctor from the Cape Colony to settle in Umvoti as the

160. CHS Boscawen-Wright, *With the Imperial Light Infantry through Natal*, pp.65-67.

161. *South African News*, 28.2.1900.

162. PAR, GH 549: Letter GS Malan to T Hannah, 17.1.1900.

163. *Natal Witness*, 24.4.1900; PRO, CO 179/211: Minutes of Natal Conciliation Committee meeting, 13.4.1900.

164. PRO, CO 179/211: Letter T Hannah to JH Hofmeyr, 4.4.1900.

Afrikaners were tired of British insults and decided to boycott English businesses and import their own people. Hely-Hutchinson forwarded all this information to Chamberlain. According to Hannah, in the end nothing much came of the Natal Conciliation Committee because of Martial Law and the fact that most Afrikaners resided on farms.¹⁶⁵

The politicised Afrikaners in Greytown did, however, find other ways to show their discontent about the lot of the Republics. At a meeting in Greytown they made their point of view very clear: the Boer Republics must remain independent.¹⁶⁶ Petitions in this regard were forwarded not only from Greytown, but also from other parts of Natal, to Queen Victoria. The editor of *De Natal Afrikaner* warned against such political practices since it was contrary to British policy. Even more problematic for the Umvoti Afrikaners, according to the newspaper, was that they tainted themselves as rebels and that such petitions in favour of the Boers would merely serve as evidence and make a mockery of the statement in the petition that they were loyal.¹⁶⁷

In reality *De Natal Afrikaner* was wrong. PH van Rooyen of Umvoti who stated at the annual Farmers' Congress that not a single Afrikaner in the Umvoti county was disloyal,¹⁶⁸ was closer to the truth. Despite unconfirmed rumours that the following Afrikaners had joined the Boers: Hoffman who was residing on the farm of Piet van Rooyen near Rietvlei, Meyer, a teacher on the farm of Philip Nel near Kranskop,¹⁶⁹ and AL Pretorius of Greytown,¹⁷⁰ only one Afrikaner of the Umvoti district, LC Hansmeyer of Rose Cottage, was found guilty of treason for assisting MP and GE de Jager to cross the Tugela to join the Boers. He was fined £20.¹⁷¹

4.3.2 Kranskop district Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War

The outbreak of war made the Afrikaners of Kranskop, as it did the others in districts south of the Tugela, worry about their safety. In this case the professed fear was not for a Boer or British attack, but for a possible raid by Africans. In an attempt to address this issue, WG Havemann, Petrus Nel, John Landsberg, Philip Vermaak, LMJ van Rooyen junior and senior and C Keyter approached Magistrate FP Shuter with the proposal of forming a guard to assist the government in protecting the district against a possible African uprising. Havemann, the chief spokesperson, with the support of the others suggested that a meeting to the effect be held on 19 October 1899 in the court house under

165. PRO, CO 179/211: Documents related to the Natal Conciliation Committee, 26.3.1900-2.5.1900.

166. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 1.5.1900.

167. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 27.3.1900.

168. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 1.5.1900.

169. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Information given by TJ Nel on acts of treason by Afrikaners in Umvoti, 5.8.1901-3.10.1901.

170. War Museum of the Boer Republics (hereafter WM), 2056: Memoirs of AL Pretorius, 30.6.1941.

171. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Information given by TJ Nel on acts of treason by Afrikaners in Umvoti, 5.8.1901-3.10.1901.

the chairmanship of the magistrate. On granting permission for the meeting the prime minister described the Afrikaner fears of an African uprising as “mortal funk” and possibly a smoke screen for a hidden agenda. Prime Minister Hime therefore suggested that someone who not only understood Dutch, but could write shorthand, should attend.¹⁷²

The meeting was attended by 27 people, mostly young Afrikaner men. The first resolution moved was that of Havemann who felt it necessary: “That considering the comparative defenceless state of this District in case of a serious Native rising, a guard need to be formed to protect ourselves and our property against such Natives...” Magistrate Shuter was asked to open a list for the names of the inhabitants willing to join such a guard. In an amendment LMJ van Rooyen proposed: “That we decide upon our own protection today and that we fix upon a place where we are to meet, because we are unable to defend ourselves our wives and property without aid.” The amendment was carried by 20 votes. In a further submission it was decided that the Hermannsburg Laager, and not the Kranskop Laager, should be the rendezvous point. A final suggestion by Philip Vermaak, that the Natal Government should provide a substantial Police force for the protection of the district, was carried unanimously.¹⁷³

The outcome of the meeting worried Magistrate Shuter, for the young men had outvoted the older men and in the process the decision taken on the location of the laager changed the decision of 7 October 1899, where it was decided that Kranskop would be the congregation point in case of danger. The new position of the laager also served to divide the Afrikaners of the area. Havemann attempted to clarify the decision by ascribing it to the independent nature of the Afrikaners and the fact that they deemed Hermannsburg safer since it was further away from the borders of the locations and had a bigger laager. Philip Vermaak, however, in the strictest confidence informed Magistrate Shuter that the real reason for the change of venue was that if the residents of the Kranskop district used a government building for the purpose of a laager, they would be treated as rebels by any Boer commandos invading the district. By moving the laager to Hermannsburg, the Afrikaners would be viewed as acting in a neutral manner independently from the Natal Government, and would therefore not be molested. Reacting to the information provided by Vermaak, the magistrate decided to return the arms and ammunition requested earlier for the defence of the district.¹⁷⁴

The decision by the magistrate to send back the arms and ammunition meant that the Afrikaners had to purchase their own. Philip Zietsman, Lucas van Rooyen, Theunis Nel, and Van Rooyen of Paul's

172. PAR, CSO 2581: Minutes of a public meeting held at Kranskop, 19.10.1899.

173. *Ibid.*

174. PAR, CSO 2581: Confidential report Magistrate FP Shuter, Kranskop, on the meeting held on 19.10.1899. Philip Vermaak on another occasion informed the magistrate that WW Maré had boasted to the Africans that the British had suffered a defeat at Mafeking and that the Boers were going to do the same in all the battles. See, PAR, AGO, 1/7/39: Report by the Kranskop magistrate, 16.10.1899.

Rust, therefore applied to the Kranskop magistrate for permission to purchase ammunition. On the recommendation of the magistrate, Prime Minister Hime gave permission for Zietsman to buy five pounds of powder, Lucas van Rooyen to buy one hundred cartridges, and Van Rooyen to buy five pounds of gunpowder. The application of Theunis Nel of Spitzkop was denied.¹⁷⁵ Clearly the magistrate had his suspicions regarding the loyalty of certain Kranskop Afrikaners.

In the meantime Magistrate Shuter had appointed AL Varty to investigate the Afrikaner claims that an African uprising could take place. Varty's report made it clear that the followers of Chief Hlangabeza had every intention, should tribal fighting with Chief Gayede erupt again, to raid the cattle of the Kranskop Afrikaners. Hlangabeza and his tribe despised the Afrikaners because they assisted Gayede, asked exuberant prices for their cattle, only employed the people of Gayede, assisted Gayede's followers financially by paying the fines imposed for tribal fighting, and some men like JC Martens, even physically supported Gayede during faction fighting. Fear of a possible uprising therefore made LMJ van Rooyen of Wonderfontein come forward, in the strictest confidence, with information regarding Gayede. He informed the magistrate that Gayede had gone to Pretoria two years previously, under the guise of visiting a sick relative but in actual fact had gone to negotiate with President Kruger.¹⁷⁶ This investigation ended the fears of an African uprising as expressed by the Kranskop Afrikaners, and vindicated Prime Minister Hime's opinion that there was a hidden agenda.

The fears of an African uprising were soon overtaken by real issues related to the raging war. Two months into the war and with tens of thousands of British troops and their logistical support arriving, transport problems arose. This was partially due to the fact that there was a shortage of wagons up for hire. Suggestions were consequently made to commandeer wagons from districts which were not directly influenced by the war, such as Kranskop, Greytown and New Hanover. Sir Redvers Buller on 1 December 1899, requested the Natal authorities to commandeer 100 wagons, each with a span of 16 oxen, a leader and driver. Prime Minister Hime was unwilling to issue the order before consulting Attorney-General Bale. Bale felt that the Natal Government did not have the authority to commandeer wagons under Army Act 44 and 45 Vic. C. 58. Buller could, however, under the powers of Martial Law conferred upon him, forcibly requisition wagons. If Buller decided to do it this way, he could command the services of the officers of the Natal Government. Having made the legal objection, Bale declared himself willing to give effect to Buller's wishes and to include the commandeering of wagons and oxen in the Act of Indemnity which was under preparation. Buller reacted positively to these suggestions and requested the civil authorities to do the commandeering. As a result Hime immediately ordered the police and magistrates in the Kranskop, Weenen, Umvoti

175. PAR, CSO 2581: Report Magistrate FP Shuter, Kranskop, on request to purchase ammunition, 19.10.1899-24.10.1899.

176. PAR, CSO 2581: Confidential report Magistrate FP Shuter, Kranskop, 20.10.1899.

and New Hanover districts to proceed with the commandeering.¹⁷⁷ The decision to commandeer wagons and oxen in the mentioned districts pleased one Britisher immensely. In a letter to the *Natal Witness*, "Colonist" wrote that the English would respond with alacrity while he awaits the Afrikaner response with interest.¹⁷⁸

The process of commandeering the wagons was undertaken on the understanding that poor farmers would not be deprived entirely of their means of transport and cultivation. In the case of the commandeered wagons, oxen and equipment from the Kranskop and Umvoti districts, it was stipulated that the goods had to be delivered to the Greytown magistrates office by 12:00 on 9 December 1899. The conditions for the commandeering read as follows: "(a) The amount to be paid you by the Military Authorities shall be at the rate of £2 per diem. (b) The Military Authorities guarantee compensation against death of cattle from lung sickness, or capture, or from extraordinary risk (c) compensation not to exceed sixteen guineas (£16. 16s) per ox and eighty pounds (£80) per wagon and gear. (d) That a driver and a leader shall be supplied by you to accompany the wagon and oxen. Such Natives shall be fed by the Military Authorities."¹⁷⁹

Commandeering commenced on Sunday 4 December 1899.¹⁸⁰ The Kranskop district immediately became the centre of the process and 22 wagons, 20 with spans of 16 oxen, one with a span of 14 oxen, and one with a span of eight oxen, were commandeered. AP Keyter of Dingley Dell volunteered two wagons and 32 oxen, and John Keyter of Glen Eland three wagons and 48 oxen. Of the 31 wagons commandeered in the Kranskop district, only four did not belong to Afrikaners.

The commandeering process was soon criticised. TJ Nel (MLA) complained to the Natal Government that the wagons and oxen of poor Afrikaners, their only means of transport, and used for ploughing and harvesting, were being commandeered. According to Nel, RP Martens had only one wagon and 17 oxen, GH van Rooyen, an invalid, had only one wagon and 18 oxen, LJ Potgieter who was landless and who had ten children, lost his sole means of economic survival, Philip J Nel of Elands Kop had only one wagon and 16 oxen shared by three brothers, IJ Nel had only one wagon and eight oxen and Philip J Nel of Ongegund had only one wagon and was suffering from heart disease.

177. For a list of inhabitants from Greytown who had their wagons confiscated see: PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/7: List of owners who had their wagons commandeered, 6.12.1900-20.12.1900.

178. *Natal Witness*, 9.12.1899.

179. PRO, CO 179/208: Correspondence regarding the commandeering of oxen and wagons, 1.12.1899-3.12.1899.

180. As the Boers were driven out of Natal so the districts in which commandeering of oxen and wagon took place shifted north. For example: In February 1900 commandeering commenced in the Weenen district. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Regulations issued by Lt-Col Bamford regarding the commandeering of wagons, 1.2.1900. In September 1900, 30 oxen were commandeered from Engelbrecht of Tintwa and 12 oxen from Maritz of Maggiesdale in the Ladysmith area. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to Inspector Dorehill, 13.9.1900. Six months later more wagon and oxen were commandeered in the Ladysmith area. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 19.3.1901, p.606.

Magistrate Shuter was quick to defend and explain his actions. According to him, Philip J Nel of Ongegund had other oxen left and he could borrow a wagon from one of his brothers who lived close by; LJ Potgieter indicated that if possible he would not like to lose his wagon “but in a sense he volunteered” and was allowed to keep a second wagon in his possession; GH van Rooyen of Scotsdale was deemed to be poor and was exempted; JP Zietsman was a poor man and could only supply 14 oxen “but he offered no real objection...and I took it that he was glad to earn money by the unused wagon and oxen for he informed me that he had finished cultivating for the season”; RP Martens was deemed by the magistrate not to be a poor man although he confessed that “...he might have been left out.” Shuter suggested that Martens should use his brother’s wagon. In the most serious case Shuter admitted that the commandeering of the wagon and oxen of PJ Nel aggravated the latter’s heart disease. According to the magistrate he endeavoured to have it returned but the military refused. The wagon of TJ Nel of Spitzkop was commandeered by the magistrate based on information that he apparently had a second wagon, and that his son who resided with him also had a wagon. Nel later visited the magistrate and solemnly swore that he had only one wagon. Other poor Afrikaners such as Philip Nel of Paul’s Rust and LL Nel of Diepfontein were not visited on the advice of WG Havemann. Despite the magistrate admitting that he might have erred in certain instances, TJ Nel’s representation failed and he was informed that: “as the wagons which have been commandeered are now under the control of the military authorities it is not possible for the government to take any further action in the matter.”¹⁸¹ This was true except for the case of PJ Nel who had his wagon and oxen returned in March 1900.¹⁸² At least one of the men unhappy with the commandeering, LM van Rooyen of Lucks Hall, took matters into his own hands. He secretly sent an African to remove his oxen from the kraal near Umsinga in which they were held.¹⁸³

That the magistrate and his posse of colonial scouts were quite forceful in the commandeering process, and that the Afrikaners did not take kindly to indirectly supporting the war effort, can be gleaned from the incident between Adrian IJ Nel of Berning and the authorities. According to Nel the commandeers arrived on his farm on 7 December 1899. He reluctantly shook hands with Magistrate FP Shuter, but refused to do the same with one of the colonial scouts, Otto Schwikkard.¹⁸⁴ Nel then refused the magistrate entry into his house thereby becoming the only person in the district to do so. Shuter explained that they had come to commandeer Nel’s wagon. Nel replied that his wagon was hired out for two months. The magistrate responded that it was none of his business. Nel

181. PAR, CSO 1633: Report by the magistrate Kranskop on the commandeering of wagons for military use, 4.12.1899-22.12.1899.

182. PAR, Archives of the Kranskop magistrate (hereafter 1/KRK) 3/1/3: Letter Lt-Col E Stanley to magistrate Kranskop, 23.3.1900.

183. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Information given by Jan Nel on Afrikaners in Umvoti, 5.8.1901-3.10.1901.

184. In *Schwikkard of Natal and the old Transvaal* edited by L Herman, it is claimed (pp.145-146) that on one occasion a number of young Afrikaners of the Kranskop area planned to ambush Otto Schwikkard as he was commandeering.

then undertook to try and get hold of the wagon. At this point Schwikkard entered the discussion and scolded Nel in Dutch for insulting him as he too was an Afrikaner and had lost everything. He then informed Nel that he expected proper treatment from him and his men in future. Nel was warned that “a day of reckoning is coming and it will be remembered against you.” The meeting ended without the shaking of hands. All subsequent attempts by Nel to apologise to the magistrate failed and Shuter later insisted that Nel come to Kranskop to apologise. What concerned Nel was the kind of justice he could expect from the magistrate in future, while the magistrate did not consider Nel in a position to demand any protection due to his attitude towards the colonial authorities as reflected in his refusal to take the oath of allegiance.¹⁸⁵

The problems surrounding the commandeering of wagons and oxen did not end with this confrontation. Magistrate Shuter suspected that TJ Nel of Spitzkop, who only supplied eight oxen owned substantially more, even as many as three spans which he was hiding. Investigations by Shuter came to nothing. In an attempt to solve the problem he requested the local stock inspector, FE van Rooyen, to bring him his stock books for inspection. Van Rooyen did not heed the request and also ignored a subsequent demand for a meeting brought to him by his brother. As a result the magistrate wrote him a letter demanding that he visit his office and threatened to report him to the Natal Government if he did not. FE van Rooyen did not take this threat lying down and he informed the magistrate that he could report him as he had not given any cause for punitive action. At the same time he objected to the disrespectful manner in which the magistrate treated him and disputed the authority the magistrate could exercise over him as a stock inspector. Stock Inspector Van Rooyen then went onto the attack and wrote to his superior, the principal veterinary surgeon, complaining that he resented the way he was being treated and adding that he would gladly assist the magistrate if he was treated with respect. In the meantime, in his own report, the magistrate took to attacking Van Rooyen, describing him as hostile, troublesome and not fit for a position under the Natal Government. All in all the magistrate put Van Rooyen's anger down to the fact that he was part-owner of a wagon and span of oxen which was commandeered. The magistrate, however, had to admit that he could bring no evidence against Van Rooyen. In this squabble there could be but one winner and after careful consideration the minister of agriculture instructed Van Rooyen to take his stock books and returns to the magistrate and to give him all the assistance he had asked for.¹⁸⁶

The economic impact, and the thought that wagons belonging to Afrikaners were used to fight the Boers did not endear the authorities to the Natal Afrikaners. The vast majority of the Kranskop Afrikaners developed an attitude which can be summed up as: “We shall have nothing to do with the

185. PAR, CSO 1633: Affidavit by AIJ Nel and the response by the magistrate, 11.12.1899-14.12.1899. The *Natal Witness*, 7.12.1899, picked up on the events at AIJ Nel's farm and added their own truths such as that Nel refused to have his wagon commandeered and that he had refused the volunteers water.

186. PAR, CSO 1634: Documents relating to Stock Inspector FE van Rooyen of Kranskop, 16.12.1899-22.12.1899.

Natal Government - we shall take good care not to offend the Transvaal Government.” In addition to this, other comments such as “the next thing to be taken would be our wives”, “remember the Battle of Congella”,¹⁸⁷ and “the money paid by the military for the hire of the wagons is blood money”, were expressed.¹⁸⁸ In a nutshell, it was a case of a dilemma in which morality outweighed the money made.

The commandeering process also proved crippling to many Afrikaners because the rent paid by the military had to be used to hire wagons, while trained oxen became casualties of war. For example, an ox belonging to JC Nel of The Gem, Greytown, was shot by members of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry near Chieveley when they found it suffering from some disease,¹⁸⁹ while Mrs PW van Rooyen of the same farm lost ten oxen to lungsickness. Although the military paid compensation to the tune of £16.6. for each of the animals in question, they were only prepared to pay half rates for the three oxen which had died of rinderpest. Fearing a further outbreak of these diseases the military embarked on an extensive inoculation process which meant that some of the wagons commandeered stood idle, resulting in a loss of income as the military refused to pay hire for days when the wagons were not working. The military likewise refused to pay for the cost of the rail freight to return the wagon since, they had apparently paid an extra eight days hire to cover such contingencies.¹⁹⁰ In the end it is questionable whether it was worth your while to have your wagon commandeered, or volunteered as in the case of John Keyter. One of his wagons broke a wheel and he therefore received no rent from it for several months. At the same time the loss of oxen meant that the military had to supply some for his wagons which then became his property. As a result, by January 1901, Keyter owed the military an estimated £60.¹⁹¹

The wagons commandeered from Kranskop were eventually returned in December 1900 to great inconvenience of the owners. They had to collect the wagons and oxen in Ladysmith within eight days after the discharge.¹⁹² The initial commandeering in the Kranskop was followed by further commandeering in April 1900.¹⁹³ The military continued to commandeer wagons and oxen from both Natal Afrikaners and English colonists from time to time. In the spring of 1901 it was deemed necessary to again commandeer all ox wagons and spans in the Weenen, Greytown, Kranskop, Klip

187. PAR, CSO 1633: Report by the magistrate of Kranskop with reference to the commandeering of wagons for military use, 13.12.1899.

188. L Herman (ed.), pp.145-146.

189. PAR, Archives of minister of agriculture (hereafter AGR) 6: Report on the shooting of an ox belonging to JC Nel, 14.12.1899-4.1.1900.

190. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/9: Letter Colonel E Stanley to PW van Rooyen, 12.5.1902.

191. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Letter Colonel E Stanley to J Keyter, 23.1.1901.

192. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Letter Staff Lt for AAG director of transport to MHL van Rooyen, 29.11.1900.

193. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Letter Lt-Col Bamford to magistrate Kranskop, 9.4.1900.

River county and Estcourt districts for, amongst others, the construction of blockhouses¹⁹⁴ and because large number of wagons were reputedly burnt near Vryheid by the commando under General Louis Botha.¹⁹⁵ An outcry followed and the magistrates of Greytown and Kranskop explained that the residents in their districts had only few oxen on short spans and that it would be harsh to take these away.¹⁹⁶ These sentiments were shared by private individuals throughout the affected districts,¹⁹⁷ and questions were posed in the Legislative Assembly about the process of commandeering which came at a bad time for all involved. All of this, however, proved to be fruitless and the military did not relent.¹⁹⁸

The actions and attitude of Magistrate Shuter during the commandeering process, made him extremely unpopular with the Afrikaners of Kranskop.¹⁹⁹ As a result, on 8 March 1900, HL van Rooyen of Wonderfontein requested permission from Prime Minister Hime to hold a meeting to object to the way in which Shuter treated loyal British subjects and for the fact that he had imprisoned their servants. Hime did not object to the holding of such a meeting and undertook to give any resolution passed due consideration.²⁰⁰ The government, however, would not allow such a treasonable meeting to pass without investigation. A Mr Murphy, accompanied by C Luyt of Kranskop, was sent by the Natal Police to attend the meeting under the guise of reporters for the *Worcester Standard*, an Afrikaner Bond orientated newspaper. The exercised failed miserably. The two men claimed that they were watched from the moment they left Pietermaritzburg by one CJ van Rooyen, and to boot they found the local Afrikaners to be loyal.²⁰¹

Shuter, on hearing of the proposed meeting, assumed it would call for his removal from the district and informed the prime minister that he would like his removal to be effected by government order and not by public request. The government responded that it had not received any suggestion for his removal.²⁰² At the public meeting held on 13 March 1900, and attended by 45 Afrikaners, several

194. PAR, PM 23: Order by GOC Natal that wagons and oxen be commandeered in the Weenen, Estcourt and Greytown districts, 23.9.1901.

195. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 19.3.1901, p.606.

196. PAR, CSO 1687: Telegram colonial secretary to magistrate Greytown, 4.10.1901; PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Telegram colonial secretary to magistrate Kranskop, 4.10.1901

197. See for example: PAR, CSO 1689: Telegram J Farquhar to Prime Minister AH Hime, 28.10.1901.

198. PAR, PM 28: Correspondence regarding the question posed by Mr Pepworth relative to the commandeering in Klip River county, 14.4.1902.

199. Animosity by Kranskop Afrikaners towards magistrates continued. In April 1902, CJ van Rooyen pressed charges against Magistrate GW Adamson for trespassing onto his property. Adamson, the president of the local rifle association, was visiting the rifle range that was located on the farm of Van Rooyen. The matter was settle when it was agreed that the rifle range be removed from the farm of Van Rooyen. See, PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/4: Correspondence regarding the charges brought by CJ van Rooyen against Magistrate GW Adamson, 22.4.1902-24.4.1902.

200. PAR, CSO 2587: Correspondence relating to meeting of Kranskop Afrikaners, 8.3.1900.

201. PAR, CSO 2587: Report on the meeting by Kranskop Afrikaners by PJ Murphy, 14.3.1900.

202. PAR, CSO 2587: Correspondence relating to meeting of Kranskop Afrikaners, 8.3.1900.

complaints were aired against Shuter. They ranged from his threatening several Afrikaners, to his handling of the commandeering process, to being described as too weak to hold the position of magistrate. As a result Stock Inspector FE van Rooyen proposed, seconded by LMJ van Rooyen, that the government transfer Shuter.

In his response to the accusations, and possibly giving substance to them in the process, Shuter considered taking action against FE van Rooyen for libel, and in a tirade declared that a true Englishman like him could never gain the popularity “amongst such people.” Shuter continued by elaborating on how all the past frictions and meetings, starting in late September 1899, up to the commandeering of the wagons, were merely a case of him performing his duties loyally and that this was the sole reason for the Afrikaners’ fury. After what they described as careful consideration, the government concluded that the accusations against Shuter were groundless and that it would take no further action in the matter.²⁰³ This ended the squabble and must have sent a clear message to the local Afrikaners - you will submit to the authorities.

Despite the anger at the commandeering of wagons and oxen and the animosity between the magistrate and the Kranskop Afrikaners, only one person was found guilty of high treason. WJM van Rooyen of Klipnek was arrested and removed to the Pietermaritzburg Prison for treasonable offences.²⁰⁴ Van Rooyen was accused of harbouring two Boers and providing them with food and information. Six weeks after his arrest Van Rooyen was tried in the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg.²⁰⁵ Although the African witnesses, on whose testimony the case was based, contradicted each other, the pleas by Mr Tainton, the representative for Van Rooyen, to disregard their evidence were ignored by the jury who found him guilty. A fine of £100 or one year imprisonment was imposed. Friends and family immediately paid the fine.²⁰⁶

4.4 The Proviso B Afrikaners and the Anglo-Boer War, October 1899-June 1900

The most isolated group of Natal Afrikaners were those resident in Proviso B around Melmoth. Because of the historical legacy of the area, they were both geographically and politically within the sphere of influence of the Transvaal rather than Natal. This was reflected in the first report after the outbreak of war, issued on 20 October 1899, by Magistrate Thomas Maxwell, namely that the local Afrikaners had held several meetings and refused to take the oath of allegiance. They had also decided to get ammunition from the Transvaal because Maxwell, on instruction from the prime minister, had refused to sell them ammunition. In his report Maxwell gave the undertaking that he

203. PAR, CSO 2587: Documents regarding the proposed removal of Magistrate F Shuter from Kranskop, 13.3.1900-24.3.1900

204. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Order for the removal of WMJ van Rooyen to the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 18.5.1900-28.5.1900

205. PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs WMJ van Rooyen, 5.6.1900.

206. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.7.1900; *Natal Witness*, 23.6.1900.

would do his best to intercept the ammunition and arrest the culprits. As far as laagering was concerned the local Afrikaners were divided. DC Uys (MLC), advised against it, while Tom Smith and Julius Ortlepp both wanted to form a laager near the DRC in Melmoth, as a precaution since the authorities allowed Africans to carry arms. Their argument, however, did not carry favour with the magistrate who informed the men that Africans had to protect themselves and would be peaceful if not interfered with. Since the idea of a laager was prohibited, the rendezvous-point for local Afrikaners apparently became the house of widow Pretorius. The restlessness in the Afrikaner community worried the magistrate since he feared that they could spy on the movements of the small British force stationed at Melmoth.²⁰⁷

Maxwell's fears were understandable because the Natal Police reported in early November 1899, that Piet Koekemoer, Labuschagne, three Kritzinger brothers, Dewald Pretorius, and Louwrens had left their farms for the Transvaal. They were followed by JJ Uys and JJ Moolman, who resided on Uys's farm, and the brothers Robert and Isaac Vermaak. All of these men took their stock with them. Isaac Vermaak apparently wanted to go to Vryheid with the purpose of bringing his wife and children to Proviso B. However, according to African reports, he returned with 60 burghers to guard the Transvaal/Zululand border. Another Proviso B Afrikaner, one Kritzinger and his family, were suspected of spying for the Transvaal and inciting Africans against the British.²⁰⁸ SJ Müller, who was born in Pietermaritzburg and had resided in the OFS prior to moving to the Melmoth district, also applied for permission to join the Boer forces as a member of the Transvaal Ambulance Department. On the recommendation of Attorney-General Bale, permission was denied.²⁰⁹

These happenings disturbed EA Brunner MLA for Eshowe, and he approached Bale for some protection for the area. Bale's reply was simple: "We do not apprehend an attack upon Eshowe and there is not a Regiment to spare for Eshowe."²¹⁰ This lack of security forced a loyal Afrikaner, Dirk Uys, to apply via Magistrate Maxwell, for permission to purchase 100 rounds of ammunition. Maxwell did not trust Uys and deemed it necessary to inform Prime Minister Hime that Uys had made some remarks which were sympathetic to the Transvaal. Despite this revelation permission was granted to Uys to purchase ammunition since it was regarded as "bad policy just now to refuse it."²¹¹ Uys must have got wind of the fact that his loyalty was questioned since he complained that the newspapers constantly carried articles calling for the confiscation of the property of Natal rebels while nothing is mentioned or done to protect loyalists from being looted and threatened by the

207. PAR, CSO, 2582: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 20.10.1899.

208. PAR, CSO 2584: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 14.11.1899.

209. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Minute paper on the application by SJ Müller, 28.12.1899.

210. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Extract confidential report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 18.10.1899.

211. PAR, CSO 2582: Telegram Magistrate T Maxwell on application by DC Uys to purchase 100 rounds, 19.10.1899.

Boers. This Uys believed was one of the main reasons why local Afrikaners joined the invaders.²¹²

Magistrate Maxwell, in an effort to maintain control over his district, wanted the letters addressed to local Afrikaners and mailed by them investigated since he suspected these letters could contain incriminating evidence and information about future military plans hatched in the Transvaal.²¹³ This investigation immediately came off the ground and a letter from Johanna Joubert of Stellenbosch to her father, RJ Ortlepp of Melmoth, was intercepted. In the letter she expressed regret that only jingoistic newspapers were available to him, and informed him that she had visited a certain Alan who was captured at Elandslaagte and who was a POW on board the *Penelope*. Johanna further wrote that she “shall teach her sons not to give in to anyone or anything English” and was hopeful that the day of reckoning for the “wretched British” would surely come.²¹⁴ In his reply Ortlepp commented mostly on farming matters and the fact that the little news they got was from the biased Natal newspapers. Ortlepp suspected that their letters were opened and informed his daughter accordingly.²¹⁵ Despite this knowledge the Ortlepp’s continued to portray their true pro-Republican sentiments. In a letter to her daughter Mrs Ortlepp bemoaned the surrender of General Cronjé and found it “very sad to think that after all we shall have to loose our country.” She also revealed that her brother David was wounded and made her feelings regarding his engagement to an English woman, Miss White, very clear. Although White was not a bad person, she was “awfully English.”²¹⁶ By now the Ortlepps were well aware that their mail was intercepted and that certain items such as the *South African News*, forwarded on a weekly basis by Johanna and her husband to Zululand, were not reaching their destination. In spite of this Johanna still spoke her mind in her letters to her mother with sentiments such as “My respect for the English is all gone...” and “the only place the English can put their prisoners seems to be on their dirty old transport ships.”²¹⁷ Apart from labelling Johanna a “rebel”, the Natal authorities took no action against the Ortlepps.

Similar seditious writings were also produced by other Proviso B Afrikaners. JG Maritz of Königsberg, Melmoth stated that “we (the Boers) will still rule Africa as God will not forsake his people.” Like the Ortlepps he place little faith in the reports of the war published in the Natal newspapers.²¹⁸ Other Proviso B Afrikaners were more circumspect. Theodor Hansmeyer heeded the advice of Magistrate HC Koch of Greytown, to keep himself quiet, especially since the few Afrikaners left in Proviso B were being watched.²¹⁹

212. PAR, A 357 XVIV/1/1: Letter DC Uys to friend, 8.2.1900.

213. PAR, CSO 2584: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 14.11.1899.

214. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter J Joubert to RJ Ortlepp, 16.11.1899.

215. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter RJ Ortlepp to J Joubert, 24.11.1899.

216. PRO, CO 179/210: Letter J Ortlepp to J Ortlepp, 1.3.1900.

217. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter J Ortlepp to J Ortlepp, 7.3.1900.

218. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Letter JG Maritz to T Smith, 24.11.1899.

219. PAR, GH 549: Letters T Hansmeyer to HC Koch and M Berning, 8.1.1900.

The intercepted letters did not provide Magistrate Maxwell with the information he hoped for and his suspicions of the 30 Afrikaner men that remained in Proviso B remained unsubstantiated. He had them, as well as the farms of those who had left and who were in the care of Africans or family members, watched. In the monitoring of the Afrikaners, the authorities received enthusiastic support from both the English and Africans. Bernard Cressey declared that JAF Ortlepp, a former candidate for the Legislative Assembly and owner of the farm on which the town of Melmoth was created, had told him that a commando consisting of 600 Boers intended to cross the Transvaal/Zululand border. KJD Ripley likewise informed the magistrate of a conversation he had with Ortlepp in which the latter said that he fully expected an attack on Melmoth by 600 Boers. According to Ripley, Ortlepp did not sound bitter but indicated that in case of an attack he would not go to the fort with the rest of the civilians as he regarded it very dangerous place.²²⁰ African scouts such as Manlinzela Ka Ngombane, the Native Police, and ordinary Africans, also informed Magistrate Maxwell about the movements of the Proviso B Afrikaners.²²¹ The information, unfortunately for the Natal authorities, was laced with speculation and rumours. One report had it that seven of the Proviso B Afrikaners, including a certain Liversage, were killed and that another, FC Meyer spied for the Boers.²²² The chief magistrate and civil commissioner of Zululand, Sir Charles Saunders, did not pay too much attention to any of this information. He did, however, believe that Ortlepp and other Afrikaners were in constant contact with the Boers and would therefore receive early information of any attack. Such information could be used as an early warning system by the local authorities.²²³

The consistent newspaper reports calling for the confiscation of the property of rebels, galvanised the remaining Proviso B Afrikaners into action and they started to remove property from the homesteads of those who had left for the Transvaal. This left Magistrate Maxwell unsure of what action to take. The advice of Governor Hely-Hutchinson was that no action should be taken for the moment because of insufficient manpower which did not allow for the enforcement of stringent measures, but that once a force of Colonial Scouts was raised, the matter could be pursued.²²⁴

The lack of a substantial British force in Proviso B, as outlined by the governor, was starting to show and the two hundred Colonial Scouts who were raised could hardly plug all the holes.²²⁵ Some Boers, assisted by Proviso B Afrikaners, took advantage of the situation and the resident magistrate of Ndwanwe and Border Scout Owen Roberts reported that 40 Boers were stationed at the house of

220. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Depositions by B Cressey and KJD Ripley, 6.12.1899.

221. PAR, CSO 1639: Deposition by Manlinzela Ka Ngombane, 15.1.1900; CSO 2584: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 28.11.1899.

222. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Report Attorney-General H Bale on Proviso B Afrikaners, 29.11.1899.

223. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Depositions by B Cressey and KJD Ripley, 6.12.1899.

224. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 16.12.1899.

Andries Pretorius within the Melmoth district.²²⁶ Also in Melmoth the Afrikaners acted with confidence. In a letter to the *Natal Witness* "Scout by name only" complained that the Melmoth Afrikaners behaved with little respect when the cortege of Trooper Glen passed.²²⁷

Subsequently Magistrate Maxwell once again focussed his attention on the Afrikaners who remained on their farms. As far as Maxwell was concerned their passivity was not due to loyalty but to the intimidating impact of lists of Boer dead published in the newspapers. The magistrate specifically focussed on LJR Kritzinger and his son MAS Kritzinger, who persisted in conveying false information to the African population in the hope of influencing them against the Natal Government. Kritzinger, apparently in fear of the Colonial Scouts, was also seen burying a rifle.²²⁸ To put an end to this Maxwell suggested that the Kritzingers should be arrested as he believed that such an arrest would not influence the other Afrikaners negatively, for they apparently also viewed Kritzinger as a doubtful character.²²⁹ As a result both Kritzingers were arrested on 21 February 1900.²³⁰ This step had the desired effect especially amongst the Africans who could not understand why the Kritzingers were allowed to preach sedition. In a subsequent search of Kritzinger senior's home the police found a Martini Henry marked "Z.A.R." which had been buried in the garden by his wife. Some ammunition was also found in a flour barrel.²³¹ Maxwell had, however, made a mistake in his assumption on how the Proviso B Afrikaners viewed Kritzinger (snr). His arrest was perceived as without justification, while it was rumoured that the British had taken all his possessions not even leaving a cow for milk.²³²

In the meantime the Proviso B Afrikaners, who had left the area to join the Republican forces, seem to have participated in several operations in the area. Dewald Pretorius and Theuns Strydom, the latter at one stage reported to have been killed at Talana, were identified as part of the force which on 9 February 1900, attacked the Nkandla Magistracy and looted Fry's store.²³³ During other Boer incursions into the Nkandla district a local shopkeeper, TW Cooper, also recognised several Proviso B Afrikaners namely, L Kritzinger, M Koekermoer, Piet Koekemoer, the two young sons of Hendrick Labuschange, and the son of Anton Potgieter. In a later raid on Hyslop's Store an assistant,

225. PAR, GH 549: Letters T Hansmeyer to HC Koch and M Berning, 8.1.1900.

226. PAR, Archive of the Nongoma magistrate (hereafter 1/NGA) 3/2/6: Report Owen Roberts, 16.1.1900; 1/NGA, 3/2/6: Report resident magistrate Ndwandwe, 16.1.1900.

227. *Natal Witness*, 29.3.1900.

228. PAR, CSO 2586: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 28.1.1900.

229. PAR, CSO 2586: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 19.2.1900.

230. PRO, CO 179/210: Telegram Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders to colonial secretary, 21.2.1900.

231. PAR, CSO 2587: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 5.3.1900.

232. PRO, CO 179/210: Letter J Ortlepp to J Ortlepp, 1.3.1900.

233. PRO, CO 179/210: Deposition by Matabata Ka Nhlebo before Magistrate JL Knight, 14.2.1900.

RJ Hutchinson, recognised L Kritzinger and Piet Koekemoer.²³⁴

Despite the involvement of a substantial number of Proviso B Afrikaners on the attack on Nkandla, the deed itself seems to have changed the attitude of the Proviso B Afrikaners who had remained behind. It is possible that because they feared they would somehow be held responsible and receive the same treatment as the Kritzingers, their attitude towards Magistrate Maxwell changed overnight. Where previously they had shunned the magistrate for two months and in private spoke against the Natal Government, they now undertook no journey without informing him. Several Afrikaners even asked Maxwell what they should do when Boers arrived at their homes. They were told to remain quiet or to come to the small fort in Melmoth. Dirk Uys (MLC) even offered to negotiate with the Transvaalers. He proposed that in exchange for the removal of all the British forces from the Zululand border, the Transvaal should remove its commandos. Magistrate Maxwell requested the government not to consider this idealistic proposal because Uys had until then remained aloof of the government and not used his influence to the benefit of the Imperial cause. Maxwell's advice was accepted and the Natal authorities made it clear that they "entirely and totally disapproves" of Uys's proposal.²³⁵ As the tide of war turned against the Republics, the attitude of the Afrikaners who remained in Proviso B changed from submission to loyalty and Maxwell could report with a certain amount of glee, that the local Afrikaners were very quiet since the surrender of General Piet Cronjé at Paardeberg on 27 February 1900, and that they showed more inclination to meet with him and to report the most trivial matters. According to Maxwell, in these meetings he did all in his power to conciliate them.²³⁶

The driving of the Boers from Natal in June 1900 did not mean the end of the low-key conflict along the Transvaal/Zululand border. Up until the signing of peace on 31 May 1902, cross-border raids by Boers, Zulus and British forces occurred, mostly to acquire cattle.²³⁷ The most serious invasion of Zululand took place in September 1901, when a large force under General Louis Botha invaded Zululand. This invasion was foiled at the Battles of Itala and Fort Prospect.²³⁸

Of the large number of Proviso B Afrikaners that joined the Boers before and during the early part of the war only ten were eventually apprehended and sentenced as rebels, namely: D Brodie, AB de Lange, LJR Kritzinger (snr), LJR Kritzinger (jnr), MA Kritzinger, JP Moolman (snr), JP Moolman

234. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Depositions by TW Cooper and RJ Hutchinson, 17.3.1900.

235. PAR, CSO 2586: Proposal by DC Uys, 16.2.1900-17.2.1900; PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Uys, 23.8.1902.

236. PAR, CSO 2587: Report Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, 5.3.1900.

237. For a detailed description of the low-keyed war fought in this area, see: JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe concentration and surrendered burghers camp during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)*, pp.1-18.

238. DM Moore, *General Louis Botha's second expedition to Natal during the Anglo-Boer War, September-October 1901*, pp.37-76.

(jnr) DJ Pretorius, TP Pretorius and RJ Vermaak.²³⁹

4.5 In the shadow of war

The experiences of the Natal Afrikaners in the counties south of the Tugela River and in Proviso B were in stark contrast to those experienced in Northern Natal. Furthermore, along a northwest to southeast axis in the area south of the Tugela wartime conditions also differed radically. For a brief period of time, the Afrikaner residing in the Upper Tugela districts and parts of Estcourt and Weenen experienced similar conditions to those experienced by the Afrikaner in Northern Natal. Those in the southeast, however, underwent a different war, namely that of life in the shadow of war. Under Martial Law, and with little support from their own government, the rule of law and British fairplay were at times an illusion. Under the rules of war, spying, suspicion, rumours, discomfort, verbal and other abuses and persecution became the order of the day in this pseudo-war between Natal Afrikaners on the one hand, and the British forces, the Natal authorities and the Natal public on the other. All of this was based on the premise that being of Afrikaner origin meant that the maxim was, guilty until proven innocent. These actions proved to be invalid as only a handful of rebels came from the region under discussion, a clear indication that the vast majority of Natal Afrikaners wanted to remain neutral while reserving the right to sympathise with the plight of the Republics.

239. For a detailed analysis of the rebels from Proviso B, see Appendix A.

CHAPTER 5

DEALING WITH THE NATAL REBELS (PART I): REACTIONS, ARRESTS, IDENTIFICATION, INVESTIGATIONS AND EARLY TRIALS

The Natal rebels hardly feature in the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War. *The Times history of the war in South Africa* dismisses the rebellion in one sentence,¹ while the *Natal Witness* of 25 April 1900 correctly points out that: “though the ranks of the enemy had been swelled by a few of the local Dutch, Natal’s proportion of rebels is infinitely small compared with that of the sister colony (Cape Colony).”² Despite its size, the rebellion in Natal was a war-related event of gigantic proportions for both the Natal community and the Natal authorities. It was to spark debates, both in private and in public, about the kind of punishment that should be meted out to rebels; who should decide on the punishment; and the right of the Colony of Natal to make autonomous decisions about judicial matters involving its subjects. These debates ran concurrently with processes such as the identification and arrest of rebels, and the passing of legislation to create structures for trying of these rebels.

5.1 Rounding up the rebels

When the Natal Army under Buller started to mobilise on 11 May 1900, the arrest and prosecution of rebels was a secondary military objective. Buller in fact, had two months earlier even expressed some sympathy with the rebels’ plight and felt that “they really seem to have been more sinned against than sinning.”³ In a telegram on 11 March 1900, Buller informed Governor Walter Hely-Hutchinson of his views on how the rebels should be treated who, according to African intelligence sources, were returning to their farms. He suggested that they should be allowed to go back to their farms and that the Natal Government should treat them as suspects and have the police investigate them. Only once a case was built against them should they be arrested. At the same time he abdicated military involvement in dealing with the rebels because, he had neither the men nor the time to perform the required duties. The Natal authorities accepted these recommendations and instructed the police to intensify the gathering of information against suspected rebels.⁴

On 1 May 1900, several days before the Natal Army advanced northwards, Buller made his policy regarding the Natal rebels public by issuing a conciliatory proclamation. In it he stated that some of the Natal Afrikaners were misled into taking up arms, and having realised their error they were keen to redeem themselves. If they did do so, by laying down their weapons, he undertook to present their cases to the civilian authorities for more “considerate treatment” than extended to those who

1. LS Amery (ed.), *The Times History of the war in South Africa 1899-1902, Vol VI*, p.62. *The standard encyclopedia of Southern Africa, Vol 9*, pp.260-261, fares no better and does not even acknowledge the existence of Natal rebels.

2. *Natal Mercury*, 25.4.1900.

3. PAR, PM 17: Telegram General R Buller to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 17.5.1900.

4. PAR, CSO 2587: Telegram General R Buller to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 11.3.1900.

remained in the field after he had issued his proclamation.⁵ The contents of Buller's proclamation infuriated the Natal authorities who felt that he "had no business issuing such a proclamation without consulting the Governor of Natal." The second paragraph especially, which promised to give the same consideration to rebels as surrendered burghers, displeased the Natal Government for it bound them against their will. The government, possibly for the sake of diplomacy, did not confront Buller about his proclamation.⁶

When the Natal Army finally advanced from Ladysmith via Helpmekaar to Dundee, several suspected rebels were arrested, principally by the advance parties of the Natal Carbineers under Colonel Greene and Captain Lyle. These arrests soon spread to Dannhauser and Newcastle. Some suspected rebels, like TR Boshoff and JJ Nel, surrendered of their own accord⁷ and received passes that allowed them to return to their farms for the time being.⁸ The nature of these passes worried Captain Foxon of the Natal Carbineers who also wanted the height, age, and general appearance of the Afrikaner, to whom the pass was issued registered on it. He was worried that any burgher could use such a pass to enter Natal illegitimately by pretending to be the person to whom the pass was issued. In the end nothing came of his legitimate concern.⁹

In the wake of these advance parties came the major body of Buller's force which swept the Klip River county clean of its Afrikaner residents. Between 10 and 21 May 1900, 72 suspected rebels either surrendered or were arrested. A further 40 were arrested or surrendered between 22 and 26 May 1900. In the period 27 to 31 May 1900 another 50 suspected rebels either surrendered or were apprehended, bringing the total to 162 within 21 days. In early June another four were caught. During the period 10 October 1899 to 4 August 1900 the military arrested a total of 251 people in Natal for treasonable offences. Of these 96 were handed over to the civilian authorities, 105 were released, 15 were allowed to go on parole, 17 were tried by a military court and 18 were kept in custody by the military.¹⁰ The above-mentioned mopping up of rebels in the Klip River county was done with great efficiency, simply because all the local Afrikaners were arrested as suspects.¹¹

The prisons in Dundee and Newcastle could soon no longer hold all the rebel prisoners and on 30 May, 1 June and 7 June a total of 74 suspected rebels were transferred to the central prison in Pietermaritzburg. Once Pietermaritzburg could no longer accommodate all the suspected rebels, George Teichmann, PJ Meyer and others were imprisoned onboard the *Catalonia* outside the Durban

5. PAR, GH 532: Proclamation issued by General R Buller, 11.5.1900; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 15.5.1900.

6. PRO, CO 179/212: Minute paper regarding the proclamation of General R Buller, 1.5.1900-13.6.1900.

7. *Natal Witness*, 6.6.1900.

8. *Natal Witness*, 25.5.1900.

9. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Captain Foxon to magistrate Dundee, 3.7.1900.

10. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Disposal of treason cases in Natal, 10.10.1899-4.8.1900.

11. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Enquiry by Prime Minister AH Hime on the number of rebels arrested, 1.3.1900-3.6.1900.

harbour.¹² The reasons given by the military for sending rebel suspects from the Newcastle and Dundee districts to prison in Pietermaritzburg and on board the *Catalonia* in the Durban harbour were the dangers of having so many prisoners close to the front, the crowded nature of the local prisons, and the anticipation of further arrests.¹³ All these measures proved insufficient because of the sheer number of suspects, consequently some were allowed to reside in Newcastle with family members or in a hotel on condition that they reported to the police twice a day.¹⁴ The poorest Afrikaners ended up taking lodgings in the vestry of the Newcastle DRC.¹⁵

On arriving in Newcastle Buller, true to his earlier policy statement that the civil authorities had to deal with the rebels, requested that the magistrates and their staff be returned at once to administer the surrendering Afrikaners.¹⁶ By then Magistrates P Hugo of Dundee, and JO Jackson of Newcastle, both in exile in Southern Natal, were already, with the assistance of the Criminal Investigation Office (hereafter CIO), busy compiling lists of suspected rebels. Hugo admitted that his list was mostly based on hearsay from Dundee residents who were present in Pietermaritzburg, but nevertheless put forward the names of 84 suspected rebels. Jackson likewise compiled a list of 55 names with the assistance of some former Newcastle residents.¹⁷ By 24 May 1900, the magistrates court in Newcastle was again functional and in a position to receive suspected rebels.¹⁸ In the most southerly Klip River county district, Ladysmith, 146 Afrikaners were suspected of treason,¹⁹ six of which were in prison.²⁰

Only once the Klip River county was cleared of Natal Afrikaners, and the magistrates had started their investigation, did Buller issue orders regarding the treatment of rebels. These strategically issued orders decreed that all British subjects in the Klip River county would be required to register with the magistrates in their districts. On registration they had to sign either declaration A or B. Declaration A was intended for those rebels suspected of taking up arms and these signatories were required to hand over their horse, arms, and ammunition and to sign a declaration stating: "I was forced by the Queen's enemies to take up arms against Her Majesty's Troops, and that a rifle and ammunition were issued to me." The suspects who fell in this category could proceed to their farms on condition that they could be summoned at a later stage. They were also not allowed to

12. PAR, AGO I/7/46: Lists of Natal rebels capture between 10.5.1900 and 4.6.1900, as well as incriminating documents compiled by Lt-Col AE Sandbach.

13. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Letter Clerk of the Peace GL Fraser, Newcastle, to Attorney-General H Bale, 2.6.1900.

14. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 24.5.1900, p.206.

15. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 30.5.1900, pp.212-213.

16. PAR, PM 17: Telegram General R Buller to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 17.5.1900.

17. PAR, CSO 2588: Request to Magistrates P Hugo and JO Jackson to compile name lists of suspected rebels, 5.5.1900.

18. *Natal Witness*, 24.5.1900.

19. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: List of suspected Natal rebels, 1900.

20. PAR, AGO I/7/42: List of those in Klip River county against whom there is some evidence, 16.6.1900.

communicate with, or assist the Boers.²¹ If they claimed that they had handed their rifles to the Boers they were imprisoned until it could be proven that there were no arms on their farms. Natal Afrikaners within this group would eventually stand trial as rebels. Declaration B applied to British subjects who were required to bring two trustworthy witnesses before a magistrate to prove that they had remained absolutely loyal. The livestock of both classes were not to be interfered with unless required by the director of supplies or director of transport for military purposes. In such cases a receipt was issued by the officers or their representatives. Large numbers of livestock were not allowed near the borders with the Republics where it could act as bait to the commandos.²²

Buller's orders, like his proclamation of 1 May 1900, angered the Natal Government. This time Attorney-General Henry Bale confronted Buller and complained that the orders were in conflict with his own orders of 30 November 1899. Bale was also concerned that the oath in which the suspected rebels declared that they were forced to take up arms by the enemies of the Queen, would serve to prejudice the prosecution, and may even place the onus to disprove the statement, upon the crown. Under normal judicial circumstances the onus was on the prisoner to prove that he was compelled to take up arms. Even though Buller was prepared to apologise if his "non-legal" mind had prejudiced the process, he still believed that the onus was on the rebels to prove their innocence.²³

The fears of the Natal authorities were, to a certain extent, allayed by Lt-Col AE Sandbach who informed the rebels who were expecting to be released after handing in their weapons, in terms of Buller's proclamation,²⁴ that "each case must be considered on its merits and it is unadvisable on military grounds to release some of the suspected rebels on parole and the civil government must start the trials as soon as possible."²⁵

This spat between the civil and military authorities on how to deal with the Natal rebels was only the first of a series of such disagreements. The issue regarding the investigation of the rebels initially arrested by the military especially caused conflict between the two groups. What made things more difficult for the Natal Government was that under Martial Law they were required to cooperate with the military in matters regarding the rebellion. Although the military's activities under Martial Law were monitored through the agencies of the magistrates and the attorney-general, this collaboration was not always as close as the government would have wished.²⁶ Against this backdrop of simmering tension the Natal authorities also had to deal with another kind of pressure regarding the

21. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Declaration A and B as issued by the British military, 25.5.1900.

22. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Orders General R Buller as relayed by Lt-Col AE Sandbach on the treatment of residents of Northern Natal, 28.5.1900.

23. PAR, AGO I/8/71: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale relative to the form of oath Natal rebels had to sign, 29.5.1900-1.6.1900.

24. PAR, CSO 1673: Petition A Jansen to the governor of Natal for the release of LW Meyer, 4.4.1901.

25. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Lt-Col AE Sandbach to provost marshal, 15.6.1900.

26. VS Harris, p.44.

rebels - the demands of the Natal public that justice be served.

5.2 Public reaction towards the rebels

Advice from grassroots level to the Natal Government on how to deal with the suspected rebels started to pour in soon after war broke out. On the back of a series of anti-Republican jingoistic meetings held in especially Pietermaritzburg, the *Times of Natal*, called upon all Natalians to gather as much evidence as possible against suspected Natal rebels and to forward it to the PUS.²⁷ A similar pragmatic suggestion was made by William W Cato who recommended that the scouts and Natal Police investigate the activities of Natal Afrikaners.²⁸ Juxtaposed against the calls for the judicial process to run its course were those who sought revenge. One such person who referred to himself as “Fear God - Honour the King”, in a letter to the *Times of Natal*, ferociously attacked disloyal Afrikaners, describing them as “semi-human beings” who openly declared themselves as rebels and send their sons to take up arms against the Queen. He demanded “the punishment of the disloyal...but it should be accomplished after Republican methods, so that the traitors among us might have that republican justice their hearts desires so longingly.” By this the correspondent meant execution in a similar fashion as the “three men who had never raised a rifle against the Republic in Potchefstroom” during the Anglo-Transvaal War.²⁹ Equally vengeful was CH Mitchell who stated that: “No one in Natal wishes to see indiscriminate shooting of rebels, but we do expect that those who have deliberately taken up arms against Government should suffer confiscation of their property and disfranchisement.”³⁰

Other home-front contributors to the debate raging in the Natal newspapers were more objective. “A Northern Refugee” made it clear that it would be unfair if suspected Natal rebels were to be examined or tried by someone who held a bitter grudge against Afrikaners, as it would be equally unfair to appoint magistrates who were sympathetic to the Boer cause to rebel cases. The correspondent concluded by stating: “We want to live here in the Colonies at peace with our neighbours, and, if anyone of us is accused of wronging the community in which he lives, we don’t wish it to be suggested that he did not get a fair trial.”³¹ The omni-present Winston Churchill, who had recently returned to Natal after his dramatic escape from Pretoria, added his voice to the call for British justice when he wrote: “I read your newspapers and the report of recent meetings, industriously and all reveal the same spirit: ‘Give them a lesson they will never forget.’ ‘Make an example.’ ‘Condign punishment.’ ‘Our turn now.’ These are the phrases or ideas which occur. It is the spirit of revenge. It is wrong, first of all because it is morally wicked; and secondly, because it is

27. *Times of Natal* as quoted by *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.10.1899.

28. PAR, CSO 1632: Letter WW Cato to Prime Minister AH Hime, 3.11.1899.

29. *Times of Natal*, 14.10.1899.

30. *Natal Witness*, 29.3.1900. The letters columns of all the daily Natal newspapers such as *Natal Mercury*, *Natal Witness*, *Times of Natal* and the *Natal Advertiser* were flooded with letters generally calling for revenge.

31. *Natal Witness*, 27.3.1900.

practically foolish. Revenge may be sweet but is also most expensive.” By the term expensive Churchill meant that revenge would not secure lasting peace. He therefore idealistically suggested that suspected Natal rebels should be allowed to return to their farms and urged them to “live there upon your best behaviour until the Queen’s pleasure concerning you be made known.” Churchill believed that if the message was: “Come and stand your trial and may God have mercy upon your souls” then the rebels would return to the Boer lines and continue with war.³²

The *Natal Witness* responded by rejecting in a lead article, Churchill’s conciliatory sentiments and made the newspaper’s point of view very clear: “These rebels got into that position of their own free will, and the law which may rescue them from that position will not be an administration of justice. We do not hesitate to say that we do want to see the rebels in both Colonies given a lesson which they will never forget, and that any plea, however, eloquently urged, or from whatever quarter it may come, must be peremptorily rejected.”³³ An avalanche of letters followed in the wake of Churchill’s statement of which eight responses appeared in the 31 March 1900 issue of the *Natal Witness* alone. “20 Years Colonist” blamed the “silliness” of his argument on Churchill’s youth, GR Deare warned colonists to remain vigilant and united “to counteract any misrepresentations that are certain to be made by more or less influential persons and corporate bodies in this country as well as at home.” “G.A.” in turn considered the “impertinent effort to become the self-appointed advisor of our destiny a piece of preposterous presumption.” “G.A.” made it clear that he also questioned the intention of the Natal Government and the civil courts to deal with the rebels in a satisfactory manner. He, therefore suggested a court composed of military officers and “level-headed Colonists whose loyalty is well known” to dispense justice. “Pro Patria” of Pietermaritzburg likewise doubted the willingness of the Natal Government to effectively deal with the rebels. He or she even called for “long terms of imprisonment...disfranchisement...confiscation of property...the Dutch language be not recognised...the annexation of the southern districts of the Free State and Transvaal (and) granted to men of English descent colonial or otherwise.”

Amongst the emotionally, vengeful and sometimes irrational responses were two sane voices, ironically enough the only two correspondents who did not write under pseudonyms. CF Lowen pointed out that the failure to charge the rebels would mean a great injustice to Africans, colonists and loyal Natal Afrikaners alike, while WJ O’Brien suggested prosecution rather than persecution.³⁴ The debate started by Winston Churchill continued outside the columns of the newspapers. Attorney-General Henry Bale³⁵ was urged by WC Perry “to hunt up criminals”,³⁶ while the Lower

32. *Natal Witness*, 29.3.1900.

33. *Natal Witness*, 31.3.1900.

34. *Natal Witness*, 31.3.1900 and 2.4.1900.

35. Henry Bale was knighted for his role in dealing with the rebels. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.12.1914, p.371.

36. PAR, PM 17: Letter WM Perry to Prime Minister AH Hime, 3.4.1900.

Tugela Division Association, at a meeting held at Stanger, urged the Natal Government to bring “rebels and traitors to justice.”³⁷ A similar call, “that rebels shall be dealt within accordance with the Governor’s proclamation”, was forwarded on behalf of the Mid-Illovo Farmer’s Club,³⁸ while others urged the government to take immediate action to obtain evidence against suspected rebels.³⁹

In an attempt to reverse the negative tide of public criticism and to explain the governments intention’s concerning the rebels, Bale invited two of his political opponents to inspect the documents relating to the apprehension of suspected rebels. Apparently the two critics were satisfied that the government was doing its duty.⁴⁰ It is uncertain if the remainder of the unhappy English colonists were equally satisfied with the Natal Government’s treatment of the rebels.

5.3 The response of the Natal Government to rebellion

Although the rebellion did not catch the Natal Government totally by surprise, its preventative measures were wholly inadequate. The government’s first reaction was to swiftly issue several proclamations to suppress the rebellion.⁴¹ Suspecting that the proclamations were being ignored, and disregarding the possibility that they may not have reached the people they were aimed at, the Natal authorities requested Attorney-General Bale, who felt that no precedent existed for such a step, to prepare a draft proclamation that would allow the Natal Government to confiscate movable and immovable property of Natal Afrikaners who had been captured as POWs while fighting for the Boers, of those who died on the battlefield, and of the fathers who had sons on commando. In the proposed proclamation Governor Hely-Hutchinson prohibited the registrar of deeds to register the sale, transfer or mortgage of any of the properties registered in the names of Natal Afrikaners in the above-mentioned categories.⁴²

The possible confiscation of rebel property, as a punitive measure for committing high treason, was one of the key questions, not only faced by the Natal Government, but also the military. An enquiry by General Redvers Buller to the War Office about how severely he should deal with Afrikaners guilty of treason, received the following answer: they are “not entitled to favourable consideration” and should be punished severely. This could include possible forfeiture of property and/or deportation.⁴³ When some of the names of suspected rebels became known, Attorney-General Henry

37. PAR, CSO 1644: Request by the Lower Tugela Division Association to the colonial secretary regarding the punishment of rebels, 4.4.1900.

38. PAR, CSO 1643: Resolution by the Mid-Illovo Farmers’ Club forwarded by JW Montgomery, 19.4.1900.

39. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Minute paper in which Rethman, Tatham and Leuchars urged the government to collect evidence against rebels, 17.5.1900.

40. *Natal Witness*, 26.5.1900.

41. See for example, PAR, NCP 6/1/1/52: Proclamation No. 106 issued by Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 15.10.1899; *Natal Witness*, 16.10.1899; *Times of Natal*, 16.10.1899.

42. PAR, CSO 2581: Draft proclamation suggesting that it is the intention of the Natal Government to confiscate the property of rebellious Natal Afrikaners, 21.10.1899.

43. PRO, WO 1767: Telegrams exchanged between General R Buller and the War Office, 11.12.1899.

Bale requested the registrar of deeds to determine if any property was registered in the names of LJR Kritzinger jnr, JJ Uys, JJ van Rooyen, Isaac van Rooyen, DC Uys and LP Uys. The registrar reported that JJ Uys owned 1 000 acres, DC Uys 8 209 acres and one erf, Isaac van Rooyen 2 982 acres, and JJ van Rooyen 3 acres in Greytown.⁴⁴

Bale despite this enquiry did not view matters as black and white when it came to punishing high treason in economic terms. Quoting from the *Groot Placaat Boek, Vol 6*, p.577, published on 1 May 1732, he indicated that the Netherlands had abolished confiscation of property altogether in the case of treason. Similarly in England, Acts 33 and 34 abolished the confiscation and forfeiture of property for the same crime. Bale, however, contextualised the abolishment of confiscation by stating that this did not apply to the property of rebels taken in the course of hostilities which would under international law, belong to the government.⁴⁵

Although Bale noted that “the principal punishment (for high treason) is doubtless that of death” he also argued against this because he viewed the death penalty to be very similar to confiscation. He cited examples where either a fine or imprisonment was imposed, at the discretion of the court, for crimes such as bestiality, robbery and rape which too were punishable by death. In the light of the above he made his opinion very clear: “I am therefore of the opinion that a fine may be imposed as the punishment for High Treason.” Bale was, however, also quick to point out that the court should be informed that fines were not the only way to punish treason and that the “primary punishment” was still death or imprisonment.⁴⁶

Rumours that the confiscation of property belonging to rebels was being considered, caused a stir in certain sectors of the economy. The Newcastle, Dundee and Charlestown Vigilance Committee were concerned that as pre-war creditors to suspected rebels they would not be compensated should rebel properties be confiscated and sold.⁴⁷ MJ Farrell, on behalf of the Brazil Syndicate which held the mineral rights and the rights to purchase some of the farms in the Newcastle district owned by suspected rebels, voiced his clients' concern that they would forfeit their rights should the farms be confiscated. In its response the Natal Government expressed regret that it was unable to advise on the matter because the authorities themselves were unsure of what steps to take.⁴⁸

44. PAR, AGO I/7/40: List of Natal Afrikaners owning property and who had been recognised as fighting with the Boers, 15.11.1899-11.12.1899.

45. PAR, Zululand Administration (hereafter ZA) 33: Copy of the opinion of Attorney-General H Bale on the crime of high treason, 1899-1900.

46. PAR, ZA 33: Copy of the opinion of Attorney-General H Bale on the crime of high treason, 1899-1900. From time to time some Natal officials used the term “political offenders” when referring to high treason. See for example: PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JH Dekker, 5.12.1901.

47. PAR, PM 17: Enquiry by James Hastie, chairman Vigilance Committee, regarding debt payments out of proceeds of confiscated property, 9.5.1900-4.6.1900.

48. PAR, CSO 1637: Enquiry by MJ Farrell on what steps the Brazil Syndicate should take to protect their mineral rights, 9.1.1900-19.1.1900.

Despite the above-mentioned economic fears and the opinion of the attorney-general, the Natal Government forged ahead with proposed legislation to sanction the official confiscation of property as a punishment for treasonable offences.⁴⁹ Such thinking did not find favour with the Colonial Office or Secretary of State Joseph Chamberlain. He instructed Bertram Cox to obtain the opinion of the Law Officers' Department at the Royal Courts of Justice. Their report echoed the opinion earlier expressed by Attorney-General Bale, namely that neither under Roman Dutch Law nor international law could the Natal Government be justified in confiscating landed property for the crime of high treason. It would also be contrary to the principles of justice to pass a law which would sanction retrospective action for the purpose of inflicting such punishment. Rebels could, however, be tried by Martial Law or treated as POWs. After the expiration of the war such rebels could then be tried for treason.⁵⁰

Although the intervention of the Colonial Office ended the idea of confiscating the property of rebels, the pressure on the Natal Government to adopt such measures did not cease. Under the guidance of Yonge, the member for Melmoth within the Legislative Assembly, a campaign was launched to have the landed property of the rebels confiscated and the culprits disenfranchised.⁵¹ Prime Minister Hime's response, to what was no longer the government's intention, was a guarded one: "It is not the intention of the Government to introduce a bill to provide for...the confiscation of the landed property owned by rebels...persons who have been convicted of Treason are not qualified to vote for the election of Members of the Assembly; that confiscation is not one of the punishments recognised by the Law of this Colony or of England."⁵² This response was criticised by the *Natal Advertiser* which went on to make the draconian suggestion that whole districts should be disenfranchised simply because it envisaged that not all suspected rebels would be successfully prosecuted. The newspaper, clearly unaware of the intervention of the Colonial Office, was equally critical of the fact that rebel property could not be confiscated.⁵³

Hime's unpopular but firm stand did, however, halt the momentum of those in favour of confiscating rebel property for some time. In mid-1901, under Governor Henry McCallum, the possibility of confiscating the land of the Natal Afrikaners, this time that of the approximately 382 not yet apprehended, was raised again. The elaborate process followed to determine which of these men owned land only served to highlight the difficulties that would have been faced if confiscation was decided upon as a punitive measure for high treason. Many Afrikaner farms were for example not registered in the deed's office because they were transferred from one family to another without

49. PAR, GH 1445: Minute paper Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Prime Minister AH Hime, 21.11.1899.

50. PAR, CO 179/216: Opinion on the confiscation of the property of rebels, 25.1.1900.

51. *Natal Legislative Assembly Debates*, 22.8.1899.

52. PAR, PM 17: Response to the question of disenfranchisement and confiscation posed by Yonge, 1.6.1900.

53. *Natal Advertiser*, 7.6.1900.

official records. The problems were exacerbated by the problems with addresses and the large number of Afrikaners with the same surnames and initials who resided in the same area. To gain clarity the assistance of the surveyor-general and the district police officers was called in. This did not necessarily shed more light on the ownership question as the police did not have a register of land-ownership. The investigation process which started on 2 September 1901 was concluded only in December 1901 with the tentative deduction that 82 of those not yet arrested owned land in Natal. Although some of the men like Dirk van Rooyen of Leo Kop, Newcastle, and PH and HN Schoeman of the Ladysmith district owned thousands of acres it was decided not to confiscate their land.⁵⁴ The reason offered by Governor McCallum, apart from the fact that the cabinet had informed him that this was not possible under the existing legislation, was that only a small proportion of the men were land owners.⁵⁵ This was untrue because 20% of those still to be apprehended did own land. In reality the governor suffered a defeat at the hands of the Natal Cabinet who had been down this path before.

Apart from the proclamations issued and the extreme position taken on the confiscation of property the Natal Government did not seem to have any real ideas on how to deal with the rebellion. Part of the problem was the uncertainty about what constituted high treason, what punishment should be meted out to the offenders and by whom.

The military, however, thought they knew. Quoting from *Roman Dutch Law* by Van der Linden, they contested that high treason was a “crime committed by those who, with hostile intention, disturb, injure, or endanger the Independence or security of the State: e.g. by bringing the State into subjection to a Foreign Power...the punishment for this Crime is generally Death, and the manner and mode of execution is generally according to the greater or less degree of aggravating circumstances.”⁵⁶

A circular memorandum, issued by Lord Kitchener on the behalf of Lord Roberts, should have helped to provide both clarification and direction in matters regarding treason: Everybody involved in investigating treasonable charges were urged to guard against political and personal bias and to, neither exhibit a feeling of sympathy towards the Boers, nor sell articles to them which they otherwise might have taken by force. Treasonable offences which were to be verified by impartial witnesses included: preaching sedition and advising inhabitants to take up arms; giving information on troop movements; carrying arms against the British Army; and more specifically taking part in an attack on the British forces. The argument that the Boers had annexed a certain district and that the inhabitants were forced to enlist were not to be accepted as a valid reason for committing treason. In exceptional cases the commanding officer could, after a preliminary investigation, impose a death penalty. Under such circumstances he had apply for instructions from the commander-in-chief to

54. PAR, GH 1449: Name lists of Natal Afrikaners not apprehended, and the land they owned, 2.9.1901-12.12.1901.

55. PRO, CO 179/220: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 8.11.1901.

56. NAR, Archives of the Provost Marshal's Office (hereafter PMO) 2: Extract from *Roman Dutch Law*, p.202, by Van der Linden, certified by Lt-Col NM Poole, no date.

arrange a trial for the offender before a commission existing of a judge of the supreme court and four commissioned officers.⁵⁷ Kitchener's memorandum was, however, never used as either the point of departure, or the guiding principles, in dealing with high treason.

This can partially be explained in that Natal possessed a comprehensive treason law, Law No. 3 of 1868, to deal with high treason as outlined by Kitchener. This was in line with the law of the United Kingdom in relation to treasonable offences. This law contained an extensive definition of treason comprising: "overt acts or deeds" as well as treasonable acts by publishing or "open and advised speaking" of traitorous "compassings, imaginations, inventions, devices, or intentions."⁵⁸ Law No. 3 of 1868, however, made no provision for the confiscation of the landed property of those found guilty of treason. When reviewing this law in August 1899 the Natal Legislative Assembly rejected the idea to amend it to allow for the confiscation of property.⁵⁹ All in all Law No. 3 of 1868 lacked real judicial power to deal with rebels within a context vastly different from when it was passed 31 years before. This was reflected in the 1900 report of the magistrate for the Ladysmith district who commented as follows: "I am of opinion that it would have been a kindness to these people had there been a stringent Rebellion Act in force; many would have hesitated to join the enemy had such an action jeopardised the safety of their landed property."⁶⁰

The Imperial authorities were very sceptical of this legislation and the ability of the Natal authorities to deal with the rebels fairly. They feared that local courts, using a jury system, would treat the rebels harshly. The Imperial Government, furthermore, desired a reasonably similar treatment of rebels in Natal and the Cape Colony, and to this end an "Imperial Special Commission" to try the rebels in both the colonies was suggested.⁶¹

The Natal Government, however, were determined to show their independence by dispensing justice on its subjects and insisted that they would deal with the rebels with a minimum "interference from the Imperial Government" by means of a commission. In the light of this the Natal reaction to the suggestion of the Imperial Government was filled with some indignation: "Ministers are of the opinion that the existing system of administration of justice in this Colony is adequate for the trial of rebels and that the appointment of a judicial commission would be construed as a reflection upon the impartiality of our tribunals."⁶² The Natal Government also made it clear that it was not possible to treat rebels in Natal and the Cape Colony in a similar fashion since, unlike some districts in the Cape

57. PAR, CSO 2591: Circular memorandum issued by Lord Kitchener, 3.2.1900.

58. PAR, NCP 7/1/14: *Natal Government Gazette*, 22.9.1868.

59. *Natal Legislative Assembly Debates*, 22.8.1899.

60. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Klip River district, 1900.

61. PRO, CO 179/211: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 12.5.1900.

62. *Ibid.*

Colony, no district in Natal had suffered a revolt from the majority of its inhabitants.⁶³ Hely-Hutchinson therefore informed Joseph Chamberlain and High Commissioner Alfred Milner that “the circumstances in the Cape Colony and in Natal differ considerably and that to require uniformity of treatment of rebels would not be advisable.”⁶⁴

The Natal Government was, however, not united in its point of view. Ministers Moor and Smythe, who represented the districts of Weenen and Estcourt with their large number of Afrikaner voters, supported the appointment of a judicial commission because they felt that the juries would be swayed by race feelings. The other four ministers considered such an appointment inadvisable for the following reasons: a commission would be viewed as a discredit to the impartiality and competency of the judges in the Natal courts; the public would view the appointment of such a commission as an admission that ordinary courts would pass sentences that are too severe, and it would reinforce the belief amongst the public in Natal that the government wanted to let rebels off as easily as possible; and the belief that the necessary legislation would not be passed by Parliament would gain ground. To the majority in the cabinet Hely-Hutchinson made it clear that the failure to appoint such a commission in Natal might fail to secure the appointment of such a commission in the Cape where juries were most likely to acquit rebels. The governor also drew the cabinet’s attention to the fact that if the rebel trials were moved from the Dutch Districts it would not look good, and that the number of court cases were too numerous to be handled by the Supreme Court. These arguments, however, failed to sway the majority of the cabinet, and consequently the only real firm decision taken was for Henry Bale to prepare legislation that would allow magistrate courts to try less serious rebel cases.⁶⁵

It is thus clear that the Natal Government, not only managed to hold out against the pressure to have rebels tried by a commission to save the situation in the Cape Colony, but also that they would not easily be convinced to sacrifice their sovereignty and independence of the judiciary, which was gained in 1893, when responsible government was introduced.⁶⁶

Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Office, High Commissioner Milner and Governor Hely-Hutchinson all continued to place pressure on the Natal Government to agree to the appointment of a special commission. On 24 April 1900, the Natal Government’s resistance crumbled and the four dissident voices joined Moor and Smythe in agreeing to appoint a special commission for the trial of rebels in Natal. This change of opinion took place because of the immense pressure applied on the Natal Cabinet to ensure that “justice shall be done to rebels in the other parts of South Africa” but

63. PRO, CO 179/211: Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 3.3.1900.

64. PAR, CSO 2588: Telegram Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 31.3.1900.

65. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.4.1900.

66. PRO, CO 179/211: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 23.4.1900; PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 23.4.1900.

also because the first rebel trials were on the verge of starting in Natal. This change of mind led to the decision to compromise on the following two conditions: the Cape Colony was to undertake to introduce, and endeavour to pass, a bill to provide for the appointment of a similar commission in the Cape Colony; and the majority of the commissioners for the Natal Court were to be appointed from the local bench and bar.⁶⁷ Attorney-General Bale made it clear that he only agreed to the appointment of a commission with great reluctance, and that he wanted to explain the reasons in full for a bill “so unusual and revolutionary in character” that it could only be justified on political grounds in the Natal Parliament.⁶⁸

Once the principle of a special commission, that would dispense with the jury system and ensure uniformity of procedure and equality of punishment between Natal and the Cape Colony, was accepted the negotiations and planning of the implementation thereof could start. As a first step Attorney-General Bale corresponded with his Cape Colony counterpart on the draft bill.⁶⁹ A problem, however, arose with the suggestion that British judges were to be employed as members of the commission. The mere idea of introducing British judges for the rebel trials had the judiciary in Natal up in arms. They argued that it would be costly, that the British judges were not acquainted with the procedure of law in Natal, had no knowledge of African customs and habits which was essential since many of the witnesses would be Africans,⁷⁰ and that it was a negative reflection on the impartiality and capacity of local judges and lawyers.⁷¹ In the face of pressure from the motherland the Natal Government eventually also relented on this issue,⁷² and Sir William Smith from Britain was appointed as judge president. After eight months, however, he requested to be relieved of his duties,⁷³ and with the consent of Joseph Chamberlain, he was replaced by a local member of the bench, AW Mason, which meant that the entire bench of the Special Court then consisted of Natalians, thus handing the Colony the power it desired.⁷⁴

5.4 The creation of the Special Court

With most of the ideological matters surrounding the judicial manner in which rebels were to be dealt with settled, the Natal Government could move ahead to deal with the large number of suspects. A Special Court that would consist of the original agreed-upon special commission, was

67. PRO, CO 179/208: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 24.4.1900; Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to J Chamberlain, 25.4.1900.

68. PRO, CO 179/208: Minute paper by Attorney-General H Bale on the commission to try rebels, 20.4.1900.

69. PAR, GH 1302: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 11.5.1900.

70. PAR, GH 1302: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 30.5.1900.

71. PRO, CO 179/208: Minute paper by Attorney-General H Bale on the commission to try rebels, 20.4.1900.

72. PAR, GH 1302: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 11.5.1900.

73. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works, 27.3.1901.

74. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Minute paper regarding the appointment of AW Mason as judge president of the Special Court, 1.4.1901-2.4.1901.

established to do so.⁷⁵ Act 14 of 1900, that created a Special Court, “to make provision for the better and more speedy trial of persons accused of treason, and for the appointment of acting Judges of the Supreme Court” was passed without much trouble by the Natal Parliament.⁷⁶ The act was promulgated on 31 July 1900, and came into effect the next day. The first section of the act provided the working definitions of treason which were to be used to judge the suspected rebels:

- (a) *Crimen perduellionis*⁷⁷
- (b) *Crimen laesae majestatis*⁷⁸
- (c) Offences under Law 3 of 1868
- (d) Sedition
- (e) Every attempt to commit, and every solicitation to commit, and every kind of criminal participation in, treason.

In terms of its constitution the Special Court was to consist of three special commissioners who were qualified judges, to be appointed by Governor Hely-Hutchinson, and to be paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Colony of Natal. Although the Special Court had to try all treason cases, the following provision was included in Act 14 of 1900 so as to speed up the process and to deal with minor treasonable offences - the attorney-general could remit some treason cases to trial by a magistrate without jury, and the accused in these cases could appeal to the Special Court.⁷⁹ In a radical turnabout, the passing of Act 14, and especially the fact that no jury would be involved, was welcomed by the normally very critical Natal newspapers.⁸⁰ The publication of the act was followed by the publication of supporting legislation namely, Act 15 of 1900, which would serve: “To indemnify the Governor of the Colony of Natal and the Officer Commanding Her Majesty’s Forces in Natal, and all persons acting under their authority and in good faith in regard to acts during the existence of Martial Law.”⁸¹

Once the Special Court was established, Governor Hely-Hutchinson, appointed the following judges as commissioners: Sir William Smith of England as president, Judge AW Mason, and Magistrate Broome from the Natal judiciary. The *Natal Witness* lauded the men appointed to the panel and declared that they would “form an admirable jury.”⁸² The trio of gentlemen proceeded to produce the

75. PAR, GH 1456: Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 20.4.1900.

76. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/53: *Natal Government Gazette*, 31.7.1900, containing Proclamation No. 56 of 1900.

77. Meaning high treason.

78. Meaning treason and lesser offences against the crown.

79. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/53: *Natal Government Gazette*, 31.7.1900, containing Act 14 of 1900; NCP 5/3/8: Colony of Natal Acts, Parliament of the Colony of Natal, 4th session, second Colonial Parliament, 1900, Act 14 of 1900; *Natal Witness*, 24.5.1900.

80. *Natal Witness*, 26.5.1900; *The Standard*, 19.5.1900.

81. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/53: *Natal Government Gazette*, 31.7.1900, containing Act 15 of 1900.

82. *Natal Witness*, 7.8.1900.

“Rules of the Special Court”, a document consisting of 13 parts and 28 pages. The various parts dealt with matters such as sessions of the court, prosecution and indictment, subpoenas, trials, execution of judgements; appeals; applications for bail and release; and a miscellaneous section which explained affidavits, the tasks of the sheriff, registrar and the shorthand writers and how the documents generated by the trial were to be handled. To adhere to the regulations of the 13 parts 23 forms had to be completed amongst which were indictments; counts of theft; charges under Law 3 of 1868; notice of trial and summons; subpoena on witnesses; warrants of imprisonment; warrants of fines; warrants of discharge on payment of fines; writs of execution; notices of appeal; writs of appeal; instruction for prison returns; warrants of release on bail or on conditions; bail bonds with sureties and bail bond with personal securities.⁸³ Within this context the “Rules of the Special Court” were set to generate enormous volumes of documents. After some minor alterations it was published.⁸⁴

Although the constitution of the Special Court and the appointment of the committee of judges was welcomed by the public, the fact that the attorney-general could remit some treason cases to trial by a magistrate without jury did not receive all-round support. The *Natal Witness* was quite outspoken: “Treason has always been regarded as the highest crime for which a man can be indicted, but to allow a trial by a magistrate is to reduce it to the same level as cases of petty felony.”⁸⁵ “An ex-Magistrate” had even stronger reservations and made it clear that magistrates had no experience of treason trials which therefore could pose difficult demands beyond the training of magistrates. Magistrates could also be accused of bias when trying individuals from their district. To protect, both the suspected rebels and the magistrates involved, “An ex-Magistrate” suggested that special magistrates be appointed to try the less serious cases of treason.⁸⁶ This idea found favour with Attorney-General Bale who agreed to appoint magistrates, other than those who accepted the preliminary examination, to try the less serious cases.⁸⁷ As a result, Magistrate James Forder who was briefed to try less serious treason cases under the rules of the Special Court, was appointed to this position.⁸⁸ The maximum sentence he could impose was six months imprisonment and a fine of £20. Rebels sentenced by the special magistrate had the right to appeal to a higher court, in this case, the Special Court.⁸⁹

83. PAR, AGO I/7/46: Rules of the Special Court, 27.8.1900; PRO, CO 179/213: Rules of the Special Court, 27.8.1900.

84. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to registrar Special Court, 29.8.1900.

85. *Natal Witness*, 26.5.1900.

86. *Natal Witness*, 30.5.1900.

87. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to colonial secretary, 17.9.1900.

88. For the judgements delivered by Magistrate J Forder, see: PAR, 1/LDS 1/6/2/2/1: Natal rebels note book, 1901-1902; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/1: Natal rebels note book, November 1900; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/2: Natal rebels note book, 1901-1903; PAR, 1/LDS G/1/1/1: Clerk of the peace letter book: Telegram HEK Anderson to magistrate Upper Tugela, 21.11.1900.

89. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19979: Letter JC Vermaak to Professor Uys, 3.11.1955.

This was not the end of the problems which confronted the trials of rebels in magistrate courts. The rules of the Special Court did not deal with the drawing up of complaints in cases remitted to magistrates. Consequently Bale requested the commissioners of the court to alter the rules of the court to make this possible. The commissioners made it clear that they were not empowered to do this since all treason cases remitted to magistrate courts fell under Act 22 of 1896 and needed to be treated as such.⁹⁰

With this settled, the Special Court and special magistrate were ready to assume the daunting task of trying hundreds of suspected Natal rebels. The Special Court functioned until late March 1902 when it started to wind down. By then one of its stalwarts, Broome, had vacated his position and the sheriff, Mr Borgnis, had very little work to do and was needed by the Natal Police. Deputy Sheriff Gough was prepared to take over his duties, including the collection of fines. The president of the Special Court, Judge Mason, resigned on 24 April 1902 as he was about to take his leave in the United Kingdom.⁹¹ In April 1902 the Special Court dissolved and the remaining cases were remitted to Special Magistrate Forder for trial.⁹²

Although the Natal Government was subtly convinced by the Colonial Office to conform in matters regarding the confiscation of property and the acceptance of a Special Court, it continued to cling to its political and judicial independent line regarding the trial of rebels by the law of the Colony. The Natal Government was even prepared to sacrifice peace to ensure that Natal rebels were tried for treasonable offences. In this they had the support of High Commissioner Alfred Milner, even though he had, according to Thomas Pakenham a different agenda, namely "to knock the bottom out of the 'great Afrikaner nation' for ever and ever Amen." In the light of this, neither the Natal Government nor Milner would support the peace negotiations between Botha and Kitchener planned for 28 February 1901 at Middelburg in the ZAR. The willingness of Kitchener to negotiate amnesty for the Natal and Cape rebels carried little support with Milner who would, allow peace to derail his own plans. In the end Milner, as well as the Natal Government, had their way and prospects of peace faltered on the rebel issue.⁹³

5.5 The Supreme Court and Zululand High Court trials of Natal rebels

Before the Special Court and special magistrate could assume their duties, the rebel cases brought before the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg and the Zululand High Court needed to be concluded. The inception of the cases against the three brothers Boers, AG, GJB and HW, A Fuhri, PR Buys, WMJ van Rooyen, and others already under way in the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg, and against MA and LJR Kritzingen before the Zululand High Court, went back to the period before the constitution of the Special Court when the Natal Government deemed the Supreme Court the most appropriate institution to deal with rebels. These cases therefore fell outside the jurisdiction of Act

90. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Minute paper Attorney-General Bale requesting a change in the rules of the Special Court, 26.10.1900-5.11.1900.

91. PAR, CSO 1700: Minute paper regarding the constitution of the Special Court, 17.3.1902.

92. PAR, CSO 1702: Letter Judge AW Mason to Governor HE McCallum, 18.4.1902.

93. T Pakenham, pp.488-502.

14 of 1900 and needed to be concluded before the commencement of the sittings of the Special Court.⁹⁴

The first Natal Afrikaners to be tried outside a military court for high treason were the above-mentioned Boers brothers, Arnoldus Gerhardus, Gerhardus Johannes Bernardus, and Hendrikus Wouterus⁹⁵ of the Spioenkop area near Ladysmith. The three men were tried in the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg, during June 1900, by Judge Finnemore and a jury with Attorney-General Henry Bale prosecuting. In a concluding statement of 90 minutes, which was applauded by the packed crowd, Bale asked the court to find GJB and HW Boers guilty of treason for actively assisting the Republicans in operations in the Klip River and Upper Tugela districts, and for helping in repairing a canon. The jury agreed and sentenced the men to five years imprisonment with hard labour and a fine of £250 or a further one year imprisonment. Arnoldus Gerhardus was acquitted,⁹⁶ but was refused permission by both the military, and the civil authorities, to return to his farm because of the military situation in the vicinity of his home.⁹⁷ He eventually received permission to return to his farm on 14 September 1900, only to be ordered south of the Tugela River on 11 October 1900 by the military.⁹⁸

The case in the Supreme Court against the Boers brothers was followed by that against the 33-year-old Philip Rudolph Buys (jnr) and Albertus Fuhri of Weenen. Both men were arrested as suspected rebels and tried before Justice Finnemore and a jury of nine men, with Attorney-General Henry Bale and RF Morcom prosecuting. Buys and Fuhri were charged on two counts: that they had joined the Boers on 20 November and accompanied them south to Mooi River; and that they had taken horses from an African, Usapo. Buys pleaded not guilty to the charges and in his testimony he gave an account of his dealings with the invaders. The Boers had come to his farm and invited him and Fuhri to the laager. Here they met with General Piet Joubert who asked them if they could provide the commando with horses. Both declined as they had no horses to spare and because the Natal Government had warned them against supporting the invaders. Fuhri had, however, indicated that he was willing to sell a horse. Having failed to secure their unequivocal support, the two Natal Afrikaners were warned that if they were hiding horses and livestock belonging to English Natalians they would get into trouble. This scared Buys who was doing exactly that for Ralph Whittaker, and

94. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/53: *Natal Government Gazette*, 31.7.1900, containing Act 14 of 1900; NCP 5/3/8: Colony of Natal Acts, Parliament of the Colony of Natal, 4th session, second Colonial Parliament, 1900, Act 14 of 1900; *Natal Witness*, 24.5.1900.

95. HW Boers first came to the attention of the military and civil authorities just prior to the war when he complained of the destruction of the wire fencing on his farm by soldiers. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to HW Boers, 10.10.1899.

96. *Natal Witness*, 10-12.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/42: Regina vs AGJ, GJB and HW Boers, 5.6.1900.

97. PAR, CSO 1650: Application of permission by TF Carter on behalf of AG Boers to return home, 18.6.1900-30.6.1900.

98. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entries, 14.9.1900, p.447 and 11.10.1900, p.483.

his brother-in-law, Richard Horner.⁹⁹ After the men were questioned on the whereabouts of the British forces and answered unsatisfactorily, they were allowed to return home on condition that they had to report to the laager on a regular basis. They were warned that if they failed to report their property would be damaged. Buys' evidence, which was verified by the evidence of several African witnesses as well as Whittaker and Horner, was rejected by the jury who favoured the testimony of Herbert Blake, the local justice of the peace who had been taken prisoner by the Boers, and an African who placed Buys at the Battle of Willow Grange. After a short deliberation the jury found Buys guilty of high treason and sentenced him to three year's imprisonment and a £250 fine or an additional year in jail.¹⁰⁰ In so doing Buys became the third Natal Afrikaner, and the first south of the Tugela, to be sentenced as a rebel. Fuhri was acquitted on both charges.¹⁰¹

The agenda behind the Buys/Fuhri trial, and possibly all other trials taking place in the Supreme Court, was best summed up by the council for the defence, TF Carter, in his opening statement as reported by the *Natal Witness*:

He (Carter) asked why this case was not tried by the Court, which, in the course of two or three days would be in existence, especially appointed for trying this class of case? He believed that such a question had been asked in the House, and the reply had been given that delay would be involved if all prisoners were made to wait for trial by that Court. Such a delay would have been distinctly beneficial to the prisoners, for they could have obtained more witnesses. Dinizulu, the Irish Fenians, Jameson and Willoughby were all tried for treasonable offences by special courts, and in nearly every case of a political trial, it was the universal custom to appoint a Special Court to deal with the accused. He complained that in this case there had been undue haste in the prosecution. Was it because the government had been accused of lukewarmness, and that this was a kind of counterblast to the statements that had been made? He did not know if that was so, but he could not find any other reason than what he called a political reason. He had never heard the Attorney-General impart so much warmth and heat into any as he had in the present case. In this case there seemed to be a striving after a conviction, because it would show a good start, and the tail and the ruck would come in for their deserts.¹⁰²

In Zululand, MAS and LJR Kritzinger were tried for high treason in the Zululand High Court during June 1900. The Natal authorities wanted to proceed with the case while the Chief Commissioner and Civil Magistrate Saunders suggested that the case be delayed and tried under the newly constituted

99. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900 and 15.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/8/71: *Corpus Dilecti* in the case of the Boers brothers, 1.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/1: Treason trial of AGJ, GJB and HW Boers, 5.6.1900.

100. Buys later claimed that he suffered materially during his arrest. Via his attorney he expressed his dissatisfaction at losing his horse, saddle, bridle and mackintosh, valued at roughly £40, when he was arrested and requested that it be returned to him or that he be compensated for it. The subsequent investigation revealed that Trooper RG Jones was instructed by General Barton to hand the horse over to the remount department. An extensive investigation into the matter seems not to have favoured Buys, partially because Jones did not ask for a receipt when delivering the horse.

PAR, MJPW 77: Correspondence concerning the horse and other effects belonging to PR Buys, 13.8.1900-5.10.1900.

101. *Natal Witness*, 13.6.1900 and 15.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs PR Buys and A Fuhri, June 1900.

102. *Natal Witness*, 13.6.1900.

Special Court. The Natal authorities, however, did not relent and MAS and LJR (Louis) Kritzinger were tried by the Zululand High Court in Eshowe and sentenced to a £50 and £100 fine respectively.¹⁰³

In the end, “the good start” referred to by Carter culminated in seven cases involving eleven Natal Afrikaners being tried in the Supreme Court. Of these six were found guilty, two were acquitted and the case against HA, JJ and GC Potgieter was transferred to the Special Court on request of their lawyer, TF Carter, who must have felt that this court would give his clients a fairer treatment.¹⁰⁴

In conducting this small number of cases before the Supreme Court, the Natal Government managed to convince the rabid English colonists that they intended to punish the rebels, and on a political level it drove home the argument that the Natal judiciary could deal with the rebels, independently from the motherland. Not surprisingly, the verdict of Governor Hely-Hutchinson was that the juries involved were fair and that the sentences imposed by the Supreme Court were moderate.¹⁰⁵

This was not the perception the Boers brothers and Buys had of the sentences meted out to them. The Boers brothers petitioned the Natal authorities on four occasions and Buys once for a remission of the sentence of hard labour passed on them and which they had to carry out “with the native convicts in the streets of Eshowe.” The basis of the argument, as set out by TF Carter, was that the sentences imposed on them for high treason were more severe than that subsequently handed down by the Special Court, and the afore mentioned court did not inflict hard labour as a punishment for high treason. Their argument was supported by Attorney-General Bale who had to admit that the three men’s sentences were “more severe than sentences for like offences imposed by the Special Court.” He therefore recommended that they be treated mercifully. These requests were time and time again rejected by the governor of Natal.¹⁰⁶ Only in June 1902, after the war had ended, did the authorities relent and were the Boers brothers and Buys relieved of the sentence of hard labour imposed on them.¹⁰⁷

Several other processes, which continued into 1903, ran concurrently to the trials in the Supreme

103. PAR, ZA 33: Enquiry into the advisability of prosecuting rebel cases outside of the constituted Special Court, 1.6.1900-21.6.1900.

104. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Minute paper regarding the treason trials of HA, JJ and GC Potgieter, 12.7.1900-4.8.1900.

105. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 25.8.1900. For a detailed summary of the cases that were tried by the Supreme Court and the High Court in Zululand see: PRO, CO 179/213: Return of cases of treason dealt with by Supreme Court of Natal and the High Court of Zululand up to and including 4.8.1900.

106. PAR, CSO 1673: Petition by HW and GJB Boers for remission of sentence, 21.12.1900; CSO 1673: Petition by HW and GJB Boers for remission of sentence, 19.4.1901; CSO 1692: Petition by HW and GJB Boers for remission of sentence. 4.12.1901; CSO 1673: Petition by HW and GJB Boers and PH Buys that they be granted the privileges of other Boer prisoners, 20.12.1900.

107. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2609: Lys van Natal rebelle wat gevonniss en tereg gestaan het, 17.4.1954.

Court. Natal Afrikaners who escaped arrest by the Natal Army were investigated, arrested and identified so that they could eventually be tried by either, the Special Court, or the special magistrate.

5.6 Investigating and arresting the Natal rebels

Investigations into rebel activities in Northern Natal started well before the Boer occupation ended. District officers of the Natal police were instructed to keep a record of Natal Afrikaners suspected of disloyalty as early as 30 September and 3 October 1899.¹⁰⁸ The instruction was underpinned by Attorney-General Henry Bale's request on 30 November 1899, that information of treasonable acts and utterances be obtained.¹⁰⁹ Later these records were supplemented by evidence from refugees from Northern Natal and from African spies who exploited the poor security measures taken by the Republican forces. As a result, Charles Tatham, clerk of the peace, attorney, member of the UMR and parliamentarian for Greytown, was able to inform Bale, weeks before the Natal Army attacked the Boer positions on the Biggarsberg, that he had enough evidence to arrest 25 Afrikaners from Helpmekaar and several from Wasbank.¹¹⁰

Once Natal was cleared of the Boers by Buller's Natal Army, Tatham and Inspector Clarke of the Natal Police became the driving forces behind the initial investigations against suspected Natal rebels arrested by the military. By 11 June 1900 the pair had already drawn up a list with the names of 212 suspected rebels from the Dundee district, as well as witnesses, especially African, to testify against them. They, however, failed to achieve the same success in the Newcastle district, because most of the Africans had accompanied the fleeing Natal Afrikaners.

Despite the initial success Inspector Clarke had no illusion about the process ahead: "The persecution of rebels will be a lengthy business and a very expensive one but I have not doubt for a moment that every rebel will eventually be brought to justice...I am sorry we cannot make more rapid progress with the work but I have been working 15 or 16 hours every day since I left PMB."¹¹¹ Clarke's sentiments were echoed by the clerk of the peace for Newcastle, GL Fraser, who complained that it was impossible to obtain depositions at short notice because of the size of the district and the fact that Afrikaners from all over the division were being arrested by the military.¹¹²

A glimpse into the process, replicated in the trial of approximately 500 rebels, is provided by the case of the three Colling brothers, Frederick Moolman, Thomas George and Joseph Lombaard

108. PAR, MJPW 116: Letter MJPW AH Hime to Chief Commissioner of Police Inspector Campbell, 9.1.1900.

109. PAR, AGO I/8/69: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime on gathering information on treasonable acts and utterances, 30.11.1899.

110. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter C Tatham to Attorney-General H Bale, 11.5.1900.

111. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter Inspector Clarke to Attorney-General H Bale, 11.6.1900.

112. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Application by NJ Degenaar to be released on parole or bail, 15.7.1900.

Odendaal. Firstly intelligence was gathered by the Natal Police and their assistants who were labelled the “Brotherhood of the Holy Judas Iscariot” by Reverend Prozesky.¹¹³ Once this was accomplished suspects not in prison were arrested and the preliminary examination against them could begin. The first two Colling brothers were arrested and imprisoned on 1 August 1900 and the third brother on the 18th. Evidence was taken against the men between 2 August and 24 September 1900. Joseph Lombaard Odendaal was considered innocent and released on 27 August. The remaining two brothers were committed for trial after the necessary indictments, subpoenas, papers to the prosecution, and the list of witnesses were filed on 1 October 1900.¹¹⁴ FM and TG Colling were eventually sentenced on 11 January 1901, five months after their arrest.

The outlined process and the possibility of a fair trial were initially seriously hampered by the lack of evidence against the large number of suspected rebels arrested by the Natal Army. Investigations proved that many Afrikaners were arrested by the military without any validation and detained merely on their depositions. As a result, the onus was placed on the Natal Police to gather the necessary information. This inevitably meant that an already elaborate process became bogged down. On 18 October 1900, a worried Attorney-General Bale complained that the number of prisoners against whom no evidence had been taken was unduly large. He also felt that it would be unfair to keep the men in prison for a period exceeding three months without any evidence against them and that it “(could) only be justified, if justified at all, by extreme necessity”. Bale was, however, also under pressure to speed up the proceedings because the newspapers were criticising the slow prosecution rate. At the same time he was afraid that a critical Special Court would order the release of the suspects if steps were not immediately taken to justify their arrests. Such a step would, according to Bale, do an immense amount of injury to the administration of justice in Natal.¹¹⁵ He thus set a process in motion which could deal with the legacy created by the military. The number of assistant magistrates at Newcastle, Dundee, Estcourt and Ladysmith were doubled, the services of Charles Tatham was maintained, the clerks of the peace were paid for overtime, while the names of the suspected rebels in custody were forwarded to the police officers in the districts where the men came from.¹¹⁶

In the meantime the Natal Police did everything in their power to come up with the necessary evidence, working their horses so hard that they became unfit for use. A major problem faced by the police was that the military had moved large numbers of the suspected rebels from Newcastle, Dundee and Ladysmith to prisons in Pietermaritzburg and Durban. The preliminary examinations could therefore not start until these rebels were returned to, for example, the Newcastle jail.

113. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 24.5.1900, p.316.

114. PAR, 1/LDS 1/6/2/1/1: Preliminary proceedings in cases of alleged high treason, 8.1900-10.1900.

115. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Preparation of a complete list of rebels in prison arrested for treason, 9.10.1900-8.3.1901; AGO I/7/75: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to CIO, 25.10.1900.

116. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Preparation of a complete list of rebels in prison arrested for treason, 9.10.1900-8.3.1901.

Furthermore, it seemed unlikely that room would become available in the Klip River county prisons since convicted rebels were kept in the local prison until they had testified in other cases, while new arrests were brought in on a daily basis. A pressurised and unsympathetic Bale immediately rejected the reasons offered for the slowness of the process and urged the CIO to press ahead with the investigations.

At this stage, roughly five months after the blanket arrests of the Klip River county Afrikaners, the Newcastle Prison was seriously overcrowded because convicted rebels were imprisoned alongside a group of Afrikaners who had surrendered voluntarily,¹¹⁷ in all likelihood because they felt no charges could be brought against them. Overcrowded prisons, the arrival of hot and humid summer weather together with the small chance of prospective evidence convinced Henry Bale that bail should be granted to the imprisoned rebels. He explained: "I am aware that there is a danger of the prisoners influencing or intimidating Native witnesses, but in the interests of humanity it seems undesirable that men should be kept in Goal until they are brought to trial."¹¹⁸ The GOC for Natal, Lt-Gen Hildyard, had no objection as long as it was understood that the suspects could not move north of Pietermaritzburg.¹¹⁹

The decision to release the suspected rebels, who had little or no evidence against them, did not endear the Natal authorities, the Natal Police or the attorney-general's office to the jingoistic Natal public who used the *Natal Witness* to vent their discontent with the decision. Bale took this in his stride and commented that "the public will not be influenced by my opinion or yours, or even by the difficulties of the position. If, for any reason, evidence cannot be collected, then the men must be released. Everything must be done to avoid a scandal. The government must not be accused of cruelty if it be found hereafter that there is no evidence against some of those who have been in prison for many months." Inspector Clarke was less accommodating in accepting the criticism and in a self-imposed mission undertook to trace "the origin of abusive articles" by finding the persons who directed these attacks. This threat to investigate paid off because the Pietermaritzburg newspapers reverted to a form of self-censorship by refusing to publish articles critical of the manner in which the rebel issue was managed.¹²⁰

By middle December 1900, the situation had hardly improved and for the next two months Bale continued to place pressure on the CIO to gather evidence against the Afrikaners initially arrested by the military. On 18 February 1901, Bale could finally declare that some evidence existed against the incarcerated suspects, and he urged the clerks of the peace to proceed with the preliminary examinations. Again he declared his unwillingness to keep the suspects in prison unless a case could

117. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Correspondence regarding a list of persons charged with high treason, 23.10.1900-25.10.1900.

118. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works, 22.10.1900.

119. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Preparation of a complete list of rebels in prison arrested for treason, 9.10.1900-8.3.1901.

be brought against them. JR Lindt and PA Rensburg who were both summarily released, fell in this category.¹²¹

Other suspects arrested by the Natal Army were less fortunate. JF and LP de Jager, A Eicker, HJ Maritz and LJ van Ede who were imprisoned in Newcastle were such examples. On 21 May 1900, a year after their arrest, they complained that they were being remanded every seven days on the charge of high treason. Although the Special Court had had two sittings in Newcastle during this period, and the special magistrate three, they were not tried. The men complained that their families were suffering and that the suspense and anxiety was affecting their physical and mental health. They therefore asked Henry Bale why they were “specially picked out for this treatment...” This was exactly the kind of situation Bale had crusaded against and he angrily confronted the CIO: “Will you please inform me what evidence there is against these men and why their cases have not been dealt with? Is it true that they have been under arrest since 21 May last as stated and if so why were their names not included in the list supplied by you of men against whom no evidence had been taken?”

The CIO only respond five months later, offering the following excuse for the overlong imprisonment of the five Afrikaners: “I suspect that these papers have been overlooked when rebels have been committed for trial.” The office of the attorney-general was then informed that the culprit was Inspector Petley who had neglected his duties, and that Inspector Mardall would see to it that the cases were concluded.¹²² The quintet were eventually sentenced on 1 June 1901, by Special Magistrate Forder, to five months imprisonment each, except for HJ Maritz who was fined £15 or sentenced to 3 months imprisonment. In reality all the men except Maritz, effectively served just more than 17 months, making a mockery of the system which was set up to have less serious cases tried by the special magistrate.¹²³ The feeling of resentment towards the British at such injustice is best summed up by one of Reverend Prozesky’s diary entries: “Old Aveling once asked me where all the devils went which came out of the 2 000 swine which rushed into the sea and drowned. I said I do not know, nothing has been revealed to us about that...He said the devils have entered into the English nation.”¹²⁴

Investigations against and arrests of other rebels continued concurrently with the struggle to clear the books of suspected rebels. Suspects who had remained in Natal were systematically sniffed out

120. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to MJPW, 31.10.1900.

121. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Preparation of a complete list of rebels in prison arrested for treason, 9.10.1900-8.3.1901.

122. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Petition from five prisoners asking that their case be dealt with without delay, 6.4.1901-26.9.1901.

123. Numerous other Natal Afrikaners shared a similar experience. MJ van der Westhuysen of the farm Lincoln, Newcastle, who had surrendered on 21.5.1900 were, for example, fined £20 on 20.12.1900, seven months after his arrest by the military. PAR, AGO I/7/74: Enquiry by TF Carter regarding the charges against MJ van der Westhuysen, 5.11.1900.

124. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 1.9.1900, pp.276-277. See Matthew 8, 28-33;

by the Natal Police. LJ Muller of Doornkraal and HB Cronjé of Mielietuinhoek in the Klip River district were arrested by the police on 17 June 1900 and 22 August 1900 respectively.¹²⁵ Others such as Barend Labuschagne and his two sons BC and J, and TC Engelbrecht and his three sons surrendered to the Upper Tugela magistrate.¹²⁶ In December 1901 the Natal Police were still arresting suspected rebels like RK Sandsbury, C van der Leeuw, W Portsmouth, and G Byloo and numerous others as they attempted to account for more than 350 Natal rebels.¹²⁷ Rebels arrested in late 1901 and 1902 seem to have had a better chance to escape serious punishment because the Natal Police and clerks of peace found it difficult to collect evidence for crimes which had taken place up to two years earlier. A point in case is illustrated by Clerk of the Peace Fraser of Newcastle who complained that he could only interview one witness each in the cases against J Terblanche, PJ Swart and J Strydom.¹²⁸

The investigations, arrests and prosecutions took place under constant pressure exerted by the Natal Government, Attorney-General Bale and later Attorney-General Labistour on the overworked court staff, clerks of peace and the Natal Police to speed up the preliminary examinations.¹²⁹ In this process they called, on a monthly basis, for lists which mapped out the progress made in the apprehension and conviction of rebels.¹³⁰ On 3 September 1900 the names of 742 suspected rebels appeared on these lists. Of these 297 were arrested while 445 were still at large.¹³¹ A month later the number of names on the list had risen to 839 of which 342 were arrested while 497 were unaccounted for. The initial success in apprehending rebels then slowed down dramatically and five months later 486 suspected rebels were still at large.¹³²

Under such political pressure the Natal Police were bound to commit judicial errors. Sergeant Horne of Upper Tugela was reprimanded by Clerk of the Peace HEK Anderson of Ladysmith for arresting Afrikaners, in this case BA and MJ Bester, without sufficient evidence. Horne was advised to: "In future please get the evidence first and it will be for the magistrate to decide whether there is sufficient to justify an arrest. I am at a loss to understand how you managed to get a warrant for the arrest of these boys in the absence of evidence. If these boys were not put in goal by or at the request

Mark 5, 1-20; Luke 8, 26-39 for the relevant texts.

125. PAR, AGO I/8/83: Applications for bail by HB Cronjé and LJ Muller, 8 and 10.11.1900.

126. PAR, CSO 1655: Report by Magistrate HJ Colenbrander on Natal Afrikaners who surrendered in the area, 16.8.1900.

127. PAR, AGO I/8/83: Applications for bail by RK Sandsbury, C van der Leeuw, G Byloo and W Portsmouth, 10.1.1902; PAR, AGO I/8/83: List of suspected rebels awaiting trial in the Newcastle Prison, 27.12.1901.

128. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Report by Clerk of the Peace GL Fraser on pending treason cases, 7.4.1902.

129. The rise of Labistour was nothing but meteoric. In July 1900 he unsuccessfully approached Henry Bale about the vacant position of assistant clerk of the peace at Dundee. Little more than a year later he was the attorney-general. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Letter CA de R Labistour to Attorney-General H Bale, 30.7.1900.

130. See for example, PRO, CO 179/213: Extract from CIO record on Natal rebels, 3.9.1900.

131. PRO, CO 179/213: Extract from CIO records of Natal rebels, 3.9.1900.

132. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Name lists of rebels not yet apprehended, 22.3.1901.

of the military and you see no chance of getting evidence against them they should be discharged.”¹³³ The Besters were eventually granted bail and ultimately acquitted of all charges against them.¹³⁴

To speed up the apprehension of suspects, Attorney-General Bale, despite the fact that he did not find it proper, asked the Natal Cabinet for its opinion on the idea of advertising for evidence against rebels. The ministers rejected the suggestion with contempt.¹³⁵ The cabinet also rejected the request by “zealous officials” in Dundee who wanted to offer a £50 reward to “neighbouring natives” for the arrest of Kok, a notorious rebel, who regularly crossed the Buffalo River to loot in the Helpmekaar area. Their rejection was based on three factors: fear that a reward would encourage Africans to trump up charges; that it was unacceptable to involve Africans in the manner suggested; and on the belief that the Natal Police were capable enough of dealing with the matter in the ordinary manner.¹³⁶

Although it was not their primary task the military continued, especially during the guerrilla phase of the war, to assist the Natal Police and the civil authorities in rounding up suspected rebels. Particularly those who, in an attempt to escape the clutches of the law, had fled to the Republics were more likely to be arrested by the military. One such group consisting of WH Boshoff,¹³⁷ MW Krogman, and AW Krogman, all of the Klip River district, were arrested in August 1900 by the military in the Harrismith area.¹³⁸ The military continued to conduct such arrests well into 1902, and groups or individual rebels such as W Zietsman and PJ Kemp, were, for example, arrested by Rimington’s Scouts in the Transvaal,¹³⁹ and handed over to the Natal authorities for trial.¹⁴⁰

Cooperation between the Natal authorities and the military regarding rebels who fell into the latter’s hands was not always amicable.¹⁴¹ In March 1901 a group consisting of 20 rebels surrendered to the military in the Vryheid district. Suspects like these benefited from the fact that a lengthy period of time had elapsed since the Boer occupation of the Klip River county, as witnesses could in the meantime have forgotten what had transpired, or may have left the area to seek work elsewhere. The

133. PAR, 1/LDS G/1/1/1: Letter HEK Anderson to magistrate Upper Tugela, 21.8.1900; Letter HEK Anderson to Sergeant Horne, 11.9.1900. Arresting suspected rebels without a warrant was not uncommon and several Afrikaners mentioned that, either the Natal Carbineers or the Natal Police, had arrested them without the required documentation. Nothing much came of the complaints in this regard since Martial Law allowed for the detention of suspects. See, PAR, AGO I/8/74: Application for bail by HN Raath, 29.10.1900.

134. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Application for bail by BA and MJ Bester, 8.11.1900.

135. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Enquiry by Attorney-General Bale if the Natal Cabinet would approve of the advertisement for evidence against rebels, 23.4.1900.

136. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Request by the Dundee magistrate that a reward be offered for the arrest of Kok, 23.7.1900.

137. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Application for bail by WH Boshoff, 21.11.1900.

138. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Applications for bail by MW Krogman, AW Krogman, BA Bester and MJ Bester, 10.11.1900.

139. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Application for bail by PJ Kemp, 27.9.1900.

140. PAR, AGO I/8/83: List of untried prisoners charged with treason in the Dundee Prison, 27.12.1901.

141. NAR, PMO 39: Telegrams Provost Marshal Lt-Col RM Poole and GOC, Natal regarding the surrender of N and P Swart near Ermelo, 3.11.1901-4.12.1901.

burden of proof therefore shifted to military witnesses. Attorney-General Bale was, for this reason, quick to request the military to secure witnesses who could testify whether the Natal Afrikaners had actually fought and if they were armed when they surrendered.¹⁴² With the assistance of the GOC Natal, orders were issued to officers in command instructing them to gather evidence on the spot when Natal rebels were apprehended. The names of witnesses, who could testify about the circumstances under which the capture or surrender took place and whether the rebel carried arms, were to be especially noted. Consequently lists with the names of suspected rebels who had been unaccounted for were forwarded to the provost marshal and military governor in Pretoria, the administrator in Bloemfontein, and to the superintendents of concentration camps in the two Republics.¹⁴³

It is difficult to determine the success of the orders which were issued. They did, however, failed to ensure the swift transfer of arrested rebels to the civil authorities. A point in case is the events surrounding Vincent Botha, (age 15) the son of leading rebel CS Botha, of Drycut, Newcastle, RA Ramage (age 24) of Ladysmith, Coenraad Cornelius Johannes (age 57) and Barend Christoffel Swamers (age 17) of Warden, Newcastle, who were prisoners in the Tin Town POW Camp in Ladysmith. When their presence was reported to the civil authorities, the line of command passed the matter down to Inspector Clarke of the Natal Police. Clarke recommended that Botha not be charged because of his age but rather be deported “to broaden his views” and that Ramage and BC Swamers, despite the fact that the latter was an imbecile, be charged. CCJ Swamers had in the meantime died in the Ladysmith Hospital. It required lengthy correspondence between the military and civil authorities before Botha, Ramage, and Swamers were handed over to the Natal Police.¹⁴⁴

A reason for the conflict between the military and the Natal civil authorities, regarding the handing over of suspected rebels, lies in the different organisational cultures the groups represented. While the civil authorities generally applied the law when dealing with suspected rebels, the military employed force, which they could legitimately do under Martial Law. The Volunteer Composite Regiment (hereafter VCR) especially, described by the *Natal Witness* as “the cream of Natal’s fighting element”, employed forceful methods to flush out Natal rebels. When the guerrilla phase of the war gained momentum and the authorities struggling to apprehend the hundreds of rebels still on a free footing, the VCR, under Colonel GR Blomfield, started to use tactics reminiscent of the total war experienced by the Transvaal and the OFS. For example, on 27 October 1900, the VCR participated in the burning of farms of “unsurrendered Natal rebels.” A similar exercise took place on 9 March 1901, when all available men of the VCR were ordered to destroy farm equipment and crops belonging to Afrikaners in far Northern Natal. Military historian Mark Coghlan, quoting from

142. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Minute paper surrender of Natal rebels at Vryheid, 28.3.1901-9.4.1901.

143. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Request by Attorney-General H Bale for military co-operation in obtaining evidence and witnesses in connection with rebels, 29.3.1901-28.5.1901.

144. PAR, PM 25: Minute paper by staff officer for POWs providing the names of alleged rebels, 3.12.1901-17.12.1901.

the unpublished diary of Trooper Nicholson, graphically explains two events on the day: “We managed to finish two big fields of good mealies during the day.” The other fatigue had to destroy wood and burn a wagon. On one farm, women “pleaded with Captain Crompton that their husbands would come in at once and surrender if we would save the wagon. Duty is inexorable, however, and we had to burn the wagon.”¹⁴⁵

The efforts of both the military and civilian establishments, to investigate and arrest suspected rebels, were only partially successful for some 350 Natal rebels were still in the field by November 1901.¹⁴⁶ Little impact was made in apprehending suspected rebels after this date, not only because of the time which had elapsed since the Boers had occupied parts of Natal, but also because the rebels in question had managed to blend into what was left of the Republican societies.

5.7 Identifying the real rebels

One of the aspects that hampered both the military and the Natal civil authorities in the process of investigating and arresting suspected rebels was the difficulty they had in identify the Natal rebels. This was mainly because extended families residing in the same area and carrying the same name and initials were suspected of treasonable deeds. In Dundee Inspector Clarke complained that 18 Vermaaks were suspected of treason, making identification, the gathering of evidence, and prosecution difficult.¹⁴⁷ Similarly evidence offered to Attorney-General Bale, regarding LJR Kritzinger junior and senior of Melmoth, the former then still at large, proved to be very confusing as it did not distinguish between the two men.¹⁴⁸ The “loose way” in which suspected rebels were referred to, bothered and puzzled the lawyer Evert Jukes. In a memorandum to the attorney-general he pointed out that sweeping statements such as “Jordaan and all of his name” would leave everybody in the dark regarding the true identity of the suspects. Jukes also complained that in many instances only surnames were given, while Christian names and initials at times also served no purpose in identifying a person. As example he quoted the case of a suspected rebel who was referred to as Gideon J Kok, Gideon Kok or GK Kok. Jukes admitted that he was unsure if this was one and the same person or three different men.¹⁴⁹ The concerns expressed by Jukes became a reality when J van Staden was arrested in Utrecht by the military. This proved to be a case of mistaken identity because Van Staden was confused with the real suspect, his much older cousin with the same name, of the farm Donker in the Newcastle district.¹⁵⁰

145. MS Coghlan, pp.342-343. According to Coghlan similar military exercises by the VCR took place on 9.3.1901, 25.3.1901, 28.3.1901, 22 and 29.8.1901, 11 and 29.10.1901 and 25.11.1901.

146. PRO, CO 179/220: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 8.11.1901.

147. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter Inspector Clarke to Attorney-General H Bale, 11.6.1900.

148. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Extracts from documents relating to LJR Kritzinger forwarded to Attorney-General H Bale, 19.4.1900.

149. PAR, AGO I/8/71: Memorandum regarding suspected rebels by E Jukes, 21.5.1900.

150. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Report on pending treason cases by clerk of the peace, Newcastle, 7.4.1902-15.4.1902. To the anger of the president of the Special Court, Judge AW Mason, Van Staden was handed back to the military to in all

The inability to positively identify rebels troubled the Natal authorities who were concerned that the military did not have the necessary procedures in place to positively identify rebels arrested in the OFS and the Transvaal. Such rebels could attach themselves to a commando and provide a fictitious name and address when captured. They would then be deported as POWs. This meant that only those Natal rebels honest enough to give their real names would be arrested. Rebels like CS Botha, whose farm was heavily mortgaged, had no incentive to return home and could therefore readily alter their identities to escape arrest.¹⁵¹

A way in which the civil authorities attempted to prevent rebels from evading prosecution by using false identities was to employ former residents of the Dutch Districts to identify them. One such person was John Guthridge, the sanitary contractor for Dundee, who had resided in the town for 28 years and was present during part of the Boer occupation.¹⁵² Guthridge, who had previously identified 17 rebels while employed at the De Jagers Drift Refugee Camp, was dually appointed at the rate of £1.12.6. per day to point out rebels in the Volksrust Concentration Camp.¹⁵³ A similar role was fulfilled in the Newcastle district by AJ Debenham, a former rebel suspect.¹⁵⁴ Debenham was so successful in his identification of suspected rebels that the large number of Newcastle Afrikaners convicted of treason was attributed to his efforts.¹⁵⁵ Other claims about information regarding treasonable activities, such as that offered by Walter Greenfield, a former resident of Dundee, proved to be less profitable.¹⁵⁶

Using residents of the Klip River county to identify rebels did not guarantee success as the case of Lucas Wilhelmus Meyer of High Ridge II proved. His lawyer brought it to the attention of the authorities that Meyer had been imprisoned for seven months without any preliminary examination. The request that he be released set a lengthy correspondence in motion during which it emerged that the case against him was delayed because the authorities were uncertain about his identity. The matter was only settled two months later when the authorities, after investigating every single Meyer in the Klip River county, determined the true identity of Meyer and that he belonged to the Klip River district and not to the Newcastle district. Thereafter the case against Meyer was pursued with great haste. It seems that he was acquitted after spending nine months in prison as no record of him being found guilty could be located.¹⁵⁷

likelihood become a POW. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Questions by Judge AW Mason on the handing over of J van Staden to the military, 17.4.1902-23.4.1902

151. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Minute paper clerk of the peace Newcastle on the identification of rebels, 19.4.1900-5.5.1900.

152. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by J Guthridge, no date.

153. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Suggestion by Clerk of Peace D Turnbull that J Guthridge be appointed to identify rebels, 20.6.1901-10.8.1901; PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JH Dekker, 5.12.1901

154. PAR, 1/8/84: Minute paper clerk of the peace Newcastle on the identification of rebels, 19.4.1900-5.5.1900.

155. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941.

156. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Statement by W Greenfield regarding rebels, 1.9.1900-24.9.1900.

157. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Request by LW Meyer to be released on parole, 12.12.1900-23.2.1901.

5.8 Concluding comments

With the necessary legislation and courts in place, and hundreds of suspected rebels arrested both by the military and the Natal Police, the authorities were ready to start with the treason trials to be conducted by either the Special Court or the special magistrate. To reach the situation outlined above was a mammoth task, and the Natal Government could, with good reason, take pride in their achievement. With a small but competent and dedicated group of officials at the helm, they managed to defend the autonomy of the Colony against the Imperial authorities, negotiate principles along which they wanted to dispense justice to suspected Natal rebels, generally please the jingoistic and prejudiced, and stood firm in numerous differences with the military on how suspected rebels should be treated. All of this, however, took place while the people whose fate these processes would determine, the Natal Afrikaner, were, like so many times before in the history of Natal, on the outside looking in.

CHAPTER 6

DEALING WITH THE REBELS (PART II): THE TRIALS

The creation of the Special Court and the position of special magistrates, as well as the processes as outlined in Chapter 5, set the scene for the court cases against the Natal rebels suspected of high treason. Concurrently, and interwoven into this, several other legal processes dealing with the calling of witnesses, applications for bail, and the eventual trial and conviction or acquittal by either the Special Court, special magistrate, magistrate, or military court, took place. This chapter will unpack these events and also in the final instance attempt to explain why the Natal rebels found themselves in the position they did.

6.1 Witnesses in the rebel trials

Reliable witnesses are central to any court case for both the prosecution and the defence. The trials of the Natal rebels proved no different and the crown subpoenaed large numbers of witnesses. The extent is borne out by the number of witnesses called in the following treason cases: Regina vs FM and TG Colling - 34 witnesses; Regina vs JC and IJM Buys - 30 witnesses; Rex vs JG Döhne - 17 witnesses; Rex vs AC, H and TC Vermaak - 20 witnesses; Rex vs NM and JCP Dekker - 21 witnesses, Rex vs PJ, IJM and HG Jordaan - 20 witnesses;¹ Regina vs NJ, JJ, NJ (jnr), DIP Degenaar - 14 witnesses; and Regina vs JJA Prozesky - 15 witnesses.²

The summoning of these thousands of witnesses by the crown placed a heavy financial burden on the Natal Government. Dalzel Turnbull, the clerk of the peace in Dundee, alone examined upwards of 900 witnesses between 1 September 1900 and 15 March 1901. During this process some suspected rebels appeared several times for evidence to be taken against them, for instance DC Uys appeared 11 times and A Pelster, JM van Rooyen, PJ de Waal and AG Spies nine times.³ All these witnesses had to be paid under rule 35 of the Special Court and in line with the Witness Expenses Act 8 of 1898,⁴ with men receiving 15/ per day and women 8/6.⁵ This proved to be a costly affair. In the case against LJR and MAS Kritzinger in the Zululand Supreme Court for instance the crown called 21 witnesses who had to be paid £36.17.8 in total.⁶

Remuneration of witnesses not only had a gender but also a racial bias with African witnesses, despite the key role they played in the trials, received vastly different treatment from whites. In the first case against suspected rebels, namely the one against the three Boers brothers of Ladysmith, 15

1. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Lists of witnesses for the crown, Rex vs JG Döhne, AC, H and TC Vermaak, NM and JCP Dekker and PJ, IJM and HG Jordaan, no date.

2. PAR, AGO I/8/73: List of rebel cases awaiting trial at Newcastle, 27.7.1900-28.8.1900.

3. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Application for extra remuneration by D Turnbull, 15.4.1901.

4. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to crown prosecutor, Eshowe, 11.7.1901.

5. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Regina vs JH D'Arcy, pp.308-310.

6. PAR, AGO I/8/83: List of witnesses in Regina vs LJR and MAS Kritzinger, 29.6.1900-19.7.1900.

African witnesses were called to testify. Since they had no money, the men could not get to the Supreme Court in Pietermaritzburg. The Klip River district magistrate therefore had to issue them with third class train tickets, the cost of which was to be recovered when they received their witness fees.⁷ During the Special Court sessions held at Dundee African witnesses were accommodated in the compound of J Galbraith at the rate of 1/6 per day, while in Estcourt they resided in cattle sheds in the shunt yard. In Ladysmith, William Illing, a loyalist and key witness against numerous rebels, provided the African witnesses with accommodation. To reduce costs the rate of 1/6 per day for accommodation was soon lowered to 1/. African witnesses were also provided with mealie meal, which was handed out late in the afternoon, and cooking utensils which included “kaffir pots” for which a sixpence was subtracted. This arrangement not only managed to secure the “regular attendance of natives at the court” but also served as a way to save money because these expenses were deducted from the witness fees paid to Africans.⁸

The treatment of European witnesses contrasted starkly to that of their African counterparts.⁹ Food vouchers were provided;¹⁰ travelling costs were covered; they received substantially higher fees; and were treated more leniently as is illustrated by the case of RG Barrow. He had to act as a witness against JA Nel and received £4 to travel from Durban to Dundee. Barrow, described as a “decrepit old man, a refugee, and quite penniless” never made it to Dundee. Instead, he returned to the Lords Ground Refugee Camp in Durban where he proceeded to spend £3. After a protracted process the authorities eventually managed to recover the outstanding £1 from him.¹¹ Although they were paid more than African witnesses, two rebels who had completed their prison sentences, CJH Posselt and CL Labuschagne, believed that their witness fees were too little. The men were earning 10/ per day as ditch diggers in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp and had to temporarily give up their work when called upon to testify for the crown in Dundee. They complained that they were out of pocket to the amount of £1.18. Their grievance resulted in a lengthy correspondence on how much they actually lost as a result of their absence. Eventually, several months later, they were each paid 12/. This left the dissatisfied men grumbling and the Natal Police worried, because the treatment the two had experienced would make it difficult to secure witnesses in future from the ranks of time-expired rebels.¹²

Witnesses called by the defence for the rebels had to be compensated by the latter, a costly affair which few could afford. A point in case is Rebel James D’Arcy who could not pay for witnesses. An

7. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to Attorney-General H Bale, 4.6.1900.

8. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Minute paper pertaining to the accommodation of African witnesses for the Special Court, 17.1.1901-8.2.1902.

9. The evidence provided by witnesses were underpinned by physical evidence such as agricultural implements. PAR, CSO 1675: Enquiry magistrate Upper Tugela on what to do with implements collected as evidence, 3.5.1901.

10. PAR, AGO I/8/82: Minute paper vouchers for food supplied to M and J Potgijter, 16.11.1901.

11. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Minute paper regarding witness fees paid to RP Barrow, 4.2.1901-5.2.1901.

12. PAR, AGO I/8/83: Application by CFH Posselt and JCL Labuschagne for increased witnesses’ expenses, 24.10.1901-9.1.1902.

appeal to the Natal Government to pay his witnesses failed and left his witnesses in a quandary for failing to comply with their subpoenas could mean that they were in contempt of court. One witness, Salomon de Jager, therefore appeared at his own expenses to testify on behalf of D'Arcy. Afterwards he did, however, approach Attorney Hellett, who acted on behalf of D'Arcy, to secure some funding to compensate him for his expenses.¹³

Summoning witnesses was not always easy for the defence or prosecution. James Anderson of Dundee, the attorney for Hendrik and Johannes J Davel as well as Daniel Jacobus de Waal, requested the Supreme Court that a commission be appointed to take the evidence of Dr CJ Douglas of Dannhauser, a material witness in their defence.¹⁴ This application was made because Douglas was about to depart for Ireland on 15 August 1900.¹⁵ Attorneys Renaud and Robinson in an equally extreme case asked when their client, TP Pretorius, would receive his indictment since they wanted to serve subpoenas on witnesses in Pretoria and Lourenco Marques.¹⁶ Although these were exceptional cases, there were also other instances when, especially members of the British military, had to be traced to testify. Examples of these are Lieutenant Ivo Barrett of the 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers who had to testify in the case against AGJ, GJB and HW Boers;¹⁷ Major THB Foster and Military Interpreter G Baumann who had to testify against JG Döhne;¹⁸ and Captain Wylie of the Durban Light Infantry who had to testify against JH Hattingh.¹⁹

Locating military witnesses and getting them to testify proved a labourious task that did not always meet with the satisfaction of the civil authorities. A point in case was the difficulty experienced in getting two members of the VCR to testify against BG Meyer. Their commander, Colonel Evans, stated that his unit was under orders to move at an hour's notice and that they could be away from their base at Dundee for up to a month. Under these circumstances he could not grant the men leave to remain behind. The only option left to the civil authorities was to postpone the case until the witnesses were available. As a result the case against Meyer only took place in March 1902, four months after the initial request was made.²⁰ This was not a unique incident as the military generally proved to be an unreliable and indifferent partner in the prosecution of Natal rebels, resulting in Attorney-General Labistour having to request Governor McCallum to pressurise the army to secure military witnesses.²¹ The apathy of the military in providing witnesses could possibly be blamed on

13. PAR, AGO I/7/15: Regina vs JH D'Arcy, pp.308-310.

14. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter Lt-Col D Henderson to GOC, Natal, 31.3.1901.

15. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Application by J Anderson for the appointment of a commission to take the evidence of CJ Douglas, 8 and 10.8.1900.

16. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Letter Renaud and Robinson to Attorney-General H Bale, 6.6.1901.

17. PAR, AGO I/8/71: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 29.5.1900.

18. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to GOC, Natal, 9.5.1901.

19. PAR, 1/LDS G/1/1/1 Clerk of the peace letter book: Letter VM Brady to registrar, 7.10.1901.

20. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Minute paper regarding members of the VCR wanted as witnesses, 18.12.1901-12.8.1902.

21. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Minute paper Attorney-General GA de R Labistour to Governor HE McCallum, 10.2.1902.

the fact that, unlike in the Cape Colony, they were not allowed to try Natal rebels but had to hand them over to the civil authorities thereby leaving them without a vested interest in the process.²²

In other circumstances, especially when the suffering of people could be directly related to the apprehended rebels, witnesses were easier to come by. Such was the case when news of the arrest of GJ Kok of Garnet and PJ Meyer of Kilburn near Rorke's Drift, broke. The shopkeeper at Rorke's Drift and his wife instantaneously offered to testify against the two men. According to them, Meyer assumed a leadership role, while Kok assisted in the looting of their store.²³

Comparatively few English Natalians testified against the suspected rebels simply because most of them had fled the Klip River county prior to the Boer invasion. As a result it was mostly Africans, loyalist Afrikaners, Germans, Indians and Coloureds who acted as key witnesses. In his memoirs JC Vermaak gives his own explanation of why and how this happened. The rebels were brought from prison to court under insults from Africans and Englishmen, to hear the depositions against them:

Daar het geen Engelse teen ons verklaar nie, as net `n paar van die allerlaagste tiepe, maar Boere, Kaffers en Kleurlinge is daarvoor gebruik. Dit is kenmerkend by die Engelse dat hulle die vuil werk nie self doen nie as hulle ander kan kry om dit vir hulle te doen nie. Hulle is diplomatiek so aangelê, en jammer om te sê dat die Boere geredelik daarvoor te vinde is. In ons geval het hulle die paar lojale C.L. Pieters, Theunis, Paul en Gert Strydom daarvoor gebruik. Dit is lojale wat geweier het om die wapen op te neem teen die Engelse. Hulle is deur die Boere toegelaat om vry te beweeg in die distrik.²⁴

The Special Court and special magistrate often relied very heavily on African witnesses to prove the accusations of high treason. Afrikaners and their defence often doubted the ability of Africans to deliver reliable evidence. In the case against Hermanus A Potgieter which depended exclusively on African witnesses, the defence argued: "...that the evidence of natives is entirely unreliable, and should be rejected. It is said that they tell lies, not from motive any or desire to injure the person against whom they give evidence, but because they cannot help it." Judge William Smith dismissed this generalization and chose to accept the evidence given by the Africans in court, saying that the problem was not with the African witnesses but with the manner in which their depositions were compiled. He furthermore severely criticised the prosecution for "gathering immaterial details" which caused the in-court statements by Africans to differ from their original depositions.²⁵

22. PAR, PM 87: L of C orders No. 244, 4.7.1900.

23. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Letter shopkeeper Rorkes Drift to Magistrate RH Beachcroft, 10.4.1901.

24 VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.28, 1941.

25. *Natal Witness*, 24.1.1901. Potgieter never really accepted his conviction and in late 1902, early 1903, unsuccessfully tried to have the case against him reopened. PAR, AGO I/8/89: Correspondence between HA Potgieter and the office of the attorney-general, 14.11.1902-21.5.1903; PAR, PM 118: Letter secretary to the prime minister to HA Potgieter, 21.5.1903.

Smith's verdict did little to alter the perceptions of rebels regarding African witnesses. Reverend August Prozesky believed that the men from his mission station who had testified against him could not be blamed for doing so because the magistrate threatened them with severe punishment if they did not testify as the others had.²⁶ JC Vermaak placed yet another slant on the use of African witnesses when he claimed that compensation played a role in convincing Africans such as Mapinjane to testify against the Afrikaners. By the end of the war he had apparently become fairly wealthy from all the witness fees.²⁷ It is questionable if the African witnesses really gained much in terms of money from their testimonies. Someone like Niletshe, who testified in rebel trials at Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith and Harrismith earned roughly £4 for his testimonies. In fact, he ended up complaining that he was paid too little.²⁸ The motivation to act as a witness was probably not to make money, but rather the hope to gain economic and political power. At the same time the African witnesses faced immense pressure from their Afrikaner landlords and in Weenen county, for example, most trials against rebels failed because African witnesses on which the cases depended could not be located.²⁹

Suspected rebels were also called upon as key witnesses. *De Natal Afrikaner*, as a result, raised the legitimate issue of witnesses incriminating themselves while giving evidence. The newspaper regarded this as unfair practice and against the law and urged the Special Court to prohibit the prosecution from using self-incriminatory evidence against the witnesses when they were themselves eventually tried.³⁰ The attorney-general responded by pointing out that witnesses could refuse to answer questions that were likely to incriminate them and many of the witnesses availed themselves of this legal privilege.³¹

As the treason trials progressed it became common practice to use rebels who had served their time, as well as imprisoned rebels, as witnesses.³² Subpoenaing imprisoned rebels proved to be time-consuming and administratively cumbersome. A request was therefore made that the sheriff of the Special Court forward the necessary documentation to the commissioner of police timeously because prisoners sometimes had to travel from Eshowe to Dundee, Newcastle, and Ladysmith. The sheriff was also instructed to procure prepayment for all expenses involved in the escort and conveyance of

26. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.9.1900, p.33.

27. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.29, 1941.

28. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/12: Documentation regarding complaints by African witnesses that they were underpaid, 5.2.1903-23.3.1903.

29. PAR, CSO 1658: Request by CJ van Rooyen that the order instructing him to report to the police on a weekly basis be revoked, 4.9.1901.

30. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 18.9.1900.

31. PAR, CSO 1658: Note by Attorney-General H Bale in response to the article of 18.9.1900 in *De Natal Afrikaner*, 22.9.1900.

32. *Natal Witness*, 6.6.1901.

prisoners not subpoenaed by the crown.³³

Under the rule of law the identification, investigation and arrest of suspects are totally reliant on reliable witnesses. The latter concept, in terms of witnesses, was where the Natal Afrikaners and the judiciary differed greatly in terms of whom they believed. The sentiment expressed by the convicted rebel, JC Vermaak, possibly best encapsulates the dilemma: He had sympathy with the judges who had to determine who was lying: the witnesses for the accused or the witnesses for the state. Vermaak thought he knew the answer, many people were innocently sentenced for deeds they had not committed.³⁴

6.2 The question of bail for suspected rebels

Within due legal process bail is one of the key principles. Although suspected rebels were able to apply for bail under Rule 103 of the Special Court,³⁵ the military, the Natal Government, and the Special Court were adamant that: "Bail is on no account admissible for rebels."³⁶ As a result legal representatives for suspected rebels such as Anderson, and Carter and Robinson initially tried in vain to have their clients released on bail.³⁷

Magistrate DG Giles of Upper Tugela was, however, prepared to grant bail under certain circumstances. In August 1900, in terms of Law 18 of 1845, he released Philip Bester on bail because his wife was very ill and CCJ Bester since the charges against him allowed for bail. Both these men owned farms in the area and had returned to Natal from the OFS with their families and livestock. Giles did, however, refuse to grant bail to Natal Afrikaners who were suspected of looting or who had taken up arms. His action landed him in hot water with Bale and Prime Minister AH Hime. Hime, who did not interpret Law 18 in the same way Giles had, seethed and sarcastically commented: "The judges of the Supreme Court appear to doubt whether they have the power to release on bail, and I am rather surprised that you should have thought that you had the power. Please do not release any prisoners charged with treason on bail."³⁸ This ended any magisterial initiatives in granting bail to suspected rebels.

In isolated cases the Special Court veered from the adopted principle and granted bail to applicants. Renier Dannhauser (JP) of Newcastle, was released on 27 August 1900 on £500 bail and two sureties of £250 each on the condition that he resides in Newcastle and reports to the Natal Police

33. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Minute paper regarding the summons of rebel prisoners as witnesses, 12.7.1901-17.7.1901.

34. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

35. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter Magistrate RM Bennett, Klip River district, to Mrs H Labuschagne, 5.10.1900.

36. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Note to magistrate Dundee, 7.7.1900.

37. PAR, 1/LDS G/1/1/1 Clerk of the peace letter book: Letter HEK Anderson to Carter and Robinson, 22.5.1900; PAR, AGO I/8/71: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to AR Pierson, 31.5.1900.

38. PAR, CSO 1655: Minute paper considering the release on bail of certain Natal Afrikaners, 20.8.1900-27.8.1900.

daily between 10:00 and 12:00. This release was partially based on humanitarian grounds because his wife was dying and actually passed away soon afterwards.³⁹ Dannhauser was allowed to return to his farm in March 1901.⁴⁰ In January 1902 he was eventually charged with treason but acquitted. Despite being found innocent the Natal Government saw fit to cancel his commission as justice of the peace, a position he had held since October 1897.⁴¹ During this time bail was also granted to the very ill JA Nel, the 15-year-old HJ Strydom, and a German HGP Volker, who had deserted from the Boer ranks. Their bail conditions were similar to those of Dannhauser, with the exception that they had to reside in Dundee, and that Volker had to pay bail of £1 000 and supply two sureties of £500 each.⁴²

The measures by the military and civil authorities to deny bail, except in extreme cases, proved to be counter-productive as it meant that the various prisons remained overcrowded. TF Carter, who represented a large number of suspects from the Klip River county, requested Attorney-General Bale to liaise with the military to arrange bail for his clients, some of whom had been imprisoned for several months in seriously overcrowded jails, so that they could return to their farms. Bale who admitted that the prisons were overcrowded and that the delay to bring suspected rebels to trial was considerable, in following the war-time chain of command, requested the military to grant bail. Lt-Gen Hildyard was willing to do so on the condition that each individual case was based on merit and that the suspected rebel prisoners incarcerated in the Pietermaritzburg Prison, when granted parole or bail, could not reside north of Pietermaritzburg.⁴³ The Special Court was thus able to grant bail to 52 suspects, refusing another 104. Those refused included the so-called ringleaders.⁴⁴ This ruling in itself was a reversal from an earlier decision that allowed some suspected rebels on bail to reside on farms north of Pietermaritzburg.⁴⁵

The fact that the conditions of bail forced applicants to reside in Pietermaritzburg caused problems because many had nowhere to stay within the city. Consequently JM and PWJH Hattingh asked permission to reside on the farm Rama near Estcourt, while 13 suspected rebels withdrew their bail applications since they could not afford to live away from home.⁴⁶ Another ten indicated that they would only consider bail if they did not have to reside in Pietermaritzburg but in the Mooi River or

39. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Application for release on bail by R Dannhauser, 27.8.1900.

40. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Application to allow R Dannhauser to return to his farm, 26.3.1901.

41. PAR, CSO 1699: Correspondence regarding the cancellation of the commission of justice of the peace held by R Dannhauser, 27.2.1902-13.3.1902; *Natal Witness*, 27.2.1902.

42. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Applications for bail by HJ Strydom, HGP Volker and JA Nel, 27.8.1900. At the same opportunity HAJ Davel and JJ Webb were denied bail.

43. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Preparation of a complete list of rebels in prison arrested for high treason, 9.10.1900-8.3.1901.

44. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to registrar Special Court, 13.12.1900.

45. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Letter Chadwick and Millar to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.11.1900.

46. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Minute paper regarding the conditions pertaining to certain bail applications, 3.1.1901.

Greytown areas.⁴⁷ All this meant that the attempt to alleviate the pressure on the prison system by releasing Afrikaners, against whom little evidence existed, failed because many of the men who were granted bail were forced to reject it since they could not afford to reside in the capital.⁴⁸

When suspected rebels became aware that bail was more readily granted many applied for it. The authorities in turn generally tended to grant bail to applicants who did not have a strong case against them such as LJ Potgieter, BC Labuschagne, BA and MJ Bester, all of Ladysmith, and A and JS Jansen of Dundee. All these men were eventually acquitted.⁴⁹ Those against whom hard evidence existed, like JJ Webb, JJ Meyer, and HAJ Davel, were mostly denied bail.⁵⁰ Humanitarian reasons too, more so than before, tended to sway the authorities to release suspects on bail. TR Dannhauser (son of Renier), already imprisoned for six months without trial, had been suffering with a throat ailment for 18 years. This fact was confirmed by the medical practitioner attached to the Pietermaritzburg Prison. Dannhauser was subsequently released on bail of £500 and two sureties of £250 provided by CJ Labuschagne (MLC) and Jan Hattingh of Blue Bell, Estcourt.⁵¹ IC and TR Boshoff were likewise released on medical advice. During their seven months in prison, while awaiting trial, they had lost 20 pounds each and suffered from pleurisy and dyspepsia respectively and both from depression.⁵²

Making bail in itself proved to be a difficult economic matter. The men who could not afford it had to take out a loan, sometimes up to a £1 000, and get people who were willing, to provide sureties. To those without means, or rich family or friends, like LW Meyer, P de Jager, and PJ and LH de Wet, bail remained an illusion.⁵³

Between late 1900 and early 1901 the conditions of bail were radically altered by the military when they issued an order that no suspected rebel on bail or parole would be allowed to reside in the Ladysmith or Dundee areas.⁵⁴ The military also considered it necessary to move suspected rebels on

47. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Minute paper registrar Special Court to Attorney-General H Bale regarding suspected rebels who could not afford to reside in town, 24.12.1900.

48. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Letters LP Bezuidenhout, CJH Laas, BJ van Greuning and CM, LP, and PJ de Jager to governor central prison, Pietermaritzburg, 12.11.1900.

49. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Application for bail by LJ Potgieter and BC Labuschagne, 19.11.1900; AGO I/8/74: Application for bail by BA and MJ Bester, 8.11.1900; AGO I/8/75: Application by A and SJ Jansen for change of residence under their bail bonds, 4.12.1900.

50. PAR, AGO, I/8/73: Application for bail by JJ Webb, JJ Meyer and HAJ Davel, 22.8.1900.

51. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Correspondence regarding the release of TR Dannhauser on bail, 27.11.1900-7.12.1900.

52. PAR, AGO I/8/73: District surgeon advises that IC and TR Boshoff be released on bail, 18.9.1900-22.9.1900.

53. For some of the applications for bail by suspected Natal rebels see: PAR, AGO I/8/74: Application for bail by I and J Meyer, 20.10.1900; AGO I/8/80: Application for bail by TJ Pretorius, 11.5.1901; AGO I/8/80: Application for bail by JM van Rooyen, 20.6.1901; AGO I/8/72: Application for bail by NJ Degenaar, 9.7.1900; AGO I/8/83: Application for bail by LW Meyer, 10.1.1902; AGO I/8/81: Application for bail by PJ Kemp, 2.10.1901; AGO I/8/75: Application for bail by JA Eksteen, 21.11.1900; AGO I/8/74: Application for bail by BJ Nel, 14.11.1900.

54. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Minute paper regarding the conditions pertaining to certain bail applications, 3.1.1901. This process was started much earlier in a informal fashion by the commandant of Dundee, Lt-Col RW Evans, who were encouraging Natal Afrikaners on bail to reside in districts such as Greytown. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Letter CA de R

bail, such as JH Ries, AA and JJ Maritz and WL and SJ Meyer, from Dundee to Pietermaritzburg because of the formation of a town guard for defensive purposes with which the suspects could interfere.⁵⁵ The removal of suspected rebels on bail from Ladysmith to areas south of Estcourt was based on the fact that of a large group of suspected rebels on bail and parole were residing in close proximity to the Tin Town POW Camp. Ladysmith, like Dundee, therefore had to be cleansed of suspicious characters for security reasons.

The military's decision angered the Natal civil authorities who felt offended because the order was not communicated to them directly but to the registrar of the Special Court. The concern was not only that they were being marginalised but also based on the serious impact this decision would have on the conditions of bail bonds agreed to by the Special Court.⁵⁶ Attorney-General Bale argued that the removal of suspects from the area conditional to their bail bonds would relieve the sureties of their liability. Although Bale conceded that the military could, under Martial Law, remove the suspects on bail to any place they pleased, it would render their bail bond inoperative. Bale thus suggested that the military require the men in question to report to some officer on a daily basis. Technically it also meant that the Natal Afrikaners on bail could be rearrested in case of a breach of their terms of bail, even though it may not be their fault. The sentiments of the Natal Government on the matter was spelt out clearly to the military: "...it is very undesirable that there should be any apparent conflict between the Military and Civil Power. Your action will probably occasion the Government considerable inconvenience and may interfere with the administration of justice which is the duty of both Departments to secure."

The military, represented by of Lt-Col Sim, defended their reasons for the removals on the grounds of security. Sim offered a military solution to the objection that the removal could hamper the process of dispensing justice - the men in question could be arrested under Martial Law. He also reiterated the military policy on the matter: "I shall be obliged if it can be arranged that during the war no suspected on bail are (is) allowed to live north of Estcourt." Although the emphasis fell on men on bail, the military order soon extended this order to all suspicious Afrikaners, including convicted rebels who had served their sentences or had paid their fines; Afrikaners charged with high treason but had been acquitted; and any undesirable person. All in all the high-handed manner of the military won the day and the Natal Police were instructed to facilitate the removal of the

Labistour to Attorney-General H Bale, 29.11.1900; AGO I/8/75: Application by A and JS Jansen to move from Dundee to Greytown under their bail bonds, 4.12.1900.

55. PAR, 1/Dun 3/1/19: Letter commandant Dundee to magistrate Dundee, 20.11.1900.

56. It was not always convenient or easy for the Special Court to alter bail bonds. CM Vermaak managed to have his bail bond changed to move from Pietermaritzburg to reside with his father-in-law at New Hanover. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Minute paper altering the bail bond conditions for CM Vermaak, 12.12.1900. Others found it more difficult and JJ Nel were denied permission to spend Christmas at his father's house outside Greytown. PAR, AGO I/8/75: Request by JJ Nel to spend Christmas with his father, 20.12.1900.

Afrikaners in question from Dundee to Pietermaritzburg and from Ladysmith to south of Estcourt.⁵⁷

With matters surrounding bail dealt with, preliminary examinations conducted, indictments and subpoenas issued, the list of witnesses compiled, and the necessary documentation forwarded to the prosecution, the trials of the rebels could start in the Special Court and before the special magistrate.

6.3 The Natal rebel trials

6.3.1 High treason trials conducted by the Special Court and special magistrate

Between 16 September 1900 and 14 March 1902 the Special Court sat on 11 occasions, four times in Dundee, two times in Newcastle, two times in Pietermaritzburg, and once each in Eshowe, Estcourt and Ladysmith.⁵⁸ Apart from the ordinary recesses taken by the court to allow investigations against rebels to continue, the process only ground to a temporary halt once. This was during a brief postponement of the trial against Jurie Johannes Kemp of Zuurfontein, Dundee, on orders from Henry Bale “until the title of the new monarch”, who was to succeed Queen Victoria, was made known.⁵⁹

The first of the 276 rebels to be convicted by the Special Court⁶⁰ was Philip Rudolf Vermaak of Vermaak’s Kraal near Helpmekaar in the Dundee district. The trial which took place at the Masonic Hall in Dundee before Smith, Broome and Mason, the commissioners of the Special Court, lasted from 6 to 14 September 1900. Vermaak was charged with 19 counts of high treason, to all of which he pleaded not guilty. The prosecutors were Attorney-General Bale and Charles Tatham, while Advocates TF Carter, E Jukes, J Anderson, and CA de R Labistour appeared for Vermaak. The crown called 36 witnesses: 14 African, 12 British, six Afrikaners and four German. In turn the defence called 28 witnesses: 18 Afrikaners, eight British and two of other groupings, a total of 64. The evidence against Vermaak ran to 484 pages. PR Vermaak was eventually found guilty on 14 counts of high treason and sentenced to three years imprisonment and a fine of £1 500 or a further two years in prison, a punishment described as lenient by Bale.⁶¹ In contrast the fourth rebel to be tried by the Special Court, JC Vermaak the brother of PR Vermaak, declared the verdict a farce and said that no attention was paid to the witnesses for the defence.⁶²

The judgement in PR Vermaak’s case set certain benchmarks by which the trials that followed were

57. PAR, AGO I/8/76: Minute paper containing extensive correspondence on the removal of Afrikaners on bail from Dundee and Ladysmith, 24.12.1900-31.1.1901.

58. PAR, AGO I/7/1-1/7/38: Judgements and sentences of Natal rebels by the Special Court, pp.1-875.

59. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Enquiry by Attorney-General H Bale for reasons for the postponement of the case against JJ Kemp, 23.1.1901-4.2.1901; WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, p.3, 23.1.1901.

60. For a summary of the convictions for high treason by the Special Court see Appendix A, cases 1-276.

61. Cd. 420: Further correspondence with regards to the affairs in South Africa, pp.99-106; PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs PR Vermaak, pp.1-7; PAR, CSO 2838: Index of evidence against PR Vermaak, pp.1-484.

62. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.29, 1941.

judged. The following arguments which claimed that Vermaak was not responsible for acts of treason were rejected by the court: “(1) Owing to the British evacuation of the District of Dundee in October last, and its occupation by the forces of the South African Republic, the prisoner became, or *bone fide* believed himself to have become a burgher of that Republic, and so bound to obey the commands of its officers or agent; and (2) He committed the acts under compulsion.” Under international law Vermaak could not have changed his allegiance in the circumstances disclosed, while the claims of compulsion were regarded as discontinuous and not of such a nature as to produce a reasonable and substantial fear of immediate death or serious bodily harm.⁶³

Hereafter, the above-mentioned legal arguments repeatedly failed in the Special Court who worked from the principle that: “Compulsion was no legal ground for defence”⁶⁴ since no Natal Afrikaner, in the view of the Special Court, suffered in person or property for refusing to take up arms.⁶⁵ In essence the Special Court was punishing those Afrikaners who did not want to serve but who were forced to “for a lack of moral fibre.”⁶⁶ This decision also ruled out other forms of compulsion offered as defence, including that of JJ Webb who declared that he took up arms because he was influenced by the Vermaaks for whom he was a tenant farmer;⁶⁷ JJ Nel who blamed his father-in-law, TR Boshoff, for coercing him into joining the Newcastle Commando;⁶⁸ and JH Ries of Dundee who joined because his refusal to do so gave his brother-in-law, Commandant Steenkamp, so much bother that he relented.⁶⁹

Similarly claims that the withdrawal of the British forces, and the subsequent lack of protection⁷⁰ from the Natal Governments, forced Afrikaners to commit high treason,⁷¹ or that the Natal Government had not advised them what to do, were rejected.⁷² The ruling of the Special Court was that lack of protection did not count because Afrikaners were expected to obey the laws of the Colony of Natal which meant that they could not become involved with the Republican

63. Cd. 420. Further correspondence with regards to the affairs in South Africa, pp.99-106; PAR, AGO I/7/2: Regina vs PR Vermaak, pp.1-7; PAR, CSO 2838: Index of evidence against PR Vermaak, pp.1-484; *Natal Witness*, 7.9.1900-21.9.1900.

64. PAR, AGO I/7/3: Regina vs PJ Meyer, pp.59-61; *Natal Witness*, 6.10.1900 and 15.11.1900.

65. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs TP Lezar, pp.71-74; *Natal Witness*, 12.10.1900.

66. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs A Wellmann, pp.401-403; *Natal Witness*, 9.3.1901.

67. PAR, AGO I/7/3: Regina vs JJ Webb, pp.52-53; *Natal Witness*, 28.9.1900.

68. *Natal Witness*, 6.6.1901.

69. PAR, AGO I/7/19: Rex vs JH Ries, pp.352-355; *Natal Witness*, 15.2.1901.

70. The protection from the British forces did not always translate into practice. At least two Afrikaners, JC Vermaak and Jan de Waal, cited the reason for them joining the Boers as the arrests and humiliation they had to endure from those who had to protect them. See, NAR, J Ploeger collection, A 2030 vol 20: Notes from a pamphlet entitled *The people of Holland to the people of Great Britain and the great civilized world*, p.9; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.6, 1941.

71. PAR, AGO I/7/1: Regina vs JC Vermaak, pp.8-11; *Natal Witness*, 26.9.1900.

72. PAR, AGO I/7/6: Regina vs HW (snr), WH (jnr) and IJ Boshoff, pp.128-129; AGO I/7/1: Regina vs JC Vermaak, pp.8-11; *Natal Witness*, 26.9.1900.

administration as either smallpox guards, policemen or in any other capacity. At the same time, illustrating the dilemma they found themselves in, the court stated they were also required to “obey the ordinary laws of the conquering forces as relates to the preservation of order, commission of crime and so on.”⁷³ With the adoption of these principles the legal defence of almost all the Natal rebels crumbled.

The above-mentioned arguments were rejected despite some of the rebels hiring advocates and lawyers such as TF Carter of Ladysmith, CA de R Labistour of Dundee, Jas Anderson of Newcastle, Eugene Renaud of Durban and others for their defence. Part of the problem lay in the fact that none of the hired legal minds spoke Dutch, and could by military order initially only visit their clients if an officer or government official was present. TF Carter and Jas Anderson were hired again and again by Afrikaners, many of whom were clients prior to the war, to defend them. Carter rewarded the faith placed in his ability and defended rebels even before the military court held in Harrismith in May and June 1902. Both men tirelessly pursued matters such as the right to visit their clients, the overcrowded nature of the prisons, and the fact that bail was not granted.⁷⁴ Through no fault of their own these men hardly ever managed to sway the Special Court which prompted a convicted rebel, JC Vermaak, to comment that it soon became clear that it did not help to have a strong defence.⁷⁵ Vermaak’s criticism is supported by the fact that only 37 of the cases brought before the Special Court were either discharged or acquitted, or as in the case of EOL du Bois (jnr) had a *Nolle Prosequi* entered against his name.⁷⁶ Despite his cynicism Vermaak publically thanked his legal defence, consisting of Anderson and Carter, “for the way in which they have done their work.”⁷⁷

At least in the case of Attorney Labistour it seems as if his motivation for taking rebel cases was less than professional or honourable but merely a means to make money to pay his board and lodging in the Dundee Royal Hotel and to keep his practice running. Labistour even declared: “...while I realise that there is a great deal of money to be made out of those Rebels defences, yet I find myself unable to place heart and soul into their cases, which, however, I am afraid I cannot afford (much as I would wish) to decline to take up, although to my mind the only respectable way would be to advise them to plead guilty and throw themselves upon the mercy of the court.”⁷⁸

73. PAR, AGO I/7/9: Rex vs JL and AI Marais, pp.233-235; *Natal Witness*, 20.12.1900.

74. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Telegram AAG Intelligence to OC Troops, Dundee, 30.5.1900.

75. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.29, 1941.

76. PAR, AGO I/7/1-1/7/38, *passim*; *Natal Witness*, 27.3.1901 and 19.4.1901. Being acquitted did not necessarily meant suspects were off the hook. The military authorities gave instructions that some of those acquitted must report to the Natal Police on a weekly basis. The movements of such people were also restricted by a military order issued on 28 August 1901. PAR, CSO 1658: Request by CJ van Rooyen that the order instructing him to report to the police on a weekly basis be revoked, 4.9.1901.

77. *Natal Witness*, 5.10.1900; Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

78. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Letter CA de R Labistour to Attorney-General H Bale, 30.7.1900.

Not all suspected rebels were in a financial position to afford legal assistance, but thanks to the Afrikaners of the Umvoti county money was collected for their defence.⁷⁹ Even those who could afford lawyers and advocates were possibly deterred by rumours that the services of the advocates were very costly and that NJ Degenaar of Newcastle was charged £400 only to secure his bail.⁸⁰ This sounds highly unlikely and is probably confused with the bail granted to Degenaar. Those who could not afford legal assistance, and who attempted to somehow conduct their own defence, did not find matters easy. AC Vermaak applied, on behalf of himself and his two sons, for a copy of the evidence against them. The assistant-magistrate of Dundee refused to do so on the grounds that: "If we had to supply everyone with a copy of the evidence against them it would take a clerk all his time to do this, and he would not be able to do his ordinary work." Vermaak was informed that he had to make his own arrangements to get copies of the evidence against them. He did so and he wrote to Attorney-General Bale stating: "I understand it is a right that every prisoner has of having a copy of the evidence against him. We can't afford a lawyer and shall be glad to receive the evidence."⁸¹ The Vermaaks must have received copies of the evidence against them for the authorities generally had no objection in supplying it to lawyers acting on behalf of the rebels.⁸²

One of the predicaments faced by the Special Court was dealing with the substantial number of Afrikaners residing in Natal, but who were burghers of either one of the Republics. The benchmark case was that of Bernardus Johannes Badenhorst of Kempenveldt, Dundee. Badenhorst, a Transvaler, only settled in Natal in 1898 after his marriage to a Miss Kemp. When commandeered he joined the Natal Commando at Helpmekaar. The question the court had to answer was whether a burgher residing in Natal was amenable to the laws of Natal.⁸³ As the basis of their legal argument the crown quoted from Chitty's translation of the *Law of nations* which stated: "In those countries in which every foreigner may freely enter the Sovereign is supposed to allow him to enter only upon the tacit condition that he subjects himself to the law - I mean the general laws made to maintain good order, and which have no relation to the title of the citizen or of the subject of the State."⁸⁴ Based on this the verdict of the court was simple - burghers did not have to acquire a legal domicile to be subject to the laws of Natal. Badenhorst was therefore guilty of treason because he waited for his countrymen to arrive before joining them. Had he, as was his legal right and what was expected of him, crossed into the Transvaal at the outbreak of the war, he would not have been guilty of

79. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941; PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter FM Colling to TG Colling, 4.4.1901.

80. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 1.9.1900, pp.276-277.

81. PAR, AGO, 1/8/79: Correspondence AC Vermaak requesting a copy of the evidence against him and his sons, 24.4.1901-29.4.1901.

82. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Request Carter and Robinson for the depositions upon which NJ Degenaar were arrested, 6.8.1900.

83. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs BJ Badenhorst, pp.106-108; *Natal Witness*, 5.10.1900 and 31.10.1900.

84. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs JA Prozesky, pp.65-69; *Natal Witness*, 18.10.1900.

treason.⁸⁵ In this Badenhorst was not alone. Amongst others C van Zyl Lotz,⁸⁶ JG Wiggill,⁸⁷ DC Uys,⁸⁸ LJ de Jager,⁸⁹ JM Maritz,⁹⁰ LW Eksteen and JW Rall all claimed to be burghers of the Republics. In the case of Eksteen he was a citizen of the OFS who merely trekked to Natal every year with his sheep. This was, however, proof enough for the court that he owed loyalty to Natal.⁹¹ Claims by Rall that he was a Free Stater were rejected on a technical matter. His defence failed to prove that he was a burgher because they did not present the OFS citizenship laws to the court.⁹² *Bona fide* burghers with no connection to Natal were invariably acquitted.⁹³

Former Natal residents likewise found it difficult to escape charges of high treason before the Special Court as it reserved the right to punish them. John Albertus van Rooyen was sought because: “He was at one time a resident of Natal, was a candidate for a seat in the Parliament, belonged to a local Volunteer Corps, and apparently did not take the oath of allegiance or become a burgher until a few days before the outbreak of hostilities, and it is very doubtful whether the requisite steps were taken.” This uncertainty was confirmed by the military authorities in Harrismith and⁹⁴ Van Rooyen, who came to prominence when he threatened to shoot some Natal Volunteers,⁹⁵ was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment and a fine of £1 000 or a further 18 months in prison.⁹⁶

Roughly 10% of the 409 convicted rebels were not Afrikaners. An estimated 19 of these were English, 14 African, six German and two Irish. The English who were convicted of treason fell into four broad categories; those like John Craig and JG Wiggill who had resided in the Republics for long periods; men like FJT Brandon and JP Burns who were married to Afrikaner women; traders such as John Torpey and JW Gowthorpe who did business with the Boers and Afrikaners; and those who were commandeered and forced into duty including T and MC Collyer, GH Shorter and JC Donovan. Because of this involvement suspected Natal rebels in prison were dissatisfied with the small number of English rebels arrested. They consequently proceeded to inform the authorities of the identity of non-arrested English rebels. As a result some arrests were carried out most of whom were released, according to Reverend Prozesky, because the authorities argued that “they could not have acted differently to the way they did.” He found this argument objectionable since “there should

85. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs BJ Badenhorst, pp.106-108; *Natal Witness*, 5.10.1900 and 31.10.1900.

86. PAR, AGO I/7/14: Regina vs C van Zyl Lotz, pp.114-116; *Natal Witness*, 2.11.1900.

87. PAR, AGO I/7/26: Rex vs JG Wiggill, p.535.

88. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs DC Uys, p.413; *Natal Witness*, 12.3.1901.

89. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420; *Natal Witness*, 15.3.1901.

90. PAR, CSO 1682: Petition by JM Maritz stating that he was a burgher from the ZAR, 31.7.1901-12.9.1901.

91. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs LW Eksteen, p.445; *Natal Witness*, 20.3.1901.

92. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs JW Rall, pp.470-471; *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1901.

93. PAR, AGO I/7/1-1/7/38: Rex vs HF Lezar, CP van der Merwe, CJS Dauth, AF Nel, ICJ Vermaak, *passim*.

94. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Minute paper relative to JA van Rooyen, 2.8.1901-9.8.1901.

95. *Natal Mercury*, 17.10.1899.

96. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JA van Rooyen, pp.719-729; *Natal Witness*, 6.11.1901.

surely be one law for all.”⁹⁷ His view was shared by a Newcastle chemist, John William Gowthorpe, who was found guilty of high treason and fined £20 for serving free food and drinks to Boers, former clients of his from across the Buffalo River. What especially annoyed Gowthorpe was that apart from himself and John Torpey no other traders were prosecuted, despite the evidence by amongst others the local MLA, FAR Johnstone, and Albert Dunton a shopkeeper, who testified: “...all shopkeepers who were in Newcastle during the Boer occupation were compelled to by the enemy to keep open their stores and sell their goods at a fixed price.”⁹⁸ In its verdict against Gowthorpe the Special Court showed little sympathy for someone caught in the middle and made it clear: “Unless the state requires its subjects to evacuate the territory occupied or likely to be occupied by the enemy, individuals may, as far as permitted by the enemy, pursue their ordinary occupations, so far as they not assist the enemy. Thus a trader may carry on his ordinary business, but a gunsmith or armourer, supplying goods to the enemy would fall within the prohibition.”⁹⁹ According to the court, the line which Gowthorpe had crossed, was that he had not rendered an act of hospitality to old friends but to members of the enemy.¹⁰⁰

Afrikaners faced similar dilemmas on numerous occasions. The principles on which the Special Court based its decisions in such cases were neither black nor white. When Boers called on Natal Afrikaners and received food and drink the court did not necessarily deem the man of the house to be guilty of treason. Similarly, if blood relatives from the Republics came to visit it did not necessarily constitute an act of treason. The difference arose when the Boers were willingly supplied with goods without it being requested. TR Boshoff of Newcastle therefore crossed this line when he supplied Commandant Muller with bread and two slaughter cattle. He was sentenced to eight months imprisonment and a fine of £200.¹⁰¹

The six Germans found guilty of treason were literally divided down the middle. Volker, Wellmann and Fröhling were commandeered by the Boers and resisted furiously. Volker eventually fled across the Tugela River to escape his predicament. In the opposite camp were the Prozeskys and George Teichmann. JJA Prozesky served as a magistrate and native commissioner and commandeered Africans to perform duties along the Tugela line. He even referred to himself as an Afrikaner. His son, JGP Prozesky, amongst other duties, became the clerk to the Newcastle justice of the peace shortly after the Boer invasion.¹⁰²

The two Irishmen, JJ Hoolahan (known as Hooligan by the Boers and Natal Afrikaners) and JH

97. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 13.8.1900, p.252.

98. *Natal Witness*, 17.10.1900. For Gowthorpe the shame of being convicted of treason was unbearable and not long afterwards he committed suicide.

99. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs JW Gowthorpe, pp.76-79; *Natal Witness*, 11.10.1900, 17.10.1900 and 20.10.1900

100. *Natal Witness*, 7.1.1901.

101. *Natal Witness*, 7.1.1901 and 6.6.1901.

102. PAR, AGO I/7/1: Rex vs HGP Volker, pp.12-16; AGO I/7/4: Regina vs JA Prozesky, 117-119; AGO I/7/22: Rex vs A Wellmann, pp.401-403.

D'Arcy, both of whom had previously served with the Cape Mounted Rifles, joined the Boer cause to settle old scores with the British. The fact that they had previously worn the "Queen's Uniform" and in the case of D'Arcy, fought at Spioenkop and Platrand, explains the heavy sentences passed on them.¹⁰³ The role of the Africans convicted of high treason in the war is less clear and extensive research yielded little information on their roles.

The heaviest sentences imposed by the Special Court were on those who took active part in military operations, the so-called "willing and active partisans";¹⁰⁴ those who were regarded as rebel leaders; and those who attempted to influence fellow Natal Afrikaners to take up arms. Such men included DC Uys who was sentenced to five years imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison;¹⁰⁵ LJ de Jager who was sentenced to five years imprisonment and a fine of £5 000 or a further five years imprisonment;¹⁰⁶ and JJ van Tonder who received a five years prison sentence.¹⁰⁷ Also in line for heavy sentences were those who took part in active military combat against the Imperial forces such as CJ Pieters who served for nine days with the ZAR Artillery at the Siege of Ladysmith, GP Kemp who took part in the raid on the Wasbank Station on 25 October 1900 alongside the Russian, Captain Pokrovsky,¹⁰⁸ and JJ Dekker who had been active since the early part of the war and who continued to raid into Natal from across the Buffalo River.¹⁰⁹ Comparatively heavy sentences were also imposed on the men who ignored the various proclamations to surrender, such as the one issued by Kitchener on 7 August 1901, those Natal Afrikaners who remained in the field, and those who looted property alongside the Boers.¹¹⁰

The heaviest single sentence imposed on a Natal rebel was that given to Christiaan Stephanus Botha of Drycut, Newcastle. Botha was well educated, formerly employed by the Natal Government as magisterial clerk in Umvoti and Newcastle, a member of the Road Board and chairman of the Natal Wol Maatschappij. He was elected field-cornet for Newcastle on 29 November 1899, and proceeded to issue commandeering orders and hand out arms, and was commandant of the Newcastle Commando which participated in the attack the Nqutu Magistracy. On 15 May 1900, he left with his family for the ZAR where he continued his military activities for ten days and it was later reported

103. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs JJ Hoolahan, pp.524-527; AGO I/8/15: Regina vs JH D'Arcy, pp.308-310; *Natal Witness*, 25.1.1901.

104. *Natal Witness*, 15.11.1900.

105. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs DC Uys, p.413; *Natal Witness*, 12.3.1901

106. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420; *Natal Witness*, 15.3.1901.

107. PAR, AGO I/7/33: Rex vs JJ van Tonder, pp.822-828; *Natal Witness*, 3.3.1902.

108. A Davidson, and I Filatova, *The Russians and the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp.41-42.

109. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs CJ Pieters, pp.343-344; AGO I/7/25: Rex vs GP Kemp, pp.566-569; AGO I/7/30: Rex vs JJ Dekker, pp.736-744.

110. PAR, PAR AGO I/7/26: Rex vs AJ and PH Nel, pp.611-612; *Natal Witness*, 23.8.1901; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 27.8.1901.

that 100 Natal rebels under his command were deployed “at line Wakkerstroom-Utrecht.”¹¹¹ He was eventually captured under arms at Hlangape Bush in October 1901. Botha fell into the small group of Natal Afrikaners¹¹² who, in the words of historians Brookes and Webb: “... had responded to the call of blood and joined their invading brethren.”¹¹³ Botha’s statement to the Special Court: “All I have to say is this. That your lordships will kindly bear in mind that I am an Africander, and what I did I was prompted to do by my nationality” clearly explained why he had joined the Boers.¹¹⁴ His confession swayed the court who sympathetically declared that but for the fact that he was an Afrikaner he would have received the death sentence.¹¹⁵ The threat of a death sentence, a reversal from the previous undertaking by Governor Hely-Hutchinson,¹¹⁶ gives an indication of the severity with which the Special Court and the Natal Government viewed Botha’s crime.¹¹⁷

Unlike in the Cape Colony where 44 rebels were executed for high treason, none were executed in Natal. Graham Jooste and Abrie Oosthuizen, in their book on the execution of the Cape Rebels, erroneously state that one or two Natal Afrikaners suffered the same fate after being tried by a military court.¹¹⁸ The sole Natal Afrikaner to have had the death penalty imposed on him was IM Kok,¹¹⁹ but this was later reversed. The only other report of a Natal Afrikaner receiving the death penalty is impossible to substantiate and is possibly nothing more than a rumour. On 30 November 1899 the *Natal Mercury* reported that “a Natal Africander Judah Potgieter was arrested by the British authorities for displaying undue hospitalities to Boer commandos. Potgieter’s farm is near a British Camp. After a summary trial by court martial he was shot. He asked permission to communicate with his wife. His message was that she should send him down a coffin which had been stored on his farm for many years past. His request was granted.”¹²⁰

The lightest sentence imposed by the Special Court, that of one day, was given to 17-year-old ME Smit, 15-year-old HJ Strydom, 17-year-old GM Dekker and LW Eksteen. Although a humanitarian concern for the age of the first three rebels prompted such a light sentence, they did in fact serve a much longer sentence. Strydom and Smit for example, by the time they were finally sentenced had

111. PAR, GH 522: Summary of intelligence report for Natal week ending, 26.5.1900.

112. PAR, AGO I/7/2: Regina vs FJ de Jager, pp.45-46.

113. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, p.210.

114. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs CS Botha, p.784; *Natal Witness*, 21.2.1900 and 24.2.1902.

115. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs CS Botha, p.784; AGO I/8/83: Minute paper Natal rebel CS Botha, 7.1.1902; PAR, PM 26: Request for a permit by IM Botha to assist with the defense of his brother CS Botha, 15.2.1902; *Natal Witness*, 24.2.1902.

116. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.4.1900.

117. PAR, GH 562: Minute paper commandant Durban to Prime Minister AH Hime, 5.10.1901.

118. G Jooste, and A Oosthuizen, *So het hulle gesterf. Gedenkboek van teregstellings van Kaapse Rebelle en Republikeinse Burgers tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p.252.

119. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Report on the conviction of J Kok, IM Kok and CJ Cronjé, 20.3.1902-20.6.1902.

120. *Natal Mercury*, 30.11.1899. JC Vermaak mentions that a rebel from Helpmekaar, Jan van der Linde, was murdered after being captured. Vermaak himself admits that no further detail are available. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19979: Letter JC Vermaak to Professor Uys, 3.11.1955.

already spent eight months in prison. Eksteen too had already spent nine months in prison by the time he was convicted.¹²¹

Other cases in which the Special Court tended to pass lenient sentences were those involving rank and file members of the rebel forces;¹²² Afrikaners who had given assistance to fellow British subjects;¹²³ those who left the “protection of their sovereign” to proceed to one of the Republics;¹²⁴ and those who pleaded guilty, like CJ Smit, AS Boshoff, DJ van Niekerk and JLH Botha.¹²⁵ The news that those who pleaded guilty received lighter sentences caused some rebels to change their initial pleas from not guilty to guilty from one court session to the next. The rumours of lenient sentences being passed spread and the gaoler at Newcastle Prison could inform the authorities, during March 1901, that two-thirds of those awaiting trial intended pleading guilty.¹²⁶

A high proportion of those convicted of high treason were young men which caused Judge Mason to comment in the case against AM Pitzer and NJ Robbertse: “...it is apparent that the strength of the rebel cause in Natal, if I may use the phrase, rested upon young men of about their age...evidence exist that the young men took up arms and the old men did not.”¹²⁷ Mason’s observation is supported by the comments of some young rebels who appeared before the Special Court. CJS Hattingh explained that he was compelled by his father to join and if he had refused he would have received a thrashing as part of the deal. He maintained that the decision was made for him, saying “I (had) no idea what was right or wrong.”¹²⁸ JF Kemp, who carried the flag for the Natal Commando to Helpmekaar,¹²⁹ and PC Cronjé whose father, CP Cronjé, was an officer in the Newcastle Commando, likewise claimed that they were coerced into joining by their fathers.¹³⁰ This also applied to Arnoldus G Boers whose 17-year-old son died in battle. Boers had apparently taken his son to the Boers to fight in the place of a burger.¹³¹

Dominee DF Bosman of the DRC in Newcastle whose 17-year-old son, Lindley, was convicted as a rebel, denied the argument put forward by the Special Court that fathers had compelled their sons to

121. PAR, AGO I/7/15: Rex vs HJ Strydom, p.313; AGO, 1/7/23: Rex vs LW Eksteen, p.445; AGO I/7/30: Rex vs GM Dekker, pp.703-706; AGO I/7/9: Regina vs ME Smit, pp.195-196.

122. PAR, AGO I/7/18: Rex vs CFH Posselt and JCL Labuschagne, p.348; *Natal Witness*, 16.2.1901.

123. PAR, AGO I/7/27: Rex vs GJ Jordaan, pp.617-618; AGO I/7/27: Rex vs CL van Breda, p.776; PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter Lt-Col D Henderson to GOC, Natal, 31.3.1901.

124. PAR, AGO I/7/21: Rex vs AG Spies, p.386; AGO I/7/25: Rex vs JA du Plessis, p.543; *Natal Witness*, 4.4.1901.

125. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs PJ de Waal, pp.372-373; AGO I/7/23: Rex vs DC Uys, p.413; *Natal Witness*, 27.3.1901 and 6.6.1901.

126. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter Clerk of the Peace GL Fraser to Attorney-General H Bale, 5.3.1901.

127. PAR, AGO I/7/31: Rex vs AM Pitzer and NJ Robbertse, p.771; *Natal Witness*, 15.11.1901.

128. PAR, AGO I/7/30: Rex vs CJS Hattingh, p.874; *Natal Witness*, 15.3.1902.

129. PAR, AGO I/7/26: Rex vs GP, JF, and JS Kemp, pp.567-569; *Natal Witness*, 8.6.1901.

130. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs PC Cronjé, pp.506-507; *Natal Witness*, 29.3.1901.

131. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900.

join. Instead he listed three reasons why young Natal Afrikaners took-up arms: firstly they were commandeered to fight by the Boers and had very little choice in the matter because they were deserted by the Natal Government; secondly young men were possibly seeking adventure as “fostered by the stirring tales of your own writers”; and thirdly there was the existence of racial and ethnic tension, a line of defence not used during the treason trials. According to Bosman, insults such as “Natal Boers”, “Dirty Dutch, who can be frightened away by soap and water”, “It is high time that the Dutch are wiped off the face of the earth” and “Rather a kaffir than a Dutchman” which were aimed at Natal Afrikaners long before the war started were “more calculated to damp than intensify the ardour of our loyalty.”¹³² The following patronising extract from the *Natal Witness* published less than a month after Bosman’s comments serves to underpin his argument concerning derogatory and dehumanising comments: “My! but he was a queer karl! He drink two cups of coffee a day only and washed himself all over every morning. Ach! Such nonsense! If the Lord intended His people to wash all over every day, why did He ordain that they should wear clothes? Thus says Minnie, an Afrikaner girl, to the *Daily News* special correspondent.”¹³³

Spending lengthy terms in prison awaiting trial was the experience of most Afrikaners. The Special Court stated that it did take this into consideration when passing sentence but it is unclear how this can be substantiated because, for example, AM Cronjé who had already spend nine and a half months in prison, received a further eight months,¹³⁴ while DJ and DL van Niekerk, who were both already imprisoned for 10 months, received a further eight months each.¹³⁵

Natal rebels convicted of high treason faced three possible sentences: imprisonment, fines and disenfranchisement. The 14 rebels found guilty of both high treason and theft received a prison sentence which included hard labour and fines.¹³⁶

Natal Afrikaners, convicted of high treason by the Special Court and sentenced to a prison sentence, were transferred to the central prison in Pietermaritzburg, and later also to Eshowe. On arrival they were stripped naked and weighed before all marks and scars on the body were recorded. When this rudimentary medical examination was completed the convicted rebel was issued with prison clothes marked NCD (Natal Convict Department). Shoes were selected from numerous pairs stored in a cupboard.¹³⁷ Their prison term would then commence.¹³⁸

Fines imposed by the Special Court on the rebels were meant to be in accordance with their

132. *Natal Witness*, 18.6.1900 and 25.10.1900. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900, also picked up on the comments by Bosman but excluded his description of the insulting remarks Afrikaners had to endure.

133. *Natal Witness*, 7.8.1900.

134. PAR, AGO I/7/7: Rex vs AM Cronjé, p.426; *Natal Witness*, 20.3.1901.

135. PAR, AGO I/7/24: Rex vs DL and DJ van Niekerk, p.481 and pp.499-501; *Natal Witness*, 27.3.1901.

136. *Natal Witness*, 16.1.1901. For a complete list of those found guilty of theft and high treason see Appendix A.

137. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.30, 1941.

economic status. This could not always satisfactorily be determined and during the trial of FJ de Jager of Kemp's Hoek, Dundee, Judge Smith explained that: "I may say in considering the amount of fine to be imposed upon prisoners here, we endeavour to fix the amount, having regard, in some proportion to the amount of the estate a prisoner possesses. In many cases the information at our disposal as to the means is of the most meagre description, and we can hardly do more than form a guess as to the means." Apart from a three year prison sentence De Jager was also fined £500 or a further year imprisonment.¹³⁹ The Special Court was, however, reluctant to impose fines on the poor. When fines were imposed on them, as in the case of TP Lezar of Affgrond South, Newcastle who was given a prison sentence and fined £250, the court decreed that the money could not be recovered by force.¹⁴⁰ Imposing heavy fines on wealthy rebels was done with greater assurance. Lodewyk de Jager who owned 40 700 acres in Natal and the Transvaal was therefore fined £5 000.¹⁴¹

Fines imposed by the Special Court could be paid proportionally and sentences would be reduced in accordance with the amount paid.¹⁴² This happened to FDJ Havemann who was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 12 months. He served eight months and paid £83.6.8 which meant he did not have to serve the final four months of the additional sentence.¹⁴³ Paying the fines imposed caused controversy in some cases. Of the 23 rebels sentenced by the Special Court on 19 October 1900, only HAI Davel, HGP Volker, and JW Gowthorpe paid immediately. Since the fines imposed in these cases were not optional, the Natal authorities set about assisting the sheriff of the Special Court to recover the penalties. Government records show that most of the convicted rebels in question - men such as PR Vermaak, JC Vermaak, LW Meyer, and CF Marais were either well-to-do or had wealthy parents and "(would) pay at once if pressed." Economic conditions of wartime Natal, however, made it difficult for the families of many of the convicted men to scrape the money together. This pressure was nevertheless kept up by the issuing of writs to everybody who was not regarded as dirt poor or had a fine of £50 or less imposed on him.¹⁴⁴

In regard to the payment of fines both PR and AC Vermaak complained that their cattle were being impounded by the sheriff with the view of selling them, because they had not paid their fines.¹⁴⁵ Lodewyk de Jager faced similar threats regarding his landed property. He claimed that although he did not have enough money in Natal to pay his fine, he had £5 000 in the Transvaal. The problem,

138. For a detailed account of the imprisonment of Natal rebels see Chapter 10.

139. PAR, AGO I/7/2: Regina vs FJ de Jager, pp.45-46; *Natal Witness*, 27.9.1900.

140. PAR, AGO I/7/4: Regina vs TP Lezar, pp.71-74; *Natal Witness*, 12.10.1900 and 15.11.1900.

141. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Regina vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420; *Natal Witness*, 15.3.1901.

142. PAR, AGO I/7/26: Rex vs RJ Vermaak, p.592.

143. PAR, AGO I/8/85: Minute paper regarding the release of FDJ Havemann, 1.9.1902-27.10.1902.

144. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Return of convicted rebels on whom fines have been imposed since the establishment of the Special Court, 17.11.1900.

145. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Invasion losses claim by AE Vermaak on behalf of AC Vermaak, 26.3.1901-29.4.1901.

however, was that the military authorities prohibited the withdrawal of a sum of money greater than £20 per month from accounts held in the Transvaal. De Jager therefore appealed to the court not to force him to mortgage his land in Natal, or sell it under execution in order to levy the fine imposed. He was, nevertheless, willing to have an interdict placed upon the selling and mortgaging of his property in Natal for one year or until he was able to transfer the money from the Transvaal to pay his fine. The Natal authorities strongly opposed this application brought by Carter and Robinson on the basis that “the way he behaved disentitled him to any special consideration.” The court subsequently granted a stay of execution for two months.¹⁴⁶

Confiscating rebel property in lieu of outstanding fines, within the economic systems in place at the time, caused much controversy as is illustrated by the following case. JJ and BJ van Greuning and GH Shorter worked the farm Spectacle Spruit, Newcastle, in partnership. The three men were arrested over a period of time and the first to be convicted was Shorter, who was sentenced to one year imprisonment and a fine of £100. When he could not pay the fine a horse and 195 bags of mealies were seized by the sheriff. In the words of their legal representative: “It cannot be reasonably contended that the Government were within their rights in seizing and disposing of property belonging to others for the fine of a rebel.”¹⁴⁷

The Natal Afrikaner society hotly debated the purpose of these fines. In Newcastle it was rumoured that the fines levied would be used to pay compensation to the English who had suffered losses due to the Boer invasion,¹⁴⁸ while Ds WP Rousseau of Pietermaritzburg claimed that the fines were used to cover the maintenance costs of the imprisoned rebels.¹⁴⁹ Both these assumptions were wrong - the fines were handed out as a punitive measure. A total amount of £30 310 was imposed in fines on the Natal rebels, but only £27 037 of this was paid. The outstanding amount could not be collected because the Afrikaners in question had no property from which the fines could be recovered.¹⁵⁰

A punitive measure all convicted rebels suffered was disenfranchisement. According to paragraph 12 of the Royal Charter of 15 July 1856 any person convicted of treason lost the right to vote. With a substantial number of rebels convicted, the Natal Government issued circular No. 34 in 1901 asking for a census of the number of people whose names appeared on the voters roll who had been convicted of treason. The preliminary replies from the various magistrates yielded the following statistics: Newcastle - 99; Dundee - 37; Ladysmith (Klip River district) - 23; Upper Tugela - 11; Estcourt/Weenen - seven; Zululand - two; Umvoti (Greytown) - one; Kranskop - one. In especially

146. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Application by Carter and Robinson on behalf of LJ de Jager for an order to stay execution in connection with his fine, 14.3.1901-16.3.1901.

147. PAR, CSO 1745: Letter Hathorn and Co to colonial secretary, 26.10.1903.

148. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 24.5.1900, p.77.

149. NAR, Caption to photograph of rebels taken in the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 1.2.1902.

150. PAR, PM 42: Question by McIntosh to prime minister on the value of fines imposed on rebels, 25.6.1903.

Klip River county the political impact of disenfranchisement on both Afrikaners and the candidates they normally supported must have been severe since 159 possible voters were removed.

The mere removal of these men from the voters roll was not enough for the magistrate of Ixopo who feared that the convicted rebels could, when released, take up residence in another electoral district and cast their vote there. He, therefore, as a measure to prevent this from happening, requested that the names and addresses of the removed rebels be published in the *Government Gazette* and in pamphlets to be sent to all magistrates, field-cornets and other South African Governments.¹⁵¹ The magistrate of Newcastle wanted to extend this even further and enquired whether the names of suspected rebels still in the field could be removed from the voters roll as well. The response that the government could not provide an answer but that the magistrate could act on his discretion bearing in mind that names could be removed on suggestion by political agents and individuals, was a diplomatic and politically shrewd one.¹⁵² This was, however, not done very successfully and the government had to send out Circular No. 38 of 1902 to query names of 15 convicted rebels that still appeared on the Dundee voters roll by May 1902.¹⁵³

In spite of the hard work done by the Special Court, the number of cases pending remained very high. Although the 52 convictions for less serious cases of high treason handed down by Special Magistrate Forder,¹⁵⁴ and the 56 handed down by ordinary magistrates helped to alleviate the pressure, some suspected rebels were still spending up to nine months in prison awaiting trial. This concerned Attorney-General Bale who wanted to prevent that “a reaction and feeling should gain ground that we are persecuting or martyring.” To alleviate these pressures, and speed up the trials, Bale wanted even more cases, especially comparatively trifling ones, such as Afrikaners doing police work, fleeing to the Transvaal, and receiving the enemy into their homes, to be tried by Special Magistrate Forder. His argument was purely pragmatic - if a special magistrate was not employed “we shall never be able to overtake the work.”¹⁵⁵

Bale therefore suggested that the Natal Cabinet should consider altering the legislation so as to increase the jurisdiction of magistrates in terms of passing sentences from six months to one year imprisonment and from a £20 to a £100 fine. In the event of the cabinet fearing that this would place

151. PAR, CSO 1675: List with number of voters in each electoral district convicted of treason, 3.5.1901-10.5.1901.

152. PAR, CSO 1683: Correspondence regarding the removal of suspected rebels still in the field from the voters roll, 9.8.1901.

153. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Circular No. 38 of 1902 asking for return of names of convicted rebels appearing on the 1901 voter's roll, 16.5.1902; PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Minute paper magistrate, Dundee to PUS, 11.5.1902.

154. For some of the cases that appeared before Special Magistrate Jas Forder see: PAR, AGO I/8/79: Letter Clerk of the Peace D Turnbull to Attorney-General H Bale, 7.5.1902; PAR, 1/LDS 1/6/2/2/1: Natal rebels note book, 1901-1902; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/1: Natal rebels note book, November 1900; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/2: Natal rebels note book, 1901-1903; PAR, 1/LDS G 1/1/1 Clerk of peace letter book: Telegram HEK Anderson to magistrate Upper Tugela, 21.11.1900.

155. PAR, AGO I/8/76: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to PUS CJ Bird, 12.12.1900.

an undue amount of power in the hands of magistrates, Bale suggested that a Special Court of Magistrates be appointed.¹⁵⁶ His suggestions were rejected and the various courts were never quite able to catch up with either the work, even though some trials took place under the rules of the Special Court after the war had ended on 31 May 1902.¹⁵⁷

The uphill battle fought by the various courts in trying to deal with the large number of suspected rebels is borne out by the statistical analysis provided from time to time. When Sir William Smith resigned as president of the Special Court at the end of March 1901, there were still more than 300 rebels to be caught and tried. On 12 July 1901, Henry Bale could report that 326 rebels had been charged, 282 convicted, 44 discharged, and the same number awaiting trial.¹⁵⁸ The comprehensive inventory compiled by Sub-Inspector WE Earle on 12 September 1901, indicated the scope of the amount of work still awaiting the courts. Of the estimated 867 rebels, 307 were convicted; 108 had been acquitted or released on parole; 11 were deceased (three in action and eight in custody); two were released to give evidence; 20 were awaiting trial; 12 were on bail; seven were in the Transvaal and not yet handed over; four were handed over to the military; 14 were deported in error; and 382 were unaccounted for.¹⁵⁹ By 1 March 1902, 596 suspected rebels were dealt with while an estimated 363 were still unaccounted for.¹⁶⁰ In April 1902, the Special Court completed its final session and the remaining cases were remitted to Special Magistrate Forder for trial.¹⁶¹ The Special Court was finally dissolved by the governor of Natal on 11 March 1903.¹⁶²

Throughout the rebel trials the populace of Natal was kept informed by the various newspapers of the process. The *Natal Witness*,¹⁶³ *Times of Natal*, *De Natal Afrikaner*, *Natal Advertiser* and the *Natal Mercury* amongst others, acted as the public watchdogs and formed public opinion by bringing their readers every single detail surrounding the treason trials. Important cases, especially during the

156. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.3.1901.

157. PAR, PM 38: Proclamation dissolving the Special Court, 11.3.1903.

158. *Natal Witness*, 12.7.1901.

159. PAR, GH 1449: Summary of Natal rebels compiled by Sub-Inspector WE Earle, 12.9.1901.

160. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Memorandum Attorney-General GA de R Labistour to CIO, 1.3.1902.

161. PAR, CSO 1702: Letter Judge AW Mason to Governor HE McCallum, 18.4.1902.

162. PAR, PM 38: Proclamation dissolving the Special Court, 11.3.1903.

163. *Natal Witness*, 7.8.1900, 28.8.1900, 8.9.1900, 11.9.1900, 12.9.1900, 13.9.1900, 15.9.1900, 17.9.1900, 18.9.1900, 19.9.1900, 21.9.1900, 21.9.1900, 26.9.1900, 27.9.1900, 28.9.1900, 5.10.1900, 6.10.1899, 12.10.1900, 18.10.1900, 19.10.1900, 20.10.1900, 24.10.1900, 25.10.1900, 27.10.1900, 29.10.1900, 30.10.1900, 31.10.1900, 2.11.1900, 15.11.1900, 16.11.1900, 24.11.1900, 26.11.1900, 29.11.1900, 30.11.1900, 4.12.1900, 5.12.1900, 6.12.1900, 11.12.1900, 12.12.1900, 14.12.1900, 18.12.1900, 20.12.1900, 21.12.1900, 22.12.1900, 24.12.1900, 7.1.1901, 9.1.1901, 10.1.1901, 14.1.1901, 16.1.1901, 18.1.1901, 21.1.1901, 22.1.1901, 24.1.1901, 25.1.1901, 1.2.1901, 4.2.1901, 6.2.1901, 7.2.1901, 8.2.1901, 11.2.1901, 15.2.1901, 16.2.1901, 19.2.1901, 21.2.1901, 22.2.1901, 25.2.1901, 26.2.1901, 28.2.1901, 9.3.1901, 12.3.1901, 15.3.1901, 18.3.1901, 19.3.1901, 20.3.1901, 21.3.1901, 22.3.1901, 27.3.1901, 28.3.1901, 29.3.1901, 30.3.1901, 1.4.1901, 4.4.1901, 12.4.1901, 16.4.1901, 17.4.1901, 19.4.1901, 6.6.1901, 7.6.1901, 8.6.1901, 10.6.1901, 11.6.1901, 29.6.1901, 8.8.1901, 9.8.1901, 22.8.1901, 23.8.1901, 30.8.1901, 5.9.1901, 23.9.1901, 26.10.1901, 28.10.1901, 31.10.1901, 1.11.1901, 2.11.1901, 4.11.1901, 6.11.1901, 8.11.1901, 15.11.1901, 16.11.1901, 29.11.1901, 6.2.1902, 7.2.1902, 8.2.1902, 21.2.1902, 22.2.1902, 24.2.1902, 27.2.1902, 28.2.1902, 1.3.1902, 3.3.1902, 4.3.1902, 5.3.1902, 6.3.1902, 8.3.1902, 11.3.1902, 15.3.1902, 17.3.1902, 18.3.1902.

early months of the trials, filled columns of these jingoistic newspapers since the proceedings were reported verbatim. The reports were so thorough that the Natal authorities preferred to forward the newspaper articles on the trials, especially those carried by the *Natal Witness*, to the Colonial Office in London rather than the official court documentation.¹⁶⁴ The newspapers were also the only real mouthpiece in which the Natal community could voice their critical views. They were at times joined by editors who expressed either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with specific sentences and the perceived leniency of the courts. A point in case is the *Dundee and District Advertiser* which commented: “Rebellion in South Africa needs no bolstering by the imposition of ridiculously light sentences”, while the *Natal Witness* of 15 November 1900, viewed the judgement passed on John Hendrik Hattingh as a “smart sentence.”¹⁶⁵

In contrast to the power of the colonial authorities, as symbolised by the newspaper reports, the Special Court and the Imperial Army, stood the powerless Natal Afrikaner rebels, whose sole support amongst the spectators and participants in the unfolding drama, was their families and fellow Natal Afrikaners.¹⁶⁶ Especially the women - wives, sisters and mothers would form the frontline of moral support, always present for the sitting of the Special Court.¹⁶⁷

Like their menfolk in the dock, they believed the key to it all was the following extract from an unknown Roman-Dutch law book which came to the attention of those rebels in the Eshowe Prison: “A citizen is excused if he is hindered by external fear or under terror, however, unjustifiable, for though a firm man ought not to be prevented by fear from doing his duty, all men are not virtuous. for the power of the Sovereign ought to be able to protect against any evil those whose obedience it commands. If the Sovereign is unable to do this he cannot exact obedience or punish refusal.”¹⁶⁸

The point of view and emotions of the Natal authorities were exactly the opposite. To them the exercise was largely successful. They had managed to deal with the transgressions of their citizens with minimum interference from the Imperial Government, enforcing their political autonomy in the process. It seems to matter little to the Natal Government that: “...if a state gives a citizen protection it has a claim on his allegiance, and if he gives it his allegiance its is bound to give him protection”, something neither the Natal nor the Imperial Governments could offer to especially Klip River county Afrikaners for a period of 188 days between October 1899 and May 1900.¹⁶⁹

164. See for example: PRO, CO 179/220: Despatch No. 296, 8.11.1901; Despatch No. 300, 6.11.1901; Despatch No. 311, 16.11.1901; Despatch No. 323, 6.12.1901.

165. *Dundee and District Advertiser*, 29.1.1902.

166. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 21.8.1900, p.426.

167. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 22.10.1901, p.710.

168. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.2 1901, p.484.

169. R West, *The meaning of treason*, p.414.

Within the bigger historical picture the plight of Natal Afrikaners could be equated to that of other minority groups caught up in a war between their country of residence and their country of origin/fatherland/country or allegiance. Invariably they were also viewed as the enemy and treated as such.¹⁷⁰

6.3.2 The trial of Natal rebels by military court

As a result of the Natal Government's decision to conduct the high treason trials of its subjects, only three Natalians were initially tried by military courts. The first of these, and the first Natalian to be found guilty of treason, was John Torpey, a Newcastle trader who had formerly resided in the OFS for 20 years. During the Boer occupation of Newcastle, Torpey, like many other businessmen did a roaring trade with the Boers. In his case he used the abandoned mill of Walsh as a business venture. Shortly after the relief of Newcastle he was brought before a military court and sentenced to five years in prison with hard labour and a fine of £100 or a further year imprisonment. Torpey regarded the sentence as extremely harsh, especially since Natal Afrikaners who committed graver acts of treason only received a few months imprisonment, while hard labour was only added when they were found guilty of theft. He consequently, supported by a petition signed by 71 Natal rebels, appealed to Lord Kitchener for a reprieve of his sentence. This was denied by both the military, who regarded his case as "a bad one", and Governor McCallum, who refused to entertain any application for remission as long as the war dragged on.¹⁷¹ In April 1902 Torpey again asked for remission of his sentence and it was again rejected.¹⁷²

MP and GW de Jager, of Pietermaritzburg and Durban respectively, were the only other two men to be sentenced for high treason by a military court prior to the constitution of the Special Court. The De Jagers, both Republican burghers, one a cattle dealer and the other employed by the ZAR customs service in Durban, were determined to join the Boers. MP de Jager was originally arrested by a column under General Yule between Dundee and Ladysmith and imprisoned in Ladysmith during the siege, before being ordered to remain in Pietermaritzburg. In a second attempt to reach the Boer lines the men passed through Umvoti and were assisted by LL Nel and LC Hansmeyer¹⁷³ to cross the Tugela River. They did not get much further for they were arrested by African scouts and handed over to the UMR.¹⁷⁴ Both were found guilty of breaching Martial Law; for ignoring orders to remain in Pietermaritzburg; and for attempting to enlist with the enemy. A military court under Maj-

170. An example from the Second World War which serves to prove this point is the treatment of Japanese-Americans by the USA. See, W Ng, *Japanese American internment during World War II: A history and reference guide*, and R Daniels, *Prisoners without trial: Japanese Americans in World War II*.

171. PAR, GH 502: Correspondence pertaining to the request by J Torpey for remission of sentence, 17.6.1901-24.7.1901; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 5.6.1900.

172. PAR, PM 28: Petition by J Torpey asking for a remission of his sentence, 25.3.1902-25.4.1902.

173. Louis Hansmeyer was found guilty by the Special Court of high treason and fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment.

174. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Letter Prosecutor H Anderson to magistrate Kranskop, 21.5.1900; PAR, AGO I/8/70: Papers relating to the arrest of MP and GW de Jager, 7.5.1900-12.5.1900.

Gen Wolfe-Murray sentenced them to six months imprisonment and a fine of £50 each, or a further one month imprisonment.¹⁷⁵

In October 1901, the commandant of Durban, Colonel O'Neill, suggested an alternative to the costly and time-consuming trials of Natal rebels by the Special Court. He proposed that the rebels still in the Republics be tried by military courts. Governor McCallum supported O'Neill's proposal, claiming that the public also did. McCallum's canvassing for a change in the system was based on two reasons: the "easy life in prison" experienced by the sentenced rebels, and the fact that the rebels still in the field had had ample opportunity to surrender, but because they had not done so should be classified as "undesirables" and should, for the sake of law and order, be banished to Bermuda and other "convict establishments."

McCallum's hard-line suggestion did not please the Natal Government who argued in favour of their creation, the Special Court:

...so far as Ministers are aware, the decisions of the Court have given general satisfaction. Ministers do not therefore consider that it would be desirable to make any change in the existing system. It should be borne in mind that in the Cape Colony there have been fresh outbreaks of rebellion, and that Cape rebels have, since the commencement of hostilities, joined the enemy from time to time, but, except as regards those rebels who took up arms at the commencement of the War, none of the Natal Boers have, so far as is known, gone over to the enemy.¹⁷⁶

It was also pointed out that the Special Court was instituted at the insistence of Joseph Chamberlain. In addition the Natal Government argued that it would be a poor reflection on the commissioners of the court if it was now announced that the court was not a proper tribunal for the trial of rebels.¹⁷⁷

Governor McCallum, however, did not let the affair rest and raised the matter of how best to deal with the estimated 300 Natal rebels still in the field with Lord Milner during the latter's visit to Natal in November 1901.¹⁷⁸ When Milner adopted the same point of view as the Natal Government, McCallum decided to influence the process more directly. In conversation with the president of the Special Court, he "took the opportunity of giving him a hint that, considering the heavy sentences which were now being passed by Military Courts in the Cape Colony, it would not be out of place if a somewhat greater severity

175. PRO, WO 108/302: Extracts from the proceedings of the military court in Natal, 1900; PAR, PM 87: Sentences imposed by the military court on MP and GW de Jager, 29.6.1900-2.7.1900.

176. One report exists on three Natal rebels with the surname of Adendorff who had served time in prison for high treason and then apparently rejoined the Boers. The men were arrested by the military and taken to Harrismith. No further information could be located regarding this accusation which indicates that it was possibly a rumour. NAR, PMO 52: Telegram GOC, Natal to provost marshal, 3.12.1901.

177. PAR, GH 562: Minute paper regarding the suggested trial by court martial of rebels captured outside Natal, 7.10.1901-3.11.1901.

178. PRO, CO 179/220: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 5.11.1901; *Natal Witness*, 26.10.1901.

characterized the sentences in this Colony.”¹⁷⁹ Prime Minister Hime apparently impressed the same opinion on the president. As a result McCallum had the satisfaction to report that his interference had resulted in heavier sentence being passed on specifically two rebels, JA van Rooyen who was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment and a fine of £1 000 or a further 18 months in prison, and JJ Dekker who was sentenced to seven years imprisonment.¹⁸⁰

The mind of the Natal Government regarding the feasibility of trying rebels apprehended outside the Colony by court martial was at face value changed by a single incident. Four suspected rebels, HA and LJ Dreyer, and two Robbertse, captured near Barberton, were handed over to the Natal authorities in August 1901 and July 1901 respectively. On 29 November 1901, the Natal CID telegraphed the provost marshal asking if evidence could be supplied by the military regarding the charge of “surrender under arms” brought against these men. The military’s response was curt: “Evidence cannot now be produced and, as there was no doubt as to the Burghership of the men, it will be best instead of wasting more time to give them the benefit of the doubt and send them away as prisoners of war.” In the meantime the preliminary examination against the four men had taken place and their cases were postponed awaiting the military evidence which, was not forthcoming. In such cases the Natal authorities estimated that the lack of military evidence would result in a sentence of maximum five months rather than two years, for the men were then merely guilty of leaving Natal for the Republics. The matter was eventually referred to the new attorney-general for Natal, GA de R Labistour, with the request that further investigations be suspended so that the four suspects could be deported by the military.¹⁸¹ No evidence could be found on what happened to these men except that HA Dreyer was fined £10 or 3 months imprisonment. The light sentence in itself was a vindication of the concerns of the Natal authorities.

The bungling of the above-mentioned case, because of the failing by the military to supply the necessary evidence, moved the issue of rebel trials from the political to the legal sphere. Attorney-General Labistour suggested to Prime Minister Hime that the military should try all Natal rebels caught or surrendering outside of Natal by court martial since this “might prove more satisfactory than for this government (Natal) to take them over and then apply to the military for evidence.” The Natal Government adopted this suggestion without any resistance and via the office of General McCallum, approached Lord Kitchener with the proposal made by Labistour. Kitchener agreed on condition that a “Bill of Indemnity” was passed to protect the military. The Natal Government conceded and passed Law No. 35 of 1902 which safeguarded the military against any post-war prosecution by rebels.¹⁸² Kitchener then, without delay, issued an order on 10 January 1902, relaying

179. At this stage military courts in the Cape Colony were imposing prison sentences on rebels for periods likely to extend beyond the duration of the war. NAR, PMO 52: Telegram GOC, Natal to provost marshal, 3.12.1901.

180. PAR, CO 179/220: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 8.11.1901.

181. PRO, CO 179/222: Telegram provost marshal to GOC, Natal, 7.1.1902.

182. PRO, 179/222: Correspondence concerning the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902; PAR,

the details to the appropriate officers, and informing them that such trials could only take place with reference to the army head quarters.¹⁸³ The district police officers of the Natal Police were simultaneously informed of the arrangement.¹⁸⁴

When prompted by the governor, Prime Minister Hime revealed the real reasons for capitulating and accepting a more power-orientated approach towards the rebels. The civil authorities were finding it increasingly difficult to obtain evidence because of the lapse of time between the trials and the actual crimes of high treason. In addition it was expensive to maintain the Special Court;¹⁸⁵ inconvenient to the Natal Government; and the ruling which allowed the military to try rebels by court martial would enable the court to wind up its affairs within three months when the pending cases against the last 43 rebels in custody were completed. Members of the court, like Mr Broome, could then return to their ordinary civil duties.¹⁸⁶

The decision to allow the military to try rebels arrested outside Natal, which effectively ended the protection the authorities gave their Afrikaner subjects against Martial Law, worried some rebels who were still in the field and who wanted to surrender. They feared that they would be more severely punished by the military. Lt-Gen Lyttelton, the GOC for Natal, suggested to Lord Kitchener that “if they really wanted to come in they will get comparatively lenient sentences.”¹⁸⁷ With this Kitchener concurred on condition that the rebels were only guilty of rebellion. Lyttelton was, however, warned against issuing precise statements of possible punishment without consultation with the army headquarters.¹⁸⁸

The comparatively lenient sentences Lyttelton had promised proved to be false as Johannes Christoffel Boshoff of Newcastle, the first rebel to be sentenced under the new arrangement, found out. He was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further six months in prison for attempting to communicate with the Boers on two occasions. Rebels subsequently arrested received even harsher sentences. On 13 February 1902, a military court in Standerton, sentenced J and IM Kok and CJ Cronjé, all three of Dundee, to six years imprisonment each. IM Kok became the first Natal rebel to be sentenced to death for having two soft-nosed expanding bullets in his

AGO I/8/83: Correspondence concerning the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902.

183. NAR, PMO 2: Telegram GOC, Natal, to provost marshal, Pretoria, 4.2.1902.

184. PAR, AGO I/8/83: Letter chief commissioner police to district police officer, 3.1.1902.

185. Already in October 1900, concerns were expressed about the expenses incurred because of the treason trials. PAR, AGO I/8/76: Minute paper accounting officer, attorney-general's department, EW Baxter to Attorney-General H Bale, 15.11.1900.

186. PRO, 179/222: Correspondence concerning the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902; PAR, AGO I/8/83: Correspondence concerning the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902.

187. PRO, WO 108/116: Letter Lt-Gen N Lyttelton to Col I Hamilton, 14.2.1902.

188. PRO, WO 108/116: Letter Col I Hamilton to Lt-Gen N Lyttelton, 18.2.1902.

bandolier. Lord Kitchener eventually commuted his death sentence to a prison sentence.¹⁸⁹ Philip Jacobus Meyer of Dundee received an equally harsh sentence, five years imprisonment and a fine of £2 000 or a further three years imprisonment from a military court sitting at Volksrust. In his case the fine was scrapped by the army headquarters.¹⁹⁰ A year later, in an attempt to prove his innocence, Meyer unsuccessfully tried to locate the depositions made against him which he claimed he was denied during his trial.¹⁹¹ A group of eight Natal rebels was also sentenced by a military court at Harrismith over the six week period just before and after peace was signed. The heaviest sentence by this court was imposed on CJ van der Merwe of Vaalbank, Estcourt, who was sentenced to be imprisoned for ten years.¹⁹²

All in all the military courts convicted 15 Natal rebels of high treason after they were granted jurisdiction in late 1901. Their sentences were generally much harsher than those passed by the Special Court. On average the 15 rebels tried by the military received sentences of four years and four months each. Although the heavy sentences must have pleased the Natal Government, the process proved to be as expensive as the sessions of the Special Court with £100 expended on the case of PJ Meyer alone.¹⁹³

Once the war ended Attorney-General Labistour moved swiftly to end the trial of rebels by military court, especially after the army, in violation of the order that they had to try rebels outside of Natal, brought three rebels to Newcastle to be tried. By 9 September 1902 the trial of rebels by military court had ceased and the seven untried prisoners were handed over to the Natal authorities to be tried by magistrates under the rules of the Special Court.¹⁹⁴

Securing the records of the Natal rebels tried by the military courts serve to illustrate the ongoing tension between the army and the civil authorities and highlight the vastly different organizational cultures they represented. The attorney-general, on 18 September 1902, forwarded the following minute: "It is imperative that the military authorities should send in at once all records referring to Natal rebels tried by Military Courts. They have already been asked to do this but the request has not been complied with."¹⁹⁵ Despite the shortcomings in the relationship as outlined above it did, to a

189. NAR, PMO 44: Correspondence regarding Natal rebels, J Kok, IM Kok, CJ Cronjé, ZJ Lombard and GJW van Niekerk, 26-27.1.1902; NAR, PMO 44: Correspondence regarding J Kok, 29.1.1902; PAR, AGO I/8/84: Report on the conviction of J Kok, IM Kok and CJ Cronjé, 20.3.1902-20.6.1902.

190. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Confirmation of sentence imposed on PJ Meyer, 13.5.1902.

191. PAR, AGO I/8/89: Letter Griffen and Muller to attorney-general, 9.4.1903.

192. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Proceedings of military court against CJ van der Merwe, JA Oosthuysen (snr), JA Oosthuysen (jnr), JR Oosthuysen, JP Zietsman, NJ van der Westhuizen, JT Truscott, JHF Meyer, 14.5.1902-20.6.1902.

193. PAR, AGO I/8/86: Request that the accounting officer be informed of the costs involved in military court trials, 15.5.1902-24.5.1902.

194. PAR, AGO I/8/85: Minute paper indicating that trial by military court had to cease and prisoners had to be handed over to the civil authorities, 22.8.1902-7.9.1902.

195. VS Harris, p.44.

certain extent serve its purpose, namely to dispense justice to rebels apprehended outside the Colony.

6.4 Appeals to the Privy Council

Of the 409 Natal Afrikaners convicted of high treason very few were happy with the sentences passed on them. Initially there was talk that a large number of convicted rebels would collectively appeal to the highest court, Privy Council in London, against their sentences.¹⁹⁶ In the end only two, Lodewyk de Jager of Wasbank and Jan Lodewyk Marais of Meyershoek near Ladysmith, took their appeal to the Privy Council.¹⁹⁷

In his interpretation of events Marais stated that the Klip River county were annexed by the Republican forces and that he was compelled into service at Elandsplaagte. He was forced to remain at the Boer laager for eight days and was then, under protest, allowed to return home to perform the duties of a policeman. When the Boers retreated he remained on his farm and was subsequently arrested by the military, tried for treason, and sentenced to a fine of £200 and one year imprisonment.¹⁹⁸

Eugene Renaud, Marais' maverick counsel,¹⁹⁹ argued that the Special Court was not properly constituted and that his client was entitled to be tried by the laws of England because Roman-Dutch law had no standing in Natal since the area had been secured for Britain in 1824 by Lieutenant Farewell. When the Voortrekkers arrived they as British subjects, occupied the territory as bearers of English law. Ordinance 12 of 1845 thus only gave the Roman-Dutch Law credence "until such time as Her Majesty should have given some charter or form of government to the Colony." This expired when Natal secured some form of self-government in 1856. Arguments that the courts in Natal had been applying Roman Dutch Law for 60 years were rejected by Renaud who commented: "The practice is bad, and it is never too late to reform it."²⁰⁰ On the basis of this curious argument Renaud appealed to the Privy Council against the sentence imposed on Marais.²⁰¹ The six members of the judicial committee of the Privy Council dismissed Renaud's arguments declaring that Roman-Dutch Law did indeed apply to Natal and that the Special Court was properly constituted.²⁰² The appeal

196. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

197. The Colling brothers also wanted to take their case to the Privy Council but could not find the money to do so. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter FM Colling to TG Colling, 4.4.1901.

198. *The Times*, 25.7.1901.

199. Renaud was not afraid to take up cases other legal minds would shy away from. Amongst others, he represented King Dinizulu during the Bambatha Rebellion. A Duminy and B Guest, (eds.), *Natal and Zululand from earliest times to 1910. A new history*, p.395.

200. *Times of Natal*, 7.12.1900.

201. PRO, CO 179/218: Notice of appeal in the matter of JL Marais, 6.5.1901; PRO, CO 179/221: Appeal case, Special Court sentence passed on JL Marais, 25.6.1901.

202. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Verdict of the judicial committee of the Privy Council, 24.7.1901.

process apparently ended up costing Marais £2 000.²⁰³

Lodewyk de Jager²⁰⁴ was sentenced to a fine of £5 000 and five years imprisonment. He paid his fine, served his sentence and was released on 13 March 1903, when the sentences of all the imprisoned rebels were remitted. In 1907 De Jager, with the financial assistance of fellow Natal Afrikaners, took his case to the judicial committee of the Privy Council claiming that a victory for him would be a victory for all convicted Natal rebels.²⁰⁵ De Jager argued that he was a Transvaal citizen and could therefore not be convicted of high treason.²⁰⁶ His correspondence with the under-secretary of state of the ZAR, regarding the “oorlogsbelasting” he had to pay, was also put forward as proof that he regarded himself as a Transvaal burgher. Based on this evidence he was instructed to pay his outstanding income tax and enlist with a field-cornet in the Vryheid district.²⁰⁷ This was not the view of the judicial commission of the Privy Council. Their counter argument, an argument also used by the Special Court was that: “It is an old law that an alien resident within British territory owes allegiance to the Crown, and may be indicted for treason, though not a subject. Some authorities affirm that this duty and liability arise from the fact that while in British territory he receives the King’s protection.” Based on this principle De Jager’s appeal was dismissed, in the presence of General Louis Botha, on 9 May 1907.²⁰⁸

6.5 Concluding comments

In total 409 Natal Afrikaners were convicted of high treason by seven different kind of courts. Of these the Special Court, specifically created for the purpose, passed sentence on 276 rebels or just more than 67% of those found guilty. This was a clear vindication for the creation of the court. The other courts constituted to deal with the rebels passed sentences as outlined in Table 6.1 below. Despite their subservience to Martial Law the Natal Government generally managed to maintain their independent stance of judging their subjects on their own terms. All in all the Natal authorities could, if one considers the mammoth task they faced, be satisfied with the manner in which the rebel

203. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.2.1901, p.485.

204. LJ de Jager was an exceptionally wealthy man who owned 11 700 acres in Natal and 29 000 acres in the Transvaal. For further documentation surrounding the attempts by Lodewyk de Jager to convince the Privy Council of his point of view see the Sarie Mehl private collection, Waterkloofrif, Pretoria. Mehl, the current owner of Wasbank Manor, the Natal abode of De Jager, is his great grand daughter.

205. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

206. LJ de Jager only on 23 June 1899 asked the secretary of state of the ZAR not to consider him as resident outside of the Republic. Despite this request he continued to reside in Natal. NAR, SP 207 SPR 4724/99: Letter LJ de Jager to secretary of state, 23.5.1899. One of the sons of De Jager, Lodewyk Johannes (jnr), of the Vryheid district, who was never charged with treason, for some unknown reason also wanted to prove that he was a burgher of the Transvaal. PAR, AGO I/8/87: Affidavits regarding the citizenship of LJ de Jager (jnr), 27.10.1902.

207. NAR, SSA RA 1970/99: Correspondence between LJ de Jager and the under secretary of state of the ZAR, 29.3.1899-17.6.1899.

208. PAR, AGO I/8/115: Appeal by LJ de Jager to the judicial committee of the Privy Council, 14.3.1907-9.5.1907; *The Standard*, 10.5.1907.

trials were conducted.²⁰⁹

Table 6.1: Number of Natal rebels convicted of high treason per court

<u>Type of Court</u>	<u>No. of rebels convicted</u>
Special Court	276 (67%)
Special Magistrate	52 (13%)
Magistrate	41 (10%)
Military Court	18 (4%)
Special Court - trial by magistrate	16 (4%)
Supreme Court	4 (1%)
High Court of Zululand	2 (0.5%)
TOTAL	409

The reasons why the various courts convicted rebels, as indicated in the court documents, and summarised in Appendix A, does not necessarily reveal the whole truth. It is likely that almost all Natal Afrikaners who resided in the area occupied by the Boers had in one way or another compromised their loyalty to the crown by, as the *Natal Witness* described it, joining “hands in a struggle false in its foundation, cruel and wicked in its action and suicidal in its certain result.”²¹⁰ Only a little over 500 of the estimated 90% Afrikaners of the Klip River county suspected of having taken part in the rebellion were arrested.²¹¹ An estimated 350 Natal Afrikaners, who were possibly just as guilty, managed to evade arrest while others could not be linked to the available evidence. Proof of this is contained in the name list drawn up by the Natal Police of Natal Afrikaners suspected of treason: of the 19 Natal Afrikaners with the surname of Adendorff who were suspected of treason, only nine were convicted; six Natal Afrikaners with the surname of Spies were suspected of treason and only one was convicted; ten Afrikaners with the surname of Uys were suspected and only three found guilty of treasonable deeds and nine with the surname of Wessels were suspected but none were convicted.²¹²

The vast majority of the convicted rebels originated from the districts occupied by the Boers. (Table

209. *Dundee Commercial Advertiser*, 12.3.1902.

210. *Natal Witness*, 20.3.1900.

211. VS Harris, pp.32-34.

212. PAR, ZA 33: Names of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty, circa 1900.

6.2) These districts were not only isolated from the centres of political and economic power in Natal but, also bordered on the Republics and were thus greatly in their sphere of influence. There was furthermore a positive correlation between the duration of the occupation of certain districts and the number of rebels found guilty of high treason, with the Newcastle district topping the list. It was in the districts in close geographical proximity to the Republics that a combination of fear of Boer punishment, and pressure of Boer occupation, forced Natal Afrikaners to enlist.²¹³ The crude commandeering system, pursued in an inconsistent manner and based on deception, was implemented because of the resistance of the vast majority of the Natal Afrikaners to become involved on the Republican side in a military capacity.²¹⁴ The majority of Natal Afrikaners from the northern districts did not choose the traumatic path of rebellion, it was forced upon them. Within this context the phrase coined by historian Verne Harris “reluctant rebels” rings perfectly true.²¹⁵

Table 6.2: Number of rebels convicted per district

<u>District</u>	<u>No. of rebels convicted by Special Court</u>	<u>No. of rebels convicted by other courts</u>	<u>Total</u>
Newcastle	91	59	150
Dundee	110	20	130
Ladysmith (Klip River division)	34	18	52
Upper Tugela	21	9	30
Proviso B and Zululand	4	14	18
Estcourt	10	4	14
Weenen	4	5	9
Durban	2	1	3

213. PAR, AGO I/7/22: Rex vs A Wellman, pp.401-403; *Natal Witness*, 9.3.1901; AGO I/7/24: Rex vs DL van Niekerk, pp.499-501; *Natal Witness*, 27.3.1901.

214. PAR, 1/DUN 1/5/2/1: Evidence of FDJ Havemann during the preliminary hearing of CF Hatting; Evidence of CF Hatting during the preliminary hearing of same, 26.9.1900.

215. VS Harris, p.1.

Kranskop		1	1
Greytown		1	1
Pietermaritzburg		1	1
TOTAL	276	133	409

The Natal Government continued to prosecute rebels after peace was signed. In fact, the post-war treason cases were so numerous that the magistrate of Dundee requested and received the help of an assistant magistrate.²¹⁶ Some of the suspected rebels like F, PR and DM van der Cracht and William Cheney of Pietermaritzburg, who was fined £3 for high treason, were POWs who had returned from overseas camps.²¹⁷ A further eight Natal Afrikaners, AM Muller, JJ Meyer, G Teichmann, JJ Potgieter, JJ Swart, WH Hattingh, WH and JC Brooks, were convicted of high treason by various magistrates between 31 May and 31 December 1902.²¹⁸ Eleven Natal Afrikaners were charged with high treason in 1903. The charges against all the men, except for that against NJJ Dreyer of Ladysmith, were dropped. Dreyer was fined £20 or two months in prison. His case brought down the curtain on rebel trials.²¹⁹

216. PAR, CSO 1724: Request by Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, that Stainbank be appointed assistant magistrate, 6.2.1903-20.2.1903.

217. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Rex vs William Cheney, pp.977-979.

218. PAR, PM 35: List of persons convicted of high treason since July 1902, 17.11.1902.

219. PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/2: Natal rebels note book, 1901-1903.

CHAPTER 7

NATAL AFRIKANERS AS LOYALISTS

In Albert Grundlingh's groundbreaking work on Afrikaners who sided with the British during the Anglo-Boer War,¹ these individuals are referred to as hendsoppers or joiners. The Natal Afrikaner loyalists were neither, for as British subjects they were expected to, at the very least, remain neutral. It would therefore be more appropriate to use a simple definition from *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* to explain who and what a loyalist is, namely: "a person who remains loyal to the legitimate sovereign ... in the face of rebellion or usurpation."² Within the Natal Afrikaner community a small group managed to do so by not departing from their allegiance to the crown, regardless of the pressures placed upon them. Who was this extremely small group of Natal Afrikaner loyalists? Why did they remain loyal to the Empire and the Natal Government in the face of aggressive Republicanism? Or was it a question of all the Natal Afrikaners being disloyal and some being more disloyal than others? In this chapter an attempt will be made to answer these and other questions related to loyalist Natal Afrikaners.

7.1 Support for, and involvement in, the British and colonial forces

In terms of war, ultimate loyalty is the willingness to take up arms against invaders of the same ethnic and cultural group as yourself. This display of loyalty was exhibited by the Afrikaners who joined the UMR, a volunteer regiment from the Greytown and Kranskop area. A detachment of this unit, 36 strong, consisting of 21 Afrikaners and 15 Germans under the command of Captain EJ Landsberg was despatched to Ixopo on 6 October 1899³ to guard the southern border of Natal against a possible African uprising in the Pondoland area.⁴ The troop remained in this locality for the duration of the Boer presence in Natal, i.e. until June 1900.

Governor Hely-Hutchinson explained the thinking of the Natal authorities when he addressed the men prior to their departure for Ixopo:

You must not think we, the Government, distrust your loyalty by sending you to the Southern Border, as we consider it our duty to send a body of men to guard that border as well as the other borders of the Colony, and we have studied the situation and consider it right and proper that as you are of Dutch decent, you should be sent there, bearing in mind that some of you have blood relations and ties on the other side, but we feel confident and satisfied that you will do your duty equally with those who are now at the front.⁵

The vast majority of Afrikaners from Umvoti were less enthusiastic about this deployment as can be

1. AM Grundlingh, *Die hendsoppers en joiners. Die rasional en verskynsel van verraad, passim.*

2. RE Allen (ed)., *The concise Oxford dictionary*, p.704.

3. PAR, MJPW 71: Muster roll of Captain Landsberg's detachment of the UMR, 6.10.1899.

4. CH Stott, p.25 and p.216.

5. *Natal Witness*, 16.2.1900.

gauged by their lack of contribution towards a gift for the unit prior to its deployment. Of the 41 people who contributed to the present only PR Botha and his son were Afrikaners.⁶ At the same time the homes of those Afrikaners who were associated with the UMR, were, according to rumour, earmarked for ruthless looting.⁷

This sensible decision by the Natal authorities to send the specific detachment of the UMR to the Ixopo area meant that the Afrikaners would not be directly confronted by their kin in battle. As a result the impression was created amongst some in Natal that they could not be trusted to fight the Boers.⁸ The posting also result in long periods of inactivity and idleness. To try and pass the time two rifle matches were organised against the Ixopo Rifle Association,⁹ but this soon attracted public criticism. "Britisher" in a letter to the *Natal Witness* complained that the UMR volunteers were receiving all the perks soldiers were entitled to while they were playing games. He believed that a "volunteer is a volunteer" and that they should be at the front.¹⁰ Similar sentiments were expressed by "One who knows."¹¹ This criticism elicited an angry response from one GE Francis who explained that it was no fault of the detachment that they were prevented from proceeding to the front by the authorities. As far as Francis was concerned all the men were willing to serve at the front since they had all taken an oath of allegiance to defend the Colony. Francis proceeded to advise "One who knows" that if he was so anxious to see the detachment disbanded he should show his loyalty and patriotism by joining instead of writing incorrect and disparaging remarks under a "nom de plume."¹²

By the time that the Boers were all but driven from Natal the local magistrate also questioned the presence of the UMR detachment in Ixopo. The Natal Cabinet, realising that it would make little political sense to move the troop to the front, decided to maintain the status quo for the time being. This decision was altered a couple of days later when the unit was employed in doing police-like patrolling of the Ixopo and Polela areas.¹³ A month later a rumour surfaced that the troop would be transferred to Dundee. An outcry from the commander of volunteers resulted in an urgent telegraph to the prime minister to protest that the transfer "was not advisable for many reasons." Prime Minister Hime agreed and angrily demanded to know the source "of such an absurd rumour."¹⁴

6. PAR, A 771 (v): Letter signed by 41 inhabitants of Greytown to Major G Leuchars, 1.10.1899.

7. GC Musgrave, *In South Africa with Buller*, p.175.

8. *Natal Advertiser*, 2.11.1899; *Times of Natal*, 11.11.1899.

9. *Natal Witness*, 12.12.1899.

10. *Natal Witness*, 31.1.1900.

11. *Natal Witness*, 5.2.1900.

12. *Natal Witness*, 16.2.1900.

13. PAR, MJPW 75: Correspondence regarding the use of the UMR troop based at Ixopo, 10.5.1900-6.6.1900.

14. PAR, MJPW 76: Telegrams exchanged between Prime Minister AH Hime and commandant of volunteers, Col JG Dartnell, 10.7.1900 and 11.7.1900.

It was clear that the Natal authorities were not willing to take any risk by sending this particular force to the front. The hesitancy of the Natal Government can be understood when one considers the case against Privates JM (Mias) and JJ (Marthinus) Botha, members of the UMR. In a joint letter written home the men used disloyal language towards the crown. Both were brought before a military court which identified JM Botha as the real culprit. He was found guilty and dismissed from the UMR.¹⁵ In addition, with the Boers driven from Natal, the authorities were uncertain what to do with the Afrikaner troop of the UMR, as well as the other Natal volunteer units. Consequently all Natal volunteer units were disbanded in August 1900.¹⁶

When the UMR was disbanded not a single Afrikaner attended any of the subsequent homecoming functions. The commanding officer, Major George Leuchars, called it “ill will”¹⁷ and encouraged the Afrikaners to accept British rule, to bury the past, and to work with the British colonists for a better future.¹⁸ This “ill will” was however, reciprocated by the colonial authorities. The disbandment, for example, left Captain EJ Landsberg without a position. He therefore applied for permission to return to his farm Morgenstond in the Dundee district which he had vacated to join the UMR. Serving the war effort did not count for much in his case and the commandant of Dundee refused the request.¹⁹

In the end very little value was attached to the duty done by the UMR unit stationed at Ixopo. This can be gathered from the names which appear on the shield which honoured those who served from 29 September 1899 to 9 October 1900, presented to the unit by the inhabitants of Greytown and Umvoti county. Not one of the names of those who served at Ixopo appear on the shield. The only names of men who might have been Afrikaners and appear on the shield are: Sergeant J Laatz, C Laatz, P Meyer, WJH Muller, Corporals A Krause and A Muller, C Krause and F Krause.²⁰ These men were possibly the men who were transferred to the UMR detachments along the Tugela River and who had then guided the Imperial Light Infantry in April 1900 from Greytown on their march towards the area.²¹

A number of Natal Afrikaners also joined the British Army by enlisting in units other than the UMR. LP de Jager of Serpentine, Newcastle, first joined the Normandien Volunteer Corps in November 1900 to counteract stock theft by raiding Boer commandos and in July 1901 he joined Loxton's

15. PAR, AGO I/8/75: List of persons prosecuted by the military for treasonable offences, no date; PAR, CSO 1641: Statement and summary of evidence in the cases against JM and JJ Botha, UMR for translation, 22-24.2.1900; PAR, CSO 1645: Hershensohn and McGillewie enquires on the sentence passed on Mias Botha, 18.4.1900-25.4.1900.

16. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Application by Captain EJ Landsberg to return to his farm, 20.8.1900-28.8.1900.

17. *Natal Witness*, 13.10.1900.

18. *Natal Witness*, 16.10.1900.

19. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Application by Captain EJ Landsberg to return to his farm, 20.8.1900-28.8.1900.

20. UMR Archive, Durban, Unnumbered photo album on the Anglo-Boer War: Photo of the shield presented to the unit by the residents of Greytown and Umvoti, circa 1902.

21. CHS Boscawen-Wright, *With the Imperial Light Infantry in Natal*, pp.65-67.

Horse.²² Other Natal Afrikaners who enlisted in the military included Hans (Johannes) Strydom of Newcastle who served as a guide with the Swaziland Column,²³ FW Prinsloo of Dundee who joined Thorneycrofts Mounted Infantry,²⁴ Pelster of Dundee who joined the Scottish Horse Regiment,²⁵ and Theunis de Jager of Wasbank who was killed in action by the Boers near at Nqutu,²⁶ making him the only Natal Afrikaner loyalists to pay the ultimate price in fighting for the Empire.

An Afrikaner to join the British forces for ulterior motives was Jan (Theunis Jacobus) Nel, the son of “Mal Theuns” Nel of Spitzkop, Umvoti district. During the early stages of the war Jan Nel carried letters to the Boer forces. After a quarrel with his family he changed his allegiance and joined Mennes’ Scouts “with the express purpose of giving a few of his Greytown friends away.” Apart from serving in the Standerton district, he did what he promised and accused 14 prominent farmers in the Umvoti district, including his father and five other Nels, of harbouring and communicating with the Boers, stealing government cattle, colluding with Chief Gayede, and talking seditiously. The fact that Jan Nel testified against his own father marred his statement, at least in the books of Attorney-General Henry Bale and the clerk of the peace in Greytown, Charles Tatham. Despite these reservations against his testimony, the intelligence he provided was used to remove a large number of Afrikaners from Umvoti county to Pietermaritzburg.²⁷

Worse was to follow for Jan Nel. He lost his property and was no longer on a good footing with his relations due to his loyalist leanings. As a result he applied for the post of Dutch and Zulu interpreter. In hoping to advance his prospects he approached FS Tatham requesting him to use his influence in the matter. Tatham wrote to both the colonial secretary and John Henry Brand de Villiers, the registrar of the Natal Supreme Court, singing the virtues and loyalty of Nel.²⁸ This did not seem to have helped as no record of appointment for Nel could be found.

A small number of Natal Afrikaners also served the armed forces in non-combat capacities. J Theunissen served as a conductor in the Natal Transport Unit and for that he was awarded the Queen’s South African medal.²⁹ Donald Mackenzie, despite his name, was an Afrikaner who could not speak a word of English. His lack of English language skills did, however, not prevent him from finding a position with the British military as an ambulance conductor.³⁰ PWC Jordaan of Dundee,

22. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LP de Jager, 6.1.1903.

23. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date

24. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by FW Prinsloo, 20.11.1900.

25. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MPCs de Jager on behalf of SHF de Jager, 2.10.1900.

26. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 14.8.1901.

27. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Documents related to the statements made by TJ (Jan) Nel, 12.7.1901-2.10.1901.

28. PAR, CSO 1714: Letter from TJ Nel relative to his employment in the Natal civil service, 3.7.1902.3.-10.1902.

29. PAR, GH 526: Special circular with names of transport conductors to be awarded the Queen’s medal, 20.6.1906.

30. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 27.11.1900.

rendered services from 25 September 1900 for the British Army. During his treason trial this did not count for much and on 21 August 1901 he was sentenced to four months in prison. His father, GJ, was commended by several Britishers for the assistance he rendered to them in terms of supplying food and clothing while they were fleeing Dundee after the Battle of Talana. He too was found guilty of treason.³¹

Two Natal Afrikaners found a niche for themselves in the intelligence services of the British Army. The Dutch inspector of schools, JH Kleinschmidt, enlisted with only a couple of hours notice and was appointed as the Dutch interpreter to General Buller. He only informed the superintendent of education, R Russell, once he had arrived at Frere Camp on 8 December 1899. Kleinschmidt clearly revelled in this new role, described the pay as generous, and informed his superior that he intended to follow Buller through the campaign and would, if he “found any trophies worth collecting”, keep them for Russell. As an initial task Kleinschmidt was handed a “long rigmarole of lies from president Steyn” to deal with.³² Unfortunately for Kleinschmidt his enthusiasm did not match his staying power and his health failed. Finding a replacement for him did not prove a problem. The 26-year-old John Henry Brand de Villiers, originally from the OFS, who had become a naturalised British subject after living in Natal for two years,³³ asked the Natal Government if he could vacate his civil service position to apply for Kleinschmidt’s post. Unfortunately for De Villiers another eager candidate had already filled the position.³⁴ The loyalty of De Villiers to his new country did however pay off and after serving as a Dutch interpreter for the Special Court,³⁵ a position he had to resign from for health reasons,³⁶ he was promoted to the position of registrar of the supreme court in May 1902.³⁷

Apart from his work at the front, JH Kleinschmidt also acted as a secret agent. Under the guise of inspecting the teaching of Dutch in the government school in Greytown, he investigated the matter of disloyalty amongst the local Afrikaners.³⁸ The other Natal Afrikaner who worked for the intelligence department was Alan Hershensohn, the son of the editor of the *De Natal Afrikaner*. It is doubtful if Hershensohn’s work carried much weight or was even taken seriously. Like a typical amateur spy he referred to the existence of secret societies, numerous spies that operated in both

31. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Letter J Anderson to Attorney-General H Bale, 20.7.1901.

32. PAR, PM 109: Letter JH Kleinschmidt to Superintendent R Russell, 8.12.1899.

33. PAR, Archives of the Executive Council (hereafter EC) 26: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 17.3.1900.

34. PAR, CSO 1644: Minute paper JHB de Villiers asking for permission to apply for post of interpreter at military headquarters, 6.4.1900.

35. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Minute paper regarding the payment of salaries to Griffin and De Villiers, 12.9.1900-17.9.1900.

36. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Application for extension of leave by JHB de Villiers, 17.5.1901-25.5.1901.

37. PAR, CSO 1704: Minute paper transfer of JHB de Villiers from staff of colonial secretary to Supreme Court, 1.5.1902.

38. PAR, GH 549: Letter JH Kleinschmidt to Inspector CH George, 30.11.1899.

Durban and Pietermaritzburg and plots to “poison the local garrison.” Little attention was paid to his revelations by both the civil and military authorities.³⁹

Overall only a small number of Afrikaners joined the Natal Volunteer Regiments and other British/Colonial units. Of the 435 members on the muster roll of the Natal Carbineers, only five were Afrikaners - four Meyers and a De Haas, while the 221 strong Natal Mounted Rifles only had four Afrikaners in its ranks.⁴⁰ Of the 2 208 Natal men involved in the various volunteer regiments during the war, excluding the UMR, no more than an estimated 20 were Afrikaners.⁴¹

The only other armed grouping which contained a reasonable number of Afrikaners were the rifle associations. Although most Afrikaners resigned from these associations when members were forced to take the oath of allegiance, some retained their membership. In terms of Law No. 19 of 1862, and according to the rules of rifle associations, members could be called out for duty in their respective magisterial districts by the local magistrate.⁴² Thus, when the Camperdown and District Rifle Association was called out for duty by the local magistrate in November 1899, two Afrikaners, H and WC Meyer, reported for duty. A third, EW Meyer, was a volunteer on service with the Natal Carbineers. The Meyers remained active in the rifle association until the end of the war.⁴³ Camperdown was no exception as a number of Afrikaners in other areas also remained active members. JA Maré, JA de Waal and AP, CF and C Keyter continued as members of the Kranskop Rifle Association,⁴⁴ while GF van Rooyen who was a member of the Newcastle Rifle Association⁴⁵ resigned leaving only LP de Jager as a member.⁴⁶ Other Rifle Associations such as Tsekana, Seven Oaks, Umvoti, Riet Vlei, Melmoth, Charlestown, Ingogo, Elandslaagte, Highlands and Indowane collectively had but 24 Afrikaner members.⁴⁷ The Rifle Association with the largest number of Afrikaner members was Weenen. At its annual shooting competition in August 1900, 12 Afrikaner men and 13 Afrikaner women participated in proceedings.⁴⁸ This Afrikaner involvement did not last long and by April 1903 only five out of 51 members of the Weenen Rifle Association were Afrikaners.⁴⁹ All in all by June 1902 no more than a maximum of 40 Afrikaners counted amongst the

39. PAR, MJPW 117: Intelligence reports by A Hershensohn, 25.5.1901.

40. PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster rolls for the Natal Carbineers and the Natal Mounted Rifles, 30.6.1902.

41. PAR, NDR 2/3: Volunteer corps muster rolls, 30.6.1902.

42. PAR, CSO 1684: Circular to various rifle associations from Governor W Hely-Hutchinson and Prime Minister AH Hime, 20.11.1899.

43. PAR, CSO 1684: Muster roll Camperdown and District Rifle Association, 11-12.1899.

44. *Natal Witness*, 21.5.1900; PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster Roll Kranskop Rifle Association, 31.12.1903.

45. *Natal Witness*, 8.5.1902. GF van Rooyen was a clerk in the local court and was after the war rewarded for his loyalty by being made the field-cornet. PAR, CSO 1730: Appointment of GF van Rooyen as field-cornet, 14.4.1903-16.4.1903.

46. PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster Roll Newcastle Rifle Association, 31.12.1903.

47. PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster Roll's for rifle associations in Natal, 31.12.1902.

48. *Natal Witness*, 16.8.1900.

49. PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster Roll Weenen Rifle Association, 16.4.1903.

2 292 Rifle Association members.⁵⁰

The decline in membership can be explained by the anti-Afrikaner sentiment of the time and can be illustrated by the following case. Two of the Afrikaners who participated in the Weenen Rifle Association activities, JIJ Pieterse senior and junior, were originally from the farm Danskraal near Ladysmith. They were removed by the military to Weenen during the Siege of Ladysmith. JIJ Pieterse (snr) was eventually charged with high treason but acquitted. When the Pieterse returned to their farm in 1901 they wanted to join the Ladysmith Rifle Association and consequently signed the required oath of allegiance. The Ladysmith Rifle Association, however, was not as accommodating as their Weenen counterpart and was reluctant to issue the Pieterse with rifles. Instead, they chose to reject the verdict of the court and continued to believe that the Pieterse had assisted the Boers during the Siege of Ladysmith. Only a lengthy correspondence process managed to sway the Ladysmith Rifle Association to assign rifles to the loyal Pieterse.⁵¹

Membership of the town guard which was introduced in early 1902, was a stark contrast to the rifle associations. All white male British subjects over the age of 18 were compelled to become members. This military creation was even less successful in attracting Afrikaner members than the rifle associations largely due to the fact that most Afrikaners resided on farms outside the towns. Of the hundreds of men in the Dundee Town Guard, for example, only five were Afrikaners: JM and H Slabbert, AHO Kruger and J and Stephen Liebenberg. The name of Barend Liebenberg also appears on the list, but as a non-combatant.⁵² In Ladysmith, Ds HF Schoon refused to join the activities of the town guard. He voiced two concerns: firstly, that he was required to take the oath of allegiance again, even though he had done it 20 years earlier, and: secondly, that he might be forced to take up arms against his own people. He was consequently banned to Weenen by Lt-Col GH Sim.⁵³

Other Natal Afrikaners supported the war effort by more indirect means. In Proviso B assisted wounded and sick members of the Melmoth Field Force. TR Ortlepp gave his house to the Red Cross while Ortlepp and DC (Vaal Dirk) Uys (MLC) allowed them to use the facilities offered by the local DRC. AF Ortlepp in turn provided the patients with smoking filters,⁵⁴ Piet Uys provided "splendid grapes",⁵⁵ Vaal Dirk Uys also a large quantity of grapes, Mrs Britz and DC Uys chicken broth, JWF Ortlepp custard, custard pudding, preserves and magazines, and Mrs Pretorius a daily

50. PAR, NDR 2/3: Muster Rolls's for rifle associations in Natal, 31.12.1902.

51. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Correspondence pertaining to the applications by JIJ Pieterse snr and jnr to become fully fledged members of the Ladysmith Rifle Association, 7.6.1901-18.7.1901.

52. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/1: List of members Dundee Town Guard, 1902.

53. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 24.1.1902, 8.3.1902 and 17.3.1902, pp.762, 787, 789.

54. *Natal Witness*, 28.2.1900.

55. *Natal Witness*, 9.3.1900.

supply of milk.⁵⁶ At Dundee, JH Ries of Langfontein, who was eventually convicted as a rebel, sent milk and eggs to the British hospital,⁵⁷ while in the Weenen district some Afrikaners were prepared to contribute financially to the British victims of war. After the Relief of Mafeking a collection list with the intimidating caption, “Heroes All! Pay! pay!! pay!!!” circulated in the area. Of the 62 people who contributed 15 were Afrikaners. All of them contributed 5 shillings each, except for JC Buys, Frik Buys, WJ Basson and Ds AM Murray who contributed more.⁵⁸ Murray himself would in time suffer a personal loss when his son, who fought on the British side, was killed in action less than two weeks before the end of the war. The fact that his son was a loyalist apparently made the death even more painful.⁵⁹

Some of the those who supported the Imperial war effort, like Mrs A Otto who contributed to the Maritzburg Association for Aid to Sick and Wounded,⁶⁰ were dyed in the wool loyalists. Others, including some of those mentioned above, were definitely not loyalists but cared enough for victims of the war to make some contribution to improve their lot. Deeds such as these contributed to blurring the boundaries between loyalists and non-loyalists and allowed Afrikaners to adopt multiple personalities during the war.

7.2 Loyalist experiences at the hands of the Boers

When the Boers made the decision, towards the end of November 1899, to commandeer the white residents of the occupied Klip River county, immense pressure was placed on the local Afrikaners to join the Republican cause. But, not all capitulated. In Newcastle the continuous refusal of JC Uys and CR (Coenraad) Cronjé⁶¹ to join the Boer forces resulted in them being sent to Pretoria for imprisonment. Uys was later released and allowed to travel via Lourenco Marques to Durban. As he was well acquainted with the residents of Newcastle and with the geography of the area, Magistrate JO Jackson, who was also arrested and deported via Lourenco Marques to Durban, highly recommended Uys for employment in the military.⁶²

In the Dundee district the experiences of the loyalists mirrored that of Cronjé and Uys. The problems for the loyalists of the specific district also started with the decision to commandeer all white men still residing in the area. The first meeting called to enact this took place at Wasbank on 20 November 1899. Several Afrikaner men of the Dundee area, amongst them the Strydom brothers,

56. *Natal Witness*, 22.3.1900.

57. PAR, AGO I/7/17: Regina vs JH Ries, p.355; *Natal Witness*, 15.2.1901.

58. PAR, 1/Wen 3/2/3: Subscription list circulated in the Weenen district, 22.5.1900-28.5.1900.

59. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter M Schoon to HF Schoon, 21.5.1902.

60. *Natal Witness*, 9.2.1900.

61. Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

62. PAR, MJPW 72: Recommendation to Prime Minister AH Hime by Magistrate JO Jackson, Newcastle, regarding JC Uys, 21.12.1899; *Natal Witness*, 15.12.1899; PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JC Uys,

Wynand, Gerhardus, John, Paul, Theunis and Frederick, did not go.⁶³ Not even threats that they would be fined £37.10 each or be driven across the Tugela River could convince them to attend. In an attempt to gain clarity about their situation Wynand and John Strydom later visited the laager at Helpmekaar. Their visit culminated in a row with General JJ Ferreira, with the latter threatening to confiscate all their property if they did not cross the Tugela within seven days. The meeting ended without any firm decision and the Strydoms received a pass from Commandant Engelbrecht to visit Dr Dalzell at Pomeroy.⁶⁴

The visit to Dalzell was but an excuse to communicate with the UMR across the Tugela. In a letter to the officer commanding the spokesman for the Strydom clan, WW (Wynand) Strydom, made it clear that they refused to be commandeered. According to Strydom, the disloyal Afrikaners in the area were the instigators behind their eviction, and he feared that they could be attacked as they were heading towards the Tugela. He therefore requested the assistance of the UMR or the Natal Government to negotiate their safe passage with General Piet Joubert. A defiant Strydom, in a marginal note, informed the officer commanding that “I will try and bring ten sacks of potatoes as a present for your men.”⁶⁵ The loyalty of the Strydoms was applauded by Dalzell who described it as “...magnificent! These men are surrounded by the enemy and disloyal boers.”⁶⁶

Not long after the return to their farm two local Afrikaners by the surname of Vermaak, visited the Strydoms urging them to co-operate with the Transvalers by providing information regarding stock and property belonging to loyalists. The Vermaaks argued that such a step would remove any suspicion of their loyalist activities. The Strydoms were also informed that a meeting of Natal Afrikaners was planned at Dundee for 29 November 1899 to appoint officials for the envisaged Natal Commando. The meeting was to be held under the chairmanship of Justice of the Peace DP Wolfaardt at Paddafontein between Dundee and Helpmekaar. Upon hearing that the meeting had been moved to Dundee some of the Strydom brothers returned home while others held a family meeting at Blesboklaagte outside Dundee. Here they decided to stick together even if it meant that expulsion across the Tugela River as per the proclamation issued by General Piet Joubert.⁶⁷ Roughly

16.3.1901.

63. Although great emphasis will be placed in this chapter on the experiences of the loyalist Strydoms, other loyal Natal Afrikaners resident in the occupied region also had to constantly endure commandeering orders. See, PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AA Jansen, 19.3.1901; PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by WS Naude, 9.12.1901; PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AL Jansen, 24.10.1900.

64. PRO, CO 179/212: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2907: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JJ Strydom, 10.10.1900; CSO 2907: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by GC Strydom, 13.2.1901.

65. PAR, CSO 1632: Letter WW Strydom to commanding officer UMR, 25.11.1899.

66. *Ibid.*

67. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.3.1900, pp.343-347, Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason containing the Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 10.6.1901; PAR, GH 547: Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; *De*

100 other people were likewise rumoured to be willing to cross the Tugela rather than join the Boers.⁶⁸

Other loyalists like AW Illing, his father-in-law DC (Dirk) Pieters of Zwartwater near Dundee, and CL and AJ Pieters, as well as members of the Jansen and Gregory families, attended the mentioned meeting.⁶⁹ The issue of allegiance to the crown was soon raised. Dirk Pieters requested to remain neutral but was told by Wolfaardt (JP) "...that if any Afrikaner is so rotten as not to take up arms, he must be plundered and persecuted by any burger who comes across him." Wolfaardt took the debate one step further and declared that an oath of allegiance to Britain made by local Afrikaners, was null and void since the British had vacated the area. This was disputed by a AL Jansen who made it clear that such an oath could not be broken. Jansen warned all those present against joining the Boers.⁷⁰ The Dundee townlands manager, Barend Liebenberg, also did not mince his words and made it clear that he was a British subject and intended to remain one. His vociferous manner apparently made him a marked man from then on.⁷¹ Realising that they could be conscripted, the Pieterses and Illing asked for passes to cross the Tugela. This was declined and only passes to cross into the besieged Ladysmith were offered. The Pieterses and the Jansens thereafter left the meeting.⁷²

In due course the loyalists were informed that it had been decided at the Dundee meeting that all the Natal Afrikaners who did not want to take up arms on the behalf of the Republic would have to move south of the Tugela within seven days. Passes for this could be obtained from the justice of the peace in Dundee. To clarify their position, three of the Strydom brothers, and two English Natalians, consulted with General JJ Ferreira at Helpmekaar who informed them that they would have to be ready to move within four days. In the meantime the justice of the peace was swamped with requests for passes.⁷³ It seems as if the large number of white inhabitants who wanted to escape Republican occupation offended the Boer administration, and Ferreira, as a result informed the Strydoms that he had decided against issuing passes as this would amount to a breach of security. He was, however, willing to allow them to go to Ladysmith.

Only in one case, that of Mrs Liebenberg and her children, was a pass issued by the Boers to Natal Afrikaners to cross the Tugela into British held territory. When the loyalist family group reached

Volksstem, 11.11.1899. See Appendix B for the complete text of the proclamation.

68. PRO, CO 179/212: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2589: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

69. PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Pieters, 6.10.1900.

70. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Dr Dalzell to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.8.1900.

71. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Diary of PG Hill, no date, p.7.

72. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900.

73. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

Helpmekaar with the intention of crossing by wagon via Pomeroy they were stopped and kept prisoner in the laager for three days. Guards surrounded the wagon and the Liebenbergs were told that they would be shot if they tried to leave. The family was then returned to Dundee where the eldest Liebenberg boy was imprisoned for nine days, apparently because he was a loyal British subject. On 2 January 1900 the Liebenberg family was sent to Pretoria and then on to Durban via Lourenco Marques. Her husband Barend was previously also removed to Pretoria. He arrived in Durban on 4 May 1900, after being released by the Transvaal authorities.⁷⁴

The rest of the Natal Afrikaner loyalists were trapped in Boer occupied territory and exposed to the mercy of the invaders. On 5 December 1899, three of the Strydom brothers, John, Paul and Wynand, were arrested and brought before General Ferreira and his staff at Helpmekaar. They were threatened and given the choice of taking up arms or be driven into the besieged Ladysmith. They opted for the latter. Unsure of how to deal with such defiance, Ferreira allowed the Strydoms to proceed home. Within an hour of their return home a group of Boers arrived to confiscate their arms and ammunition. The posse also remained to guard the house. The following day, 6 December 1899, Ferreira, on three occasions, sent a messenger to enquire if the three Strydoms had changed their minds. When this did not happen Ferreira lost his patience and 50 Boers arrived and took the three Strydoms to Helpmekaar, from where they were ordered to proceed to Blesboklaagte. The fact that the loyalist brothers complained of having left behind most of their furniture, 100 pockets of potatoes, a number of horses and some cattle, did not impress the Boer officers. As a favour Wynand Strydom was allowed to send back one of his African labourers on horseback, to remain with their property. The labourer, however, did not reach the farm as a local Afrikaner, CJ Vermaak, captured him and took him on as an agterryer, while another local Afrikaner, J Kemp, took the horse.

En route three messengers arrived and informed the group of loyalists that Ferreira had changed his mind and that they were to proceed to Dundee. Dismayed the three Strydoms left their families at Blesboklaagte. Accompanied by their other three brothers and their brother-in-law, Wade, they proceeded to the Dundee Police Station. From then on the three ringleaders, Wynand, John and Paul, were subjected to the disjointed Boer administration where decisions were taken as situations arose. The threesome was locked up for a day and a night without food. Warden Nel then ordered their wives to visit them because they were to be transferred to Pretoria. The brothers insisted on seeing the justice of the peace first. The justice of the peace found the situation puzzling since he had not received orders to imprison the men. He therefore ordered that they be fed, their stock handed over to their brother Gert, and that their families be allowed to reside in Dundee. Although the brothers were initially removed to the police barracks on his orders, they were taken back to the prison by the warden and Field-Cornet Meyer, apparently "on instructions from Pretoria." The Strydoms were

74. PRO, CO 179/211: Letter B Liebenberg to PUS, 24.4.1900; PAR, CSO 1645: Letters B Liebenberg to PUS, 24.4.1900 and 5.5.1900; PAR, CSO 2889: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by B Liebenberg, 28.11.1900.

soon joined by nine other loyalist prisoners. After six days of imprisonment they were brought before the justice of the peace who asked if they would take an oath of neutrality if he placed them under house arrest. They agreed and were consequently granted permission to join their families in Dundee. Circumstances changed for the trio with the arrival of Wolmarans (JP) at the end of December 1899. On meeting Wynand Strydom and the mother of the clan he lifted the house arrest. Wolmarans, on investigation of the charges against the brothers, declared that under Transvaal law no one had the right to commandeer or interfere with British subjects. The magistrate then allowed the brothers to proceed to the farm Helena with their stock, advising them to remain quiet so as not to offend the Boers. On being informed that the horses and potatoes belonging to the Strydoms had been confiscated without the issue of receipts, Wolmarans wrote to General Ferreira asking for receipts to be issued. The general bluntly refused.⁷⁵

The rudimentary Boer administration in the Klip River county, with the assistance of disloyal Afrikaners, started to turn the screws on the loyalists from December 1899 onwards. One Kirkness, a member of the DRC in Ladysmith, complained that the Boers wanted to arrest him on three occasions on suspicion of being a spy.⁷⁶ AL Jansen and JJ Kemp were threatened with being sent either to Pretoria, Colesberg or Ladysmith, or forced south of the Tugela River.⁷⁷ A large number of loyalists, including B Liebenberg, JA Naude, J Craig, AJ Nienaber, Magistrate P Hugo and about 160 others were arrested and sent to prison in Pretoria.⁷⁸ After a short stay in the capital of the Transvaal, some of the Natal prisoners were returned to Ladysmith and forced into Intombi Camp, firstly because the officials in Pretoria could not cope with the large number of inmates and possibly also as a means to flood the besieged town with people which in turn would deplete the British resources and hasten the towns surrender.⁷⁹ Other Natalians, like JE Northern and AJ Oldacre, were later allowed to proceed to Durban via Delagoa Bay. On arrival in Durban they wasted no time in informing the authorities of the identity of the Natal rebels. Oldacre could also reveal that the Jansens, Pieterses, Illing, CM Meyer of Gladstone, Dundee and Cornelius Meyer of Tafelberg, Dundee had remained loyal.⁸⁰ While this handful of Klip River county Afrikaners managed to remain true, the treatment they suffered convinced a man like JJ Kemp of Zuurfontein, Dundee, to abandon his intention of not taking up arms. He therefore, in middle December, on the insistence of

75. PRO, CO 179/212: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2589: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900.

76. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 4.3.1900, pp.195-197.

77. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 12.7.1900, pp.397-398, letter AL Jansen to HF Schoon, 9.7.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

78. *Natal Witness*, 30.10.1900; PAR, CSO 1643: Report by Magistrate P Hugo regarding events since the British withdrawal from Dundee up to his arrival at Intombi Camp, 19.3.1900; PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AJ Nienaber, 9.2.1901; PAR, AGO I/7/40: Report from intelligence department regarding disloyal Natal Afrikaners, 9.12.1899; PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JA Naude, 11.12.1901.

79. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 8.11.1900, p.61; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 5.12.1899.

80. PAR, GH 556: Affidavit by JE Northern made to Captain Percy Scott, 31.1.1900; Affidavit by AJ Oldacre made to HR Bousfield, 22.1.1900.

his wife, proceeded to Helpmekaar to collect his rifle and join the Natal Commando.⁸¹

In the meantime the persecution of the loyalist in the Dundee district continued. On 21 December 1899, Illing, AJ and CL Pieters were arrested at Blesboklaagte by Gideon Kok and a group of men. They were taken to the laager at Helpmekaar and handed over to Dirk Uys who informed them that they had been arrested because they refused to take up arms on the Boer side.⁸² The following morning Illing, AJ and CL Pieters, James Craig, Ridley, and the four Strydom brothers Gerhardus, Theunis, John and Frederick, were brought before a court martial chaired by General JJ Ferreira and charged for being British subjects who refused to take up arms. No evidence was presented against them and they were, after their appearance, locked up again. The next day they were released with the warning that they were to report at Helpmekaar on 27 December. On the return date the men were read a telegram, apparently from President Paul Kruger, stating that all Natal Afrikaners needed to be commandeered at once or pay a fine ranging from £1 to £300. The nine loyalists informed the court martial, which included three Natal rebels, PJ van Rensburg as well as Dirk and Koos Uys, that Kruger had no authority over them and that they refused to pay either the fine or take up arms. Some of those in the crowd of onlookers now warned the group that they would be shot. This did not happen and the group was allowed to return home. Two days later Pieter Nel jnr, a Natal rebel accompanied by a Transvaler, came to the farm Zwartwater to collect £15 from DC, AJ and CL Pieters apiece as well as from James Craig and Illing. Only DC Pieters paid up; the rest refused wanting to know what the money was for.⁸³ The following day Craig, Illing AJ and CL Pieters proceeded to the laager at Helpmekaar to enquire about the £15 demanded from them. In no uncertain terms they were informed that it was not a fine but money commandeered from them. Seeing no way out they all decided to pay. This extortion bought the loyalists three weeks of grace.

The treatment of the loyalists did not have the approval of the vast majority of rebels stationed at Helpmekaar. In a letter to General JJ Ferreira, the 96 Afrikaners signatories pointed out that they were informed at the meeting held at Dundee on 29 October 1899 that only two options existed - you either supported the Boers or you were against them. Those who opted for the second choice were to be expelled across the Tugela within seven days. What concerned the signatories was that a third option seemed to exist, namely that of remaining neutral. They complained that while they were on commando the neutral Afrikaners were allowed to move around freely, even though every now and again some of them were arrested only to be released after paying a small fine. They felt that if this option was allowed some of the men presently in the laager might also choose to become neutral since it was a safer and more comfortable option. The signatories further argued that should they fall

81. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

82. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900.

83. It seems as if on 29 December 1899, £15 were commandeered from all loyalist in the area. See, PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AL Jansen, 24.10.1900; PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Pieters, 6.10.1900.

into the hands of the British they could be executed for taking up arms because the crown would point out that some men had managed to remain neutral. They therefore called on the Transvaal authorities to, for the sake of the protection of the rebels, implement their earlier decision and bring everybody into the fold.⁸⁴

It seems as if the Transvaal authorities paid some attention to the argument that if all Natal Afrikaners were to take up arms, the British would have to treat them all the same. Therefore, on 22 January 1900, the Pieterses, Illing and Craig were again commandeered by a Natal rebel, JS Swart, this time on the orders of Commandant T Steenkamp and Field-Cornet PJ van Rensburg. The loyalists had to report at Helpmekaar on 27 January 1900, armed and with provisions for eight days.⁸⁵ The Pieterses and Illing again refused and proceeded to seek an audience with the newly appointed Commandant Steenkamp who proved to be much more accommodating than Ferreira. He listened to the men, questioned them, took depositions from them and informed them that he would refer the matter to General Piet Joubert. It is uncertain what became of the report but matters did change after General Joubert's visit to Helpmekaar on 10 February 1900 because five days later two rebels, CM Vermaak and Fritz Havemann, informed the loyalists that they had to remain within the boundaries of their farms or suffer the consequences if they were found outside the stated parameters. Rumours later indicated this meant that they would be shot. Most of the loyalists were, apart from Ridley and Craig who were sent to Pretoria, thereafter left alone.⁸⁶

At the beginning of February 1900, the Strydom brothers were once again commandeered by a Natal rebel, J Schalkwyk. The Strydoms threw Schalkwyk from their house in a violent manner. When rumours started to circulate that they would be punished for this Wynand consulted Wolmarans (JP). The latter informed them that they had acted incorrectly and that they should have rather written a letter stating their position. Still fearing the repercussions of their deed, the brothers hid in the veldt for three days. A letter from Commandant Steenkamp eventually reached the men informing them that he wanted to speak to them. The meeting took place in fairly amicable circumstances but the brothers were informed that if they were found guilty of assaulting Schalkwyk they would be shot. Steenkamp then took statements from them regarding the treatment they received since he had been given power by General Piet Joubert to judge such cases. The statements inevitably lead to an argument about loyalty. Gert Strydom stated that he refused to join the Boers since that would be tantamount to being a rebel. The argument about loyalty raged for a while with Steenkamp insisting

84. NAR, KG 819: Letter to General JJ Ferreira signed by 96 Natal Afrikaners, 8.1.1900; PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CL Pieters, 6.10.1900; PAR, CSO 2872: Invasion Losses Commission Enquiry: Claim by J Craig, 9.10.1900.

85. PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Pieters, 6.10.1900.

86. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900; PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by HL Labuschagne, 5.10.1901; PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Pieters, 6.10.1900.

that the Strydoms's "unborn children's children" would curse them some day. Steenkamp then allowed the men to go home while he awaited orders from Joubert. Afterwards three Natal rebels informed the Strydoms that they could not, as was the case with other loyalists, leave the farm they were residing on, Helena.⁸⁷

By early May 1900 the position of the Strydom brothers had become precarious. Their loyalty meant that they were being imprisoned on a farm other than their own and were running low on food. Three of the brothers therefore proceeded to Glencoe to consult with General Lucas Meyer. Meyer's response was curt: the brothers could not expect the ZAR to feed disloyal people, but he was prepared to send them to Ladysmith where they would find both "food and Englishmen enough." Meyer ended the meeting by ordering the brothers to return to their residence and remain quiet. On 7 May 1900, as the Boer defences started to crumble, Commandant Steenkamp gave the Strydoms permission to return to their own farms⁸⁸ to await the arrival of Buller's Natal Army. This return sometimes proved to be unpleasant as JM Strydom, mother of the loyal Strydoms, testified. Her house was used as a stable and all the fruit trees were cut down. Similar sights awaited other loyalists who were absent from their properties.⁸⁹ JS, L and JH Combrink of Uithoek, Umsinga, all members of the UMR, and closely associated with the Strydoms on whose farm they resided, found that their property was looted by the Boers as a punitive measure.⁹⁰

The mistreatment of loyalist Natal Afrikaners was not restricted to the occupied areas north of the Tugela. Those to south of the Tugela suffered a similar fate, during the brief Boer occupation. Wessel Pretorius requested the commander of a 500-strong commando to be allowed to remove his family and property to his farm on the Little Tugela. The commander refused because he believed that Pretorius knew of their plans and positions and would inform the British thereof. As a result the distressed family and their possessions were forcefully removed to the laager. In the process a lot of the Pretorius' furniture was broken by the Boers who simply threw it onto the wagon. After residing in the laager for a short period of time Pretorius and his family were allowed to proceed to his father-in-law, John Oosthuysen's, farm near Harrismith. As a parting message Pretorius was informed that he would be brought back to join the commando.⁹¹

Despite the suffering loyal Natal Afrikaners had to endure at the hands of the Boers and Natal rebels it was not regarded in a serious light by a later president of the Special Court, AW Mason. He

87. PRO, CO 179/212: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2589: Statement by WW Strydom, 20.6.1900.

88. *Ibid.*

89. PAR, CSO 2907: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JM Strydom, 9.10.1900.

90. PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claims by JH and JS Combrink, 10.10.1900; Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by L Combrink, 6.10.1900.

91. PAR, GH 525: Statements taken by the Field Intelligence Department from Hiya, John, Jacob and Makanda, 12.1.1900.

preferred to play down their suffering when compared to that of English colonists. His verdict was that:

No instance, however, of any kind, was brought to our notice of personal hardship being inflicted upon a Dutch resident of the Dundee district declining to take up arms. One or two men lost a few pounds, or an ox or two, and some were detained for a short time in laager at Helpmekaar under custody, in the Newcastle district one or two men were sent into the Transvaal and thence to Delagoa Bay, and this happened with respect to the British inhabitants of Dundee some of whom, however, were sent into Ladysmith, and there endured the privations of the siege...while the loyal Dutch suffered little more than inconvenience, those of British nationality were in many cases treated with extreme harshness, some being confined to their farms, some removed therefrom, while others were deported to the Transvaal.⁹²

Scant wonder the loyalist *De Natal Afrikaner* reported in June 1901: "We who remained loyal since the outbreak of war, and who are still most heartily loyal, we who always contended that our Afrikaners may safely rely upon the sense of fair play of the better class of English Colonists as a guarantee for good treatment in the future, we are now compelled to admit that we were sadly mistaken in our belief."⁹³

7.3 Brother against brother - revenge against and reaction towards loyalists Natal Afrikaners by Natal rebels

As could be expected a serious rift developed between those Afrikaners who remained loyal to the crown, and those who chose to align themselves with the invading Republican forces. Vengeful attitudes towards loyalists by disloyal Natal Afrikaners did not take long to surface. HJ Strydom complained that he had been molested by someone for several nights in late September 1900 when the person threw stones at his house. In one case a stone broke a window and injured a family member.⁹⁴ The levels of anti-loyalists emotions also surfaced in the DRC. The day when Ds Bosman of the DRC in Newcastle preached at Judith, a church situated between Dundee and Helpmekaar, AL Jansen was informed that he was not welcome. In reaction Jansen sent a message to Bosman, requesting a visit from him. When this did not happen, Jansen did not become angry but professed a feeling of sadness for the local Afrikaners who were misled and ended up in jail. At the same time he stated that his eyes were opened to the behaviour of the members of his congregation.⁹⁵

92. PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason, in response to the application by Mrs JJ Webb to have her husband's sentence reduced, 10.6.1901.

93. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 18.6.1901.

94. PAR, Archives of the Umsinga magistrate (hereafter 1/UMS) 38: Letter HJ Strydom to Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, 28.9.1900; Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Sgt Salter, 28.9.1900.

95. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 12.7.1900, pp.397-398, letter from AL Jansen to HF Schoon, 9.7.1900. The process of barring Afrikaners who sided with the British from church activities became one of the features of post-war South Africa. See, AM Grundlingh, *Die hendsoppers en joiners...*, pp.314-336.

The real conflict between loyal and disloyal Afrikaners came to a head during the rebel trials which started in September 1900. In trial after trial the loyalists exacted revenge for their treatment at the hands of the occupiers and their fellow Natal Afrikaners by testifying against suspected rebels. The Strydom brothers testified against between 40 and 50 suspected rebels, including family members, whom they alleged were harder on them than the Transvalers.⁹⁶ Likewise Illing and the Pieters family became key witnesses in the rebel trails, testifying against a large numbers of rebels.⁹⁷ Other loyalists who also testified for the crown in the rebel trials included: Daniel Opperman of Newcastle against AJ Matthee,⁹⁸ MW Theunissen and Trooper Steyn of the UMR against AC, H and TC Vermaak⁹⁹ and Barend and Stephen Liebenberg against PJ, IJM and HG Jordaan.¹⁰⁰ Even rebels who had served their time, such as CFH Posselt and JCL Labuschagne, became loyalists and testified for the crown.¹⁰¹ In an extreme case Joseph Lombaard Odendaal Colling, who was serving with the Volunteer Composite Regiment (hereafter VCR), and who had once been arrested as a suspected rebel and had two brothers convicted as rebels, testified against BG Meyer.¹⁰²

Being a witness in the rebel trials also had a downside. Barend Liebenberg complained that he was “suffering through the Rebels” because his testimony as a witness in the Special Court had become a “permanent job”. Consequently his business suffered when he was called to testify in Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt and other places. Liebenberg, therefore complained that he was paid too little and submitted a claim for money lost while absent from his business. The Natal authorities did not entertain this claim and informed Liebenberg that he had actually been overpaid to the amount of 8/6.¹⁰³

Those on the wrong side of the evidence offered, and who sought revenge, each developed his own strategy. JC Vermaak, sentenced to two years imprisonment, decided to exact retribution against the Afrikaners who testified against him by publically humiliating and exposing them. In a letter to the *Natal Witness* he declared: “I wish through remedy of your respected paper my respectful and hearty thanks to convey to Messrs. F Leroux, JJ Muller, Aug. Jansen, JJS Maritz, Adrian Jansen and others

96. PRO, CO 179/212: Despatch C Tatham to Attorney-General H Bale, 20.6.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Testimonies of TJ and GC Strydom and CL Pieters against JC Vermaak, 24.9.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/35: Testimony of SL Strydom against JJ van Tonder, 26.11.1901.

97. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by AW Illing, 22.5.1900.

98. PAR, Archive of the Newcastle magistrate (hereafter 1/NEW) 1/1/2/1: Rex vs WJ Matthee in the special magistrates court, 8.1.1901.

99. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Rex vs AC, H and TC Vermaak, pp.950-952.

100. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Rex vs PJ, IJM and HG Jordaan, pp.1140-1144.

101. PAR, AGO I/8/83: Application by CFH Posselt and JCL Labuschagne for increased witnesses expenses, 28.10.1901; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 15.6.1901, p.508.

102. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Testimony of JL Colling against BG Meyer, 15.1.1902; PAR, CSO 2872: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JL Colling, 6.9.1900.

103. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Correspondence surrounding the claim by B Liebenberg that he had been underpaid, 11.6.1901-12.6.1901.

for the evidence by them given in my case. Of the seven counts against me brought I have been found guilty of only two by the Judge and those are the two admitted by me...the Lord give me the strength that I forgive the witnesses who without reason have persecuted me good for evil return."¹⁰⁴

De Natal Afrikaner refused to publish this letter and responded by bemoaning the state some Natal Afrikaners found themselves in.¹⁰⁵

Other rebels followed a less sophisticated but equally harmful approach. This strategy consisted of the rebels attempting to, either implicate loyalists in rebellious activities, or discredit their applications for compensation before the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission. In sworn affidavits the following convicted rebels, WFJ Prinsloo, JCL Labuschagne, CFH Posselt (jnr), CFH Posselt (snr) and SL Strydom, implicated AW Illing in rebellious activities and in falsifying compensation claims. The men were in agreement that during the early part of the war Illing had continued "freely and willingly" with the operation of his store at Coalfields outside Dundee. As it was the only well-stocked store in the area, Illing had apparently not only received permission to increase his prices by 100%, but the members of the Natal Commando also purchased boots, tobacco, and liquor from him. Furthermore, in early November 1899, Illing presented a barrel of Cape Brandy to the Boer forces while delivering a rousing speech in which he referred to himself as one member of the Afrikaner nation who was glad that they were retaking the lands of their forefathers. Afterwards Illing managed to secure a permanent guard to prevent Boers from looting his store thereby enabling him to continue with the operation of his enterprise until almost all his stock was sold. He then handed it over to the Boer forces. Some rebels claimed that Illing was even seen carrying a rifle at times and that he had also visited the Boer wounded after the Battle of Talana. In the light of this the mentioned convicted rebels found it strange that Illing could claim £6 000 compensation.¹⁰⁶

Even the members of the Strydom family, despite their professed loyalty, were suspected of dealing with the enemy. Magistrate Thomas Maxwell of Umsinga informed the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission that Hendrik Strydom snr of Uithoek's claim that the Boers had taken some of his cattle, horses and 1 000 lbs of fodder, was false. According to Maxwell he had proof that Strydom had actually sold the horses and fodder to the Boers and that some of the cattle in the claim were with his son in Zululand.¹⁰⁷

Other loyalists faced similar accusations of disloyalty. Rebel Lucas Willem Meyer¹⁰⁸ stated that he

104. *Natal Witness*, 5.10.1900.

105. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 9.10.1900.

106. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Depositions by WFJ Prinsloo, JCL Labuschagne, CFH Posselt jnr and snr and SL Strydom, 3.6.1901, 18.6.1901, 24.6.1901, 27.6.1901.

107. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell to Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission, 13.11.1900.

108. LW Meyer was the son-in-law of the loyalist August Jansen. The latter, on two occasions, unsuccessfully petitioned for the release of Meyer. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Letter J Hershensohn to Attorney-General H Bale, 2.8.1900; PAR, CSO 1673: Petition by A Jansen to governor regarding the release of LW Meyer, 4.4.1901-15.4.1901.

saw Gert Strydom talking to some Transvaal burghers on the stoep of Nelson's store in Dundee during late October 1899, while in December 1899, he collected a Lee Metford rifle from Strydom which had been left with him by some Transvalers.¹⁰⁹ The elderly Dirk Pieters of Zwartwater was likewise accused of treason. According to GP Kemp, Pieters had taken two loads of furniture belonging to the magistrate of Umsinga to Zwartwater. When this was uncovered by the Transvaal authorities, the furniture was removed. SL Strydom elaborated that Dirk Pieters had also sold slaughter animals to the Boers to the value of £70. Loyalist Coenraad Pieters of Zwartwater was similarly accused by GP Kemp of voluntarily supplying the Boers with forage and two riding horses. SL Strydom added to the accusation by declaring that Pieters had, before the formation of the Natal Commando, participated in action at Lombard's Kop.¹¹⁰ The evidence against Coenraad Pieters mounted when JJ and GC van Tonder charged him with attending the commandeering meeting at Dundee and of nominating a CJ de Villiers as assistant field-cornet. The claims of disloyalty against Coenraad Pieters were rejected by the Natal authorities as pure fabrication.¹¹¹ A dimmer view was taken of the accusations against other loyalists and an enquiry was launched.

The task of evaluating the belated depositions by convicted rebels against loyalists fell on the shoulders of Charles Tatham. The point of departure for Tatham was a very pragmatic but also defensive one:

Few people who remained within the area occupied by the enemy - did not, in some way, become involved with the invaders - I have therefore, throughout my - connection with treason work, been careful as to whom I caused to be prosecuted and whilst it was hinted to me, when I was at Dundee, that several persons of Dutch birth or sentiment, whom I treated as witnesses for the crown were not untainted with treasonable acts - I preferred to accept them as witnesses after carefully considering the facts and circumstances connected with each case and from personal observation - as I personally visited at their farms, on my way to Dundee... I may say that so far I have seen no reason, or proof, that a mistake has been made...

To acknowledge that any of the accusations against the loyalists were true would therefore imply that the original investigative work done by Tatham was not up to standard. Tatham's verdict was therefore predictable. He regarded Gert Strydom as a very loyal man who served in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and was arrested by the Boers during the Anglo-Transvaal War of 1880-1881. During the Boer occupation of Klip River county he was arrested and endlessly harassed by the Boers who commandeered his fodder. Despite all of this he remained loyal. Tatham likewise regarded the wealthy Dirk Pieters and his son Coenraad, as extremely loyal. All the witnesses he consulted denied that the Pieterses traded with the Boers; it was merely a case of goods being commandeered from them. The trip to Lombard's Kop was conducted to reap some crops and collect cattle from a farm the family owned in the area.

109. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Deposition by LW Meyer, 26.6.1901.

110. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Depositions by GP Kemp and SL Strydom, 14.6.1901, 21.6.1901.

111. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs JJ and GC van Tonder, pp.826-827.

Tatham treated the evidence against AW Illing much more circumspectly. He admitted that Illing could have committed treasonable acts between 20 October and 15 December 1899. Illing confessed that he had traded with the Boers, saying that if he had not done so they would have taken the goods without paying. In December the Boers commandeered most of his stock and gave him two receipts. Since the Boers offered him no protection he had to move his stock and furniture to the house of his father-in-law. Tatham rejected the depositions by the Posselt's out of hand since they were "considered the biggest looters in the Biggarsberg." As far as Tatham was concerned if Illing did carry a firearm it was merely a "pass" to allow him to move about freely and trade for as long as possible. What Tatham could not hide was Illing's opportunistic exploitation of the war since he was being sued by a rebel, Edmund du Bois, for wool paid with an unexchangeable money order issued to him by the Transvaal Government. What was most important to Tatham was that Illing did not take up arms on behalf of the Boers.¹¹² Although the investigation by Tatham, which was in effect a review of his own work, smacked of double standards and a cover-up, it, for all intents and purposes took care of the serious accusations levelled at several leading loyalists.

As a result of Tatham's investigation the hatred and anger felt towards loyalists by some Natal Afrikaners deepened. This anger manifested itself either in physical violence or in writing and it remained ingrained in the memory of many of the Natal Afrikaners. An example of physical violence was that suffered by a member of the Strydom clan, SL (Fanie), who had joined the Boers. While imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg he, hoping to get a reduction on his two year prison sentence, decided to become a witness for the crown against Thomas Boshoff. When this came to light, his fellow inmates were furious. Some wanted him to be punished by the so-called "beesvel ry". Hereby the person being punished was propelled into the air by means of a blanket which was removed when the victim was in the air. Dirk Uys, however, came up with an alternative suggestion. Strydom had to be thrown into the prison swimming pool every morning. From then on, every morning, regardless of the weather, Strydom was thrown into the pool.¹¹³

According to JC Buys, Strydom and JG Wiggell were endlessly tormented by their fellow Afrikaner inmates for their willingness to testify against their kin. In an early form of Afrikaans he provides an insight into the events that took place in and around the cell of the two loyalists:

...was de laaste mens achter hem zoo als een klop kraaien om een uil, naderhand toen ons met ons kos de avond op sters ging toen heef het eers dol gegaan, de ouw Strydom ze bynaam is Wolvie, party zeg de wolf zal bijt de menschen moet op pas, perty zeg het is nu twee wolven een mannetjie en een wijvie...en party van de menschen heef hen altwee net zoo sleg geseg

112. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Report to Attorney-General H Bale by Charles Tatham on the accusations leveled against several loyalists, 4.9.1901.

113. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2554/2: Document entitled "Voorvalle en grappe in die tronk", 1941.

als wat moeglik was de joaler heef kom stil maak mar kun zijn lag niet houw, de menschen wil de een de ander ddod trap voor de twee Konings getuigen ze door om hen te zien...

This process repeated itself the next morning, and again when the two loyalists returned from having testified in Dundee. Apparently the men hoped to have their sentences lifted but in the words of Buys: “de jutsen heeft hem uit gelag.”¹¹⁴

The tormenting became too much for Strydom and in a letter to Attorney-General Henry Bale he complained that: “I cannot stay here with these people they are angry with me...I ask to be removed here today. I cannot stand this. Bad things will occur here. I am afraid to stay here any longer.” Strydom’s wish was granted and he was transferred to the Dundee Prison.¹¹⁵

The words written about loyalist Natal Afrikaners were to have a long lasting effect. HC McPeak, (formerly Zietsman, born Rheeder) who was a six-year-old girl during the war, in a semi-biographical sketch entitled *Vierkleur*, recalls the loyalty of Paul Bester: “You see the sun sinking into the redness - that is the blood of our people, all the men, women and children you have betrayed, Paul Bester. You are a traitor and their blood fills the sky.”¹¹⁶

Other Natal Afrikaners took to poetry to express their anger towards the loyalists. In pure doggerel, of which some is quoted below, Rebel JC Vermaak made his feelings clear:

De eerste hield zich neutraal
En sprak dus ook geen leugentaal
De laatste vol schynheiligheid
Die predikt leugens wyd en zyd

Om hunnen eigen kwaad te dek
Bleven zy toen in geen gebrek
Geveinsdheid aan den day to beg
Dan komen hunse zaaken rech¹¹⁷

Even greater anger, with striking religious overtones, was spewed by PRN Vermaak in a poem entitled, *Aan die verraaiier*,¹¹⁸ of which some lines are quoted below:

In watter gedaante sal Jy voor hom verskyn?

114. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, pp.20-21, 3-4.6.1901.

115. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Request by SL Strydom to be removed from the Pietermaritzburg Prison to Dundee, 6.6.1901-26.6.1901.

116. MP Tarr private collection: Biographical sketch by HC McPeak (formerly Zietsman, born Rheeder) entitled *Vierkleur*.

117. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 30.5.1901.

118. Foy Vermaak private collection: Poem entitled: *Aan Die Verraaiier* by PRN Vermaak, no date.

Sal jy waag om in Jou omhulsel van Satan ???
Verraaier, jy is die Judas, die vloek van Jou volk
Jou naam dit is Judas; Verraaier en duiwels gespuis;
Mismaakte gedierte en kruipende luis;
Verraaier, braaksel, skuim van die aarde.

Equally long lasting are the memories by the rebels and their descendants of the loyalist individuals. JC Vermaak, a convicted rebel, still wrote of Coenraad Cronjé in 1941 as a “verraaier en vloek der aarde.”¹¹⁹ The grandson of another Natal rebel was even able to recall 100 years later how Coenraad Cronjé was ostracised by the Newcastle Afrikaner community, forcing him to sell off his property and move to Weenen where he was not known.¹²⁰ Likewise the “disloyalties” of Coenraad Pieters are easily recalled.¹²¹ In this context the statement by FS Bishop, a loyalist resident of Helpmekaar, rings true: “...the Natal Boers never ceased to annoy me. Their behaviour generally towards me and other residents who remained was worse than that of the Transvaal Boers.”¹²²

Not all Natal Afrikaners guilty of high treason found it a bitter pill to co-exist alongside loyalists, many a time blood relatives. In fact in many cases the families of rebels who had lost everything were cared for by the Afrikaners of the Dundee district who remained loyal. These charitable deeds received high praise from the *Dundee Commercial Advertiser*¹²³ and also served to challenge the impression that all Afrikaners convicted of treason blamed their loyalist kin for their plight.

7.4 How much is our loyalty worth? The post-war relationship between Afrikaner loyalists and the Natal Government

When the Boers were driven from Northern Natal in June 1900 the loyalists could exact revenge. One of the prominent men to do so was Coenraad Cronjé. When released from prison by the British forces who had captured Pretoria, he provided the provost marshal with the names of 42 alleged rebels, “residents of Natal who have been assisting the enemy in the present war against the Empire.” Cronjé promised that if he “had the opportunity of visiting the districts in Northern Natal he would add many more names to the list.”¹²⁴ This was not the end of the involvement of Cronjé in identifying disloyal Afrikaners. After the war ended he and HE Kirby¹²⁵ were employed on the dockside in Durban, and at the Umbilo POW Camp, to identify Natal rebels from amongst the

119. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.27, 1941.

120. Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

121. Interview with Foy Vermaak conducted at Helpmekaar, 10.7.2000.

122. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Deposition by FS Bishop, 31.5.1900.

123. *Dundee Commercial Advertiser*, 12.3.1902.

124. NAR, PMO 5, 352/02: Letter CR Cronjé to provost marshal, 26.6.1900.

125. PAR, MJPW 97: Application by HE Kirby for a railway pass in connection with identifying rebels, 14.10.1902-28.10.1902.

returning POWs.¹²⁶

But the darlings amongst the loyalists were the Strydoms. Governor Walter Hely-Hutchinson sang their praises in a letter to Joseph Chamberlain and also recommended their cause to the Natal Government.¹²⁷ The government reacted with great speed and Wynand Strydom was rewarded for the “exemplary behaviour of yourself and members of your family” by being appointed as a justice of the peace.¹²⁸ The Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission was also instructed to pay immediate attention to the Strydoms case.¹²⁹

The good relations between the loyalist Strydoms and the Natal authorities soon soured. On 18 August 1900, Charles Tatham brought Gert Strydom to Attorney-General Henry Bale. After Strydom explained that they had suffered considerable economic losses at the hands of both the Boers and the British, Bale wrote to Prime Minister Hime suggesting that he hoped “it may be found possible for the government to reward them substantially.”¹³⁰ What the Strydoms were looking for, according to Dr Dalzell, was a grant of 500 acres in land or the equivalent in cash.¹³¹ The Natal Government found this unjustifiable and made it clear that no reward would be paid to any member of the Strydom family.¹³²

This verdict silenced the Strydoms for almost two years. Two months after the war ended they launched a second attempt to gain compensation for the loyal services rendered. The Strydoms approached FS Tatham, the clerk of the peace at Dundee during the war, to try and negotiate some economic benefit on their part. Tatham deemed it necessary to inform the Natal Government of “...all the facts...” about the most loyal family on the Biggarsberg and proceeded to explain that because they were regularly being called upon to testify in rebel trials the brothers were often absent from their farms. This caused stock losses and a neglect of their farming activities; indirect losses not covered by the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission. When the government held sales of looted stock, the Strydoms, because they were Afrikaners, were denied permits to attend the auctions and buy cattle at low prices. Adding to this dilemma the Strydom family was ostracised by the other Afrikaners in the area. To reward them for their loyalty and to allow them to improve their unbearable position Tatham called upon the government to grant “...allotments in the Piet Retief or Vryheid districts (the other side of Vryheid) so that they can be a long distance away from those that they gave evidence against.” As far as Tatham was concerned this was not a case of rewarding

126. Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

127. PRO, CO 179/212: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 20.6.1900.

128. PAR, CSO 2589: Letter PUS C Bird to WW Strydom, 13.8.1900.

129. PAR, CSO 2589: Correspondence PUS C Bird to secretary Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission, 7.7.1900.

130. PAR, CSO 2589: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 18.8.1900.

131. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Dr Dalzell to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.8.1900.

132. PAR, CSO 2589: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 18.8.1900.

loyalty but a grant for their services “...similar to the grants which were made to the late Richard King in the early days of this Colony, for his services at the time of the Boer Attack upon Capt. Smith.”¹³³ Tatham’s plea received strong support from Henry Wiltshire, the MLA for Dundee.¹³⁴

The appeal on the behalf of the Strydoms again fell on deaf ears and the Natal Government, possibly wary of setting a precedent, replied: “The ministers, while recognising the value of the services of the Strydom family during the war, regret that they do not see their way to extend to these gentlemen any further recognition of their services.”¹³⁵

Several months later the Strydom brothers saw the imminent visit of Joseph Chamberlain to Natal as an opportunity to revive their cause. Attorney-General CA de R Labistour approached the colonial secretary on their behalf requesting an interview with Chamberlain.¹³⁶ This was refused until the exact nature of their reasons for requesting an audience was made known. Consequently WW Strydom declared his reasons:

We believe that it is an Imperial matter, as the redress we seek is for loss and suffering incurred during an Imperial war, and under martial law. You are aware of my brothers and my own suffering during the war, on account of our loyalty, and that we gave the Government a large amount of assistance after the Boers were driven from Natal. We would like to know if something special could not be done in the way of a grant of land on easy terms, or otherwise, to help to recompense us for what we have gone through, and the losses we have incurred. Only one of us is an owner of land. On account of constant attendance of treason trials, we had no opportunity of attending stock sales, and buying stock at a reasonable price. We were the only Dutch British subjects in this district, who were removed from their farms, and imprisoned by the Boers. Even now, we are boycotted on account of our loyalty by Dutch residents here. I am afraid that we may be obliged to leave this district, as we shall be unable to procure land for our stock here. We also suffered heavy indirect losses in the form of loss stock etc., from being driven with our families from our farms for five months.¹³⁷

Despite the eloquently written letter the Strydoms had very little luck. Governor McCallum deemed the issue a matter for local government and not one for Chamberlain whose time could not allow him to interview individuals.¹³⁸ This, however, did not deter the Strydoms; instead they enquired if it would be possible, since it was a matter for the Natal Government, to submit a full report of their treatment and losses during the war.¹³⁹ The Government responded by pointing out that the compensation by the Invasion

133. PAR, CSO 1708: Letters FS Tatham to colonial secretary, 14.7.1902. and 16.7.1902.

134. PAR, CSO 1708: Letter H Wiltshire to Prime Minister AH Hime, 24.7.1902.

135. PAR, CSO 1708: Minute paper containing pleas on behalf of GC Strydom for recognition of services rendered during the war, 16.7.1902-2.8.1902.

136. PAR, CSO 1719: Letter Attorney-General CA de R Labistour to colonial secretary, 9.12.1902.

137. PAR, CSO 1719: Letter WW Strydom to Attorney-General CA de R Labistour, 19.12.1902.

138. PAR, CSO, 1719: Letter PUS to Attorney-General CA de R Labistour, 27.12.1902.

139. PAR, CSO, 1719: Letter WW Strydom to PUS, 14.2.1903.

Losses Enquiry Commission had, or would be paid to them in full, but that this compensation only related to direct losses since indirect losses could not be recognised. In concluding the principal-under-secretary attempted to put the morality of the loyal services rendered by the Strydoms in perspective: “This government highly appreciates the loyal attitude which you, and the other members of your family, maintained throughout the War, and regrets that attitude should have subjected you to ill treatment and annoyances at the hands of the enemy; but it would be impossible, nor do I think that you would desire, that the Government should put a monetary value upon what you suffered in this respect.”¹⁴⁰ This put an end to any hopes of gain the Strydoms harboured.

Other loyalist Natal Afrikaners were less public than the Strydoms about their suffering and allowed others to speak on their behalf. Dr Dalzell took it upon himself to inform the authorities that Adrian Jansen, (JP) and his brother August, remained loyal to the end. Dalzell considered the Jansens as loyal as the Strydoms, and believed that they had suffered much more in economic terms. In the wake of the Boer retreat from Northern Natal the advancing British military arrested every Afrikaner and confiscated large herds of livestock.¹⁴¹ While the Strydoms were released within days and their cattle returned the Jansens did not receive the same treatment. All livestock belonging to the Jansens was confiscated and August Jansen was banned to Pietermaritzburg under the suspicion of having committed treason. The sons of August; Arnold, Alexander and Johannes Stephanus, were furthermore, kept in prison awaiting trial.¹⁴² Dalzell’s letter prompted an immediate investigation into the charges against the Jansen boys. The clerk of the peace, Charles Tatham, felt very strongly that the Jansens were guilty of taking up arms, harbouring the Boers, and supplying them with food and shelter. He even produced 12 witnesses to testify against them.¹⁴³ In time, however, Dalzell was vindicated as the Jansens were found not guilty of all the charges of treason brought against them.¹⁴⁴ Acquittal did not necessarily mean that the loyal Afrikaners in question left the court unblemished. A point in case is Renier Dannhauser (JP) of Palmietfontein, Dannhauser. He was found not guilty of all treason charges in February 1902. The reason for this is best described by Judge Mason in his verdict: “...it appears while he endeavoured perhaps not to commit himself openly to the Boer side, on the other hand he was careful not to make any declaration of loyalty that might in any way offend the enemy. He was anxious, perhaps, to avoid being prosecuted for high treason, but at the same time he paraded as not unfriendly to the Boers.” He was not what the judge claimed to be an “actively loyal” subject.¹⁴⁵

140. PAR, CSO, 1719: Letter PUS to WW Strydom, 20.2.1903.

141. PAR, CSO 2912: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Wessels, 28.11.1900.

142. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Dr Dalzell to Attorney-General H Bale, 10.8.1900.

143. PRO, CO 179/213: Affidavit by C Tatham regarding the charges against AJ Jansen and JS Jansen, 21.8.1900.

144. PAR, AGO I/7/37: Rex vs AJ and JS Jansen, pp.338-340. The Jansens were not the only loyalists to suffer this fate. Countless were arrested on suspicion of treason but released without being charged. Others like, NJ Degenaar, CJ van Rooyen, IJ Meyer, WM Lotter and CJ van Rooyen, to name but a few, were arrested, tried and found innocent. See, PAR, AGO I/7/1-I/7/37: Judgements and sentences against Natal rebels, *circa* 1900-1902.

145. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Rex vs R Dannhauser, pp.801-805; *Natal Witness*, 27.2.1902.

Other Afrikaners who remained loyal were treated even worse by their own government. WS Naude of the Dundee district was removed to Greytown. Three months after his banishment he requested permission to return to his farm but was denied permission by the military authorities.¹⁴⁶ When further requests failed Naude took up Joshua Hershensohn's offer extended in the *De Natal Afrikaner*, to assist loyal Natal Afrikaners in their attempts to return to their farms. What irked Naude was that a fellow loyalist like August Jansen was given permission to return to Dundee, and disloyal Afrikaners and English Natalians allowed to remain on their farms, while he was refused permission and suffered economically for it. Hershensohn's good intentions to help fellow Afrikaners by corresponding directly with the prime minister proved to be just that. He failed to negotiate the successful return to their farms of both Naude and another loyal Afrikaner, JN Nel of Bronkhorstville near Ladysmith. In both instances the military failed to reveal their reasons for denying the farmers permission to return home.¹⁴⁷ Nel himself possibly offered the most plausible reason: "I know of cause, that being an Africander, or Dutchman, as we are designated by some, I am liable to be suspected of actively sympathising with the enemy."¹⁴⁸

FS Tatham reached a similar conclusion after he had taken the case of his loyalist client, CM Meyer of Gladstone, Dundee, to both the prime minister and the governor of Natal. To Tatham the case was simple: The British military allowed Meyer to stay on his farm until 7 November 1901, when he was told to leave his farms, 13 000 acres in total; 500 head of cattle and 4 000 sheep; and proceed with his family to Pietermaritzburg. Tatham's claim "that Mr Meyer's position is precisely the same as that of any loyal British subject..." fell on deaf ears and despite Tatham's position and his access to officials in high places, the military denied Meyer permission to return to his farm.¹⁴⁹

Although loyalty for the sake of loyalty was not enough for the Strydoms, for other Natal Afrikaners and their government this was sufficient. However, as Natal Afrikaners, they could never be loyal enough and some doubt continued to linger in the minds of non-Afrikaners as the following section will disclose.

7.5 Being a loyal Natal Afrikaner in the Natal civil service

Working as a loyal Afrikaner in the Natal civil service during the war was no easy task. On 17 October 1899, two Natal Afrikaners by the surname of Bester were arrested and brought before Magistrate P Hugo in Dundee because they and some Africans had looted an Indian store in

146. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/18: Letter WS Naude to Magistrate Gibson, 27.2.1901; Letter Magistrate Gibson to commandant, Dundee, 27.2.1901.

147. PAR, PM 21: Correspondence regarding the return of WS Naude, 26.4.1901-13.5.1901.

148. PAR, PM 24: Correspondence regarding the return of JH Nel, 28.10.1901-7.11.1901.

149. PAR, PM 20: Correspondence regarding the return of CM Meyer, 17.12.1900-7.2.1901.

Dannhauser. According to the Africans, Bester (snr) had given them permission to do so since the region was now part of the Transvaal. Hugo's handling of the case immediately opened him up to criticism based on his ethnic origin. The *Natal Witness* made no bones about it by stating "...there is bound to be a certain amount of suspicion in the minds of some people that a Magistrate of Dutch descent is prone to lean in his sympathies on the side of those of the same nationality as him." The newspaper suggested that for his own sake and for the sake of justice he should be transferred.¹⁵⁰ Despite these accusations Hugo, who had close relations with the Afrikaners in the Dundee district, was taken prisoner and sent to Pretoria by the Boers for being a loyalist.¹⁵¹

The highest ranking Natal Afrikaner in the civil service, Judge HG Boshoff, also found himself accused of disloyalty. A friend of his, Sergeant Barron, informed Attorney-General Henry Bale of conversations he had had with Boshoff. According to Barron, Boshoff had stated that he saw signs of providence on the side of the Boers. Boshoff apparently said that he felt the Boers ought to receive a portion of Natal, as Natal people had no right to meddle in affairs that did not concern them. Furthermore, whenever the Boers had a victory Boshoff would phone Barron, but he did not call when they suffered reverses. He was apparently very jubilant when the Boer forces moved as far south as Mooi River stating that it would not be long before they were in Pietermaritzburg. Barron concluded by stating: "I could never understand Mr Boshoff as at sometimes he seemed very anxious for the Boers to win and at others he seemed to be loyal." Henry Bale believed every word of the statement by Barron and confronted Boshoff on his apparent loyalty to "the enemies of the Queen" by pointing out that as a judge Boshoff was not allowed to take part in politics and his duty as a subject of the queen obliged him to refrain from expressing or even feeling sympathy with those who were in arms against the Empire. Bale reminded Boshoff: "As I was largely responsible for your appointment as a Judge in the Native High Court I trust that it will not be necessary for me to take further notice of your conduct, and that you will, as I have already advised you, by attention to your judicial duties by abstention from all political action and by your loyalty justify your occupancy of the high and honourable position which you hold through the favour of the Queen's Ministers in Natal." Boshoff professed to be hurt by the tone of Bale's letter, especially since he had earlier explained his side of the story to Bale. All he could do was once again deny that he was in sympathy with the Boers.¹⁵²

Boshoff and Hugo were not the only civil servants accused of disloyalty. Colonel EC Bethune, the officer commanding for Greytown, forwarded a telegram in cypher to Governor Hely-Hutchinson complaining that Magistrate HC Koch and Sub-Inspector Meiners were, as far as he was concerned,

150. *Natal Witness*, 19.10.1899.

151. PAR, GH 537: List of civilian government officials recommended for the war medal, no date.

152. PAR, CSO 2586: Minute paper regarding the loyalty of Judge HG Boshoff, 6.12.1899.

generally unreliable and their conduct unsatisfactory.¹⁵³ Animosity against Afrikaners in junior positions also reared its head. When FAF Gilson retired due to ill health as clerk of the court at Bulwer in Polela district, he was temporarily replaced by a Mr Crosses. Magistrate HW Boast, on receiving notice that Crosses was to be replaced by GF van Rooyen took to singing the praises of Crosses and made his feelings towards Van Rooyen very clear:

I do not consider him a fit or proper person to fill or hold an appointment in this division. Personally the man is a perfect stranger to me and he may be for all I know perfectly qualified for the duties of the office but Mr Van Rooyen unfortunately is Dutch and I fear his stay at Bulwer will be unpleasant. The feeling in this district against Dutch people is stronger than any other part of the Colony. I am perfectly certain if Mr Van Rooyen knew the prejudices there is (*sic*) against his nationality here it would be his last wish to be stationed here.

Boast's recommendation fell on deaf ears and he received a telegram from the colonial secretary informing him that Van Rooyen would report for duty during the last week of September 1900.¹⁵⁴ GF van Rooyen did not remain in the Polela district for long before he was transferred to Newcastle. The acting magistrate in the district, Maynard Matthews, felt differently from his colleague in Polela and was suitably impressed with the work Van Rooyen delivered as a clerk and as a Dutch and Zulu interpreter. What pleased Matthews most was the fact that Van Rooyen did not demand remuneration, as his predecessors did, for Dutch interpretation. Matthews as a result, recommended him for promotion.¹⁵⁵

A handful of Afrikaners were, like Van Rooyen, rewarded for their loyal work. JM Hershensohn was transferred from the office of first class assistant in the education department to that of a second class clerk in the colonial secretary's office,¹⁵⁶ PD Botha was appointed to act as assistant magistrate in Upper Umkomanzi,¹⁵⁷ and Adrian Johannes Stephanus Maritz as acting magistrate in the Lower Tugela Division.¹⁵⁸ The latter appointment followed in the wake of Maritz acting as a guide, because of his knowledge of Umvoti county, to Colonel Bethune, during October 1901.¹⁵⁹

Like the loyalists in the areas occupied by the Boers, the civil servants in the employment of the Colony of Natal found that being an Afrikaner in wartime Natal generally meant that some

153. PAR, CSO 2586: Minute paper on conduct of Magistrate HC Koch and Sub-Inspector Meiners of Greytown, 17.2.1900.

154. PAR, CSO 2590: Minute paper regarding the appointment of GF van Rooyen as clerk of the court at Bulwer, 19.9.1900.

155. PAR, CSO 1683: Note by Acting Magistrate M Matthews, 14.9.1901.

156. PAR, CSO 2592: Note by clerk executive council, HA Hime, 28.6.1901.

157. PAR, CSO 1691: Appointment documents for PD Botha, 25.11.1901-3.12.1901.

158. PAR, CSO 1695: Oath of allegiance and judicial oath taken by AJS Maritz, 6.1.1902; PAR, CSO 1668: Appointment of AJS Maritz, 15.2.1902; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 7.8.1900.

159. PAR, CSO 1688: Minute paper granting authority to AJS Maritz to accompany Bethune's column, 17.10.1901; CSO

prejudices existed towards you. It was virtually impossible to escape this, even if your loyalty was beyond any doubt.

7.6 The most loyal Natal Afrikaner - *De Natal Afrikaner*

Possibly the most loyal “Afrikaner subject” in the Colony of Natal was *De Natal Afrikaner* under the editorship of Joshua Hershensohn. The philosophy of the Pietermaritzburg-based newspaper, that appeared twice a week, was very simple: It was completely loyal to the British Empire, anti-Republican, in favour of peace and when that failed it fully supported the war effort. Furthermore, the newspaper approved of maintaining the status of the Dutch language in Natal.¹⁶⁰

In terms of the war, *De Natal Afrikaner* endlessly counselled its readers on how to conduct themselves, and reminded them that good behaviour meant remaining loyal to the crown. Even before the outbreak of war the Natal Afrikaners were advised, on three different occasions, to adopt public motions in favour of peace and against war. The sole reaction to this advice came from a Biggarsberg Afrikaner who wrote to a newspaper in Vryheid making it clear that the Afrikaners were not afraid of the British.¹⁶¹ Further calls by Editor Hershensohn to remain loyal elicited angry reactions from some of the subscribers which the newspaper proceeded to publish without revealing the names of the correspondents.¹⁶² This meant that Hershensohn knew the identity of disloyal Afrikaners whom the Natal authorities wanted to apprehend. No amount of pressure by the Natal authorities could, however, move the principled Hershensohn to reveal the names of these disgruntled Natal Afrikaners and his determination forced them to abolish their investigation.¹⁶³

When war broke out and many Afrikaners in the northern parts of the Colony took part in rebellious acts *De Natal Afrikaner* showed very little compassion for their circumstances. Instead, in a article, the rebels were reminded that they would not have been in trouble had they followed the advice of the newspaper and not that of “adventurers and charlatans.” When the Boers were driven from Natal in June 1900 *De Natal Afrikaner* was once again quick to offer advice to Natal Afrikaners: accept the proclamation by General Buller and surrender.¹⁶⁴ Two weeks later the accusational attitude of the paper was somewhat toned down and the problems Northern Natal Afrikaners faced under the Boers, in the absence of their government, were described in an article. The paper did, however, make it clear that the only rebels who deserved sympathy from the Special Court were those who were forced into rebellion. Looters and volunteers for the Boer cause needed to be punished

1688: Telegram magistrate Stanger to colonial secretary, 17.10.1901.

160. For the contribution by *De Natal Afrikaner* in the struggle to maintain the status of Dutch in Natal, see Chapter 8.

161. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 27.3.1900.

162. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 6.12.1899.

163. PAR, CSO 2585: Correspondence regarding an article on disloyalty in *De Natal Afrikaner*, 6.12.1899, 7.12.1899-13.12.1899.

164. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 8.5.1900 and 15.5.1900.

harshly.¹⁶⁵ This was duly done and when some Afrikaners complained about the sentences meted out, *De Natal Afrikaner* was swift to inform its readers that for similar offences in the Cape Colony the death penalty was imposed.¹⁶⁶

Republican war successes such as the Boer victory at Spioenkop in January 1900 were frowned upon. The fear was expressed that such victories would convince many of the Natal Afrikaners, who still doubted the abilities of the Boer forces, to openly rebel. *De Natal Afrikaner* stated that had the Republicans suffered a serious reversal at Spioenkop they would have grasped the futility of it all and asked for peace. The paper suggested that Spioenkop made matters worse for the Afrikaners for: “Nu echter zullen ze den oorlog voortzetten met het gevolg dat zij vernield zullen worden door de Britsche cohorten, die binnenkort van alle kanten des Rijks Zuid Afrika zullen binnestroomen.” The newspaper was under no illusion that Afrikaners would disapprove of the article but was convinced it would be proven correct within the months to come.¹⁶⁷ The paper must have felt vindicated when Lord Roberts reached Bloemfontein in March 1900 and again raised the question what the Republics could gain by continuing the war.¹⁶⁸ As Roberts continued his march to Pretoria *De Natal Afrikaner* persisted with its refrain of questioning the logic of prolonging the war, which by now had entered a guerrilla phase. *De Natal Afrikaner's* point of view was, understandably so, not very popular with a large number of its readers and consequently Hershensohn deemed it necessary to explain to them that the truth about the war was painful but that the newspaper had so far correctly predicted the events.¹⁶⁹

Subsequent Boer military activities received equally little respect, while in contrast, the efforts of the Imperial forces were reported on in glowing terms.¹⁷⁰ A planned raid on the Glencoe Station was represented as the work of “dwaze waaghalzen”,¹⁷¹ while the actions of Boer heroes Danie Theron and Gideon Scheepers were described as “psalmsingende wreedheid.”¹⁷² The Transvaal authorities were, in two articles, taken to task for the way in which they treated British POW's,¹⁷³ while the newspaper even suggested that the Boers were dunking their bullets in poison before firing them at the British Army.¹⁷⁴ Throughout all of this *De Natal Afrikaner* persisted in dispensing advice to its readers by suggesting an alternative way in which “de Engelschen eene verpletterende neerlaag kan

165. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900.

166. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 15.10.1901.

167. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 6.2.1900.

168. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 24.4.1900.

169. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 31.7.1900.

170. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 20.2.1900.

171. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 25.12.1900.

172. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 5.11.1901. This article was written in retrospect, for by then Danie Theron had been dead for 14 months, and Gideon Scheepers imprisoned for three weeks.

173. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 23.1.1900 and 24.4.1900.

174. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.3.1900.

worden toegebracht." Afrikaners needed to distinguish themselves in the economic and social fields, let bygones be bygones, and most importantly, embrace the British Empire.¹⁷⁵ One Natal Afrikaner who apparently did manage to follow this advice was JG (Koos) Hattingh of the farm Rama near Estcourt who according to *De Natal Afrikaner*, "found the perfect way in which to defeat the English."¹⁷⁶ What endeared Hattingh to the newspaper and to the English inhabitants was his offer to "Lord and Lady Roberts of the two acres of land on which lie the remains of their son, and other gallant soldiers who fell at Colenso." The praise heaped on Hattingh by *De Natal Afrikaner* was echoed by the *Natal Witness* who proclaimed: "Yes! We have Dutchmen who have their hearts in the right place, who, whatever their natural sympathies may be, are loyal and true and are Nature's gentlemen."¹⁷⁷

The pro-British *De Natal Afrikaner* became even more critical towards the Afrikaners in the field as the war progressed. By late August 1901, the Boers still fighting were accused of being hard headed and blind.¹⁷⁸ In an article in the edition of 4 February 1902 the bittereinders were attacked in very strong language and described as "unpatriotic" and "revolting in character"; men who merely wanted to "satisfy their feelings of vengeance." The bittereinders were accused of not caring about the suffering of the women and children in the concentration camps or the destruction of the Republics, but merely caring about independence. Most importantly, the article blamed them for creating the phenomena of joiners and the tragedy of a civil war situation in which Afrikaners were fighting each other. *De Natal Afrikaner*, furthermore, predicted that "De Afrikaners zullen voortaan sommigen hunner eigen stamgenooten meer haten dan zij de Britischen doen."¹⁷⁹ In the next edition of the paper another attack was launched against bittereinders like General Louis Botha who had, according to Editor Hershensohn, turned the gracious and humane care the British took of the Boer women and children into a slander campaign during which endless lies were fabricated and this while the Boer civilians were well looked after and cared for.¹⁸⁰ To prove its point the newspaper published a letter from a group of inhabitants of the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp in which they called on the Boers still on commando to end hostilities.¹⁸¹

As a loyalist mouthpiece *De Natal Afrikaner* was always quick to either promote or defend loyalism. In a jingoistic book review, the newspaper even recommend that its readers purchase the book, *Natal*

175. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 26.6.1900.

176. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 16.10.1900.

177. *Natal Witness*, 9.10.1900. The loyalty of Hattingh were praised as early as 1.12.1899 by the *Natal Witness*. According to the article he remained loyal in the face of "persuasion and threats" while his brother joined the Boers. Magistrate RH Addison of Estcourt likewise praised Hattingh for his loyalty, see: PAR, NCP 7/4/7: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1900.

178. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 13.8.1901.

179. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 4.2.1902.

180. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 11.2.1902.

181. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 20.11.1900.

Volunteer Record. The view expressed was that in time this publication would, ironically enough, become a wonderful source of reference to Afrikaners.¹⁸² Loyalist Natal Afrikaners who suffered due to the war were also defended by the newspaper. The *Times of Natal* was taken to task for, firstly claiming that justices of the peace were appointed in a reckless manner from amongst the disloyal Natal Afrikaners of Northern Natal and, secondly, for claiming that James Gregory spoke out against commandeering at a meeting held at Dundee in November 1899. The *Times of Natal* were informed that there was only one Afrikaner JP in the Dundee district, Adrian Jansen, and that he and not Gregory, was the person who spoke out against the commandeering by the Boers.¹⁸³ This act of correcting their article did not go down well with the *Times of Natal* and the journalist in question felt insulted. In an attempt to try and get his own back he explained that he meant Jansen when he referred to the JP. He then proceeded to attack *De Natal Afrikaner* by firstly giving sections of the article in question in Dutch followed by English translations to prove his point. In response Hershensohn had a field day and proceeded to correct all the errors in translation made by the *Times of Natal*.¹⁸⁴

Much of the advice dispensed by the newspaper was aimed at the Umvoti Afrikaners. The Afrikaners of this region were chastised for sending a proclamation to the queen in favour of the independence of the Republics.¹⁸⁵ In the 29 May 1900 issue, which celebrated the 81st birthday of Queen Victoria, the Umvoti Afrikaners were reprimanded for wanting to open several businesses in opposition to the predominantly English ones that already existed.¹⁸⁶ The view expressed was that such a step would serve to sideline Afrikaners even further and provide ammunition for the public figures who wanted to attack and belittle Afrikaners.¹⁸⁷ The appropriate way to behave would, according to the newspaper, be to provide as little suspicion as possible by living an almost apologetic lifestyle. That way the Afrikaners would not provoke verbal attacks on themselves.¹⁸⁸

De Natal Afrikaner was not adverse to dispensing advice to the Natal Government either and to warn the rulers of the implications of its policies. A point in case was a warning issued that the “Cape Dragons, i.e. the ‘Bond’ had established itself in Natal.” The newspaper took it upon itself to, “in the interests of fairness and justice but also in the interest of future peace, prosperity and progress to point out to the Government where they act wrongly and injuriously to the general interests.” The

182. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 15.1.1900.

183. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 3.7.1900.

184. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 24.7.1900.

185. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 27.3.1900.

186. *De Natal Afrikaner* deeply mourned the passing of Queen Victoria and dedicated large sections of its 29.1.1901 issue to tributes to the late monarch.

187. In the 15.5.1900 issue of *De Natal Afrikaner*, the paper took a member of the Legislative Assembly, Walter Pepworth, to task for his statement: “Ik geloof veeleer loyale kaffers, dan rebellen Afrikaners.”

188. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900.

article in question referred to the decision by Parliament to allocate no money to the instruction of Dutch in Natal, while setting aside funding for African, Indian and Coloured Education.¹⁸⁹

This pro-Dutch expression possibly did very little to improve the status of *De Natal Afrikaner* in the eyes of its readers. The diary entry of Missionary Prozesky, while awaiting trial in the Newcastle Prison, possibly summarises the feeling of most Afrikaner readers. He described Hershensohn as a Russian Jew and a jingo “of the dirtiest water” who took it upon himself to lecture the Boers and to please the English because his articles “judge so nicely.” Prozesky possibly managed to encapsulate the philosophy of *De Natal Afrikaner* when he accused the paper of creating the image that: “All English possess the spirit of infallibility, and to judge any action of theirs negatively is already to be guilty of a severe punishment.”¹⁹⁰

The loyalty of *De Natal Afrikaner* during the war did, however, held some benefits for the newspaper. Joshua Hershensohn was informed by Governor HE McCallum that High Commissioner Milner had agreed to the Transvaal Government’s subscription to the *De Natal Afrikaner* to the extent of 100 copies of each issue.¹⁹¹ This was a very welcome economic windfall to a newspaper slowly but surely forsaken by its primary audience.

7.7 The real Natal Afrikaner war heroes

Being an Afrikaner in Natal during the Anglo-Boer War meant that it was virtually impossible to be regarded as a loyalist. While Afrikaners were imprisoned by virtue of their ethnicity, the Natal authorities were in turn imprisoned by the reductionist manner in which they suspected almost all Afrikaners of being disloyal. In a somewhat Orwellian-like world even expressing sympathy towards the Boers meant that loyalist Afrikaners could be labelled as supporters of the enemy. What mitigated against the small number of Afrikaner loyalists was the form their loyalty took. While some remained loyal because they believed it to be the correct thing to do, others acted in this manner because of a series of variables. The Strydoms seem to have been loyal in the hope that they would economically gain from it, TJ Nel acted loyally to harm his family and friends, Pelster because he was arrested by the Boers, while JH Ries of Dundee or the Ortlepp’s of Proviso B acted humanely but not necessarily loyally. Others like DJ Pretorius of the farm Waterfall near Melmoth who had reported the presence of small groups of armed Boers near his house on 4 and 19 February 1901,¹⁹² and the 71-year-old Johannes Christoffel Buys, a resident of Natal since 1844, who provided a statement about the actions of the Dreyers, did so not out of conviction, but because they

189. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 14.5.1900.

190. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 24.7.1900, p.185.

191. PAR, PM 118: Letter secretary prime minister to J Hershensohn, 1902.12.10; PAR, CSO 738: Minute paper Transvaal Government subscribing to *De Natal Afrikaner*, 4.12.1902.-10.12.1902.

192. Durban Archive Repository (hereafter DAR), Archives of the Melmoth magistrate (hereafter 1/Mel) 3/2/8: Letter DJ Pretorius to magistrate, Melmoth, 4.2.1901; Letter DJ Pretorius to magistrate, Melmoth, 19.2.1901.

were forced to do so by law.¹⁹³ Some were even loyal because of their economic circumstances. i.e. in the employment of English Natalians. Captain EJ Landsberg, a member of the UMR, worked for TY Griffen near Dundee,¹⁹⁴ AJ Nienaber worked in the colliery outside of Dundee,¹⁹⁵ FW Prinsloo of Dundee, who joined Thorneycrofts Mounted Infantry, worked in a English butchery,¹⁹⁶ and FJ Swartz, an illiterate Afrikaner who worked for an English Natalian near Newcastle all remained true to the crown.¹⁹⁷

But it is also in the ranks of the loyalists that the real Natal Afrikaner heroes of the war are found.¹⁹⁸ The true heroes were families like the Jansens, Strydoms and Pieterses who remained loyal despite being deserted by their own government; intimidated; threatened with death, fines, imprisonment and deportation; punished by the Boers; scorned and ostracised by their fellow Natal Afrikaners; and arrested, imprisoned or deported by the British forces. In spite of all this their belief in the Empire did not falter and they firmly believed that their loyalty was worth the trouble and pain it caused.

193. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Statement by JC Buys, 19.7.1901.

194. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by EJ Landsberg, 5.2.1901.

195. PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AJ Nienaber, 9.2.1901.

196. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by FW Prinsloo, 20.11.1900.

197. PAR, CSO 2906: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by FJ Swartz, 17.1.1901.

198. For an attempt to create a list of Natal Afrikaner loyalists from the area occupied by the Boers, see Appendix C.

CHAPTER 8

MARTIAL LAW, THE LINGERING WAR, AND ITS SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPACT ON NATAL AFRIKANERS

Martial Law was declared in all of Natal on 23 October 1899¹ to act as “the public law of self-defence (and) the right to use military means to preserve the peace against public enemies within.”² The military commander of each area was responsible for the administration thereof. Martial Law gave the military authorities the power to use extreme measures to maintain safety and security. To achieve this movements were restricted, passes were issued,³ people were arrested and removed from their farms, and property was commandeered.⁴ Like most instances of Martial Law, the populace found the conditions deplorable and oppressive, and as the war dragged on beyond June 1900, the relentless pressure on Natal Afrikaners made it difficult for them to manoeuvre under the jingoistic wartime conditions.

In Natal Martial Law was initially upheld by the Indemnity Bill published on 5 June 1900 to protect “the Governor of the Colony, and the Officer Commanding her Majesty’s Forces in Natal, and all persons acting under their authority and in good faith in regard to acts during the existence of Martial Law.”⁵ This bill was subsequently updated by other Indemnity Bills as circumstances changed.⁶ The community of Natal Afrikaners received the bill with mixed emotions. On the one hand people such as Ds HF Schoon argued that it would sanction all kinds of abuses by the authorities,⁷ while the Afrikaner politician, CJ Labuschagne, who himself was innocently imprisoned under Martial Law, voted in favour of the Indemnity Bill.⁸

In the light of the above the emphasis in this chapter will be twofold. It will firstly concentrate on the experiences by Natal Afrikaners under martial law against the backdrop of the continuing war, and secondly, examine the experiences in the socio-political sphere of life after the Boer forces were driven from Natal.

8.1 The lingering war and Martial Law

The war in Natal did not end when the Boers were driven from the Colony in June 1900. Small scale

1. PAR, GH 1454: Proclamation No. 108 extending Martial Law to all of Natal, Proviso B and Zululand, 23.10.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 23.10.1899; *Natal Witness*, 24.10.1899.

2. FN Wiener, *Civilians under military justice. The practice since 1869 especially in North America*, p.219.

3. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Pass issued to L Combrinck by Magistrate T Maxwell, 18.9.1900; Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

4. Cd. 981: Papers relating to the administration of Martial Law in South Africa, 1902, *passim*.

5. PRO, CO 179/211: Indemnity Bill as published on 5.6.1900.

6. PAR, PM 34: Indemnity Bills, - Act 41 of 1901 and Act 22 of 1902; PRO, CO 179/222: Indemnity Bills - Act 41 of 1901 and Act 22 of 1902.

7. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 31.5.1900, p.339.

8. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 13.6.1900, p.362.

guerrilla style incursions continued up to the end of the war and were mostly conducted from the cover provided by the Drakensberg and the Vryheid district of the Transvaal.⁹ On 13 August 1900, and again on 21 August 1900, the railway line to the south of Newcastle was destroyed preventing the transfer of rebel prisoners to Pietermaritzburg. During this time an Indian shop in close proximity to Newcastle was also looted.¹⁰ One of the most successful of these raids took place, in October 1900, under the Russian, Captain Pokrovsky, who led a group of 50 Natal rebels and members of the Swaziland Police. The posse crossed into Natal via Vant's Drift and after cutting the telegraph line between Dundee and Helpmekaar, and taking some horses from Africans and Afrikaners in the area,¹¹ they proceeded to Wasbank Station. On 26 October 1900 the station was attacked and burnt down, the railway line damaged, and 11 horses belonging to the remount department, taken.¹²

A month later two small commandos invaded Natal from the OFS. On 29 November 1900 one of these commandos, consisting of 50 men, visited Fred Brandon's farm Jackal's Spruit at the top of Collings Pass. Mrs AW Brandon was alone on the farm at the time because Fred was in prison awaiting trial for high treason. The Boers looted the house and shop and in the process allegedly assaulted Mrs Brandon who did not want to allow them into the house.¹³ After threatening that they would come back to burn the farm down, the men returned to the Free State.¹⁴

At approximately the same time a small commando crossed down to the farm Spitzkop in the Newcastle district. Here they collected sheep and all the riding horses from the various African homesteads and took all the saddles, blankets, and clothing they could find.¹⁵ Further south, at Venterspruit in the foothills of the Drakensberg, a raiding party burnt down the stable of a surrendered rebel, Potgieter.¹⁶ Since such raids by small parties of Boers into the Newcastle district became more and more commonplace Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard, the GOC for Natal, organized farmers into self-defence groups, such as the Normandien Volunteer Corps, in the areas which bordered the OFS.¹⁷ The creation of such self-defence units proved to be unsuccessful as raids into the

9. For a summary of the principles of campaigning against guerrillas aided and abetted by a sympathetic population, see H Strachan, *European Armies and the conduct of war*.

10. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 13.8.1900, p.252; 21.8.1900, p.257; 23.8.1900, pp.260-261.

11. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Application by JJ Kemp to return to his farm, 12.4.1901-24.4.1901.

12. PRO, CO 179/214: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 27.10.1900; A Davidson, and I Filatova, *The Russians and the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp.41-42.

13. *Natal Witness*, 4.12.1900; PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 30.11.1900, pp.524-525. The husband of Mrs Brandon, FJT Brandon, was jailed for one year and fined £100 for treason.

14. PRO, CO 179/215: Letter Inspector WV Dorehill to chief commissioner of police, 30.11.1900.

15. PRO, CO 179/215: Deposition by Umkonkonyeka before Magistrate AD Gilson, 30.11.1900; PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DJ Pringle, 13.10.1902.

16. PRO, CO 179/219: Report on Boer raids from the OFS, 1902.

17. PAR, GH 533: Letter Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 27.11.1900.

Newcastle¹⁸ and Upper Tugela¹⁹ districts by commandos, using the Drakensberg as a base, persisted and farmers and stores continued to suffer serious losses.

Similar raids also continued from the Vryheid district into both Proviso B²⁰ and the Dundee area. In one such raid, on 18 November 1901, Matheson's shop at Vant's Drift on the Buffalo River was looted by a small commando.²¹ These low-key operations across the Buffalo River continued well into 1902 and on two occasions cattle and horses were looted from James Gregory at Gregory's Nek. At the same time nine Boers, two of whom were rebels, confronted Donald Mackenzie at Van Tonder's Pass between Helpmekaar and Wasbank. They took most of his clothes, his horses, and some "mountain dew." A few days later the shop of Cumming at Rorke's Drift was looted.²² The commandos around Dundee²³ were so active that the local press described them as "marauding gangs of Boers" or "highwaymen" and in April 1902 it was still regarded unsafe to travel on the road between Dundee and Helpmekaar.²⁴

Often these small commandos were forced to seek refuge in Natal to escape the giant mobile columns active in the Transvaal and OFS.²⁵ The continued guerrilla activities by Boers along the borders of Northern Natal soon caused rumours to spread and Prime Minister Hime was informed by Mr Mardall, the brother of a Natal Policeman, that he had overheard a conversation in the Imperial Hotel to the effect that some Boers were apparently near Greytown.²⁶ In the Umsinga district HF Fynn claimed that he saw a commando in the Isibindi valley,²⁷ one Pringle reported that he saw 12 Boers near Bushman's Pass,²⁸ while rumours also did the rounds that some Boers were hiding in the little berg near the source of the Umlambonja River.²⁹

In an attempt to deal with these raids the military, under Martial Law, removed civilians from their homes in the areas threatened by the Boers on an ongoing basis. The magistrates of Estcourt and Weenen received instructions from General Buller, soon after the relief of Ladysmith, to place 21 Afrikaner and 30 British families living in the Klip River and Upper Tugela districts on the farms of

18. PAR, GH 534: Letter Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 16.7.1901.

19. PAR, GH 534: Report by Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard on Boer raid into the Upper Tugela district, 10.7.1901; PAR, MJPW 86: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor HE McCallum, 13.7.1901.

20. PAR, CSO 2897: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by FA Ortlepp, 12.8.1902.

21. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 11.2.1902.

22. *Dundee Commercial Advertiser*, 12.3.1902 and 26.3.1902.

23. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Meyer, 13.1.1903.

24. *Dundee and District Advertiser*, February-March 1902.

25. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1901.

26. PAR, MJPW 117: Letter criminal investigation officer to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.1.1901.

27. PAR, 1/UMS 29: Letter Dr J Dalzell to Magistrate T Maxwell, 4.9.1901.

28. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1901.

29. PAR, SNA I/1/294: Letter Inspector Mardell to chief commissioner of police, 26.9.1901.

those Afrikaners who had left the area and who were suspected of having joined the enemy. These families lived in tents supplied by the military, or in farm houses when available, and remained there until they were allowed to return to their farms.³⁰ Within the months that followed the military cleared large sections of Upper Tugela and Klip River county of white residents, ordering them south of the Tugela.³¹ In this process, many Afrikaners,³² including Widow Byloo whose husband had been arrested on suspicions of treason, and who had died in hospital in Ladysmith, had suffered substantial material losses since the hasty removal did not leave enough time to collect personal belongings such as furniture. Promises by the provost marshal that the property they had left behind would be protected came to naught as private accounts indicated that severe looting did take place.³³

These relocations happened many times because of general military proclamations. In line with the proclamation issued by Lord Roberts on 19 June 1900, which stated that Afrikaner civilians who resided within the vicinity of sabotaged railway lines were to be removed, and their property destroyed,³⁴ Mrs Thomas Boshoff of the farm Yarl near Newcastle was, along with her children, on 3 September 1900 ordered to proceed to Pietermaritzburg. The explanation for the removal was that the house of the Boshoff's was roughly four kilometres from the railway line which was frequently sabotaged by parties of Boers.³⁵

In his report to Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard, Lt-Col GH Sim stated that the military had completely cleared the Upper Tugela area in September 1900. Its inhabitants, including Afrikaners against whom no evidence existed like AM (Andries) Maree, Salomon de Jager and the wives of Adriaan Marais and Lukas Meyer, were ordered to the Estcourt district.³⁶ In late 1900 and early 1901, they were followed by another large group of Afrikaners including time-expired rebels, those acquitted of treason, and those whom the military were suspicious of.³⁷ The removal of these Afrikaners from Ladysmith to Estcourt did not necessarily follow a logical process. Koos de Jager for example was not banned to Estcourt with his family but had to reside in a boarding house in Ladysmith.³⁸ On another occasion the hands of the military were tied when 30 suspected rebels who had been released on bail, including the Colling brothers and SJ van Vuuren were allowed by the resident magistrate, on the

30. PAR, PM 20: Letter Magistrate RH Addison to Prime Minister AH Hime, 16.12.1900.

31. PAR, GH 1452: Minute paper on deputation of farmers of Upper Tugela to Governor HE McCallum, 3.1.1902.

32. PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by J Potgieter, 6.9.1900.

33. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 4.5.1900, pp.310-311.

34. SB Spies, *Methods of Barbarism? Roberts and Kitchener and civilians in the Boer Republics: January 1900-May 1902*, pp.112-113.

35. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.9.1900, pp.282-284.177. Five male relatives of Mrs Boshoff were imprisoned as rebels.

36. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 11.10.1900, pp.483-484.

37. PAR, AGO I/8/76: Minute paper regarding men removed from Ladysmith to Estcourt, 29.12.1900-24.1.1901.

38. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 7.1.1901, p.557.

orders of the attorney-general, to return to the cleared area.³⁹

These removals did not end the raiding and upset the Natal Government to such an extent that they requested the military authorities “to make such arrangements as will prevent the recurrence of similar raids in any part of the Colony.”⁴⁰ Lt-Gen Hildyard, by his own admission, did not know what to say to Prime Minister Hime. He felt the military had done their best with the available resources since they had, as outlined above, cleared large sections of land of its inhabitants. The Natal volunteer regiments could also not be called out since the best men from these units had already been swallowed up by units such as the VCR. This left original volunteer units disorganized. Calling out the volunteer units was also not an option as it would lead to inconvenience and economic hardship which would be detrimental to the Colony.⁴¹

The inability of the military in Natal to deal with the Boer raids prompted Governor HE McCallum to enquire about the extent of the military outposts that existed, and in which areas farmers would be allowed to return to their farms. In his response Lt-Gen Hildyard not only outlined the areas cleared by the military, namely the Upper Tugela district and large sections of Klip River county, but also described the problems faced by the military. These included a lack of manpower to safeguard the farms outside the cleared areas on which farmers resided either with the permission of Sir Redvers Buller, or that of the civilian authorities.⁴² According to Hildyard the civil authorities failed to grasp the military situation which threatened the border area. Thus, while the military tried to keep the area clear, the leniency of the civil authorities in granting bail to suspected rebels, left the military no choice but to confirm passes for those already in the area. No new passes were however issued.

Prime Minister Hime denied that the Natal Government had ever directly or indirectly authorised the return of suspected rebels to the Upper Tugela area. This denial settled the matter for Hildyard. He could now remove all white residents who could be looted by invading Boers. Henceforth Hildyard adopted the hard-nosed attitude that the hardship suffered by a few residents in the area was outweighed by the safety of the Colony.⁴³ The military also sent a clear signal to the civil authorities - they would under Martial Law decide who goes where - regardless of the concerns of the said authorities.⁴⁴ Hildyard's hand was considerably strengthened by Lord Kitchener's proclamation of 7 August 1901 which threatened disloyal families and those who continued with the war with

39. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Correspondence between Magistrate TR Bennett and DAAG Ladysmith, 22.12.1900-3.1.1901.

40. PAR, GH 534: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to administrator, 12.4.1901.

41. PAR, GH 534: Letter Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard to Prime Minister AH Hime, 15.4.1901.

42. PAR, GH 1449: Correspondence Governor HE McCallum to Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard, 8.7.1901-16.7.1901.

43. PAR, GH 534: Correspondence regarding the removal of white inhabitants from Northwest Natal, 22.7.1901-9.8.1901.

44. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding the transfer of the Britz and Landman families from Newcastle to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 23.6.1901-15.7.1901.

banishment.⁴⁵

The Boer forays into Natal that brought about the most severe reaction from Hildyard took place in early July 1901. Several commandos came down from their hideouts in the Drakensberg and looted stores at Acton Homes and in the Upper Tugela district taking horses, blankets, food, and clothes.⁴⁶ Hildyard immediately issued the following order: "Owing to the late raid of the Boers into Natal it has been decided that all farms in Natal between: Tugela River and Sunday River and, west by a line Venterspruit - Acton Homes Bridge - Besters Station - Ibele mountain must be cleared of all white persons, their horses, cattle, foodstuffs, blankets, and clothing."⁴⁷ This order instructed the Ladysmith magistrate to remove all the white families from the Upper Tugela district to either the area around the little Tugela River or the Ladysmith townlands. Others like GD Fourie⁴⁸ and his family were ordered into Estcourt, and CS du Plessis and Ben and SJ Nel to the area south of Estcourt.⁴⁹

These measures did not satisfy Governor HE McCallum. Instead, he was concerned that the commandos could invade as far south as Umvoti and disrupt the approaching royal visit by Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught. He therefore requested Lord Kitchener to use any available military force to prevent such an invasion by guarding the passes across the Drakensberg that linked Natal and the OFS. Kitchener was also asked to cancel the evacuation order issued to farmers in the Upper Tugela district.⁵⁰

In fact the continued guerrilla activities by the Boers in Natal had, at this stage, both the Natal Government and the governor worried because it made it impossible for loyal colonists to return to their farms or resume ordinary activities. The low-keyed war also had other negative effects on the Colony: Trade was paralysed, trains were monopolized by the military, the cost of living and labour remained high, while Africans were rumoured to becoming restless. As a result the Natal Government asked that sterner measures be adopted to bring the war to an end. The most severe suggestion made was that if the Boers and their rebel supporters did not surrender with immediate effect they would be informed that the women and children cared for in concentration camps would be deported. It was also felt that rebels had to be informed that if they do not surrender immediately

45. SB Spies, pp.269-278; Foy Vermaak private collection, Proclamation by Lord Kitchener as published in an extraordinary *Government Gazette*, 7.8.1901.

46. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 8.7.1901, p.656.

47. PAR, CSO 1681: Order No. 3578 of removal issued under Martial Law by Capt EO Walken. 15.7.1901; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 23.7.1901.

48. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett to inspector Natal Police, 9.9.1901.

49. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to Inspector Dorehill, 8.6.1901.

50. PRO, CO 179/219: Telegram Governor HE McCallum to Lord Kitchener and Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 20.7.1901.

they would be dealt with severely.⁵¹

The affected residents were not happy either, but their concerns were regarding bread and butter issues. Like McCallum they requested the cancellation of the removal order which they regarded as “ill-advised, harsh and unnecessary” since it was the middle of winter and the lack of grazing would result in serious economic losses. The removal of cattle to the south of the Tugela River would also expose healthy cattle to cattle already infected with lung sickness. According to SW Willis, the spokesperson, the looting of items such as clothing and food was an insignificant loss compared to the losses residents would suffer if they were removed. Farming and other commercial activities would be halted, and possible damage would give rise to new claims for compensation. Those to be removed felt that the Drakensberg was the natural line of defence and that the passes could be guarded by blockhouses, while the local residents ought to be organised into a volunteer corps.⁵²

What troubled the residents as much as their removal was the fact that everybody, even the members of the Natal Carbineers and the rifle associations, had to hand in their rifles.⁵³ They, furthermore, felt they were perceived as disloyal. Telegrams from Prime Minister Hime and Governor McCallum failed to convince the military who would not change their decision and argued that “single rifles on solitary farms are of no possible use for protection and form a bait to raiders.” As far as the complaints by the residents were concerned, the GOC made it clear that the military were sensitive to the removal, but that the residents were exaggerating matters.⁵⁴

The complaining group, however, had no problem with the removal of “suspected and untrustworthy” inhabitants.⁵⁵ Almost without exception the “suspected and untrustworthy” people were Afrikaners. A point in case was the removal of PR Nel, a Weenen mill owner who was ordered by the military to move to Estcourt on 25 July 1901. This left him without any economic means. He consequently requested permission from the authorities to reside in Pietermaritzburg where he hoped to find employment as a carpenter.⁵⁶

Three months after their removal, the white residents of the Upper Tugela were still not back on their farms. They therefore drew up a petition requesting the governor to negotiate their return since they needed to plough and plant their fields, especially since this privilege was granted to Africans

51. PAR, GH 1040: Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor HE McCallum, 16.7.1901.

52. PAR, CSO 1681: Letter SW Willis to Governor HE McCallum, 19.6.1901; Letter SW Willis to Captain EO Walken, 19.7.1901.

53. PAR, CSO 1681: Order No. 3579 regarding handing in of rifles under Martial Law issued by Capt EO Walken, 15.7.1901.

54. PAR, PM 89: Correspondence regarding the disarming of residents of Upper Tugela, 29.7.1901-31.7.1901.

55. PAR, CSO 1681: Letter SW Willis to Governor HE McCallum, 19.6.1901; Letter SW Willis to Captain EO Walken, 19.7.1901.

56. PAR, CSO 1687: Correspondence regarding the position of PR Nel, 25.9.1901-7.10.1901.

in the area. Governor McCallum reacted without delay and pressurised the military into allowing the farmers to return. The military yielded under this pressure but, on condition, that only men whose loyalty was beyond suspicion could return; that only foodstuffs for a fortnight could be stored on a farm; and that only horses for farm use could be kept.⁵⁷

Such leniency did not apply to most Natal Afrikaners from the war-ravaged northern part of the Colony. Apart from removing some Afrikaners because of the military threat which the Boers posed, other such removals, mostly to Pietermaritzburg, were made for a variety of justifications which included the all-encompassing labels of being “undesirables” and “suspects.” Being removed to Pietermaritzburg was especially traumatic. Not only was the capital of Natal a very English and hostile city, but those who were removed to it had to cover their own expenses. The Natal authorities were adamant that if the military sent Natalians to Pietermaritzburg they would have to “shift for themselves.”⁵⁸ This placed an extremely hard financial burden on most of them. A point in case are the experiences of P Cronjé, A Meyer, A Potgieter and A van Tonder of Dundee. These men were banned to Pietermaritzburg but could not afford the £5 rent they were expected to pay.⁵⁹ In many cases only the men in a family were ordered south creating great fragmentation within their homes. In one such case, TR Dannhauser of Kliprust Dundee, was ordered to the Weenen area where he resided with P Lotter while leaving his wife and family behind.⁶⁰

Some of the men who were not removed such as JJ (Mias) Nel were placed under house arrest. In June 1900 he was selling mealies from his wagon in the Ngobevu and Inandi locations in Zululand. This aroused the suspicions of various African scouts who reported him to the military. Nel was subsequently ordered to remain within the boundaries of the farm Maresvale, near Greytown. Six months later he was still not charged and as a result his father, LL Nel, wrote to the magistrates of Greytown and Kranskop, as well as the commandant for Greytown, asking that the “quarantine” on his son be lifted since his assistance was required on several other farms. LL Nel’s request was supported by the Greytown but not by the Kranskop magistrate. As a result the military indicated that they would consider the request.⁶¹

The removals of Afrikaners and other European residents continued for as long as the Boers remained active along the borders of the Colony,⁶² and persisted well into 1902. In February of that

57. PAR, PM 24: Resolution and correspondence regarding the return of Upper Tugela farmers, 13.11.1901-30.11.1901.

58. PAR, CSO 1732: Report by the magistrate Newcastle that the military had ordered him to send the De Wet, O’Reilly and Cronjé families down, 4.7.1901-19.7.1901.

59. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 23.3.1900, p.242.

60. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, to magistrate Dundee, 19.6.1901.

61. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/9: Application by LL Nel for the lifting of the restriction order on JJ Nel, 10.1.1901-21.1.1901; PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/4: Application by LL Nel for the lifting of the restriction order on JJ Nel, 17.1.1901-23.1.1901.

62. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 8.10.1901, p.533.

year Afrikaners were removed south from around Ladysmith. In contrast, surrendered burghers from the Republics were allowed to settle on the farms around Ladysmith, Newcastle, and Dundee from which Natal Afrikaners had been removed. This became one of the reasons why Natal Afrikaners could not return to their farms.⁶³ In April 1902, a month before war ended, LJR Kritzinger of Melmoth complained that he and his three sons were ordered from their farm despite the fact that he had had his wagon and oxen commandeered, had promptly reported the presence of Boers near his farm, and had five horses and 24 head of cattle looted by a commando. Since his removal had taken place under Martial Law, the government could not entertain his request to be allowed to return home.⁶⁴

While the practice by the military of removing Natal Afrikaners from their farms under Martial Law was sometimes difficult to understand, the policy which catered for their return was downright whimsical, illogical, and generally without consistency. WAC Bester of Fourie's Kraal, one of the richest and most influential farmers in the Ladysmith area, soon discovered this. Bester was detained in Ladysmith during the siege without any charge being laid against him. He was then sent to Pietermaritzburg on parole where he took the oath of allegiance on 6 June 1900, after which he was allowed to return to Ladysmith. On arrival he reported to the military who told him to await further instructions. Approximately a month later Bester was informed by the local police that the military had given instructions for him to return to Pietermaritzburg. Back in the capital he reported to Captain Appelby who promptly jailed him, and only released him after he signed a document stating that he would not leave Pietermaritzburg or communicate with the Boers. By now Bester had had enough and requested his lawyers, Carter and Robinson, to raise the matter with the Natal Government who, to their credit, reacted promptly. Inspector Clarke of the Natal Police was asked to investigate the case against Bester. Clarke, supported by the provost marshal, could not find a reason for the treatment of Bester apart from the possibility that his farm just outside of Ladysmith was in close proximity to the positions of some troops. When confronted with this evidence, the military indicated that the situation on the ground had changed and that not only Bester, but also his sons, could return to his farm immediately.⁶⁵ Those residents of Klip River county with less financial power and influence than Bester were less fortunate. GCF Potgieter who initially returned home at the same time as Bester⁶⁶ was also sent back to Pietermaritzburg. His request to be allowed to return

63. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 3.2.1902, p.767; PAR, AGO I/8/79: Letter A Jansen to attorney-general, 17.5.1901. For a comprehensive lists of surrendered burghers who were allowed to reside in Natal see: NAR, Archives of the Staff Officer Prisoners of War, Natal (hereafter SOP) 17: Burghers from Harrismith on parole in Natal, 1.9.1901; NAR, Transvaal Colonial Publications (hereafter TKP) 156 and 157: List of POWs who have arrived in Natal, 1900-1901.

64. PAR, PM 28: Request by LJR Kritzinger that he and his sons be allowed to return home, 15.4.1902-22.4.1902.

65. PAR, CSO 1655: Correspondence regarding the removal of WAC Bester, 4.8.1900-17.8.1900; CSO 1652: Minute paper regarding the treatment of the Bester family, 17.7.1900-23.8.1900.

66. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 22.6.1900, p.377.

home was denied.⁶⁷

The inconsistencies of the functioning of Martial Law are further confirmed by the experiences of JJ Muller of the farm Doorn Kraal near Elandslaagte. Muller (snr) was allowed to reside on his farm until the military moved him in December 1901. What Muller could not understand was why other residents who lived closer to the Drakensberg and thus the OFS border, as well as convicted rebels around Dundee, were allowed to remain. His request to return home was answered by the military with the by now standard reply: "...for military reasons it cannot be acceded to."⁶⁸

In 1902 the military at times adopted a more lenient attitude towards Afrikaners who wanted to return home, possibly because they had better control over the areas threatened by small Boer commandos. JA and JF van der Merwe and CP, CJP as well as JM Hattingh of the Estcourt district were all granted permission to return to their farms on condition that they took the oath of allegiance. Receiving permission to return home did, however, not always prove to be this easy and different conditions were imposed on different applicants. GE Minnaar, a convicted rebel, was for example not allowed to move to the farm Rietvlei, Springfield, of GJ Jordaan, but he did receive a one week pass to visit.⁶⁹

Other petitioners were denied permission to return home altogether. JS Maritz and PJ Triegaardt could not return to their farms which were located within the area that the military wanted to keep clear namely, between the Tugela and Little Tugela Rivers and Lindeques Drift.⁷⁰ This refusal to issue passes allowing Afrikaners to return home forced at least one convicted rebel to break the law. JG Zietsman, after numerous applications, failed to secure a pass to return to his mother's farm, Snelster near Estcourt. He pointed out to the authorities that other time-expired rebels had received passes, and when he was again informed "your application cannot be entertained at present" he used his own discretion and took "French leave." Zietsman's absence did not go undetected and he was arrested and returned to Durban. On his return he took up the pen and in crisp language continued to ask for permission to return home. Time and again permission was denied. Zietsman believed this was a clear indication that he had no chance of being granted permission and that he had to make a serious decision about his future. He therefore requested Prime Minister Hime for "...a passport to quit this Colony for good, as it is useless for me to lie under a government who refuses to give me redress, it is quite evident - judging by the past treatment - that - you as the head of the government - do not intend to give me a hearing." The government referred Zietsman to the commandant of

67. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to Mrs Potgieter, 13.11.1900.

68. PAR, PM 25: Application by JJ Muller to be allowed to return home, 3.12.1901-18.12.1901.

69. PAR, PM 26: Request by GJ Jordaan that GE Minnaar may reside with him, 31.1.1902.

70. PAR, PM 26: Application by Afrikaners from the Estcourt district to be allowed to return home, 14.2.1902-13.3.1902.

Durban.⁷¹ It cannot be determined if he received a passport but he possibly changed his mind as the war ended soon afterwards.

By early 1902 several Natal politicians were beginning to question the value of the continuation of Martial Law.⁷² To the relief of Prime Minister Hime Martial Law was not repealed as requested by the politicians. Instead, the military started withdrawing systematically from regions such as Greytown and Kranskop and started handing over administration to the magistrates and Natal Police.⁷³ In mid-April 1902 Martial Law conditions were relaxed even further and Afrikaners banned to south of the Tugela River were no longer required to report to the authorities as regularly as in the past.⁷⁴ For unknown reasons the military tightened Martial Law conditions once the war ended and a request by the Natal Government that banned persons should be allowed to return home was refused by the commandant of Ladysmith. The Natal Afrikaners affected by this decision kept up their requests to be allowed to return home and eventually by 20 June 1902 most had been allowed to do so.⁷⁵

Over and above banning and restriction orders and removals, Natal Afrikaners also suffered under the application of Martial Law as related to other wartime measures. Gert van Rooyen of Pinedale, Seven Oaks, Greytown applied for a permit to purchase 100 Martini Henry cartridges. Although the controller of firearms did not oppose the application, he could not grant him a permit since a circular of 15 November 1899 prohibited the issuing of cartridges to people who were not members of rifle associations.⁷⁶ Under the same restrictions Magistrate Addison of Estcourt prohibited JG Hattingh from buying 10 lbs of blasting powder to construct water furrows. Not even a letter in support of Hattingh's application by the pro-Afrikaner FR Moor (MLA) could sway Addison who insisted that the applicant had been involved in treasonable acts while the Boers were in the area and could therefore not be trusted.⁷⁷

Even in the case of attending to serious personal matters Natal Afrikaners suffered under Martial Law. On 7 March 1902 PJ Nel of the farm Ongegund near Kranskop applied for a pass to go to the farm Slaaf near Helpmekaar to get married. After a lengthy enquiry and a declaration that he had no relatives on commando nor any that were tried for treason, the Kranskop magistrate, despite regarding Nel as a pro-Boer, recommended that he be granted a pass. This, however, did not happen

71. PAR, GH 562: Application by JG Zietsman to return to the Estcourt district, 26.12.1901-9.1.1902; PAR, PM 28: Application by JG Zietsman for a passport, 17.12.1901-17.5.1902.

72. PAR, PM 91: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor HE McCallum, 14.2.1902.

73. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/4: Letter officer commanding Umvoti to magistrate Kranskop, 28.2.1902.

74. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 18.4.1902, p.798.

75. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 12.6.1902, p.815 and 20.6.1902, p.820.

76. PAR, CSO 1680: Application by G van Rooyen to purchase 100 Martini Henry cartridges, 8.7.1901-20.7.1901.

77. PAR, PM 18: Refusal to grant JG Hattingh permission to purchase gun powder, 13.7.1900-24.8.1900.

as the farm Slaaf was raided by Boers in early April 1902⁷⁸ and the military denied Nel a pass to proceed to his wedding.⁷⁹

Martial Law was only repealed on 4 October 1902.⁸⁰ Unfortunately for the Natal Afrikaners, as the borders between limited and absolute war blurred during the guerrilla phase of the conflict, they felt the vengeance of especially the military authorities. Furthermore they often suffered retribution for Boer misdeeds and not necessarily for supporting the Boers or resisting British authority.⁸¹ In the process relations, not only between Natal Afrikaners and their government, but also between the military and civil authorities were strained and at times soured.⁸²

Despite such extreme Martial Law conditions only a handful of Natal Afrikaners were actually found guilty of transgression.⁸³ H Rabe, MF Scheepers and BJ Badenhorst of Dundee were arrested for unpunctuality in reporting themselves. Fortunately for them they were only reprimanded.⁸⁴ Less fortunate were four rebels who had served sentences for high treason. JC Nel, JH Hattingh, LP de Jager and JW Rall were arrested on 22 November 1901 for being at the Pietermaritzburg Station without passes. They were handed over to the civil authorities who fined each man £1 or 10 days imprisonment. The fines were paid the same day.⁸⁵

8.2 The impact of Louis Botha's second invasion of Natal on Natal Afrikaners

The most intense period of persecution of Natal Afrikaners under Martial Law, however, was the period surrounding the second invasion of the Zululand part of Natal by General Louis Botha in September 1901. The Zululand section of the Natal border with the Transvaal proved very porous. Small groups of Boers from the Vryheid district continuously raided into Zululand, and invariably the Zulu reciprocated. The invading Boers generally left the property of Proviso B Afrikaners untouched and often even visited them. Such encounters had to be reported under Martial Law, and on two occasions, 5 and 19 February 1901, Andries L Pretorius informed the Melmoth magistrate that a patrol of two armed Boers had visited the house of Mrs AL Pretorius.⁸⁶ Similar visits were made to the parliamentarian Vaal Dirk Uys. Uys's problems started when five armed Boers,

78. The raid was presumably to get hold of some horses for on 4.4.1902 a notice went out to numerous farms, including Slaaf, stating that only one horse, except for mares in foal and young stock under three years, may be kept. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Notice Captain FS Reeves, 4.4.1902.

79. PAR, 1/KRK: Application by PJ Nel for a pass to proceed to the farm Slaaf to get married, 7.3.1901-5.4.1902.

80. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 10.6.1902.

81. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.6.1901, p.512.

82. C Townshend, Martial Law: Legal and Administrative problems of civil emergency in Britain and the Empire, 1800-1940, *The Historical Journal*, 25/1, 1982, pp.164-194.

83. See Appendix for D a list of Natal Afrikaners who were apprehended under Martial Law.

84. Cd. 981: Papers relating to the administration of Martial Law in South Africa, p.191.

85. PAR, CSO 1692: Summary of convictions under Martial Law during December 1901, 21.12.1901.

86. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Letters AL Pretorius to magistrate Melmoth, 5.2.1901 and 19.2.1901.

including two rebels, Theunis Pretorius and Charles Liversage, arrived at his house on 5 February 1901. The spokesman for the group, Pretorius, informed Uys that they knew he was one of the peace commissioners who had been distributing Kitchener's proclamation to two Havermann's and a Potgieter on the border between the ZAR and Zululand. They threatened that if he was found near the ZAR border he would be shot and if he left his farm he would be arrested. After helping themselves to refreshments from his house the men rode off. Fearing that they might loot his cattle Uys, who had no labourers or a horse available, left on foot to collect his stock. In the meantime a thunderstorm had started to rage and Uys had to wait until it passed before he could proceed to inform the police at Melmoth of the incident. During this time the posse of Boers cut the telegraph line in two places, raided 80 cattle belonging to WF White, and drove them to the Transvaal. Because it took Uys such a long time to report the incident, and since his cattle were left untouched, he was under suspicion. This allegation alarmed the governor and attorney-general since it had "an ugly appearance" and they suggested that Uys explain his actions. Uys repeated his earlier statement and the second time around, possibly to prevent political embarrassment similar to that suffered with the arrest of another Afrikaner MLC, CJ Labuschagne, it found favour with the authorities.⁸⁷

The raiding into Zululand became so problematic that the chief magistrate and civil commissioner of the area, CR Saunders, wanted the volunteer forces called out again. He believed that a raid on Melmoth and then across the Tugela into Natal was quite possible since that was the only part of Zululand inhabited by Europeans, most of which were Afrikaners. These Natal Afrikaners, as far as Saunders was concerned, were in cahoots with the Transvalers and kept them well informed of what was happening. Preventing such communication proved impossible since the small Natal Police force stationed in the area could not stop the free movement of groups of Boers across the border. The only remedy for the situation was thus "to make arrangements under which all the Boers near Melmoth could be removed from their farms and kept under strict watch well out of that District, (to) warn them that such arrangements are being made and that if the raiding continue (d) they will be removed. I have little doubt that if they choose to do so they could persuade their friends in the Vryheid District to desist from violating this border..."⁸⁸ The only person to be removed, however, was Dewalt J Pretorius of Waterfall, Proviso B. He was deported to Pietermaritzburg as an undesirable by the commanding officer in Zululand.⁸⁹ In the meantime the cross-border guerrilla warfare, especially to loot cattle, continued and reached a climax when freebooter status was officially bestowed on Colonel H Bottomley and his agents to loot Boer livestock for personal gain.⁹⁰

87. PAR, ZA 33: Documents relating to the looting of the cattle of WF White and the conduct of DC Uys, 7.2.1901-6.3.1901.

88. PAR, ZA 33: Letter CR Saunders to officer troops commanding, Zululand, 15.2.1901.

89. JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe...*, p.35.

90. For the raids across the Transvaal/Zululand border see: JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe ...* pp.2-12.

The small scale Boer invasions into Proviso B and Zululand were soon enlarged. General Louis Botha, in an attempt to divert the war from the Transvaal by opening up a new front, started in September 1901 with a second invasion of Natal. When thwarted by the swollen Buffalo River, the presence of a large British force and the British occupation of the drifts on the said river, Botha decided not to invade the Dundee district. After defeating the British at Blood River Poort on 17 September 1901, his commando crossed the virtually unguarded border into Zululand just north of Nqutu. By now the British Army was well aware of Botha's intentions and the defence of Natal was strengthened by calling out the volunteer regiments while three columns pursued the invading Boers. The invasion was halted at Itala and Fort Prospect which allowed the British time to secure the drifts into Umvoti county on the lower Tugela. By the end of September 1901 the invasion was called off.⁹¹ This unsuccessful invasion of Botha's had a detrimental effect on many Natal Afrikaners.

When information of Botha's intentions reached the military and Natal authorities, they immediately acted against Natal Afrikaners in the districts south of the Tugela to prevent them from supporting the invading force. All wagons in the Weenen/Estcourt area were commandeered by the military. A list was also compiled of the number of horses with a view to requisitioning them all for military purposes.⁹² Inspector Mardall of the Natal Police, on request, informed the military that 180 people under police surveillance in the Estcourt district could possibly join Louis Botha's force. He was also convinced, after receiving information from a surrendered burgher, that the rebels who had completed their time were the most dangerous since fining and imprisonment had not made them more loyal than before. Instead, he suspected that they harboured a spirit of resentment. Mardall also said that beacon fires as well as suspicious night movements of local Afrikaners had been reported in the district. Owing to the proximity of the forces of Botha, Lt-Col JH Sim, commanding officer of troops in Ladysmith, ordered Capt Breves of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers to inform Mardall to arrest several Natal Afrikaners and POWs on parole who resided north of the Bushmans River. As a result three surrendered burghers, ten time-expired rebels, and six suspected rebels awaiting trial, were arrested in the Estcourt and Weenen districts and taken to the Tin Town POW Camp in Ladysmith. A further eight time-expired rebels were informed that they had to proceed to Ladysmith and report to the staff officer by 23 September 1901.⁹³

The Natal Afrikaners involved, and especially James T Howell and JG (Koos) Hattingh, did not

91. For a comprehensive account of the invasion, see: DM Moore, *General Louis Botha's second expedition to Natal during the Anglo-Boer War, September-October 1901, passim*; CM Carter, Itala - monument to valor, *Military History Journal*, 2(1), June 1971.

92. PAR, SNA I/1/294: Letter Inspector Mardell to chief commissioner of police, 26.9.1901.

93. PAR, SNA I/1/294: List and correspondence of Natal Afrikaners arrested by order of the military, 19.9.1901-11.10.1901; PAR, PM 90: Correspondence regarding the imprisonment of certain Natal Afrikaners, 21.11.1901-22.11.1901.

accept their removal without a fight. Neither of these men had been convicted of high treason but were suspected of wielding great influence over the local Afrikaners and having had close ties with the Boers during the first invasion of Natal. The two men immediately sent a telegram to Prime Minister Albert Hime asking him to intervene and secure their release. With typical Natal bureaucratic efficiency the matter was not dismissed out of hand. Instead, Inspector Mardall was asked for an explanation. Mardall replied that under Martial Law he had merely acted on orders of the military without questioning them. He could therefore not be held accountable for the removals. Acting on the information supplied, Hime informed the two men that since they were ordered into Tin Town by the military under Martial Law, the colonial government could not interfere.⁹⁴

Being the most politically literate of the Afrikaners removed, Hattingh and Howell, with the support of a local politician GR Richards,⁹⁵ again took up their case. In his correspondence Hattingh maintained that the military were prepared to discharge him providing the instruction came from the Natal Government. He also made it clear that he would suffer economically if he remained in prison much longer. Hattingh claimed “the full rights of a British Subject and that freedom and liberty I have enjoyed under my Govt which I am called upon to forfeit through no apparent cause of mine...” As far as he was concerned he was removed because of the enmity that existed between him and Mardall. On his part Howell complained that his removal, influenced by Mardall, happened just prior to the general election. On application to the commandant for a pass to proceed to Weenen to cast his vote, he was refused. Howell therefore demanded his “immediate release, a full enquiry, satisfaction and compensation for all personal, and material injury sustained owing to my removal from my farm, family and occupation.” The Natal Government stood by Inspector Mardall and again informed the two gentlemen that they had been removed at the instance of the military and not the inspector. For their part the military denied that the removal of the men had anything to do with the election and that they only intended to detain the men until the treason trials in the area were concluded, for they feared the intimidation of witnesses.⁹⁶

The opinions expressed by Hattingh and Howell were shared by two local politicians, FR Moor and HD Winter, who relied heavily on the Afrikaner vote. The pair complained to the prime minister that several voters of the Weenen area had been removed by the military. Since no evidence existed

94. PAR, SNA I/1/294: Correspondence regarding the detention of JT Howell and JG Hattingh, 23.9.1901-26.9.1901.

95. GR Richards, a member of the Legislative Assembly, bombarded Prime Minister Hime with letters on 18.10.1901 (two letters), 21.10.1901, 23.10.1901 and 1.11.1901 in which he pleaded the cases of Howell and Hattingh. PAR, 1/SNA I/1/294. The reason for the active involvement of Richards could possibly be traced to a letter from E Hattingh, the wife of JG, to FR Moor in which she stated that the reason her husband was removed a punitive measure because he had worked so hard to have Richards, Moor and Winter returned as members of the Legislative Assembly. See PAR, SNA I/1/294: Letter E Hattingh to FR Moor, 18.10.1901.

96. PAR, 1/SNA: I/1/294: Correspondence regarding the detention of JG Hattingh and JT Howell, 15.10.1901-17.10.1901.

against them they requested Hime to use his influence to allow the voters to cast their votes.⁹⁷ Hime was not desirous for the government to make representations to the military on behalf of individuals. His suggestion was thus that the persons in question make their own representations to the commandant of Ladysmith.⁹⁸ In this way Hime skilfully managed to sidestep the issue for he knew that any petition to the military would fail.

Two months later, despite the dissolution of the threat of Botha's invasion, seven Natal Afrikaners, JG Hattingh, JT Howell, Jacob and Frank van der Merwe, JS Maritz, P Trichardt, and Izak Meyer, were still imprisoned. Again Howell and Hattingh complained to the Natal Government who now immediately enquired from the military why the men were still detained. Without explanation the military released the Afrikaners from Tin Town but, they were not willing to allow them to return to their farms.⁹⁹ At this point FR Moor, who had tried to play both sides, stepped in and suggested that if the Afrikaners in question were prepared to furnish substantial security in the form of bonds on their properties they should be allowed to return to their farms.¹⁰⁰ If this did not happen, Moor feared that the detention would cause the men to become sullen and discontent. With enough time having elapsed since the threatened invasion Prime Minister Hime and the cabinet supported Moor's suggestion and asked Governor McCallum to relay the idea to the military. McCallum, unlike in the case of the English farmers who wanted to return to their Upper Tugela homes, did not support the idea because he was adamant that the civil authorities should not interfere with military discretion, especially when it involved Afrikaners. The Natal Government disagreed with McCallum and they felt that once the military had considered the merit of each case and found that there were no serious military reasons for imprisonment, the Afrikaners involved should be allowed to go home, on condition that they provide the necessary security. The pressure exerted by the Natal Government on the governor eventually won the day and he relented and approached the military with the request. Surprisingly the military capitulated and agreed to free the men on the conditions outlined by Moor and the Natal Government.¹⁰¹

As had happened in the Weenen county, the military in the Umvoti county, under Lt-Col GA Mills of the 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers, immediately took steps in case General Louis Botha should raid into the district of his birth. As a first step the local rifle associations were informed of the possible invasion and warned that they could be called out. Indicative of the distrust of Afrikaners it was not

97. PAR, PM 24: Telegram FR Moor and HD Winter to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.9.1901.

98. PAR, PM 24: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to FR Moor and HD Winter, 25.9.1901.

99. PAR, PM 90: Letter JS Maritz to FR Moor, 4.12.1901; PM 90: Requests by CP Hattingh and WC Zietsman to return home, 3.12.1901-5.12.1901.

100. PAR, PM 90: Requests by CP Hattingh and WC Zietsman to return home, 3.12.1901-5.12.1901.

101. PAR, SNA I/1/294: Correspondence regarding the detention of JG Hattingh, JT Howell and other Afrikaners, 15.10.1901-8.1.1902; PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1901; PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 29.11.1901, p.732.

deemed desirable to issue the same warning to them.¹⁰² Mills was especially worried about the actions of Paul Hansmeyer, the brother-in-law of General Louis Botha, whom he suspected of keeping up correspondence with the commandant-general. He therefore requested that a strict censorship of mail be undertaken in Umvoti county. The Natal Police, correctly so, pointed out that this would be illegal.¹⁰³ He was also informed that such a step would be fruitless since letters were not passed through the post-office but forwarded by hand to the Boers by Natal Afrikaners living on the Zululand border.¹⁰⁴

Martial Law, however, enabled Lt-Col Mills to act in other ways against Afrikaners in the Umvoti county suspected of having pro-Boer sentiments and who could possibly aid Botha. On receiving intelligence from Mrs Otto that Afrikaners residing in the Mooi River area were disloyal,¹⁰⁵ Mills instructed Daniel Petrus Boshoff to proceed to Pietermaritzburg where he was charged for using seditious language and harbouring the enemy. Further efforts to obtain information about Boshoff by an intelligence officer failed as the Afrikaners in the Mooi River area closed ranks and became very reticent.¹⁰⁶ Boshoff, who ended up residing in the boarding house of his daughter, Mrs Braham, in Pietermaritzburg was very bitter about his arrest as he felt the charges against him were false. He even considered instituting legal action against the military authorities for illegal arrest.¹⁰⁷

Acting on information provided by an Afrikaner loyalist from Greytown, Jan (TJ) Nel, and without informing the magistrates of either the Umvoti or the Kranskop districts, Mills removed the following individuals to Pietermaritzburg: FE van Rooyen (stock inspector), LMJ van Rooyen jnr (Wonderfontein), PH van Rooyen (Good Hope), Ds GS Malan (Greytown), John Keyter (Frogmore), LMJ and PJ Nel (Ongegund), TJ, JPC and PR Nel (Spitzkop), AJJ Nel (Berning), LL Nel (Greytown) and JC Martens, LJ Potgieter and JP van Rooyen (all of Broedershoek). The men had no idea why they were removed but attributed it to the fact that they did not instantly comply with earlier commandeering orders issued for their wagons and oxen.¹⁰⁸ According to Missionary Hofmeyr, who worked in the Umvoti area, the men were removed for collecting money for the support of the wives and children of the imprisoned rebels and the rebels themselves.¹⁰⁹ What irked

102. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.9.1901.

103. *Natal Witness*, 2.4.1900. WB Morcom QC, successfully litigated against the Natal Government, forcing them to end censorship in the rural areas of the Colony.

104. PAR, PM 90: Correspondence regarding the alleged correspondence between Paul Hansmeyer and General Louis Botha, 21.10.1901-23.10.1901.

105. PAR, SNA I/1/294: Letter Inspector Mardell to chief commissioner of police, 26.9.1901.

106. PAR, CSO 1683: Correspondence relative to DP Boshoff, 22.8.1901; CSO 1676: Minute paper with reference to the charges brought against DP Boshoff, 10.5.1901-20.5.1901; PAR, PM 21: Correspondence by JG and H Hattingh and KM and PJ de Jager asking to be allowed to reside in the Weenen district, 7.5.1901-24.6.1901; PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, and commandant, Pietermaritzburg, 3.7.1902-24.7.1901.

107. PAR, MJPW 117: Report by civil intelligence officer A Hershensohn, 15.5.1901.

108. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Complaint by JS van Rooyen to colonial secretary, 24.10.1901.

109. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, Introduction, p.392.

those removed the most was that they were relocated soon after the first rains, which meant that they could not plough and plant.¹¹⁰

On investigating the removals the magistrate of Kranskop concluded that most of the men were sent away as undesirables and because of minor disputes with the military, such as the loyalist John Keyter who had not instantly complied with a commandeering order and LMJ van Rooyen (jnr) who had a disagreement with the military over 25 sheep and 10 oxen that were commandeered from him.¹¹¹ This was only partly true. Mills had acted on information that the men were disloyal and that they would join the Boers if they were to invade.¹¹² Furthermore, this was the first time since the war had broken out that reliable evidence could be procured against Afrikaners from Umvoti, thanks to Jan Nel breaking the ranks. The military therefore possibly felt that they had to act.

Two of the men who were removed, JC Martens and JP van Rooyen, did not take kindly to the fact that they were sent to reside in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. In a letter to the colonial secretary they made their sentiments clear:

We have been told we can live in the Boer Refugee Camp in a Bell Tent at Government expense - we are not able to do this without being subjected to great inconveniences, and we desire to live at an Hotel in Maritzburg and we beg to request that an allowance may be made to enable us to do this, and we shall be glad if you will deal with this matter or forward this application to the proper Authorities in order that it may be dealt with. Apart from the inconvenience of living in the Boer Camp it is distasteful to us at the present time to have to live amongst Dutch Refugees.

Not surprisingly their request was rejected.¹¹³

The removal of the men from the Umvoti county infuriated several leading local Afrikaners who believed the treatment was unfair. A father and son, LMJ and JS van Rooyen of Welgevonden, felt so strongly about the matter that they were prepared to stand security to the amount of £10 000 for six of the men.¹¹⁴ The strongest petition for the liberation of the men came from Theuns (TJ) Nel a former MLA. Nel made it clear that the men in question, as landowners, all had vested interests in the Colony and valued the protection and privilege provided by the British Empire. It would therefore have been unwise for them to be disloyal at that stage of the war. He proceeded to point out that the men in question had complied when wagons, oxen and horses were commandeered, and would suffer economically if they remained away from home for much longer.¹¹⁵

110. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Complaint by JS van Rooyen to colonial secretary, 24.10.1901.

111. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Petition by JP Nel to magistrate Kranskop, 29.10.1901.

112. PAR, SNA I/4/9: Report Lt-Col GA Mills to DAAG, Natal, 11.10.1901.

113. PAR, CSO 1687: Correspondence regarding the request by JC Martens and JP van Rooyen, 5.10.1901-7.10.1901.

114. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Complaint by JS van Rooyen to colonial secretary, 24.10.1901.

115. PAR, PM 24: Letter TJ Nel to Prime Minister AH Hime, 30.10.1901.

Prime Minister Hime, in response to Nel's petition, advised the GOC that the men in question should be allowed to return home since he thought: "They had a severe lesson." A month later, after the Natal Police had unsuccessfully investigated the complaints against them, the GOC allowed all the men except LL and TJ Nel and PH and FE van Rooyen to return home.¹¹⁶ This brought an end to their six week exile to Pietermaritzburg.¹¹⁷ Soon afterwards the remaining prisoners, except for JE van Rooyen, were released and allowed to return home.¹¹⁸

The shadow of the military prowess of Louis Botha continued to fall over Natal. It was feared that Botha, who was active in the Vryheid district during early 1902, might break through and attack the Colenso Concentration Camp to liberate the male inhabitants as Beyers had done when the camp was still located in Pietersburg.¹¹⁹ Rumours of such an attack did the rounds in both the concentration camp and within Botha's commando. As a result the authorities immediately decided to move the camp to Pinetown.¹²⁰ This meant, that this time around, Republican civilians bore the brunt for Botha's military exploits and not the Natal Afrikaners as had happened previously.

8.3 Education, language and politics under Martial Law

Martial Law and other wartime measures, as explained thus far in this chapter, not only resulted in the banning and removal of Natal Afrikaners, and related hardships, but also impacted on the social, political and educational aspects of their lives as will be illuminated below.

Education was one of the spheres of Afrikaner life that suffered because of wartime sentiments and Martial Law. The instruction of Dutch was already under pressure prior to the Anglo-Boer War, and the conflict had a further negative impact on the already fragile status of the language.¹²¹ In his report for 1899 the inspector of schools for Dutch in Natal and translator to General Redvers Buller, JH Kleinschmidt, stated that 150 pupils studied Dutch, eighty of which were at Durban High School. Yet only two of the learners, the Jansen brothers, were Afrikaners.¹²² The others took the language as an alternative to French rather than as a desire to learn the language. In the Afrikaner stronghold of Greytown only 37 out of 117 learners enrolled in the government school studied Dutch. This happened despite the fact that 70% of the learners in the school were Afrikaners. In 1901 matters

116. PAR, PM 24: Minute paper regarding the removal of certain men from Umvoti county, 2.11.1901-7.12.1901.

117. *De Kerkbode*, 12.12.1901.

118. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Complaint by JS van Rooyen to colonial secretary, 4.12.1901.

119. PRO, CO 179/223: Telegram Governor HE McCallum to Lord Kitchener, 27.2.1902.

120. E Neethling, *Should we forget*, pp.216-217.

121. For pre-war position of Dutch, see pp.5-11.

122. Ernest (EG) Jansen was an excellent scholar and sportsman who was to rise to political prominence as a tireless fighter for Afrikaans culture in Natal. He became the first Afrikaner to fill the role of governor-general for South Africa. PJJ Prinsloo, *E.G. Jansen se rol in die belang van die Afrikaners in Natal*. D Litt-thesis, PU for CHE, 1987, *passim*.

took a turn for the worse when in the collective examination for Natal only six out of more than 500 candidates wrote the Dutch exam, one less than when Dutch was first examined in 1891. All six candidates were girls from the Afrikaner private school, Greytown Seminary. In his damning report Kleinschmidt stated:

Many thousands of pounds sterling have been devoted by Government during the last decade to support the teaching of Dutch and there is nothing to show that any advantage whatever has accrued to any one from the expenditure. The Government support (£750-1000 a year) was originally given because it was contended that children of Dutch parentage had no opportunity of acquiring the language they wished to learn, viz: - Dutch. My experience of 11 years in Natal has shown that 3% of the Dutch speaking children, on whose behalf the demand for Government aid was made, have availed themselves of that aid when it was given and continued for ten years.¹²³

As a result of this report the Natal Government withdrew its funding for the teaching of Dutch in government schools from the 1900/1901 and 1901/1902 budgets. This step alarmed Governor Henry McCallum who feared that it would “intensify racial feelings” but the reasons provided by Kleinschmidt served to allay his fears. The sober summing up of this decision by the colonial office namely, “that the commercial value of English is too great for Dutch to compete without the stimulus of political agitation”, hit the nail on the head because Dutch was by this stage already a foreign language to most Afrikaners.¹²⁴ Thereafter matters took a turn for the worse for Dutch education and in early 1901, EG Jansen claimed that Dutch was no longer taught at Durban High School.¹²⁵

The loyalist *De Natal Afrikaner*, which strove to enhance the position of Dutch, initially did not want to comment on the fact that no funding was allocated to the teaching in and of the language for 1900/1901. The newspaper regarded the racial tension in the Colony as too high to debate the issue, while it also believed that nothing would come from protests. *De Natal Afrikaner* could, however, not resist the temptation to link the budgetary decision to the upcoming high treason trials by pointing out that it was a very un-English way of dealing with perpetrators of the law to punish the accused before they were tried and found guilty. *De Natal Afrikaner*, furthermore, regarded the decision as an indication that all 5 000 Natal Afrikaners were branded as disloyal and were being punished for the actions of a suspected 1 000 people who were yet to be tried. The newspaper did not regard this as “English fair play” and expressed the hope that the matter of Dutch language education would be reconsidered for the 1901/1902 financial year.¹²⁶

This did not happen and a year later, in *De Natal Afrikaner* of 14 May 1901, the editor, Joshua

123. PAR, PM 17: Report on Dutch instruction in government schools by JH Kleinschmidt, 29.5.1901.

124. PRO, CO 179/218: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 11.6.1901.

125. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter EG Jansen to HF Schoon, 3.1.1901.

126. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 26.6.1900.

Hershensohn, warned the Natal Government that the policy it was following would play into the hands of the Natal Afrikaner who were sympathetic to the Afrikaner Bond. The newspaper again pointed out that the Afrikaners were treated unfairly with the removal from the budget of funding allocated to Dutch instruction. In contrast substantial amounts were allocated to Indian, Coloured and African education, and white English learners could receive instruction in their mother tongue. The loyalist broadsheet made it clear that the critical article appeared for two reasons: to see justice and fairness done to Natal Afrikaners who did not deserve such treatment because some of their kinsman were disloyal, and to counteract the Afrikaner Bond which was already functioning in Natal.¹²⁷

When Theuns Nel, in June 1901, attempted to raise the treatment of Dutch language education in the Legislative Assembly, he was prevented from doing so by a Mr Hitchins who suggested that the meeting proceed to the next point on the agenda. His suggestion was accepted by 17 votes to 16. *De Natal Afrikaner* proceeded to lambast the 17 members stating that their behaviour was shameful and, vengeful, and that it contributed to the already tense situation between the two white groups. Editor Hershensohn even speculated that the 17 members were able to take such a vote since so many Afrikaner voters had been disenfranchised due to treasonable offences. In an attempt to exert pressure, and to indicate who stood where on the matter, the names of those who voted for and against the issue, were published.¹²⁸

Even the jingoistic *Natal Advertiser* could not agree with the 17 members and regarded their behaviour as counter-productive. The newspaper argued that a knowledge of Dutch was necessary for anyone residing in South Africa and that the matter needed to be debated along economic principles and not political emotions.¹²⁹ The policy of the Natal Government towards Dutch and the prevention of Theuns Nel to table his motion also came under fire in the *Het Zuid-Westen* in the Cape Colony. The paper also regarded the attitude towards Dutch as counterproductive especially since English was such a dominant language in Natal. The *Het Zuid-Westen* argued that Dutch would have died a natural death in Natal but would now be revived since every self respecting Afrikaner would, in the light of the persecution of the language, cling to Dutch and use the policies aimed at it as an anti-English stick.¹³⁰

The prediction by *Het Zuid-Westen* was soon fulfilled. LL Nel of Greytown was adamant that he

127. PAR, CSO 1676: *De Natal Afrikaner*, 14.5.1901 translated into English for the Natal authorities; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 14.5.1901.

128. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 11.6.1901.

129. *Natal Advertiser*, 7.6.1901.

130. *Het Zuid-Westen*, 13.6.1901 as quoted in *De Natal Afrikaner* of 2.7.1901. An example of the impact of the war on language is the case of Anna Barry. Before the war they spoke English at home, but after a traumatic experience at the hands of British soldiers she decided to become Afrikaans speaking. A Barry, *Ons Japie. Dagboek gehou gedurende die*

wanted to be served in Dutch at all times. As a result he had quarrels with the postmaster of Greytown and the clerk of the magistrate in Kranskop. What drove Nel over the edge was a letter in Dutch, dated 23 November 1900, which he had addressed to the magistrate of Kranskop regarding an African in his employment. When he did not receive a speedy reply he stormed into the office of the clerk of the magistrate, Kirkman, demanding an explanation. A heated exchange followed during which Nel demanded to be served in Dutch while Kirkman insisted that it was a British Colony with English as the official language and he would not learn Dutch for the gratification of Nel. When requested to produce Nel's letter Kirkman was unable to do so. Nel left in a huff and subsequently sent a strongly worded letter to the Natal authorities complaining of the treatment he had received from the "petty fogging youth" and enquired whether all Afrikaners were to be treated with such contempt. An investigation into the matter showed that Kirkman had placed Nel's letter in a safe to await the return of the local magistrate, Adamson, who spoke and wrote Dutch. Unfortunately for Kirkman he forgot about the letter thus causing the row. Magistrate Adamson chose to ignore this evidence and concluded that Nel had entered the office in a foul mood because of the direction the war had taken. In addition to this Nel had also attended a funeral the same morning and had a heated debate with LMJ van Rooyen because the latter was transporting an Englishman in his trap. Nel was consequently informed of Kirman's oversight and assured that all government employees were expected to act in a civil manner towards members of the public, but that this needed to be reciprocal. Nel did, however, manage to secure a small victory for Dutch as he was informed that a clerk who could speak Dutch had been appointed to the office of the Kranskop magistrate.¹³¹ Nel's outburst did also forced the Natal Government to put a language policy in place when dealing with their Afrikaner subjects. While the were willing to accept letters in Dutch, they would be answered in English.¹³²

Simultaneously as the funds for Dutch language education were withdrawn, Afrikaner teachers in government schools found their conditions of employment increasingly difficult. Joachim van der Merwe, a teacher at the government school in Greytown, was first suspended and then dismissed from service.¹³³ His problems started when the military authorities intercepted a letter he wrote to his family at New Bethesda in the Cape Colony. Van der Merwe could not give a satisfactory explanation to the education authorities of the political sentiments expressed in the letter and was subsequently discharged.¹³⁴ Undaunted he started his own private school which soon had 96 learners, all "Boeren jongens." Another intercepted letter again brought trouble to his door. One of his learners, JR, wrote to a friend in Bethulie in the OFS, Jan Kruger. JR admired Van der Merwe

Driejarige Oorlog, p.5.

131. PAR, CSO 2591: Correspondence regarding LL Nel's complaint that his communication in Dutch was ignored, 11.2.1901-6.3.1901.

132. PAR, CSO 1666: Request by LM Swanepoel that he be corresponded with in Dutch, 11.12.1900-15.1.1901.

133. PAR, AGO I/8/70: Letter Minister of Education H Bale to minister of lands and works, 27.4.1900.

134. PAR, EC 26: Note Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 2.6.1900.

greatly and explained to his friend that “als ons gaan dril dan trekken wij onze jersey en een zwart broek aan, aan onze jersey is genaai deze letters O.V.S. P.R...jij weet wat de O.V.S. meent en de P.R. meent Penkop Regement...wij zijn nog Blikoore.” In other childlike news JR boasted “Ik hebt een mooi nooi” while he also informed Jan Kruger “dat jiy niet my cricket set kan krijgen...” The letter angered the authorities and resulted in a full examination into the activities of Van der Merwe, but the investigation proved very little. Two independent sources testified that no drilling was carried out and that the boys did not wear a uniform. Neither could any proof be obtained that Van der Merwe was imbuing his learners with anti-British and pro-Republican feelings. The English community of Greytown was, however, adamant that Van der Merwe was vehemently anti-British and given to disloyal and racial hate talk to his compatriots. The boys who attended his school were described as “the sons of the most rabid Dutchmen in the place” and included the sons of Dominee Malan. Since the contents of the letter could not be verified the Natal authorities approached the military to use Martial Law to have Van der Merwe removed to the OFS where he originally came from.¹³⁵ General Hildyard, the GOC, was not prepared to deport Van der Merwe but was willing to have him relocated in Natal and in doing so break up his school. This second prize was not good enough for the Natal authorities and they decided to drop the case.¹³⁶

Van der Merwe was not the only government-employed teacher to fall foul of the authorities. RK van Dam, a teacher at the Boys Model Primary School in Loop Street, Pietermaritzburg, got into trouble for telling the boys in his class that it was not true that any of the Boers had retired under a flag of truce after the Battle of Talana. He also wiped the blackboard with a red, white and blue dress flag. As a result eight boys of the school signed a statement against him. A letter from Dominee Wiese of Noodsberg, who knew Van Dam as someone “in the habit of disseminating treasonable sentiments” from when he was a school teacher in the area, convinced him to hand in his resignation.

This was not the end of Van Dam’s quarrels with the Natal authorities. On 3 October 1899, a day after he had submitted his application for naturalization, he unlawfully joined the Pietermaritzburg Rifle Association. When the association found out that he was not yet a British subject he was asked to resign and was subsequently accused of attending a meeting of the leaders and sub-leaders of the rifle association called by the magistrate. This was untrue, but he was nevertheless arrested as a spy - only to be released soon afterwards. In the meantime a letter of naturalisation had been prepared for

135. The fear of the Natal authorities can be understood when considering the immense power nationalistic teachers wielded. A point in case is the experiences of a Natal student by the surname of Searle. He arrived at Victoria College in Stellenbosch a “good loyalist.” He apparently became so indoctrinated by the views of two professors, Marais and Neethling, that he became a rabid pro-Boer. C Venter, Stellenbosch tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog, in *Historia*, 44 (2), November 1999, pp.365-389.

136. PAR, GH 562: Correspondence regarding the accusations of disloyalty against J van der Merwe, 4.7.1901-13.9.1901.

Van Dam but when the knowledge of his arrest came to light the letter was suspended. With no prospects left in Pietermaritzburg, he took up a position as a teacher on RJJ van Rooyen's farm Buffelshoek, near Weenen. Eleven months later Prime Minister Hime decided that Van Dam was a problem case and convinced both the military authorities and the governor that it was necessary to transfer him back to the capital so that he could be watched. By now Van Dam must have had enough of the unaccommodating attitude of the British. He took 13 days to make his way from Weenen to Pietermaritzburg. On arrival he was told to remain in town and report to the authorities twice a week. Van Dam promptly booked himself into the "The Langham Hotel" on the account of the military. After residing in the hotel for more than two weeks he applied to be allowed to return to the employment of Van Rooyen. His hotel bill was attached to his application with a promise that further hotel bills would be forwarded as they were presented to him. The military refused to pay the bill and it had to be settled by the Natal authorities on whose instruction Van Dam was transferred to Pietermaritzburg. In reaction the Natal authorities swiftly transferred Van Dam to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.¹³⁷

The pressures Natal Afrikaners experienced in the fields of language and education spilled over into the political arena. On the political front no supra-political organization existed that could represent the aspirations and views of Natal Afrikaners and, whatever existed in terms of political organization, was destroyed by the war. Despite the lack of a political organization there were always Afrikaner representatives elected to the Legislative Assembly. This changed in the wartime general election that took place in late 1901. Several Afrikaners were named as candidates in the Umvoti county. Gert Thomas van Rooyen of Pinedale was nominated by 27 voters, of which all but two were Afrikaners; Theunis Jacobus Nel of Craiglands received 38 nominations, all but one from Afrikaners, while Theunis Jacobus Nel of Waterfall received 22 nominations, of which only one came from an English person. In contrast WA Deane received more than 50 nominations with two coming from Afrikaners and Major George Leuchars of the UMR received more than 60 nominations, six from Afrikaners.¹³⁸ No Afrikaners were nominated in any of the other Dutch Districts like Weenen, Newcastle and Dundee.¹³⁹

In especially Weenen, candidates such as FR Moor and HD Winter relied heavily on the Afrikaner vote. As a result they refused to have their names attached to a confidential memorandum in which the Natal Government supported Kitchener's proclamation of 7 August 1901 regarding the banishment of certain Boers.¹⁴⁰ They were afraid that if their views on the banishment became

137. PAR, PM 21: Correspondence regarding RK van Dam, 3.10.1899-5.4.1901; *Natal Witness*, 9.11.1899 and 15.11.1899; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 21.11.1899.

138. PAR, 1/GTN 2/2/8: Nominations of candidates by the electors of Umvoti county, 9.9.1901.

139. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1901.

140. SB Spies, pp.269-278.

public they would lose the votes of the Afrikaners in their constituencies.¹⁴¹

During the election that followed 19 of the 39 members elected to the Legislative Assembly were completely new to political life, most of them volunteer officers returning from the front. Not only were old and respected members not re-elected, but for the first time since responsible government was acquired, no Natal Afrikaner was elected to the Legislative Assembly. Instead three Englishmen were elected in the Afrikaner political stronghold of Umvoti county.¹⁴² Not only was the Afrikaner vote weakened by the disenfranchisement of convicted rebels, but the political organization founded by Thomas Hannah to assist the Afrikaner candidates in the Legislative Assembly elections, failed to deliver.¹⁴³ The result of the election clearly reflected the prejudices against Afrikaner candidates inflamed by the war.

Afrikaners fared little better on local political levels. Two, Nel and AFW Laatz, served on the Greytown Local Board for the period 1899-1900. Six out of the twelve candidates for the next term of office, 1900-1901, were Afrikaners but only the loyalist, AFW Laatz, was elected.¹⁴⁴ The following year, 1901-1902, ten candidates were up for election but the number of Afrikaner candidates had shrunk to two and only JM van Rooyen was elected.¹⁴⁵

The political vindictiveness against Natal Afrikaners spread to beyond the formal political sphere into the realm of heritage. In Pietermaritzburg the local municipality adopted a resolution to change some street names of Afrikaner origin to English names, namely: Greyling to Gallway, Boom to Milner, Berg to Cornwall, Pietermaritz to York, Longmarket (Langmark) to King Edward and Loop to Queen.¹⁴⁶ Sanity however prevailed and the decision was not implemented.

8.4 Religion

In the absence of a supra-political organization amongst Natal Afrikaners, the DRC, the only church catering specifically for their needs, tended to fulfil this role. The DRC comprised five congregations served by the following dominees: DF Bosman - Newcastle, HF Schoon - Ladysmith, AM Murray - Weenen, GS Malan - Greytown and WP Rousseau - Pietermaritzburg. As in the Cape Colony, the DRC could not maintain a strictly neutral stance because of the sympathy most members had with the plight of the Republics. Furthermore, the dominee, as one of the few learned people in the community, who at times also provided guidance in political matters, could not remain outside

141. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 3.8.1901.

142. PRO, CO 179/220: Report on the general election that took place in Natal, 5.10.1901; *Natal Witness*, 27.9.1901 and 30.9.1901; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 8.10.1901 and 25.11.1901.

143. PAR, MJPW 117: Report by civil intelligence officer A Hershensohn, 25.5.1901.

144. *Natal Witness*, 1.6.1900.

145. PAR, 3/GTN 1/1/1/2: Records of the town clerk of Greytown, 29.5.1900 and 26.5.1902

146. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 16.4.1901.

the fold.¹⁴⁷ Consequently, both the ministers, and the physical church buildings, became targets of the British forces, while the activities of all the above-mentioned congregations were at one stage or another interrupted or influenced by the war.

One of the most severely disrupted congregations was that of Newcastle. Proof of this is the time that elapsed between church council meetings. The last meeting held prior to the war was on 10 July 1899. The next meeting was only held on 20 August 1902. Present at both meetings were Ds Bosman, Renier Dannhauser, Frans Fourie and HJ Davel.¹⁴⁸ Fortunately for the Newcastle congregation their main church building suffered very little damage. A rural church on the road to Dundee was, however, damaged. Bosman's claim for compensation was only submitted after 20 August 1902. The claim was rejected on the grounds that the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission had already been disbanded. His explanation that he had only received permission from the military to visit the building after the war ended was not considered.¹⁴⁹

Bosman and his family, as central figures in their community, did not manage to escape the wrath of the military authorities. Bosman himself was, after the retreat of the Boers, arrested and briefly detained by the military for forwarding a letter to General Buller which he addressed, Newcastle, ZAR.¹⁵⁰ His teenage son, Lindley Bosman, was less fortunate and was sentenced to a £50 fine or 4 months in prison for high treason. The war also impacted on the religious duties of Bosman and he was denied permission to preach to members of his congregation held in the Dundee Prison, while the curfew, which forced all Newcastle residents to remain indoors between 18:00 and 8:00, was particularly strictly enforced on him and his family.¹⁵¹ In a particularly petty incident, the commandant of Newcastle instructed him to clean up around the DRC, well knowing that the debris came from the businesses on either side of the church.¹⁵²

Despite these difficulties Bosman and his wife attempted to continue with their congregational duties as normally as possible. Every Sunday he conducted services to the small number who could attend, visited members of his congregation imprisoned in Newcastle, buried those who passed away,¹⁵³ and confronted the military about the distribution of goods donated by the Afrikaners of Greytown to the poor.¹⁵⁴ The Bosmans in particular went out of their way to support local

147. JH Snyman, *Die Afrikaner in Kaapland...*, pp.121-122.

148. NGKA: Kerkraadsnotules, Newcastle 1899-1902, (G47/1), pp.77-84.

149. PAR, CSO 1729: Claim for compensation on behalf of DRC, Newcastle by Ds DF Bosman, 7.4.1903-9.4.1903.

150. *De Kerkbode*, 31.5.1900.

151. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 30.8.1900, p.269.

152. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.9.1900, p.296.

153. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 31.5.1900, p.214; 19.8.1900, p.255; 31.8.1900, p.272.

154. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.10.1900, pp.356-360. While still under Boer occupation women of the Newcastle congregation, under Mrs Jan Meyer, forwarded a box of goods to the Ladysmith

Afrikaners arrested as rebels. Mrs Bosman regularly sent soup and other food to the prison in Newcastle,¹⁵⁵ while the poorest male members of the congregation were allowed to reside in the vestry of the church while awaiting trial.¹⁵⁶ They also took Missionary JJA Prozesky and his wife into their home when the former was granted parole.¹⁵⁷

The only other DRC congregation in Northern Natal was the one at Ladysmith which also served the Dundee district. Its minister, HF Schoon, kept a detailed diary of events throughout the war. He also fired off numerous letters to the Natal Government, the Ladysmith Town Council, and the military regarding matters that concerned the plight of his congregation members in particular, and Natal Afrikaners in general.¹⁵⁸ This did not endear him to the powers of the day and when the Siege of Ladysmith ended,¹⁵⁹ Schoon was accused by Lt-Col AE Sandbach of having communicated with the Boers. He and his family were therefore banned to Pietermaritzburg¹⁶⁰ where they rented a house at 288 Loop Street from Widow Berning for £11 per month.¹⁶¹ Schoon immediately set about serving the members of his congregation who like himself, were under Martial Law banned to Pietermaritzburg. He visited these members, conducted services alongside Ds WP Rousseau,¹⁶² met the family of the Boers brothers, the first rebels to be convicted by the Natal authorities, at the railway station and arranged accommodation for them.¹⁶³ The Schoons were eventually, after numerous requests, allowed to return to Ladysmith on 29 June 1900.¹⁶⁴

Here Schoon resumed his duties, conducted services - often mostly to women since the men were either in prison or were refused passes to travel, buried the dead and baptised children. As in Newcastle, Afrikaners who could not find accommodation in town were allowed to reside in the church building. Most of these duties were centred around Ladysmith. On one occasion he received permission to visit the members of his congregation in the Eshowe Prison,¹⁶⁵ but only received permission to visit the Dundee section of his congregation in January 1902. On this trip he baptised four children and married one couple. He could, however, not visit the Judith church which served

congregation, then under siege. This never reached its destination. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 9.6.1900, p.354.

155. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 20-25.5.1900, pp.190-205; 22.8.1900, p.259.

156. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 30.5.1900, pp.212-213.

157. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 27.5.1900, pp.209-210.

158. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary, *passim*.

159. For the experiences of Ds HF Schoon and members of his congregation during the Siege of Ladysmith, see pp.91-92.

160. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 6.4.1900, p.265.

161. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 21.3.1900, p.235.

162. *De Kerkbode*, 19.4.1900.

163. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 1.6.1900, pp.342-343.

164. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 29.6.1900, pp.382-383.

165. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 21.5.1901, p.502.

the Afrikaners of Helpmekaar.¹⁶⁶

HF Schoon's outspokenness regarding what he considered to be unfair, unjust and wrong made him unpopular with the authorities and the local English populace. Both groups possibly viewed him as the Afrikaner leader in the region. As a result he was terrorised on several occasions by mischief-makers. The first time this happened was with the fall of Pretoria. On this occasion stones were thrown at the houses in which Afrikaners banned to Pietermaritzburg resided, while "God save the Queen" was sang in front of the Schoon's house.¹⁶⁷ Such acts continued when Schoon returned to Ladysmith. On Christmas Eve 1900, stones were thrown on the roofs of Afrikaner houses in Ladysmith and on 1 January 1901 on the roofs of the parsonage and the church.¹⁶⁸ Stones were again thrown on the parsonage roof on 28 February 1901, possibly as a celebration of the relief of Ladysmith and again when Louis Botha invaded Zululand.¹⁶⁹

One matter that Schoon pursued with great vigour was the damage done to the church buildings of his congregation. The Ladysmith church and parsonage suffered extensive damage during the siege. The church was used as a hospital by the military which resulted in damage to numerous parts of the interior, while shellfire damaged the parapet, while forms, tables, cane chairs, church documents and the communion silver also disappeared from the church. Structural damage was also caused to the parsonage. Schoon's claim of £222.15 was paid out by the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission, but his claim for the salary he did not receive during the time was not acknowledged.¹⁷⁰ He could only visit the two church properties in the Biggarsberg, Kirkland, and Judith in July 1902 to determine the damaged caused but as he was forbidden by the military to leave the immediate area around Ladysmith. He claimed £25.14 for damaged done to Kirkland of which only £7.16 was paid out. The church at Judith, between Helpmekaar and Dundee, sustained extensive damage. Windows, the door, the pulpit, the organ, chandeliers, lamps, and numerous other church items were either stolen or vandalised. Of the total claim of £181.8 only £135 was paid out because it was deemed that the damage was caused by both Boer and British forces.¹⁷¹

Towards the end of January 1902 Schoon again clashed with the military. A town guard was formed in Ladysmith and all white men were expected to join. Schoon did not want to do this since he feared that once he joined and had again taken the oath of allegiance, he could be employed to fight against his own people. Lt-Col GH Sim did not regard this as a legitimate excuse and on 17 March

166. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 5.7.1900-13.1.1902, pp.386-758.

167. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 7.6.1900, p.353.

168. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 25.12.1900, pp.538-539; 1.1.1901, pp.552-553.

169. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 28.2.1901, p.589; 5.10.1901, p.703.

170. PAR, CSO 2926: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DRC, Ladysmith, 25.7.1900.

171. PAR, CSO 2926: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DRC, Ladysmith, 1.8.1902.

1902, Schoon was banned to Weenen to reside with Ds AM Murray. He could only return home on 30 June 1902, a month after the war had ended and when passes for travelling in Natal were no longer required.¹⁷²

Disruptions were also experienced by the Weenen DRC. By 31 December 1899 communication between the northern and southern sections of the congregation had been severed and was only re-established after the retreat of the Boers from Natal. Martial Law also made it difficult for Ds AM Murray to conduct his normal house visits during the early part of 1900 and he had to cancel his long leave.¹⁷³ The economic impact of the war also made it difficult for members of the congregation to pay their annual contributions. Despite their financial woes, the Weenen congregation managed to donate £15 to Ds Schoon for the costs incurred by the Ladysmith congregation for treating the Boer wounded from the Battle of Elandslaagte.¹⁷⁴

The greatest inconvenience suffered by the Weenen DRC was the damage and desecration by British soldiers to a church building located at the Little Tugela Bridge. Windows were smashed, chandeliers broken, organ notes ruined, the church silver and other odds and ends stolen, and in the pulpit Bible someone had written: "Cursed be the Dutch in all their doings." Murray, with considerable help from FR Moor (MLA), presented the matter to the military and the prime minister. Although the military camped about 500 metres from the church, they denied damaging the church and placed the blame on Africans or other ill-disposed people. Prime Minister Hime tasked Inspector Mardall of the Natal Police to investigate the matter. Predictably so the investigation failed to determine who caused the damage.

When informed about the damage to the church, Governor Hely-Hutchinson suggested that the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission compensate the church to the value of 75% of its loss. He also, possibly in an attempt to remove the spotlight from the atrocity, asked that the loyalty of Murray and the two local deacons, HJ Hattingh and Hans van der Merwe, be investigated. This time around, Mardall had no difficulty in finding evidence. He described Murray, in spite of the fact that his son fought on the British side, as "a Boer sympathiser, and though unable to trace any act of disloyalty on his part, I am of opinion he is a person not to be trusted." Murray was also accused of "preaching seditious sermons" and of being "very intimate with the prisoners in Goal charged with high treason." What tainted Murray even further was the fact that he had attended the congress of the Afrikaner Bond in Worcester.¹⁷⁵ No evidence of disloyalty could be produced against Van der

172. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 24.1.1902-30.6.1902, pp.762-830.

173. NGKA: Kerkraadsnotule, Weenen 1899-1902, (G70/14), pp.51-77.

174. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 30.10.1899, p.37, 23.3.1900, p.242.

175. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Correspondence regarding the permission sought by Ds AM Murray to travel to the Cape Colony, 7.1.1901-7.2.1901.

Merwe, but Mardall regarded all the Afrikaners, almost all of them Van der Merwes, who resided in proximity of the church with suspicion. Likewise no tangible evidence of disloyalty was found against Hattingh and Attorney-General Bale consequently refused to prosecute him. In the end the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission reimbursed the church to the value of £81.5.6.

This incident went a long way in showing up Natal colonial attitudes towards Natal Afrikaners as well as those of politicians like FR Moor who remained loyal towards their voters. The matter took all but ten months to be settled and in the margin of a letter from Murray to Moor, which was returned to the latter by the authorities after being submitted as evidence, the following remark was written by an official in the Natal civil service: "Mr Moor is very anti-English, and it is probable that he is making a good deal or mischief over this case." Moor took exception to this insult and with the support of Hime had it withdrawn.¹⁷⁶

Religious and pastoral work was also conducted by AM Murray for rebels incarcerated in the Weenen Prison, for those in the Eshowe Prison on 14 September 1901,¹⁷⁷ and for a period of a month in the concentration camp at Colenso.¹⁷⁸ With the approval and blessing of the Natal Burgher Camps Department, and his own congregation, Murray continued giving this service during May 1902 when the camp was moved to Pinetown.¹⁷⁹

The DRC congregation which suffered the least disruption was that of Greytown and as a result the church managed to continue functioning in an unhindered manner, that is apart from the six week period in late 1901 when Ds GS Malan and several leading members of the congregation were removed under Martial Law to Pietermaritzburg.¹⁸⁰ The war was generally not discussed during the church council meetings of the Greytown DRC. The meeting of 22 September 1900, however, was different since letters of brotherly love were sent to the sister congregations at Weenen, Ladysmith and Newcastle. The issue of the war was only raised again roughly a year later. At the meeting of 24 August 1901, S Martens suggested that a special collection be held so as to provide the "Afrikaansche gevangenen" in Pietermaritzburg with coffee.¹⁸¹

176. PAR, CSO 2590: Correspondence regarding the damage done to the DRC at Little Tugela River, 22.2.1900-28.11.1900; CSO 2926: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DRC, Weenen, 28.5.1900.

177. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.9.1901, p.525.

178. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Letter AM Murray to Magistrate M Matthews, 24.9.1900.

179. JM Wassermann, *The Pinetown Concentration Camp during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)*, p.12 and pp.64-68.

180. PAR, PM 24: Letter TJ Nel to Prime Minister AH Hime, 30.10.1901.

181. NGKA: Kerkraadsnotule, Greytown, 1899-1902, (G30/1), ongenommer en pp.1-18. An area of study that falls beyond this thesis that needs further research concerns the relationship between Natal Afrikaners and the DRC, especially since almost all the congregations constantly faced financial problems and regularly lost members to English churches or to no church at all. Should such research be undertaken the class differentiation within the various congregations needs investigation.

Although not reflected in the minutes of the church council meetings, the Greytown congregation endlessly supported fellow Afrikaners who suffered due to the war. Firewood and other gifts were sent to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp from time to time.¹⁸² Afrikaners in Northern Natal especially were recipients of charity from Greytown. On two occasions Ds Schoon received £5 from funds collected in Greytown for Afrikaners banned to Pietermaritzburg,¹⁸³ while foodstuffs were also forwarded to individual Afrikaners in need. In one such case Mrs JM Pieters of Paddafontein, Dundee, received a bag of flour, a pocket of sugar, a box of candles, and 20 pounds of coffee.¹⁸⁴ The Newcastle congregation also benefited from donations made by the Greytown Afrikaners. On 3 October 1900, 18 bags of flour, sugar, salt, rice, coffee, and soap arrived in the town. The military immediately confiscated the goods to prevent Afrikaners suspected of treason from distributing it. Requests by the Bosmans for the goods to be released did not sway the military. The provost marshal eventually used a wagon and members of the Natal Police to distribute the goods to the poorest of the poor amongst the Newcastle Afrikaners, some of whose clothes were in tatters and who were reduced to begging.¹⁸⁵

The most active DRC dominee was the elderly and sickly Ds WP Rousseau of the Pietermaritzburg congregation. Even before war broke out Rousseau attracted the attention of the authorities. In a despatch on 29 September 1899 to Joseph Chamberlain, Governor Hely-Hutchinson mentioned that: "A minister in the Dutch Reformed Church yesterday offered a gentleman of my acquaintance and his wife asylum in his parsonage which he said would be respected by the Boers when they capture Pietermaritzburg." Rousseau found it hard to believe that his comments, which were made in a "jocular" fashion in the privacy of his house, warranted a paragraph in an official despatch. According to Rousseau, when discussing the possibility of war with his English friends, he often made similar comments in jest.¹⁸⁶ Rousseau's explanation was attacked in a jingoistic letter by "Seriously Jocular" to the *Natal Witness*. The author failed to see the point of Rousseau's argument and preached "jocular confiscation of property, or disenfranchisement."¹⁸⁷

Whether the comments by Rousseau belied his true beliefs at the time, is difficult to determine, but he did rally to Afrikaners arriving in the town as POWs or suspected rebels. Less than two weeks after hostilities started Rousseau asked for permission to visit the POWs in the Pietermaritzburg Prison. This request had the support of Attorney-General Bale but the governor after consulting the military, denied Rousseau permission to visit any prisoners except the wounded.¹⁸⁸ This privilege

182. *De Kerkbode*, 13.6.1901.

183. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 30.10.1899, p.37; 10.9.1900, p.442.

184. PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Commission: Claim by JM Pieters, 18.2.1901.

185. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 3.10.1900-5.10.1900, pp.353-362.

186. *Natal Witness*, 15.3.1900.

187. *Natal Witness*, 16.3.1900.

188. PAR, CSO 1629: Application by WP Rousseau to visit Boer POWs, 22.10.1899-31.10.1899.

was, however, soon extended to include visiting rights to all POWs, including Natal Afrikaners sent down as suspected rebels.¹⁸⁹ From then on Rousseau held weekly prayer sessions, conducted the Sunday service and even buried a POW, Daniel du Plessis. Rousseau's wife and other ladies of the congregation provided coffee, tea, milk, cake and fruit, as well as a Sunday meal, for the POWs.¹⁹⁰

When the POWs, including some suspected Natal rebels, were transferred from Pietermaritzburg to the *Catalonia* anchored off the coast at Durban, Rousseau secured permission and a first class return rail ticket to visit these prisoners. Not only did Rousseau conduct religious services, but he also took gifts and money for some of the men. At the same time he continued attending to the spiritual needs of his own congregation, the wounded POWs in Pietermaritzburg, and when he buried a second one, Van Leggelo, his wife made a Transvaal flag to cover the coffin.¹⁹¹ Such a pro-Republican statement did not go down well with the military and he was accused of breaking the regulations when visiting the prisoners on board the *Catalonia*. At the same time, "A Loyal English Woman", in a letter to the governor, accused Rousseau of disloyalty and of having ammunition hidden in cases labelled milk.¹⁹² As a result of these accusations his permission to visit the prisoners and the free rail ticket were revoked.¹⁹³

It could rightfully be assumed that Rousseau's visiting rights were repealed because of growing anti-British sentiments that were possibly reflected in his sermons. The most possible cause of this was the death of Philip Cronjé in the Greenpoint POW Camp. Cronjé held a prayer meeting every night at a place near the camp fence where he could get enough light. On 30 April 1900, while the group was singing, a sentry gave an order to the group to move away from the fence. They did not hear the order and Cronjé was shot. The death of Cronjé touched Rousseau deeply. So much so that he wrote a poem, "De Dood van Cronjé", the first verse of which is quoted below:¹⁹⁴

Hebt gij gehoord van den dood van den jongen Cronjé?
Hy sneuvelde in Groene Punt Kamp
Met zyn Byebel in hand, toen hy daar langs den draad
Stond te zingen by't licht van den lamp.

Rousseau was, however, allowed to continue his religious work among the Natal rebels imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg which he continued doing until all the rebels were released under the general amnesty of 1903. As was the case with the POWs, Rousseau tirelessly tried to improve their lot. He

189. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 7.6.1900, p.353.

190. *De Kerkbode*, 19.4.1900.

191. *De Kerkbode*, 17.5.1900.

192. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Documents on the proceedings of and the investigation into WP Rousseau, 11.12.1899-16.12.1899.

193. PAR, MJPW 76: Withdrawal of permission to WP Rousseau to visit the *Catalonia*, 30.6.1900-4.7.1900.

194. NGKA: B 34, Poem, *De Dood van Cronjé*, 11.12.1902.

organised that they receive coffee, sugar and milk and on one occasion even bought £1 worth of meat out of his own pocket and had it cooked and divided amongst the 74 rebels.¹⁹⁵ In turn Mrs Rousseau also managed to alleviate the needs of some of the rebels with the donations she received from the Cape Colony.¹⁹⁶

Rousseau also ran into problems while attending to the spiritual needs of suspected Natal rebels. The trouble was caused by a pamphlet he distributed in prison entitled “Our beloved South Africa in tears” by “One sorely afflicted”. Not only did the pamphlet offer spiritual comfort but Britain was also abused under a religious guise with phrases such as “...Great Britain has, during recent years viewed the Transvaal Goldfields with envious eyes.” The distribution resulted in a full-blown investigation followed by a serious warning to Rousseau that if it happened again he would be charged with treason. WP Rousseau expressed his regret at distributing the pamphlet, but his apology did not lead to the restoration of the privileges he earlier held.¹⁹⁷

Because of his devotion to the spiritual needs of the rebels, the latter held him in extremely high regard. Two group photographs of convicted Natal rebels taken on 1 February 1902, in the Pietermaritzburg Prison, were given to Rousseau as a “Geschenk van de Politieke Gevangenen te Pietermaritzburg.”¹⁹⁸

The third group of prisoners whom Rousseau served were the concentration camp inhabitants. He visited the camps at Howick,¹⁹⁹ Eshowe,²⁰⁰ Colenso,²⁰¹ Pinetown,²⁰² Merebank,²⁰³ Jacobs, Wentworth²⁰⁴ and Pietermaritzburg²⁰⁵ to conduct services, lead prayer meetings, distribute clothes and money, organise religious associations, and provide general guidance.

195. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 19.7.1900, p.403.

196. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 25.4.1900, p.303.

197. PAR, MJPW 77: Investigation into the pamphlet distributed by WP Rousseau to Natal rebels in the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 14.8.1900-21.8.1900. Ironically enough the grandson of Rousseau, Garth Petzer, currently serves in the Royal Navy as a chaplain. Correspondence via e-mail with G Petzer, 12.10.1999.

198. NAR, photographs 7163 and 7164: Veroordeelde rebellen in de gevangenis te Pietermaritzburg, 1.2.1902. An extensive collection of individual photographs of rebels is to be found in the CF Leipoldt collection in the South African National Library (hereafter SANL) in Cape Town. See SALN, BRN 1/5/3: INIL 3819-3889. The only way these photographs could have found their way to this collection was via Rousseau who was a friend of Leipoldt. A file in the PAR, CSO 2584, marked secret, which should have contained a letter dated, 20.11.1899, from CF Leipoldt to WP Rousseau contains no documents at all.

199. PAR, PM 88: Letter Camp Commandant Struben to Hurst, 28.2.1901.

200. JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe...*, pp.56-57.

201. JM Wassermann, *The Pinetown...*, p.12.

202. JM Wassermann, *The Pinetown...*, pp.64-68.

203. *De Kerkbode*, 12.12.1901.

204. *De Kerkbode*, 5.6.1902.

205. *De Kerkbode*, 4.4.1901; *De Kerkbode*, 13.6.1901; *De Kerkbode*, 12.12.1901. All these articles were written by Rousseau and are characterized by the manner in which he under plays his work.

Probably the most fitting tribute to the work done by Rousseau comes from Missionary Prozesky: “Brother Rousseau a short squarely build man the right constitution for work, indefatigable...He has died but he lives in the memory of so many; thousands in the prisons, in the refugee camps saw him, saw his engaging way, and heard his words which breathed Christian love. What blessings this man scattered cannot be expressed.”²⁰⁶

8.5 Concluding comments

In terms of conditions under Martial Law in Natal Missionary JJA Prozesky probably best sums up the perception of the Afrikaner community: “England is most merciful - that is towards England” while Afrikaners were persecuted.²⁰⁷ HF Schoon took an ever dimmer view of the conditions and felt that the war was not against the Republics *per se* but against Afrikaners in general.²⁰⁸

Support for the sentiments of Prozesky and Schoon came from John M Robertson, a pro-Boer and the author of *Wrecking the Empire*. After a visit to Natal facilitated, by Schoon and other Afrikaners in Northern Natal,²⁰⁹ he reported on “The reign of terror in Natal” in *The Morning Leader* illustrating his articles with a detailed description and photographs of the destroyed farm Snelster of Mrs MJ Zietsman near Estcourt. According to Robertson, the military assisted by Africans “destroyed 85 young fruit trees, cut down and removed miles of fencing and took all the stock, consisting of 450 cattle, 500 sheep, and 100 goats; all the pigs and poultry; and all the forage including 100 muds of mealies. The house itself was gutted of all its doors and windows, and woodwork...” Robertson then provided a detailed account of the looting and death threats that some Afrikaners in the Estcourt area had to endure resulting in some of them fleeing the district. He claimed that in other areas hundreds of Afrikaners were arrested on false accusations. He explains these actions by giving three reasons: “(1) the animal malice of most colonials and too many imperial officers and soldiers towards the Dutch in lump; (2) the gross credulity which tends to go with malice; and (3) sheer lack of common sense and common caution among the authorities of all grades.” Robertson followed up his article with a series of public meetings in London.²¹⁰

The manner in which the Natal authorities reacted to the statements made by Robertson probably served to substantiate it. The Natal Government firstly requested a report from Magistrate RH Addison of Estcourt on Mrs Zietsman. In his report Addison admitted that Zietsman’s house was completely destroyed after she had left it on 26 November 1899 in the face of the British advance.

206. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 4.11.1900, p.444.

207. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.5.1900, p.207.

208. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 14.8.1901, p.672.

209. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter HF Schoon to JHF Meyer, 24.9.1900.

210. *The Morning Leader*, 14.12.1900 and 15.12.1900. Robertson’s statements caused an intense debate in *Pall Mall Gazette* of 18 and 20.12.1900 and *The Times* of 20.12.1900.

He suspected that it was done by Colonial and British troops. The magistrate furthermore explained that one of Mrs Zietsman's sons had been sentenced as a rebel while the other two were still absent from the district. Her brothers, Hendrik and Christiaan Hattingh, were also missing from the district.

This report was, in his official contradiction of Robertson's article, masterfully turned into a piece of counter-propaganda by Prime Minister Hime. He pointed to the rebellious activities of the sons of Mrs Zietsman as well as that of her brothers. He then continued to twist Addison's report to suit his agenda: "I am informed that Snelster was looted when our troops advanced from Frere by troops or whether by natives is not known." Hime then proceeded to, apart from the Africans, introduce another possible culprit - the rebels of the area: "The occurrence took place just after the looting of several farms belonging to British Colonists by Natal rebels and others of the enemy, and though much to be regretted, is scarcely surprising." Hime went on to deny any malice shown towards Natal Afrikaners by British Colonists, who according to him, at times even testified in favour of Afrikaners during rebel trials.²¹¹ Like a modern day "political spin doctor" Hime denied all accusations of maltreatment of his Afrikaner subjects, suggested alternative culprits, and attempted to claim the moral high ground. With such political leadership on the one side, and the military on the other, Natal Afrikaner civilians stood very little chance under Martial Law as is borne out by the following statement referring to PRN Vermaak of Helpmekaar, then a teacher in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp: "The head teacher is a young man, a British subject who did not fight, but it was though best for the Empire that he should live in a goal, and so he did for eight months. He still thinks, poor man that he should have been charged with some offence and tried, but this is a vain thought..."²¹²

The destruction and Martial Law experiences as outlined above are rooted within the total war that gripped Southern Africa, including Natal from late 1900 onwards. When the enemy, in this case the Boers, could not be found, civilians had to bear the brunt as a war of low intensity moved to a front that encompassed socio-political, economic, and human aspects. For the civilians caught up in this it looked like an all out assault on them. All in all it was a counter-productive way to wage a war since everything which had been destroyed, including physical structures and relationships, would eventually have to be rebuilt.²¹³

211. PAR, PM 20: Correspondence regarding the agitating by JM Robertson that Mrs Zietsman suffered at the hands of British colonists, 15.12.1900-17.12.1900.

212. NAR, A 2030, 98: A South African diary - reprinted from the *Daily News*, no date.

213. E Schmidl, *The position of the Anglo-Boer War in the 'Century of Peace' (1815-1914)*. Lecture delivered on 19.2.2004, UP.

CHAPTER 9

THE IMPRISONMENT OF NATAL AFRIKANERS

The Anglo-Boer War was characterised by the imprisonment of large numbers of civilians and individuals associated with the Boer forces. Natal Afrikaners did not escape this plight, and under the ultimate exertion of power over ordinary people by Martial Law, they found themselves being confined in four categories: as POWs; rebels on charges and conviction of high treason; inmates of the concentration camps; and lastly a small number were interned in Portugal. Under these experiences Natal Afrikaners suffered a fate similar to that of the inhabitants of the Republics, which reinforces the notion that they were targeted because of their ethnic origins. In this chapter the imprisonment of Natal Afrikaners will be investigated and analysed by focussing on the various facets of life in the prison establishments as well as the liberation from it.

9.1 Natal Afrikaners as Prisoners of War (POWs)¹

Initially the military made little effort to distinguish between Natal Afrikaners and Boers and consequently several managed to pass themselves off as *bona fide* burghers after surrendering or capture.² This confusion led to the eventual deportation of an estimated 43 Natal Afrikaners. (Appendix E)³ For the British to commit such an error was not difficult, as no real comprehensive name list of Natal Afrikaners existed. The phenomenon of Natal Afrikaners pretending to be Boers, so as to escape prosecution as rebels, continued throughout the war, especially when they were captured by units who did not have the ability to distinguish between Natal Afrikaners and Boers. PR, D and FA van der Craght from Dundee for example fought with the Boers for 18 months before they were captured and sent to India.⁴ In another instance, JJ and PD Dekker of Dundee, captured by Rimington's Guides near Utrecht and sent to the Tin Town POW Camp in Ladysmith, were only identified as British subjects when they admitted to being Natalians.⁵

Measures designed to prevent such errors were,⁶ because of the lack of communication between the

1. For a detailed description of Boer POW Camps during the Anglo-Boer War, see: SPR Oosthuizen, *Die beheer, behandeling en lewe van die krygsgevangenis gedurende die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902*. D Phil-thesis, UOFS, 1975.

2. PAR, GH 1449: Summary of names of Natal rebels compiled by Sub-Inspector WE Earle, 12.9.1901.

3. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper on the arrest of eight Natal rebels returning from Ceylon on board the *Templemore*, 22.7.1902; GH 742: Nominal role of Natal rebels compiled by Major SHM Conran, Bellary, India, 15.11.1902; GH 563: CID report on the arrival of rebels on board the *Ionian* from India, 15.11.1902-18.11.1902; GH 563: Minute paper on the detainment of ST Potgieter as a suspected Natal rebel, 1.12.1902-11.12.1902; GH 742: Report by Lt-Col AC Vincent from Ceylon on the rebel MC van Niekerk, 11.12.1902; GH 742: Declarations of allegiance taken by SJ Eksteen and HS van der Craght, 10.7.1902; NAR, SOP 35: Letter SOP Cape Town to DAAG POW, Umbilo, 26.11.1902; PRO, WO 108/117: Letter Lord H Kitchener to the Viceroy of India, 19.3.1902; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 27.8.1900. p.164; PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett to DAAG, 4.10.1900.

4. PRO, WO 108/117: Letter Lord H Kitchener to the Viceroy of India, 29.3.1902.

5. PAR, PM 22: Minute paper regarding the arrest of JJ and PD Dekker, 29.6.1901-3.7.1901. JJ Dekker eventually received one of the heaviest sentences meted out to a rebel, seven years imprisonment. PD Dekker were fined £20 or five months imprisonment.

6. PRO, 179/222: Correspondence regarding the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902; PAR, AGO

Natal authorities and the military, and within the military with regard to captured suspected rebels, only partially successful. As a point in case the assistant provost marshal - Standerton-Heidelberg was forced to ask: "... please inform me what is the ruling in the cases of Natal and Cape Rebels that arrive here as Prisoners of War..."⁷ Three weeks later the SOP based at the Umbilo POW Camp, Lt-Col Allatt, also wanted to know if Corporal Marthinus Johannes Potgieter, of Beauvale, Ladysmith, was to be exiled as a leader, or handed over to the Natal authorities to be tried as a rebel. Attorney-General GA de R Labistour had to refer Allatt to the agreement between the Natal Government and the military whereby from 1902 onwards, rebels captured outside Natal were to be tried by the military authorities outside the Colony. A note was made to the effect and Potgieter was removed from Durban to be tried at Volksrust.⁸ No record of a trial could however be found.

The statement by Labistour did little to enlighten the military and he received a similar enquiry regarding DS Landman of Kameelboomkop, Dundee, who had surrendered on 16 February 1902, at Middleburg. Again Labistour reminded the military of the agreement whereby rebels captured in the field were to be tried by court martial.⁹ Due to the continued uncertainty regarding the status of Natal rebels arriving as POWs, Landman managed to slip the net until his wife, MMED Landman, a resident in the Merebank Concentration Camp, requested that her husband be allowed to join her. Mrs Landman admitted that her husband was a British subject but insisted that he had repented his actions. Although her letter alerted the military and the Natal Police, Landman managed to escape punishment as the trial against him came to nothing.¹⁰ In the end both he and Potgieter were better off than their rebel counterparts, for as a result of bureaucratic bumbling and oversight they came off scot free.

The end of the war meant that the tens of thousands of Boer POWs imprisoned in India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), St Helena and Bermuda, were able to return home.¹¹ Amongst these prisoners were a small number of Natal Afrikaners whom the Natal authorities wanted to apprehend. To achieve this end, frequently updated lists of Natal Afrikaners believed to be POWs, were forwarded to all commanders of overseas POW camps with the request that the rebels, when identified, be immediately deported. The Natal Afrikaners in question were to be handed over to the ship's captain, who would in turn, on arrival in Durban, hand the suspected rebels over to the colonial officials.¹²

I/8/83: Correspondence regarding the trial of Natal rebels by the military, 29.11.1900-4.1.1902.

7. NAR, PMO 44: Letter assistant provost marshal, Standerton-Heidelberg district, to provost marshal Pretoria, 26.1.1902.

8. NAR, SOP 29: Correspondence regarding the status of MJ Potgieter, 18.2.1902-20.3.1902.

9. NAR, SOP 30: Correspondence between Lt CC Bicknell and Attorney-General GA de R Labistour, 6-7.3.1902.

10. PAR, AGO I/8/84: Correspondence with reference to the release of DSA Landman, 18.4.1902-1.5.1902; PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/12: Request by S Liebenberg that he be paid for testifying against DS Landman, 7.2.1903.

11. An unknown Natal Afrikaner, banned to Ceylon, was brought back to Ladysmith to be tried for high treason. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry, 27.9.1902. p.144.

12. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper with instructions to ship captains on how to deal with Natal rebels, 20.9.1902.

The suspected rebels would then be imprisoned in Durban before being despatched to their home districts for trial.¹³ These elaborate procedures made it very difficult for Natal rebels when repatriated, to disembark at Durban without detection.

To ensure that none slipped the net, a premium was also placed on personal identification. This was considered essential since many Natal Afrikaners shared the same surnames and initials, while others purposefully altered their identity in an attempt to pose as burghers and in so doing escape arrest. Emphasis was specifically placed on the recognition of “the scores of the Natal bywoner class” who appeared on no voters role because they owned no property and were shielded by their former landlords. To achieve this a loyalist Afrikaner, CR (Coenraad) Cronjé, and an English Natalian, Kirby, were employed on the dockside in Durban and in the Umbilo POW Camp.¹⁴

The elaborate measures taken to identify returning rebels so impressed Prime Minister Hime that he informed Governor HE McCallum that he believed they could not be improved.¹⁵ Attorney-General Labistour, however, disagreed and stated: “At this rate the question of dealing with rebels will last forever and the expenses will be considerable...”¹⁶

The measures did work and several Natal Afrikaners landing in Durban and attempting to masquerade as Transvalers or Free Staters were apprehended.¹⁷ One such rebel, ST Potgieter, who gave his address as Waaihoek, Utrecht, was identified as a resident from the Newcastle district. He was arrested and sent to Newcastle to be tried.¹⁸ Likewise a Natal subject, MC van Niekerk, who had resided in the OFS for three years, was identified and arrested as a rebel and sent to Newcastle for trial.¹⁹ In other instances it proved more difficult to distinguish between rebel and Republican. Three burghers from Vryheid for example, were initially incorrectly arrested as Natal rebels,²⁰ while HAF Lezar had to be released because he was a Transvaler.²¹ This difficulty of distinguishing between rebels and former Republicans is best illustrated by the case of the 70-year-old HP Geldenhuys who died on 21 May 1902 in Ceylon. Geldenhuys left £8.15.3 and a securely nailed box to be mailed to Hartebeestfontein, Newcastle. Neither the Natal Police nor the local magistrate could identify the individual or the farm. Further investigation revealed that the farm was located in the Vrede district,

13. PAR, GH 742: Telegram secretary of state to High Commissioner A Milner, 28.6.1902.

14. PAR, GH 563: Report SOP Umbilo on the detention of ST Potgieter, 1.12.1902-11.12.1902.

15. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper regarding POWs, including suspected Natal rebels, disembarking at Lourenco Marques, 20.9.1902.

16. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper regarding the return of Natal rebels from POW camps, 28.11.1902-2.12.1902.

17. *Natal Witness*, 20.11.1902.

18. PAR, GH 563: Report SOP Umbilo on the detention of ST Potgieter, 1-11.12.1902.

19. PAR, GH 742: Report on Natal suspected Natal rebel MC van Niekerk, 17.12.1902-28.1.1903.

20. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper from SOP Umbilo on three suspected Natal rebels sent to Vryheid, 12-21.8.1902.

21. PAR, GH 563: Report SOP Umbilo on the arrival of four Natal rebels on board the *Oratava*, 28.11.1902-2.12.1902.

a short distance from the Natal border. Newcastle was merely the closest railhead.²²

The close scrutiny of POW ships arriving in Durban in search of rebels meant that the latter had to consider alternative plans to escape arrest. Rumours soon surfaced, denied by British informers in Lourenco Marques, that rebels were paying their passage to the port with the intention of returning overland to Natal. The Natal Government nevertheless forwarded instructions to the commanders of POW camps instructing them to prevent Natal Afrikaners from paying for their return passage and from disembarking at Lourenco Marques.²³ In an attempt to block all escape routes from Lourenco Marques, the British consul-general in the city, the provost marshals at Pretoria and Newcastle, the magistrate at Wakkerstroom, and the South African Constabulary at Volksrust, were all informed of the possibility of such a scheme.²⁴

The Natal authorities, however, neglected to block one of the most obvious disembarking points for Natal rebels, the port of Cape Town. As a result six Natal rebels landed at Cape Town and were erroneously allowed to proceed to the former OFS. (Orange River Colony after 31 May 1902). This caused a problem to the authorities since the men were outside of Natal and could, in accordance with an agreement reached between Lord Kitchener and the Boer leaders at Vereeniging, not be extradited. They would only be charged should they decide to return Natal.²⁵

In the end all the measures put in place to arrest Natal rebels returning from POW camps came to nothing. Although some were briefly imprisoned in Durban, only William Cheney was convicted of with high treason and fined £2.²⁶ The others were treated very generously and freed, possibly because they had already served time, while it would also have been counter-productive within the post-war context to subject them to further punishment.

9.2 Natal Afrikaners in prison as rebels

The second group of Natal Afrikaners imprisoned were men who were suspected or convicted of high treason.

9.2.1 Initial imprisonment

The first Natal Afrikaners to be imprisoned on suspicions of high treason were PRN Vermaak, JA

22. PAR, GH 774: Enquiry about the location of the farm Hartebeestfontein, 29.10.1904-16.11.1904.

23. By 30 May 1902, two Natal Afrikaners, James and Izak Bester, who had crossed in Mozambique in 1900, was still resident in Lourenco Marques. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are expected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

24. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper regarding POWs, including suspected Natal rebels, disembarking at Lourenco Marques, 20.9.1902.

25. Free State Archive Repository, CO 143: Correspondence file dealing with Natal rebels allowed to proceed to ORC by mistake, 9.2.1903-17.3.1903.

26. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Name lists of rebels arriving in Durban as POWs, 19.7.1902; PAR, AGO I/7/37: Rex vs W

van Tonder, and PC Cronjé. They were arrested outside Dundee by the UMR and arrived via Greytown in Pietermaritzburg in late October 1899. Several other Afrikaners such as the Mcduling brothers, D Snyman, G Pieterse and D Bezuidenhout from the Weenen and Estcourt districts, joined them in December 1899.²⁷ None of these men were ever tried and, all were released after a brief detention.

Large scale arrests of suspected Natal rebels began when Buller's Natal Army advanced into Northern Natal. The first group of Afrikaners to suffer such arrests were those resident in the Klip River district. By March 1900 the district surgeon for Ladysmith, HC Proctor, pointed out that the local prison was severely overcrowded and that "many of the political prisoners are complaining of slight ailments, and these, I fear, will become more serious, unless the condition is alleviated."²⁸ Proctor was convinced that overcrowding caused the decline in the health of the suspected rebels.²⁹ Although the Ladysmith Prison was only supposed to hold 50 prisoners in 18 cells, this number was exceeded when 28 suspected Afrikaners and POWs, seven convicted Europeans, 23 suspected Africans, 13 convicted African and Indian prisoners, five suspected Indians, and four British soldiers were imprisoned. These 80 prisoners had to share three toilets.³⁰

Similar conditions were experienced in the Newcastle Prison. Like in Ladysmith, it was impossible to alleviate conditions in the overcrowded prison because the Pietermaritzburg and Durban Prisons could not receive the overflow from Newcastle. As a temporary solution, 25 African prisoners from Pietermaritzburg, were sent to Durban to make place for suspected rebels. The military also suggested that 150 suspected rebel prisoners be removed to Durban and imprisoned on board the *Catalonia*, anchored outside the harbour. As the pressure to deal with the situation intensified, Prime Minister Albert Hime stepped in. Although he did not want to imprison the suspects on board the *Catalonia* he had no choice since the Pietermaritzburg Prison could not accommodate any more prisoners.³¹ Suspected Natal Afrikaners from Newcastle, Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg consequently arrived in Durban on 20 May 1900, and were transferred to the *Catalonia* where they were detained alongside Boer POWs. Here the prisoners spent their time fishing, fighting seasickness, writing letters home asking for money, clothes and tobacco,³² and gathering in the

Cheney, pp.977-979.

27. PAR, MJPW 72: Lists of suspects incarcerated in the Estcourt and Pietermaritzburg Prisons, 18.12.1899-1.3.1900.

28. The term political prisoners were from time to time used in official correspondence when referring to the Natal rebels, simply because they were regarded as criminals against the state. Even some of the rebels used the term on occasions. It, however, did not become a general term of reference, but provides an insight into how the rebels were viewed in some quarters, and how some viewed themselves. See for example: OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, Introduction, p.384.

29. Eight suspected and convicted rebel prisoners died while imprisoned. For the details of these deaths see Appendix F.

30. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Documentation on the crowded nature of the Ladysmith Prison, 19.3.1900-29.3.1900.

31. PAR, MJPW 75: Correspondence regarding the transfer of suspected rebel prisoners from Newcastle Prison to the *Catalonia*, 29.5.1900-31.5.1900.

32. PAR, GH 559: Intercepted letters written by Natal rebels imprisoned on board the *Catalonia*, 7.6.1900-14.6.1900.

evenings for devotion.³³

On 5 June 1900, 20 Natal Afrikaners were removed from the *Catalonia* to the Durban Prison. The remainder of the suspected rebels joined them on 23 June 1900. Initially they were only allowed to smoke during certain times and were locked in their cells from 16:30 till 6:30. Conditions were, however, better than on the *Catalonia* as the food and facilities were good, they regularly received letters from home, and were visited by GM Rudolph of Weenen, a former magistrate, who gave each prisoner £2.³⁴

From early July 1900 onwards the suspected rebels were transferred from Durban to Ladysmith and Newcastle. This boosted the moral of the suspects as they were now closer to their relatives. JC Buys, for example, commented that he could see his mother from the prison window and although he was not allowed to greet her, she did send him cake and meat. He also saw his father and greeted him by lifting his hat. The terrible conditions in the Ladysmith Prison as outlined earlier persisted and were addressed by individual prisoners throwing money at the problem. Buys bought a kettle and a pot for cooking since the utensils in prison were very dirty, while Ds Schoon supplied him with a bed and chairs. As far as the inside of the cell was concerned Buys stated: "Ik heef alles betakel met vlooi poeder." He also complained that the bedding was dirty, that the prisoners had to cook their own food and buy their own coffee. The close proximity to home did outweighed the poor living conditions as visitors were eventually allowed.³⁵

The Ladysmith Prison, however, remained seriously overcrowded. As a result Inspector Dorehill of the Natal Police received instructions to remove "upwards of twenty of the rebel prisoners now in course of examination" to the prison in Pietermaritzburg.³⁶ By 5 October 1900 the gaoler at Ladysmith could report that the prison had been relieved of surplus prisoners and that he had ample accommodation for all the men in his charge.³⁷

By this time the first rebels were being sentenced. Often the imposition of prison sentences were followed by requests from the legal representatives and family members that the convicted rebels serve their sentences close to home. Carter and Robinson, for example, applied on behalf of their client, HB Cronjé, that he serve his sentence in the Estcourt Prison. This was denied due to overcrowded conditions in the prison.³⁸ A similar request by Chadwick and Millar on behalf of their

33. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 27.5.1900, p.2.

34. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 3-5.6.1900, pp.4-5.

35. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 4-7.1900, pp.6-7.

36. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Letter Inspector Dorehill to magistrate Klip River district, 22.9.1900.

37. PAR, MJPW 78: Minute paper chief commissioner of police to minister of lands and works on conditions in the Ladysmith Prison, 5.10.1900.

38. PAR, CSO 1665: Application by Carter and Robinson for HB Cronjé to serve his prison sentence at the Estcourt Prison, 22.12.1900-29.12.1900.

client, GI van Benecke, who wanted to serve his sentence in the Upper Tugela Prison, was rejected because the authorities did not want to send convicted rebels to small outlying prisons.³⁹ The request that led to the formulation of a policy regarding such requests came from, GM Rudolph, who wanted his son-in-law and grandson, JF Robbertse senior and junior, transferred from the Pietermaritzburg to the Estcourt Prison. Initially Chief Commissioner of Police John Dartnell indicated that the Estcourt Prison was full, and that the request could not be entertained. He did, however, promise that “later on when the Estcourt Goal is less congested it may be possible to send the prisoners back to complete their sentences.” When Rudolph pursued the matter at a later stage Prime Minister Hime made it clear: “I am strongly opposed to these men being sent to Estcourt Goal to complete their sentences...if this application be granted, it will be a precedent which will be quoted in favour of granting other applications.”⁴⁰

The rejection of the above-mentioned requests and the formulation of a policy did not prevent others from being lodged.⁴¹ Subsequent requests, based on family and health concerns, made very little impact on the authorities who stood firm in their policy not to transfer prisoners.⁴² This put an end to applications from legal representatives and only one further application was received for the remainder of 1901.⁴³

As no possibility existed for convicted rebels to serve their prison sentences close to home, they were generally transferred to Pietermaritzburg. Often the accompanying guards were slack, slept most of the way, and only removed money but not knives from the prisoners. They even gave some of the convicted rebels beer during the train journey.⁴⁴

The jail in Pietermaritzburg, like the up-country establishments, was soon overcrowded and only the rebels with a sentence of less than one-year were detained there. Those with lengthier sentences were transferred to the brand new prison at Eshowe in Zululand. These transfers took place on four occasions: 22 and 29 November 1900, 30 January 1901, and 14 February 1901.⁴⁵

39. PAR, CSO 1666: Application by Chadwick and Millar for GI van Benecke to serve his prison sentence at the Upper Tugela Prison, 10.1.1901-16.1.1901.

40. PAR, CSO 1669: Application by GM Rudolph to have JF Robbertse senior and junior transferred from the Pietermaritzburg to the Estcourt Prison, 13.12.1900-13.2.1901.

41. PAR, CSO 1667: Application by Carter and Robinson for OW Krogman to serve his prison sentence at the Estcourt or Ladysmith Prison, 26.1.1901-31.1.1901; Application by Carter and Robinson for WAL Bester to serve his prison sentence at the Ladysmith Prison, 23.1.1901-25.1.1901.

42. PAR, MJPW 83: Application by Renaud and Robinson for HBLW Meyer to serve his prison sentence at either the Estcourt or Pietermaritzburg Prison, 14.3.1901-25.3.1901; PAR, CSO 1677: Application by Carter and Robinson for HW and GJB Boers to serve their prison sentences at the Estcourt or Pietermaritzburg Prison, 29.5.1901-5.6.1901.

43. PAR, MJPW 88: Application by J Anderson for CF Marais to serve his prison sentence at the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 21.10.1901-24.10.1901.

44. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 23.1.1901, pp.3-4.

45. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Correspondence regarding the representations made by FDJ Havemann and other prisoners, 5.3.1901-18.4.1901; WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.1.1901 and 12.2.1901, pp.5 and 8.

9.2.2 Living conditions in prison - an overview

On arrival in prison the convicted rebels were stripped naked and weighed before all marks and scars on their bodies were recorded. When this rudimentary medical examination was completed they were issued with striped prison clothes marked Natal Convict Department (NCD). Shoes were selected from numerous pairs stored in a cupboard.⁴⁶ Their prison term had commenced. Suspected rebels still awaiting trial, soldiers who found themselves in trouble, and from time to time other criminals, were imprisoned on the same premises.⁴⁷

The general living conditions in the Eshowe and Pietermaritzburg Prisons were typical of the time. Two to three prisoners shared a cell⁴⁸ furnished by grass filled mattresses, a wash basin, wash bucket, drinking mug, and a toilet bucket.⁴⁹ Lice were a problem,⁵⁰ while luxuries such as toothbrushes, toothpowder,⁵¹ and sheets⁵² were not readily issued by the prison authorities. Sometimes those in power did try and improve conditions by, for example, painting the cells and spraying them for lice.⁵³

Initially no special rules existed for the management of convicted rebels. Very soon the rebels complained that they did not have sufficient time to exercise, that they were locked in their cells by 17:00 and not allowed lights after dark. In his capacity as minister of lands and works, Prime Minister Hime demanded an explanation. Governor JR Thomson of the Pietermaritzburg Prison responded that the rebels were allowed all the privileges which prisoners on remand or awaiting trial had been granted in the past. Hime subsequently asked Attorney-General Bale whether he thought any special privileges should be extended to the rebel prisoners. Bale was not prepared to commit himself and said he believed the cabinet should decide on the matter. Initially the ministers decided that no action was necessary.⁵⁴ By November 1900 this decision changed and the following regulations were adopted by the Natal Cabinet:

Special Rules, applicable to prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment without hard labour

1. They may wear their own clothing, providing that it is sufficient and fit for use, and may also procure their own bedding.

46. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 1941, pp.30; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 3.11.1900, p.444

47. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, p.28.

48. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 1941, p.35.

49. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* November 1900, p.441.

50. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 29.1.1901, pp.5-6.

51. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* November 1900, p.449.

52. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 28.1.1901, p.478.

53. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 26.5.1901, p.19.

54. PAR, MJPW 76: Investigation into the complaints by suspected rebel prisoners awaiting trial, 10.7.1900-10.8.1900.

2. They may provide their own food and other necessaries, but only at hours as may be laid down from time to time.
3. They may be permitted to purchase at their own expense such books, newspapers or other means of occupation as are not, in the opinion of the Governor of the Goal, of an objectionable kind.
4. No prisoner should be allowed to sell, or transfer to another, any article which has been introduced into prison for his own use.
5. They may receive and send letters daily.
6. They may receive visitors twice a week, at such hours and on such days as may be appointed, such interviews shall, however, be restricted to thirty minutes, and shall take place in the presence of an official of the prison.
7. They shall be allowed to exercise for a period of at least two hours during the day, and when at exercise they will be allowed to smoke (providing their own tobacco). The latter privilege may, however, be withdrawn from any prisoner should he misconduct himself.
8. A light shall be allowed in the cells of such prisoners from sundown until 9 p.m.
9. They shall not be placed in association or exercise with other criminal prisoners.
10. The rations issued in the prison shall consist of:
Breakfast: 1/3 oz. Coffee, 1 oz. Sugar 12 ozs. Bread.
Dinner: 1st class European ration as per present dietary scale.
Supper: 1/4 oz. Tea or Coffee, 1 oz. Sugar, 8 ozs. Bread.
11. Such prisoners shall not be compelled to have their hair cut or to shave, unless the Medical Officer deems it necessary on the grounds of health and cleanliness, and the hair shall not be cut closer than is necessary for that purpose.
12. They are exempted from the strict prison regulations as regards washing and bathing; but will obey such orders as are from time to time issued with a view to health and cleanliness.
13. They shall not be required to perform menial service, other than making their own beds and tidying their own cells. Such work as the removal of slops, scrubbing floors, etc., shall be performed by a convict told off for this purpose.
14. Prisoners of this class shall also be subject to the general rules for the time being in force for the government of prisoners, except where the same are inconsistent with these special rules.⁵⁵

The adoption of the outlined set of rules for prisoners convicted of high treason did not find favour with the *Natal Witness*, and by using emotional phrases such as a “travesty of justice”, and expressing the opinion that their punishment was being “diminished”, the right of convicted rebels to wear their own clothes and the general relaxation of the rules surrounding visitors and correspondence, were questioned. The newspaper interpreted these steps as “nothing less than a declaration of disapproval of the sentences” passed by the Special Court. By posing the question, “Who has done it?”, the Natal Government was indirectly attacked since only the cabinet could make such a decision.⁵⁶ The newspaper’s opinion was supported by an anonymous letter from a member of the public who felt that rebel prisoners were treated too leniently and should be made to work on the roads.⁵⁷

55. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Special rules applicable to prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment without hard labour - as revised by the attorney-general and colonial secretary in accordance with ministers’ decision, 24.1.1901; Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

56. *Natal Witness*, 20.11.1900.

In the Pietermaritzburg Prison the rules were welcomed by the rebels who speculated wildly on why they had been enforced. One rumour which persisted was that General Redvers Buller was captured by the Boers and in the trade-off for his release a better deal was negotiated for the rebel prisoners.⁵⁸ In the Eshowe Prison the new rules made little difference as the prisoners were denied their right to view any regulations.⁵⁹

Prisoners, however, also contested the regulations. While most rebels embraced the wearing of their own clothes as stipulated in the first article, others, especially the poor, adopted a different attitude. They preferred to wear prison clothes and reasoned: "Why should I wear out my clothes and shoes?"⁶⁰ These rebels received fresh clothes every Saturday.⁶¹

The single biggest problem with the implementation of prison rules were the prison officials and low ranking wardens who tended to apply the regulations as they saw fit. Warden Davis of Eshowe made it clear he thought it was their duty to make life as difficult as possible for prisoners so that they would not come back again.⁶² This seems to have been the unofficial policy in dealing with Natal Afrikaner prisoners. Already during their pre-trial imprisonment in the Dundee Prison, suspected rebels considered one warden ill-mannered since he seldom addressed them other than with shouts and swearwords. The prisoners dealt with this behaviour by bribing him with £15 and an "oorkonde" (address) the words of which sang his praises in elaborate language. Subsequently there was a remarkable change in his attitude.⁶³

In the Eshowe and Pietermaritzburg Prisons it was not so easy to deal with difficult wardens. In both institutions wardens were, with the odd exception, rude and "erg nukkerig",⁶⁴ while Governor Deane of the Eshowe Prison earned the nickname "Satan" because of his vindictive disposition. Attitude problems towards the rebel prisoners manifested themselves in various abuses. Prisoners were often locked in their cells for the duration of the day with the doors and service hatches closed and in the process denied access to the toilet.⁶⁵ Requests that the service hatches be opened for fresh and cool air to flow through were ignored. In contrast the cell door of a British soldier, who had murdered a fellow soldier, was opened so that a breeze could blow through.⁶⁶ In Pietermaritzburg prisoners were similarly tormented and during a particularly bad week were only let out of their cells to collect

57. *Natal Witness*, 28.8.1901.

58. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17 or 19.11.1901, pp.451-452.

59. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.1.1901, pp.475-477.

60. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17 or 19.11.1901, pp.451-452; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.31, 1941.

61. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.11.1901, p.446.

62. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.3.1901, p.493.

63. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.27, 1941.

64. WM, *Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys*: Deel 2, 20.1.1901 and 26.2.1901, pp.1 and 11.

65. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.1.1901, p.476

food.⁶⁷ Fortunately more humane wardens in both prisons left the cell doors unlocked for the duration of the day when on duty. Inmates could then visit each other and enjoy cooler conditions.⁶⁸

Harassment of rebel prisoners also took other forms. In the Eshowe Prison they were forced to exercise in the heat of mid-summer,⁶⁹ while in Pietermaritzburg they were, against the regulations, coerced into taking a communal bath in water which the rebels described as very dirty.⁷⁰ Cell wrecking during regular searches were common in both establishments.⁷¹ In the Eshowe Prison Sundays were generally reserved for such searches and other forms of provocation, such as Africans being instructed to chop wood in close proximity to the church service.⁷²

Wardens also reported a number of rebels for contravening prison regulations. Invariably this led to punishment such as being locked-up in the “dark room”; a room with no furniture and only a water and toilet bucket. Bedding was only provided at night and only five minutes of exercise per day was permitted.⁷³ The first rebel prisoner to be incarcerated in the dark room was JC Donovan who was caught smoking and sentenced to three days in the dark room on half rations. He, however, spent only half a day in the dark room before he was moved to another cell.⁷⁴ MD Hessleman and P Cronjé were punished for an equally petty grievance. They gave some old clothes to African hard labour prisoners. Despite similar acts of charity having taken place in the past, Gaoler Martens reported the two men to the governor who placed them on half rations for two days.⁷⁵ The most severe punishment was reserved for JW Rall for having a saw in his room and CL and FAJ Breytenbach who made a fire in a tin in their room to heat some glue. All three were locked up for three days on half rations.⁷⁶

Complaining to the governor of the prison about the ill-treatment seldom had a satisfactory outcome for the prisoners.⁷⁷ In Pietermaritzburg Warden Martin was reported to the governor and subsequently reprimanded. Afterwards he treated the prisoners even worse than before⁷⁸ with no further consequences.⁷⁹ This angered the inmates and J Zietsman wrote a letter to his family

66. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 1.1.1901, p.468.

67. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.4.1901, p.17.

68. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 8-9.2.1901, p.8.

69. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.1.1901, p.476

70. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 11.3.1901, p.14.

71. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 3.2.1901, p.481.

72. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 5-6.2.1901 and 2.6.1901, pp.484 and 504.

73. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* November 1900, p.441.

74. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 5.2.1901, p.7.

75. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 19.5.1901, p.19.

76. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 8.9.1901, p.29.

77. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 11.3.1901, p.14.

78. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 25.8.1901, p.27.

79. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 20.10.1901, pp.32-33.

describing the bad treatment. Warden Spalding, when censoring the letter, complained to the governor who agreed with the views expressed by Zietsman. In this case the expression of dissatisfaction led to the creation of a set of rules which increased the amount of time the rebels could spend outside their cells.⁸⁰

In an attempt to solve the above-mentioned problems the various prisons were inspected weekly by the local magistrate. At Ladysmith this was done on a Saturday at noon. The outcome of this was that “every thing was found in a most excellent order...” Regular inspections were, however, not maintained and long periods elapsed between magisterial visits forcing the PUS to reprimand Magistrate Matthews.⁸¹ The Eshowe Prison at one stage was not inspected in more than a month.⁸²

When inspections did take place, like when Governor McCallum visited the Pietermaritzburg Prison, rebel prisoners, out of fear, did not air their complaints.⁸³ When they did, however, express dissatisfaction it invariably worked in their favour, as when Colonel JG Dartnell inspected the Eshowe Prison on 15 June 1901.⁸⁴ On this occasion Missionary Prozesky raised a number of issues, amongst others the manner in which rebels were addressed, and the lack of time they spent out of doors. Immediately afterwards conditions changed for the better and they were allowed to spend much more time outside, were allowed lights until 21:00, and Prozesky received a chair and a table.⁸⁵

The inspection of the Eshowe Prison was the result of earlier complaints. Real bitterness was rife amongst the prisoners and a riot threatened.⁸⁶ Consequently a group of prisoners, including FDJ Havemann, DJ de Waal, LW Meyer and Fred Colling, went to Dundee to act as witnesses, and confronted Attorney-General Bale with a petition regarding their “treatment as political prisoners.” Before meeting the prisoners Bale sought the prime minister’s permission. This he received on condition that he made them no promises. The rebels complained about their exercise times between 10:00 and 11:00 and 14:00 to 15:00 as these were the hottest times of day. After this they had to return to their cold cells with cement floors and were afraid that they could suffer chills. They also requested knives and forks to eat, and permission to smoke tobacco. It also concerned them that five to six men had to use the same bathwater, and that 70 prisoners had to share the limited toilet facilities with Africans.

80. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.4.1901, pp.17-18.

81. PAR, CSO 1698: Minute paper Magistrate TR Bennett to PUS C Bird explaining why he did not inspect the Ladysmith Prison regularly, 29.1.1902.

82. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.1.1901, p.473.

83. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 11.7.1901, p.21.

84. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 7.6.1901, p.508; Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

85. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.34, 1941.

86. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 14.1.1901, p.476

These complaints led to two positive results. Rebel prisoners were allowed to obtain their own knives and forks for use during mealtimes, and Governor Deane of the Eshowe Prison was expected to respond to the issues raised by the prisoners. Deane claimed that early morning and late afternoon exercise times were used when hot and maintained that the rebels did not exercise in the heat but sat around passively. He also indicated that under the regulations they were not allowed to smoke and that the use of knives and forks was prohibited in all prisons. Deane agreed with the complaints about bathing facilities and said that part of the problem was the inadequate water supply to the prison, something he had complained about repeatedly. The underground tanks were empty and African prisoners had to carry water in buckets over a distance of 1 500 metres. The problems with the toilets were similarly acknowledged. There were only five toilets available for the prisoners and wardens to share and Deane had also complained about this repeatedly.

When confronted with the problems the Public Works Department (hereafter PWD) blamed the drought, which made the well give in, for the lack of water, while the bad toilet facilities were blamed on the influx of rebel prisoners which had not been anticipated seven months earlier when the prison was completed.⁸⁷ According to the rebel prisoners the water supply problem was never solved because the PWD did not know how to construct a well.⁸⁸

As a consequence of this petition other improvements followed. In the Pietermaritzburg Prison the food improved, toilet buckets were removed by Africans, and the inmates were allowed to burn candles at night.⁸⁹ At the same time the prohibition of smoking enforced by Bale under the provisional rules circular 21 was challenged by Renaud and Robinson, the legal representatives of the rebel prisoners in Eshowe. This also turned into a victory for the prisoners and “special rules” were sanctioned by the governor of the Colony allowing for smoking during recreation hours.⁹⁰

Living conditions were contested up until the release of the last rebel prisoner. At times they secured concessions. For example, in September 1901 the governor of the Pietermaritzburg Prison granted prisoners permission to leave their doors open as long as they did not make a noise. An elected committee of three consisting of DC Uys, JM van Rooyen, and NJ van Rensburg had to see to it that the rebels adhered to the agreement.⁹¹ Matches and tools were, however, banned from the

87. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Correspondence regarding the representations made by FDJ Havemann and other prisoners, 5.3.1901-18.4.1901; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 21.3.1901, p.495.

88. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, *circa* December 1900, 11.1.1901, 4.6.1901, pp.461, 473 and 504.

89. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 5.3.1901, p.13.

90. PAR, MJPW 83: Enquiry by Renaud and Robinson regarding permission for rebel prisoners to smoke, 5.3.1901-8.3.1901.

91. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 29.9.1901, p.30.

cells.⁹²

The rebel prisoners who had to endure the most were the 14 Natal Afrikaners sentenced to hard labour. They had far less privileges than their peers and worked in the streets of Eshowe alongside African prisoners. Part of their duty was to pull the carts loaded with sand used for road repairs. As a result they soon earned the nickname “government mules” while the prison became known as the “mule stable.” On their return to prison they also had to perform other duties. Once a week they had to wash the underclothes, sheets and pillowcases of the their fellow rebel prisoners. Even on Sundays they were not spared and Warder Hockley forced Johannes van den Berg to pick up all the pieces of paper in the courtyard of the jail.⁹³

9.2.3 Food in prison

One of the persistent complaints the rebel prisoners had was with the quality and quantity of the food they received. According to JC Vermaak they received a pint of “skilly” or thin porridge without salt at 6:00 in the mornings. For lunch, served at noon, they got “mieliepap” with a spoon of sugar. Supper, served at 18:00, consisted of tea and bread. On Mondays and Thursdays the menu was altered and they received vegetable soup with some meat.⁹⁴ From time to time the diet slightly improved. Then they would received a cup of black coffee and a piece of bread for breakfast, mash potatoes or soup with meat for lunch, and bread and black tea for dinner.⁹⁵ This food was unlike the food the prisoners were used to and many were left feeling hungry.

Against this background strong sentiments were expressed about the quality of the food. The prisoners deemed the bread and potatoes to be raw, the coffee too strong and the soup full of insects.⁹⁶ Especially the quality of the potatoes served in Eshowe irked Missionary Prozesky, who complained that they were green and rotten.⁹⁷ The prisoners were also unhappy about the lack of access to boiling water to make coffee.⁹⁸ Their complaints about the quality of the food and the lack of hot water had very little impact.⁹⁹

92. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 2.6.1901, pp.19-20.

93. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 12.5.1901, 4.6.1901, 8.10.1901, pp.502, 504, 533.

94. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.30, 1941.

95. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 13.7.1900, p.8 ; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 1941, p.31; PAR, AGO I/8/78: Special Rules applicable to prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment without hard labour - as revised by the attorney-general and colonial secretary in accordance with ministers' decision, 24.1.1901; Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

96. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, p.26.

97. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.1.1901, p.473.

98. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, p.16.

99. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.1.1901, p.477.

In an attempt to prove that complaints about the food were unfounded, Governor Deane of the Eshowe Prison, compared the weights of the rebel prisoners when they arrived on 22 and 29 November 1900, 30 January, and 14 February 1901, to their weight on 19 March 1901. According to his calculations the 68 prisoners collectively lost 101 lbs and gained 158¼ lbs - a nett gain of 57¼ lbs. The most weight was gained by JC Engelbrecht and JJ Audie both of whom increased by between 11 and 12 lbs. The biggest weight losers were JJ Webb who lost 12¼ lbs and JH Hattingh who was performing hard labour and also suffering from a kidney disease.¹⁰⁰

Deane, however, neglected to mention that the prisoners diets were supplemented in two ways. Firstly they could purchase food from outside the prison. Once a week a member of the prison staff would take a shopping list to a grocer and purchase what the prisoners had ordered.¹⁰¹ Items on the shopping list ranged from tinned meat,¹⁰² to jam,¹⁰³ and beer¹⁰⁴ until the purchase of alcohol was prohibited.¹⁰⁵ Secondly food was obtained from friends and relatives. This process began in Newcastle in May and June 1900 when Mrs Bosman sent fruit and food to the prison on a daily basis.¹⁰⁶ After this providing food to rebel prisoners became a common occurrence. Mrs J Adendorff of Hope Farm, Newcastle visited her family, the Boshoffs, Lindley Bosman and Paul Prozesky, in prison in Pietermaritzburg. She gave each a loaf of brown bread, a pound of butter and a tin of biltong. The men had to share a bottle of pickles.¹⁰⁷

If the Buys brothers in the Pietermaritzburg Prison and PR Buys in the Weenen Prison were to serve as an example of the food received, the rebel prisoners did very well. Amongst other supplements the brothers received a box of peaches from GM Rudolph, a vat of butter from their sister Mrs Lotter, meat, biltong, peaches, grapes and rusks from family. As a result they had so much food that for long periods they did not have to eat the prison food.¹⁰⁸ The brothers were invariably very productive the day after receiving food from the outside. Izak went and painted the windows of the hospital and Stoffel made a little table from planks.¹⁰⁹ Because the food they received from their extended family was so tasty, some of it was intercepted. "Soldiers dressed in kilts" took most of the food, including a roast chicken, grapes, and some rusks from the basket sent to PR Buys in the Weenen Prison by his mother.¹¹⁰

100. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Correspondence regarding the representations made by FDJ Havemann and other prisoners, 5.3.1901-18.4.1901.

101. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.30, 1941.

102. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 31.1.1901, p.6.

103. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 13.7.1900, pp.7-8.

104. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 15.2.1901, p.9.

105. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

106. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, date unknown, p.428.

107. OE Prozesky Private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 28.9.1900, p.338.

108. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 13.7.1901, pp.1, 7-8.

109. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, p.26.

110. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Memorandum Magistrate M Matthews to magistrate Estcourt, 5.3.1900.

Well wishers also supplied the rebel prisoners with food. Afrikaners from Melmoth sent six eggs for each prisoner, as well as butter, rusks and bread to the Eshowe Prison.¹¹¹ This was followed by Louis Kritzinger who sent rusks, bread and butter and Mr Koekemoer who donated potatoes, cabbages, and pumpkins. Some of the vegetables were taken to the prison kitchen by Philip Vermaak but unlike the case in Pietermaritzburg, the chefs refused to prepare it. Vermaak then wrote to Koekemoer thanking him, but suggested that he send no more vegetables since it could not be cooked. On censoring the letter Governor Deane called in Vermaak and informed him that he should not do it since it was all a misunderstanding. Subsequently the vegetables were prepared without further ado.¹¹²

On Christmas 1901, the prisoners in Eshowe were treated to a large meal funded by Lady Saunders, the wife of the chief magistrate and civil commissioner for Zululand, and prepared by the women in the local concentration camp.¹¹³ A similar meal was prepared by the women of the concentration camp for New Year. This time the money was donated by Doors Hansmeyer of Greytown.¹¹⁴

9.2.4 Passing time

One of the most challenging aspects of imprisonment facing any prisoner is how to pass the time and deal with the longing for freedom and loved ones. The experiences of the imprisoned Natal rebels were no different. One of the rebels who kept a prison diary, Fred A Truscott, captured the longing for his wife on the cover: "Wherever I roam whatever I see my heart untravelled fondly turns to thee."¹¹⁵ Similar feelings of melancholy were expressed by JC Vermaak: "...gescheiden van onsen dierbare bloedverwanten en vrienden, en met een onuitsprekelijk verlangen om weder met hen vereenigd te wesen."¹¹⁶

Dealing with the loneliness took on various guises. Like many of their counterparts in the POW Camps, some rebel prisoners turned to religion. All those initially imprisoned in the Newcastle Prison, except for JC Donovan, an English speaking rebel, had Bibles.¹¹⁷ Elsewhere this was not the case. Here those without Bibles sometimes received copies from friends or relatives. JC Buys for example received a small Bible and some religious books from GM Rudolph when he visited the Durban Prison.¹¹⁸ Reading the Bible and praying¹¹⁹ was a common practice and many learnt whole

111. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 23.12.1900, p.464.

112. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.1.1901, p.477.

113. Eshowe Museum: Framed letter rebel prisoners to Lady Saunders, 2.1.1902.

114. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.34, 1941.

115. NAR, A 1531 FA Truscott-writings: Prison diary, cover page.

116. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

117. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, date unknown, p.427.

118. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 4.6.1900, p.4.

119. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

chapters by heart.¹²⁰ Bible study groups were formed and a singing group in the Newcastle Prison sang Dutch and English spiritual songs and hymns.¹²¹ In the Eshowe Prison two rebels, Degenaar and Cronjé, under the guidance of Missionary Prozesky, took to reading the Bible in Zulu so that they could, when released, hold services for the Africans on their farms.¹²² These religious activities were sustained by regular visits from dominees of the DRC and ministers of other denominations.¹²³

Secular material was also read. The Pietermaritzburg Prison library was well stocked¹²⁴ and Missionary Prozesky took out Dante's *Inferno*, *Purgatory* and *Paradise*.¹²⁵ Newspapers to keep in touch with general news and war-related happenings were, however, more difficult to come by. Rebels who moved from the *Catalonia* to the Durban Prison sometimes received newspapers to read,¹²⁶ but this is where it ended. Prozesky, for example, was not allowed to receive the newspaper he had subscribed to,¹²⁷ while the legal representative of JG Zietsman, HM Millar, unsuccessfully petitioned for his client to receive a paper in prison.¹²⁸

A small number of prisoners used their time in prison to improve their academic competencies. Stoffel Lotz was instructed in reading and writing and English language skills for two hours a day by his cell mate in the Eshowe Prison, Missionary Prozesky.¹²⁹ JDJ Havemann and DJ de Waal learnt shorthand and practised it an hour a day for months, Fred Colling worked as a chef in the Pietermaritzburg Prison¹³⁰ while JC Vermaak improved his accountancy skills and did the books of many of the wardens in the Eshowe Prison. Vermaak in turn instructed JS Hattingh who on his release secured a position at a shop in Estcourt.¹³¹

Writing was another common activity. Some men like JC Buys,¹³² JJA Prozesky¹³³ and FA Truscott¹³⁴ kept diaries. Both the diaries of Buys and Truscott contain extensive lists of names of all the rebels sentenced, the fines they had to pay, the time they had to serve and where they came from. Writing in prison also took on a cultural dimension. JS Vermaak and AM Cronjé wrote a poem of

120. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, date unknown p.427.

121. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, date unknown, p.429.

122. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 4.2.1901, p.483.

123. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.2.1901, p.484.

124. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

125. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.11.1900, p.447.

126. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 1, 5.6.1900, p.4.

127. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, circa November 1900, p.449.

128. PAR, AGO I/8/77: Minute paper Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works regarding the request for a newspaper in prison by HM Millar, 22.1.1901.

129. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, circa November-December 1900, p.462.

130. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.1.1901, p.5.

131. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

132. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: *passim*.

133. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: *passim*.

134. NAR, A 1531, FA Truscott-writings: Prison diary, pp.3-61.

more than a 100 verses on the condition Natal Afrikaners found themselves in after 11 October 1899.¹³⁵

Another important way of passing time was singing and patriotic, sentimental, philosophical and melancholic songs were sung. Songs like “Venus my shining love”, “Old Folks at home”, “Verlaat my niet”, “Comic Song”, “Ons Vryheid” and “Di bruilof van Flip Kotze” were sang in the Eshowe Prison.¹³⁶ In the Pietermaritzburg Prison songs such as “Burger lied”, “Vrystaats Burgerlied”, “A true song”, “Transvaalsche Volkslied”, “Die sterwende wees op die Slagveld” and “Afscheids lied” formed part of the repertoire of the prisoners.¹³⁷ Not only were well-known songs sung, but new ones speaking of the experiences of the Natal rebels were also composed. One such very descriptive song entitled, “Lement of the rebels” appears in the diary of JC Buys.¹³⁸

Lement of the rebels

1 Verse

Round the goal yart am a singing
The Rebels mournful song
Because they have to their sleeping
Laying on the cells hard ground
Where the kaffir police are watching
Inside the close barred gates
There the Rebels are a cussing

Chorus

Down in the goal yard
Hear that mournful song
How the Rebels are a cussing
Through sleeping on the cold hard ground

2 Verse

When the gaoler comes to see them
Or calls them up to court
They know it means another witness
Swering what he shouldnt aught
Up they trot before the great B-
And witnesses a score
Listening to the evidence
That closes around hem more and more

Chorus

3 Verse

Up again up on the morrow
It makes their tear drops flow
And fill their hearts with bitter sorrows
To see the grins of Miller & Co

135. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

136. NAR, A 1531, FA Truscott writings: Prison diary, pp.62-76.

137. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, handwritten copies of songs, no date.

138. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, Lement of the rebels, no date.

The joyful looks on Rebels faces
At seeing the gaoler kind
But don't they look a bit disgusted
When he goes out and leaves them behind

Chorus

The singing was accompanied by violins built by prisoners from a book which they had ordered.¹³⁹ Music proved to be a powerful medium and according to JC Buys “mensen word oproeig om musik in die tronk te hoor.”¹⁴⁰ No wonder that JC Vermaak recalled in his memoirs that singing was prohibited by prison regulations.¹⁴¹

Participation in various sport and games was also common. Prisoners regularly participated in chess, dominoes, draughts and long and high jump. Other games simulated life on the farm. One prisoner would represent a horse and the other his rider and races would take place. Young and powerful men played a game in which one represented an unbroken horse and another a rider who wanted to break it in. First the rider had to mount the horse, and once up, stay up.¹⁴² In the Pietermaritzburg Prison the rebels made a ball with which they played during the day.¹⁴³

Very few rebel prisoners remained passive and most manufactured curios and articles in an attempt to pass the time.¹⁴⁴ Some carved models out of stone;¹⁴⁵ or inserted objects into bottles;¹⁴⁶ others produced smoking pipes and walking sticks;¹⁴⁷ JDJ Havemann made a pin for a tie;¹⁴⁸ Missionary Prozesky painted pictures and made a medallion;¹⁴⁹ Nicholas Prinsloo Jordaan made a kist 305mm high, 550 mm long and 350 mm;¹⁵⁰ LW Meyer likewise made a kist;¹⁵¹ JC Buys crocheted a necktie;¹⁵² and Philip Meyer fixed shoes in the Eshowe Prison including that of Governor Deane and his wife.¹⁵³

While the prison authorities were strict in not allowing prisoners to keep the walking sticks they

139. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 7.10.1901, p.531; WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 2.6.1901, pp.19-20.

140. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 2.6.1901, pp.19-20.

141. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

142. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, date unknown, p.427.

143. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 27.7.1901, pp.23-24.

144. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

145. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 25.1.1901-31.1.1901, pp.4-6.

146. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.2.1901, p.12.

147. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 22.8.1901.

148. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.35, 1941.

149. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, circa November-December 1901, p.462.

150. E-mail Marthinus Willem (MW) Jordaan great grandson of Nicholaas Prinsloo Jordaan to JM Wassermann, 12.6.2002. The kist is currently in possession of MW Jordaan.

151. Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

152. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 2.2.1901, p.6.

made in their cells,¹⁵⁴ they were more lenient and accommodating in other aspects. Casper Truscott was, for example, allowed a saw and plane to work with in prison.¹⁵⁵ In time the privileges were expanded and groups of prisoners in the Pietermaritzburg Prison were allocated rooms in which they could do woodworking and keep their tools.¹⁵⁶

9.2.5 Contact with the outside world

Despite being imprisoned Natal rebels managed to keep contact with, and gain news from, the world outside prison. The easiest way to establish contact with the outside world was through letters. The first group of arrested Natal Afrikaners to write letters for this purpose were those on board the *Catalonia* in the Durban harbour. In their correspondence to family and friends they refrained from writing about the war and generally focussed on personal matters.¹⁵⁷ In time certain codes related to the weather and farming were used to circumvent the censorship of letters. The word “vooros” in a letter apparently referred to a general, “osse” meant officers, “springhane” meant soldiers, “donder/onweder” meant a battle and “hagel” signified destruction by soldiers. Stamps affixed to letters also carried clues. When things went badly stamps were pasted in a skew manner - the more skew the stamp the worse matters and/or conditions were.¹⁵⁸ Such elaborate secretive measures were not always necessary. While in exile in the Netherlands and later German South West Africa (Namibia), CT Vermaak kept up a steady correspondence with his brother JS Vermaak in the Eshowe Prison, without being detected. The pseudonym Miss Cora Herzog was used to protect the identity of CT Vermaak. In the process they conducted business affairs and exchanged news on the war and family.¹⁵⁹

Frequently letters or telegrams received by prisoners brought bad tidings, such as the removal of women and children to concentration camps, looting of livestock and the death of a family member.¹⁶⁰ Theunis Paulus Lezar, whose correspondence was handled by Prozesky, received such a letter from his wife informing him that one of his daughter had died of measles.¹⁶¹ JC Buys and his brother Izak of Rietkuil, Ladysmith, likewise received sad tidings: “Op de 14de van die maant heeft ons een treurige tyding gekrygen, ons heef een telegram gekregen dat ons oude Vader gestroven is. Het is bitter swaar om in deze plek zoo een treurige tyding te krygen, mar wat kan ons doen ons moet mar tevrede en geduldig wees onder de hand des Heere.” The Buys family was particularly

153. VTR, JC Vermaak collection 03/2554/2: Document entitled “Grappe in die tronk”, no date.

154. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 16.11.1901, p.33.

155. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.2.1901, p.12.

156. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 11.8.1901, p.25.

157. PAR, AGO I/7/46: Incriminating letters written by Natal rebels imprisoned on board the *Catalonia*, no date.

158. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17 or 19.11.1900, pp.451-452.

159. Foy Vermaak private collection: JC Vermaak between 19.3.1901 and 5.6.1902 wrote at least 27 letters to CT Vermaak alias Cora Herzog.

160. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.1.1901, p.473.

161. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 4.9.1901, p.524.

hard hit and while imprisoned not only had to deal with the death of their father but also that of their sister Mrs P Lotter,¹⁶² and their brother, JP Buys, who died while awaiting trial in the Ladysmith Prison.¹⁶³ On a more positive note, the brothers received permission from the authorities, just before their father's death, to accompanied by policemen go and visit him. On arrival in Ladysmith by train they hired a cart and horses from the Royal Hotel and proceeded to the farm Rietkuil for a visit which lasted from 10:00 to 16:00. Afterwards they returned to Ladysmith and waited in prison until the train arrived to take them back to Pietermaritzburg.¹⁶⁴

Generally the military authorities had no problem in allowing rebel prisoners to attend funerals or visit sick family members. The only condition was that the civil authorities accept full responsibility and provide a police escort.¹⁶⁵ In line with this policy the Meyer's, incarcerated in Pietermaritzburg, attended the funeral of Andries Naude,¹⁶⁶ while the ill Jim Truscott's brother was granted leave from Pietermaritzburg Prison to visit him in the Estcourt Hospital.¹⁶⁷

Not all such requests were, however, granted. The Cronjé brothers, HB and PJ, asked to visit their dying mother on the farm Dwars Rivier between Wasbank and Ladysmith. This was denied because Inspector Dorehill of the Natal Police regarded the proposed escort as insufficient since a third Cronjé brother, for whom a warrant of arrest had been issued, was presumed to be in the area.¹⁶⁸ Apart from the above-mentioned visits the only other way in which prisoners could venture beyond the confines of the prison was when they were subpoenaed to testify in other rebel cases. On such occasions they could, for example, travel from Eshowe and Pietermaritzburg to Northern Natal and back. In the process information would be obtained about the war, families and other prisoners.¹⁶⁹ Returning witnesses were thus able to report in March 1901 that the districts of Ladysmith, Dundee and Newcastle were cleared of livestock and that most of the women and children had been removed to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. The only Afrikaner residents left were loyalists and old people.¹⁷⁰

The most regular direct contact with the outside world was through visitors.¹⁷¹ Regulations stated

162. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 16.11.1901, p.33.

163. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/16: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett to colonial secretary, 7.9.1900.

164. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 13.10.1901, pp.31-32.

165. PAR, CSO 1682: Telegram magistrate Newcastle to PUS C Bird, 5.8.1901.

166. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

167. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 6.3.1901, p.13.

168. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Correspondence regarding the request of HB Cronjé to be allowed to visit his mother, 31.10.1900-7.11.1900.

169. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letters JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 22.3.1901 and 12.6.1901; PAR, AGO I/8/80: Minute paper regarding the summons of rebel prisoners as witnesses, 12.7.1901-17.7.1901.

170. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

171. PAR, CSO 1662: Application by J Shepstone to visit Piet Hogg, 12.11.1900-22.11.1900; PAR, CSO 2583: Telegram Sub-Inspector Meiners to chief commissioner of police, 6.11.1899.

that prisoners could only receive visitors twice a week for 30 minutes at a time. The prisoners were called by the warden on duty and after the visit they had to sign a register indicating that they had received visitors. The wardens, either through oversight or kindness, sometimes allowed three visits per week. It was also possible to receive three groups of visitors per week by conveniently forgetting to sign the visitors register, thus providing no proof of an earlier visit.¹⁷²

Especially the Pietermaritzburg Prison was frequented by visits from friends,¹⁷³ family members,¹⁷⁴ and even the wife and daughter of General Christiaan de Wet of whom JC Buys wrote as follows: “sy kan regte veel praat zij is nog een opregte boer.”¹⁷⁵ These visitors brought gifts for the prisoners ranging from fruit and food to tobacco. Prisoners treasured both the goods and the packaging in which it was brought as this useful material could be turned into shelves and sorely needed storage space.¹⁷⁶

The importance prisoners attached to the visits from family and friends can be gauged by the conflict it caused in the Pietermaritzburg Prison with the Sunday sermons. Ds WP Rousseau’s complaint that some prisoners were called out for visits while he preached, and his subsequent request that no visitors be allowed during his sermons caused such tension that some prisoners indicated they would not attend at all as they did not want to jeopardise Sunday visits from relatives and friends. In response the governor of the prison threatened to put a stop to the regular Sunday sermon.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, when the inhabitants of the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp were stopped from visiting the prison apparently to prevent the spread of measles, the rebel prisoners protested. They refused to accept the explanation and interpreted it as a punitive measure since the camp inhabitants could move about Pietermaritzburg without restriction.¹⁷⁸

In contrast to the Pietermaritzburg Prison, Eshowe received very few visitors. Since it was geographically isolated and difficult to reach, only very determined family members like Annie Krogman and Mrs Meyer made the journey.¹⁷⁹ Both prisons, however, received visits from curious local inhabitants on a regular basis. These were brought into the prison to gape at the rebel prisoners in their cells.¹⁸⁰ This kind of visitor was generally not welcomed by the prisoners and JC Buys

172. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 8.2.1901-19.2.1901, pp.8-10.

173. PAR, CSO 1662: Application by J Shepstone to visit Piet Hogg, 12.11.1900-22.11.1900; WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 27.1.1901, p.5.

174. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 10-12.2.1901, p.8.

175. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 25.8.1901, pp.27-28.

176. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 27.1.1901, 19.2.1901, 9.3.1901, pp.5, 10 and 13.

177. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 28.4.1901, pp.17-18.

178. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 25.8.1901, pp.27-28.

179. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.2.1901, p.485.

180. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* February 1901, p.490.

derogatorily referred to them as “Engelsche vleries.”¹⁸¹

One local English visitor who was welcomed to the Pietermaritzburg Prison was an entrepreneurial photographer. Over a three day period he took photographs of individual and groups of rebels. One woman even came into prison with her children to be photographed with her husband for what was described as “een goede aandenking.”¹⁸²

All the contact with the outside world, however, did not ease the pining for freedom. According to Prozesky this feeling was worst during exercise time: “... when we look eastwards, we see beyond the wall of the prison a little piece of world, and whenever I look that way, I feel as if I am still connected to the outside world. And when I look up, I see the beautiful sky in which the clouds pass by. Whey they are going in a northerly direction, I send greetings to my dear ones, and when they are coming from the north, I imagine that my dear ones are sending greetings to me.”¹⁸³

9.2.6 The release of the rebel prisoners

In line with the longing for their loved ones the rebels always hoped that they would obtain amnesty before the completion of their sentences. Consequently there was much talk that they would be liberated at the time of Queen Victoria’s death, late January 1901. To exploit this opportunity the rebels, under the leadership of Johannes Vermaak, drew up a telegram of condolences to the king-to-be, Edward. The governor of the Eshowe Prison, however, refused to forward it.¹⁸⁴

The second occasion on which rebels were hopeful that they could obtain amnesty was with the visit to Natal by Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught. Several letters published in the *Natal Witness* expressed the view that the “political prisoners” should be released or their sentences reduced during the visit.¹⁸⁵ From within the Afrikaner community Gert van Rooyen wrote to Attorney-General Henry Bale asking that as an act of royal mercy the rebels be released. The rebel prisoners incarcerated in Pietermaritzburg also did their bit to try and secure freedom and sent the duke a violin, a frame, a bottle, and a slangkassie (jack-in-a-box) so that he could see “dat de barbaarsche natie welke hy van gehoor heeft niet zoo is also wat hy dag.” These requests were unsuccessful and all the prisoners gained from the visit was to see flags hoisted in preparation of the visit and hear the sounds of the festivities such as the singing of African voices.¹⁸⁶

181. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 27.1.1901, pp.5.

182. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 21.7.1901-23.7.1901, pp.22-23; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17 or 19 November 1900, p.453; NAR, Photographs 7163 and 7164: Veroordeelde rebellen in de gevangenis te Pietermaritzburg, 1.2.1902.

183. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, Introduction, p.384.

184. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 11.1.1901, p.473.

185. *Natal Witness*, 14.8.1901.

186. WM Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, pp.26-27.

The Natal authorities were also not willing to release rebels from prison before their sentences were served. In the light of this Gerrit Adendorff, who was condemned to nine months imprisonment, had his request to be released because of a valvular disease of the heart and enteric fever, rejected by the governor of Natal.¹⁸⁷ Similarly AE Douglas of Dannhauser failed to have Hendrik Dafel's nine month sentence remitted. Douglas testified that Dafel and his family had showed great kindness to him and his brother during the Boer occupation of Northern Natal. With the arrival of the British forces in the area in May 1900, Douglas his brother and three other people, had brought Dafel's good deeds to the attention of Lt-Col David Henderson of the military intelligence. Henderson used this information to give a favourable report to AAG Intelligence Natal to help Dafel should he be brought to trial. Dafel did not get the benefit of Douglas's request because the letter written by Henderson could not be found.¹⁸⁸ In the end the only rebel to be pardoned by the governor of Natal was the elderly and sickly AC Vermaak from Paddock, Dundee.¹⁸⁹ Vermaak died five months before peace was declared.¹⁹⁰

The only way in which convicted rebels could gain their freedom was by serving their sentences. Any release was preceded by extensive administrative duties. A fortnight before the discharge of a rebel the prison involved had to provide the Natal Police with the appropriate names.¹⁹¹ The names were then, along with a notification of the time-expired rebel's intended place of residence, forwarded to the military so that the commanding officer of the district in question could be consulted.¹⁹² Once released, the rebel prisoner had to report to the commandant of Pietermaritzburg. On completion of an interrogation session, the former prisoner was ordered to the office of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) where the officer in charge, mostly Inspector Clarke, would command the rebel to remain in Pietermaritzburg and report to the police twice a week. In a limited number of cases rebels were allowed to proceed to the areas they came from, or to the homes of friends and family.¹⁹³

If and when time-expired rebels were allowed to reside outside Pietermaritzburg, security to the amount of £500 had to be paid by those who were prepared to accommodate the individual. The person willing to harbour the ex-prisoner was also first investigated by the Natal Police. This was the procedure when BA Bester applied for permission for his son JJ (Johannes) to reside on the farm

187. PAR, CSO 1662: Petition by G Adendorff for his release from confinement, 16.11.1900-15.12.1900.

188. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Enquiry by AE Douglas about the possible remittance of the sentence imposed on H Dafel, 24.3.1901-22.4.1901.

189. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

190. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by H Vermaak, 15.1.1903

191. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/18987: Discharge certificate for JJ Kemp from the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 3.2.1902.

192. PAR, MJPW 83: Correspondence regarding the discharge of rebels from prison, 3.3.1901-25.3.1901.

193. PAR, PM 22: Correspondence regarding application by PC Cronjé to proceed to the farm of CJ Labuschagne, 8.6.1901-18.6.1901.

Rama near Ladysmith. He gave his farm Abergeldie, which was valued at £500, and which he had to prove was free from mortgage, as security. Once this was proved Johannes moved to Rama on the following Martial Law conditions: he could only leave the farm with the permission of the officer commanding; he had to refrain from communicating with burghers or colonials who supported the Republican cause; and was not allowed to show any disloyalty towards the king or the British forces by word or deed.¹⁹⁴

Released rebels also faced other obstacles in their attempt to return home. Lawyers Hershensohn and McGillewie requested permission from the colonial secretary for TR Dannhauser, a time expired rebel from Cecilia Dale, Dundee, to return home. They pointed out that Dannhauser was poor and one of the first rebels whose sentence had expired. He was, however, compelled to remain in Pietermaritzburg while his family was on the farm. This disturbed both Dannhauser and his lawyers as the greater majority of the rebels from the Dundee district who had served their sentences had been granted passes to go home. Hershensohn and McGillewie thus alleged that “passes to return to Dundee have been issued indiscriminately at Dundee and men who were released long after our client has returned to their farms, and in one case one Cronjé received his pass to return although he had still a month to serve.” The lawyers brought these facts to the attention of the CID in Pietermaritzburg who was aware of the fact that passes were being issued by either Captain Stieble¹⁹⁵ of the VCR or the commandant of Dundee without reference to the CID. Hershensohn and McGillewie also felt aggrieved by the system since all their applications received negative responses while the agents and lawyers acting from Dundee had no problem in satisfying their clients.¹⁹⁶ The Natal Government acknowledged the problem but were, under Martial Law, unable and unwilling to act.¹⁹⁷

The Natal Government also found itself in a predicament when the military refused to allow rebels, who had completed their prison sentences, to return home. The government tried its level best to keep these former prisoners out of the concentration camps, so that they would avoid having to pay for their keep. In fact, the Natal Government was not even prepared to pay for the railway tickets of rebels allowed to leave Pietermaritzburg since they did not regard it as their duty to do so.¹⁹⁸ A point in case was AJ and JJ Moolman. On their release in Ladysmith, after serving their sentence of five months, these former rebels found themselves destitute. Consequently the GOC wanted to send them

194. PAR, PM 29: Application by JJ Bester to be allowed to return to his fathers farm, 8.2.1902-26.2.1902; For another example of this process see: PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/9: Correspondence about the conditions under which JE Jordaan could proceed to Greytown, 20.5.1902-31.5.1902.

195. Other members of the VCR, notably Captain Gold, also had a good relationship with Natal Afrikaners. Under his command CL Cronjé and Miss Meyer were allowed to search the house of PD Twyman for stolen goods. See PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/5: Statement by PD Twyman, 5.8.1901.

196. PAR, CSO 1687: Letter Hershensohn and McGillewie to colonial secretary, 2.10.1901.

197. PAR, CSO 1687: Letter assistant under secretary to Hershensohn and McGillewie, 9.10.1901.

198. PAR, CSO 1684: Natal Government Railways passenger account for discharged prisoners, 5.9.1901.

down to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. Prime Minister Hime immediately wanted to know if this move was to be paid for by the military or the Natal Government. Fortunately for the men they found work in Ladysmith.¹⁹⁹

The tightfistedness of the Natal Government made life extremely difficult for the liberated rebels as shown by the following examples. Hershensohn and McGillewie applied on behalf of Johannes Hermanus Potgieter, on completion of his sentence, for admission into the Pietermaritzburg Camp. He had been living on the charity of friends since his release from prison and could not afford to pay his board and lodging and was prevented from returning to his farm by the military. Potgieter had a half share in the farm Grootgeluk near Newcastle, the instalments of which were paid by his mother-in-law, Mrs JJ Meyer. As was normal, the Natal colonial authorities tasked the police to conduct an investigation into the case. The investigation found that Potgieter's grandfather, an owner of four farms equalling 5 436 acres, had recently passed away. Although his estate was not yet settled, Potgieter's father would inherit the farms. This, together with the fact that he owned property in Natal, caused the Natal authorities to deny his request to enter the concentration camp.²⁰⁰ Abraham Marthinus Cronjé who owned four farms,²⁰¹ and Daniel Rudolph de Wet of Rietspruit, Newcastle, whose family owned a large amount of landed property but had lost all their livestock, were likewise, barred from entering the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.²⁰²

The same fate befell the requests of another time-expired rebel, PH Labuschagne of Stonehill, Dundee. On his release from prison Labuschagne requested permission to be admitted into the Pietermaritzburg Camp so he could join his parents, but failed in his application because he stated that he could not find work in Pietermaritzburg. Inspector Clarke of the Natal Police believed Labuschagne did not "want work, he appears to be of the loafing type." Labuschagne soon proved Clarke wrong and obtained employment, but only earned 4/- per day on the days when there was sufficient work, while his board and lodging cost him 5/6 per day. Consequently Labuschagne again applied to be allowed to reside in the camp where his mother "will do her best to provide for me in the way of rations, and with my slender pay I can assist her." His request was again rejected and Clarke unfairly stated: "I judge from the present actions and demeanour of these people that they intend, in the event of a first refusal, to inundate the Government and the Commandant with repeated applications, with a view to tiring the Government into consent."²⁰³

199. PAR, CSO 1682: Correspondence regarding the status of AJ and JJ Moolman, 27.7.1901-16.9.1901.

200. PAR, MJPW 87: Correspondence regarding the application of JH Potgieter to join the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 4.9.1901-18.9.1901.

201. PAR, MJPW 89: Correspondence pertaining to the applications of JL and AM Cronjé to enter the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 18.11.1901-14.12.1901.

202. PAR, MJPW 91: Correspondence regarding the request by CJ de Wet that her son might join her in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp on his release, 7.1.1902-13.1.1902.

203. PAR, MJPW 89: Correspondence regarding the application by PH Labuschagne to enter the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 25.11.1901-30.12.1901.

Time-expired rebels stood no chance against such an attitude as LP de Jager found out. As a man with no property he had before the war resided with his father on the farm Bakenkop near Dundee. At the time of his request to return home he was residing in the boarding house of Mrs de Haas in Boshoff Street, Pietermaritzburg. When interviewed about his financial standing De Jager's demeanour was described as "...very impudent in his manner and slouched out of the office before any more information could be gathered on his means..." Not surprisingly his request was denied, as was a later request.²⁰⁴

The plight of these time-expired rebels is best described by WP Rousseau: In "Maritzburg verscheidenen na maanden lange gevangenis nu vrijlaten en die toch niet naar hunne woningen mogen terugkeeren. Zij moeten nu hier zonder een pfenning op zak leven. Enkelen hunner zijn zoo gelukkig geweest verlof te krijgen om in het kamp te gaan wonen en daar 'rations' te krijgen. Doch velen loopen rond op de straten in armoede en gebrek. Wat in deze gevallen te doen, is ons een raadsel."²⁰⁵

The situation as outlined caused rebel prisoners to develop their own philosophy on liberation from prison. Comparing his own status to that of individuals who could not get permission to leave Pietermaritzburg and had to report regularly to either the police or the military, Prozesky stated: "... he is worse off, in that his prison is bigger and he has to pay for his own board and lodging."²⁰⁶ The conditions associated with liberty, as a result, acted as an incentive to some rebels not to pay their fines and thus remain in prison.²⁰⁷ Missionary Prozesky who held this view was threatened that if he did not pay his fine his property would be sold. He refused and argued that he did not have property to the value of £500 as most of it was stolen. Prozesky was thus informed that the sale of his property would take place on 6 July 1901.²⁰⁸ His belongings eventually fetched £123.14. - a highly inflated price according to him.²⁰⁹ JC Buys likewise failed to pay his fine of £100 and had to serve another three months.²¹⁰

This hard-nosed attempt of the Natal Government at saving costs, which at the same time acted as a punitive measure, was maintained until it was realised in late 1901 that the policy was almost

204. PAR, MJPW 88: Correspondence regarding the application of LJ de Jager to enter the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 31.10.1901-18.1.1902.

205. *De Kerkbode*, 12.12.1901.

206. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 26.9.1901, pp.528.

207. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 15.6.1901, p.508; PAR, AGO I/7/44: List of prisoners undergoing sentence for high treason, 25.6.1902.

208. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 7.6.1901, p.504.

209. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 16.7.1901, p.516.

210. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 15.9.1901, p.29.

impossible to implement.²¹¹ From then onwards the procedure was relaxed and time-expired rebels such as PH Nel of Kalverfontein, Dundee, FAJ van Niekerk of Langklip, Newcastle, NJ Degenaar of Ingagane, Newcastle, JC and IJM Buys of Rietkuil, Ladysmith, and SJ Brooks of Newcastle, amongst others, were allowed to enter the concentration camps at the expense of the government.²¹²

Of all the hundreds of Natal Afrikaners who served prison sentences for high treason only one, a certain Van Niekerk, described by JC Buys as, “zoo een schurk”, was rearrested after his release. He received a sentence of one month hard labour because he had broken into a tent in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.²¹³

Contrary to what happened in POW camps, not a single rebel attempted to escape from prison. This was the case in spite of the successful escape by Burghers Felix Coetzee, Southall and Le Roux from the Pietermaritzburg Prison, proving that such a step was possible.²¹⁴

9.3 Natal Afrikaners in the concentration camps

The largest number of Natal Afrikaners to be detained were those in the concentration camps.²¹⁵

These camps, erected to pacify and care for the Boer population, resulted in the creation of several camps in Natal namely at: Ladysmith, Eshowe, Howick, Colenso, Pinetown, Pietermaritzburg, Jacobs, Wentworth and Merebank.²¹⁶

9.3.1 Removal and life in the concentration camps

The first concentration camp to be created in Natal was the one located at Fort Napier in Pietermaritzburg. The camp was officially created in August 1900 making it, after Mafeking, the

211. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding the admission of CJ Lombaard into the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 3.4.1902-23.8.1902.

212. NAR, DBC 139: List of bachelors in the Pietermaritzburg camp, undated; WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 14.12.1901, p.34; PAR, MJPW 88: Correspondence regarding the application of SJ Brooks to enter the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 21.9.1901-10.10.1901; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 26.9.1901, p.528.

213. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 4.8.1901, pp.24-25.

214. VTR JC Vermaak collection, 03/19980: Letter unknown (possibly JC Vermaak) to Professor Uys, 3.11.1955; PAR, 1/PMB 2/3/2/2: Minute paper from the governor of the Pietermaritzburg Prison regarding the placing in irons of three prisoners, 29.7.1901.

215. For general works from various historiographical perspectives on the concentration camp system see, amongst others, the following: N Devitt, *The concentration camps in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer War of 1889-1902*; AC Martin, *The concentration camps 1900-1902: facts, figures and fables*; JC Otto, *Die konsentrasiekampe*; SB Spies, *Methods of barbarism? Roberts and Kitchener and civilians in the Boer Republics: January 1900 - May 1902*.

216. The history of several Natal Concentration Camps are well documented, see: AU Wohlberg, *The Merebank Concentration Camp in Durban, 1901-1902*. MA-thesis, UOFS, 2000; AU Wohlberg, *The Durban Concentration Camps: Merebank, Wentworth and Jacobs*, in JM Wassermann and BT Kearney (eds.), *A warrior's gateway: Durban and the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp.272-303; JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe concentration and surrendered burghers camp during the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*; JM Wassermann, *The Pinetown Concentration Camp during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)*. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to investigate any of the mentioned camps in detail but merely to illuminate the experiences of Natal Afrikaners in these, and other camps, in the system.

second oldest camp in the system.²¹⁷ The first inhabitants arrived on 10 August 1900.²¹⁸ The first Natal Afrikaners to arrive were Mrs JH Breytenbach and her seven children from Newcastle who were described as destitute and accused of hiding dynamite on their farm. After their arrival, a steady trickle of “undesirable” Natal Afrikaners such as Mrs GF Maritz, Mrs M Botha and her baby, Mrs JB Louw and her four children all from Newcastle, joined them. In their wake followed, on 2 November 1900, so-called undesirables namely Mrs Gregory and her governess Miss Latty, and Mrs ME Kock²¹⁹ and her four children, all from Dundee.²²⁰

From then on, until just before the war ended, hundreds of Natal Afrikaners were deported to especially the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. The full range of justifications for sending Natal Afrikaner women and children becomes clear when studying the camp registers.²²¹ Reasons offered included: “Anti British”; “For protection”; “Undesirable”; “Destitute”; “Suspect”; “Refugee”; “Husband tried for treason”; “Own request”; “Military reasons farm had to be cleared”; “No reason given”; “Cattle in the Transvaal”; “Rebel” and “Harbouring enemy.”²²² Clearly a large range of reasons, many punitive as part of the total war waged against Natal Afrikaners, others humanitarian in nature²²³ or motivated by Martial Law.

The process involved in removing Natal Afrikaners to the concentration camps, as explained by CM Meyer of Gladstone, Dundee, mimicked that experienced by their Republican kin:

At noon on the 6th of November 1900 some Policemen came to my house and told me that my family and I must all be at the station at 3 o’c that afternoon - I had no opportunity of making any arrangements but had to leave everything on the farm just as it was...We were sent to the Refugee Camp P.M.B. but only remained there 3 days after which we obtained permission to live in town. I went to a boarding House where I remained with my family for two months when I took a house for myself. I was not allowed to go back to my farm till 17th April 1901.²²⁴

The arrival in the concentration camps of these Natal Afrikaners was a continuous process which carried on up to the end of hostilities. The process of cleansing the northern districts of Natal was greatly aimed at Afrikaners who were, with few exceptions, all viewed as disloyal. Under Martial Law it was possible for the military to remove people whom they suspected, like for example, Piet

217. Cd. 893: Report on the concentration camps in South Africa by the Committee of Ladies appointed by the secretary for war containing reports on the camps in Natal, the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, p.30.

218. NAR, DBC 135: Register of residents M-Z in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Jun 1901.

219. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME Kock, 24.10.1902.

220. J Ploeger, pp.41.4-41.6.

221. NAR, DBC, 140: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Jun 1900.

222. NAR, DBC 134-142: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 1900-1902.

223. PAR, PM 22: Letter HE van Vure to Lt CM Threlfill, VIII Hussars, 29.6.1901. Her husband, Stephanus Johannes, spelt his surname Van Vuuren.

224. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CN Meyer, 13.1.1903.

Conradie and his son from the Newcastle district to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, at will while leaving their wives and children behind on the farm.²²⁵ In this process the colonial authorities had very little say. They merely had to tow the line and try and influence the process by means of enquiries and correspondence.

Transfers of Natal Afrikaners between the various concentration camps in the Colony also took place from time to time. The rationale behind this was that allowing people to join families and friends would alleviate the population pressure in certain camps. A point in case is the transfers that took place shortly after the creation of the Howick Concentration Camp.²²⁶ On 2 February 1901, to accommodate some members of the burgeoning population of the Pietermaritzburg Camp, 82 Natal Afrikaners were transferred to Howick. Included in the number were “undesirables” like Annie Vermaak of Helpmekaar²²⁷ and DJ Pringle and his six children from Newcastle, who after a Boer raid in December 1900 in the Newcastle area, asked to be sent to a concentration camp.²²⁸ The same process took place when the Merebank Concentration Camp was created in September 1901. Sixty five Natal Afrikaners, including some time expired rebels, were transferred to the camp from Pietermaritzburg. The first of these to arrive on 24 October 1901, were Judith Margaret Rall (aged 26) and her five-year-old son Adriaan Matthys from Klippoort, Newcastle. Her husband Johannes was convicted as a rebel and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. By 12 November 1901, there were 65 Natal Afrikaners in the Merebank Concentration Camp from either the Newcastle, Dundee or Melmoth districts. The oldest in this group were the 83-year-old Adrian Johannes Rall and his 75-year-old wife Johanna Susika, while the youngest was the six-month-old Fredrika van der Walt from the farm Belfry in the Dundee district.²²⁹ In time Natal Afrikaners were also relocated to the newly created Jacobs Camp in Durban.²³⁰ Moving from Transvaal to Natal Camps was also allowed. One such example was JS Lezar, the wife of rebel TGP Lezar, and her seven children between the ages of four and 13 who were, on 3 August 1901, relocated from the Volksrust to the Pietermaritzburg Camp.²³¹

The concentration camp experiences of Natal Afrikaners differed very little from those experienced by other inhabitants of the well managed Natal Concentration Camp system. One aspect of camp life shared by all inhabitants was death. Although the death rate in the Natal Camps is not comparable to that in the camps under the Transvaal and OFS administration, a significant number of deaths did occur. Amongst these were 28 Natal Afrikaners. (see Appendix G) The majority of the deaths

225. PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by P Conradie, 15.10.1902.

226. NAR, A 2030, 81: Besonderhede oor die kamp te Howick, no date.

227. NAR, DBC 111: Register of residents A-L in the Howick Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Nov 1902.

228. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DJ Pringle, 13.10.1902.

229. PAR, CSO 1732: Reply by H Bousfield to an enquiry about the number of Natalians in Merebank, 12.11.1901.

230. PAR, CSO 1710: List of Natal Afrikaners who were sent to Merebank, 16.8.1902.

231. NAR, DBC 142: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Oct 1900-May 1901.

amongst Natal Afrikaners occurred in the camp which housed the highest number of Natal Afrikaners, namely Pietermaritzburg.²³² The most important causes for the deaths suffered by Natal Afrikaners mirrors those of the concentration camp system in general: pneumonia, measles and enteritis. Certain families were also harder hit than others and the Botha/Van Niekerk, the Coetzer and the Shorter families lost several members each.²³³ These deaths were to a certain extent balanced by the births to Natal Afrikaners. Like the deaths this occurred almost exclusively in the Pietermaritzburg Camp.²³⁴

The approximate number of Natal Afrikaners who were at one stage or another listed in the registers of the various Natal Camps roughly totalled: Pietermaritzburg 537, Merebank 130, Howick 70, Jacobs 43 and Eshowe 1. A further 194 Natal Afrikaners resided at one stage or another in the Volksrust Concentration Camp,²³⁵ and 23 in the Standerton Concentration Camp.²³⁶ When studying the figures it must be borne in mind that many individuals transferred between camps and were resident in more than one before leaving to reside with family or friends or returning home.²³⁷ The approximate 900 to 1 000 Natal Afrikaner concentration camp inhabitants constituted between 20% and 25% of the Afrikaner population of Natal. Amongst them were individuals who fulfilled important roles within the camp system like Mrs van Schalkwyk who acted as midwife,²³⁸ and PRN Vermaak who did sterling work as the head of the concentration camp school in Pietermaritzburg.²³⁹

Although Natal Afrikaners had much in common with their fellow camp inhabitants from the Republics such as language and culture, and many of them had also suffered greatly during the war, they were a sub-group which could be differentiated by the fact that they were British subjects who had support structures at hand, for they could appeal directly to their government or local politicians. They could also easily call on members of their extended families because they were geographically not far from their homes. At the same time, unlike their Republican counterparts, Natal Afrikaner camp inhabitants did not suffer the feeling that they had lost their country and that they were imprisoned in a foreign state. As such they were, according to Mrs Isabella A Grobler in the

232. Natal Afrikaners banned to Pietermaritzburg, but who resided outside of the concentration camps, also lost family members to death. For example, Carolina Vermaak died of enteric fever. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 2.3.1902

233. PAR, AGO I/8/85: Minute paper regarding the death of Carl Posselt, 3.6.1902-10.6.1902; PAR, GH 554: Monthly reports for Natal Concentration Camps, 1901-1903; NAR, DBC 110-157: Registers for Natal Concentration Camps, 1900-1903; NGKA: Doodslyste vir die Merebank en Jacobs Konsentrasiekampe, 1900-1903; AU Wohlberg, *The Merebank...*, pp.242-261.

234. NGKA: Doopregister vir die Pietermaritzburg Konsentrasiekamp, circa 1900-1902.

235. NAR, DBC 105-107: Registers of residents in the Volksrust Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Jan 1903.

236. NAR, DBC 95-98: Registers of residents in the Standerton Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Jan 1903.

237. NAR, DBC 134-142: Registers of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Dec 1902.

238. MM Postma, (versamelaar), *Stemme uit die verlede. 'n Versameling beëdigde verklarings van vroue wat tydens die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in die konsentrasiekampe verkeer het*, p.89.

239. NAR, A 2030, 98: A South African diary - reprinted from the *Daily News; De Kerkbode*, 4.4.1901.

Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, referred to as the “Natal Rebels.”²⁴⁰

9.3.2 The Natal Government and the economics of keeping their subjects in the concentration camps

Like with the rebel prisoners the Natal Government's attitude regarding the maintenance of its subjects, sent down to the concentration camps by the military was clear - they should “be told to shift for themselves.”²⁴¹ In the case of destitute members of society the Natal Government would, at times, make an exception.²⁴² The reluctance and even unwillingness of the Natal Government to support deported individuals was based on their principle that, since the small Colony had a limited amount of funding available to deal with the enormous expenses caused by the war, those who could afford it should pay for themselves. At the same time it was reasoned that forcing deportees to pay their own way would serve to stop the military from unnecessarily removing people to Pietermaritzburg. The policy of self-payment furthermore also served to punish “disloyal” Afrikaners financially. The Natal authorities could, however, not apply this policy in a watertight manner while dealing with the whims of the military.

The case which served to alter the Natal Government's attempts at non-payment for Natal Afrikaner families deported to Pietermaritzburg, was that of JF Britz and her two children, and Mesdames Isak, Johanna and Susannah Landman, all family members of rebels. They were handed over by the military to the civilian authorities in Newcastle for deportation to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. Because they were Natal subjects Prime Minister Hime stated that “...we have no concern in the matter.” As a result the women and children could not be transferred and were forced to sleep in the office of the police sergeant at Newcastle, while the magistrate ordered food for them from the Commercial Hotel. The situation left the magistrate with no choice but to deport the families to Pietermaritzburg where they arrived unannounced at the camp.²⁴³ The reluctant camp commandant was consequently forced to accommodate the Britz and Landman families.²⁴⁴

This series of events did not please PUS Bird who enquired under whose authority the group was sent down. The military replied that the GOC had ordered the removal of several families including the Britz and Landman households²⁴⁵ and that they had merely acted in accordance with their agreement with the Natal Government. This statement sent a clear signal to the Natal authorities that

240. MM Postma, p.89.

241. PAR, CSO 1732: Report by the magistrate Newcastle that the military had ordered him to send the De Wet, O'Reilly and Cronjé families to Pietermaritzburg, 4.7.1901-19.7.1901.

242. PAR, PM 22: Correspondence relative to HE van Vure, 7.7.1901-21.7.1901.

243. PAR, CSO 1732: Enquiry on whose authority the Britz and Landman families were relocated to Pietermaritzburg, 8.7.1901-9.7.1901.

244. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding the transfer of the Britz and Landman families from Newcastle to Pietermaritzburg Camp, 23.6.1901-15.7.1901.

245. PAR, CSO 1732: Enquiry on whose authority the Britz and Landman families were relocated to Pietermaritzburg,

the military would decide who goes where under Martial Law, regardless of the concerns of the civilian authorities.²⁴⁶ To put some finality to the matter, the civilian authorities requested the military to send the documents related to the transfer of the said families to Pietermaritzburg. These the military could not locate.²⁴⁷

The bullying tactics of the military left the Natal Government no choice but to agree to pay for the maintenance in the concentration camps of certain pauper families. In the case of those able to maintain themselves, the Natal authorities were adamant that they should be told to do so.²⁴⁸ This decision did not conclude the matter. PUS Bird was concerned that the Natal authorities would be unable to determine whether Natal Afrikaners deported to the concentration camps were loyal or disloyal. Consequently loyalist could possibly be unfairly punished by paying for themselves. At the same time he knew of no funds from which the accounts could be settled. This financial predicament forced the Natal cabinet to find other means to resolve the problem. It was therefore decided to ask the Natal Police to ascertain which of the Natal Afrikaners in the concentration camps had property. On completion of this investigation the authorities intended to inform the military that they would not maintain Natal Afrikaners who were property owners, in the Natal Concentration Camps.

The Natal Government's idea to force Natal Afrikaners with landed property to pay for their maintenance in the concentration camps was scuttled when the acting attorney-general pointed out that it would be "undesirable that anything should be done until the expiration (*sic*) of the period fixed by the Proclamation recently issued by Lord Kitchener when the matter can be further considered."²⁴⁹ After further consideration, on 8 November 1901, the head of the concentration camps in Natal, Sir TK (Thomas) Murray, was informed that the Natal Government could not take any liability for Natal colonists who could henceforth be admitted into the concentration camps, unless they had, after due enquiry, been admitted with approval and sanction.

This decision meant that wealthy Natal Afrikaner families such as that of Pieter Cronjé who owned 2 042 acres and five plots in Weenen and Newcastle, Hendrick Ostawald Eksteen who owned 5 680 acres, Johannes Abraham Landman who owned 7 563 acres, Lodewyk JJ Muller who owned 15 050 acres, and various others, could reside in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp on the account of the Natal Government because they were accepted prior to 8 November 1901. The Natal Police,

8.7.1901-9.7.1901.

246. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding the transfer of the Britz and Landman families from Newcastle to Pietermaritzburg Camp, 23.6.1901-15.7.1901.

247. PAR, CSO 1732: Request by the civilian authorities for the papers concerning Britz and Landman families from the military, 8.7.1901-9.7.1901.

248. PAR, CSO 1732: Report by the magistrate Newcastle that the military had ordered him to send the De Wet, O'Reilly and Cronjé families to Pietermaritzburg, 4.7.1901-19.7.1901.

249. SB Spies, pp.269-278; Foy Vermaak Private collection, Proclamation by Lord Kitchener, as published in an extraordinary *Government Gazette*, 7.8.1901.

however, suggested relief work such as road making for the members of the “bywoner” class who wanted to enter a concentration camp for it would “be a sure test as to their inability to secure the wherewithal to live in P.M.Burg.”²⁵⁰

How much money was the Natal Government trying to save by getting Natal Afrikaners to pay for their board and lodging in the concentration camps? For the month of June 1901, 3 859 rations were issued to Natal Afrikaners in the Pietermaritzburg Camp. This amounted to £122.4.9.²⁵¹ If this is multiplied by the number of months per year it would have cost the Natal Government roughly £2 440 to maintain their subjects during 1901 in the Pietermaritzburg Camp. The Natal Government was billed an additional £109.3.6 for the diets and extras issued to Natal Afrikaners in the hospital in Pietermaritzburg for the period November 1900 to September 1901.²⁵² Although this is not a huge amount, the Natal Government was trying to come to terms with the principle which implied that they were expected to finance disloyal property owners and decisions made by the military.

One way to compensate for the financial expenditure was to convince Natal Afrikaner men in the concentration camps to seek employment “so that the government may be relieved of the cost of maintaining them in the refugee camp.” Inspector Clarke of the Natal Police thought it would not be difficult to procure work for able-bodied men, while some of the younger women could work as housemaids and nursemaids. Before this new scheme could be implemented it had to be discussed with Sir TK Murray. The idea did not find favour with him. Murray was worried that some Natal Afrikaners may have land but no money, while others may have paid one or two instalments on government land and to turn them out of the camp would mean financial ruin. He was, however, adamant that no able-bodied man should be kept idle or be supported by the government. Murray therefore provided a list of all the Natal Afrikaner men in the camp system between the ages of 14 and 50 who could, with the intervention of the chief commissioner of police, be employed as convict guards in Durban. This suggestion came to nought since the commissioner thought he could find more suitable men than those offered.

The Natal Government’s attempts to get the Natal Afrikaner men to work also failed for numerous other reasons ranging from laziness, subverting the system, to the manual nature of the work they had to perform which was normally done at the time by Africans. By February 1902, 49 Natal Afrikaner men aged between 14 and 50 resided in the various Natal Camps. Of the 16 such men in the Howick Camp, only two were employed while only two of the ten resident in Merebank were employed. In total only 21 out of the 49 Natal Afrikaner men were employed. Declining rations to men eligible to work did not seem to alter the situation as many of those who were not on rations

250. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding the maintenance of Natal colonists in the concentration camps, 18.6.1901-8.11.1901.

251. PAR, CSO 1732: Debit voucher from chief army service corps to colonial secretary, 7.1901.

were not employed either.

The Natal Afrikaner camp inhabitants who did work were generally those who wanted to, and not because policies and threats forced them to do so. This source of labour was ready to be exploited and especially young men performed manual labour in and around Howick²⁵³ and Pietermaritzburg, on farms, in houses, in industry, for the military and in the concentration camps. The work done was in line with their lack of qualifications, thus they did mostly manual labour at for example the brickyards and in the brewery in Pietermaritzburg. (Table 9.1) Natal Afrikaner women also sold their labour. Miss LLA Zietsman of Leviathan, Dundee, worked for M Roberts at the locomotive shed in Pietermaritzburg, while PUS C Bird employed a certain Mrs EJ Prinsloo.²⁵⁴

Table 9.1: Employment of male Natal Afrikaner concentration camp residents

NAME	CAMP	AGE	OCCUPATION	RATIONE
DJ Botha	Pietermaritzburg	16	Burgher guard	No
W Bowen	Pietermaritzburg	20	Burger guard	No
JH Breytenbach	Pietermaritzburg	17	At brewery, £1.17 per week + overtime	Yes
JRT Budge	Pietermaritzburg	40	Army Service Corps	No
JJ Coetzer (Coetzee?)	Pietermaritzburg	40	Employed in Pietermaritzburg	No
SJ Dauth	Howick	30	Burgher guard, 1/ per diem	
JE de Wet	Pietermaritzburg	15	At brewery, 17/6 per week	No
H Huyser	Merebank		Burgher guard	

252. PAR, CSO 1691: Debit voucher for hospital expenses chief army service corps, 21.11.1901.

253. NAR, DBC 111-112: Register of residents in the Howick Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Nov 1902.

254. NAR, DBC 116: Register of Howick Concentration Camp inhabitants working in Pietermaritzburg, Jan 1901-Sept 1902.

UJ Kok	Pietermaritzburg	15	At brewery, 15/ per week	Yes
JJ Kok	Pietermaritzburg	14	At brewery, 12/ per week	Yes
HO Eksteen	Pietermaritzburg	28	Employed in Pietermaritzburg	No
HJ Lourens	Pietermaritzburg	34	Employed in camp	No
HS Lombaard	Pietermaritzburg	41	Mowatt and Still, 5/ per diem	No
JH Oosthuizen	Pietermaritzburg	44	Pietermaritzburg Corporation	No
DJ Oosthuizen	Pietermaritzburg	36	Mowatt and Still, 5/ per diem	No
SM Oosthuizen	Pietermaritzburg	28	Mowatt and Still, 5/ per diem	No
MJJ Oosthuizen	Pietermaritzburg	36	Employed by PWD - dismissed as unsatisfactory	No
DJ Pringle	Howick		Sanitary officer	
JH Robbertse	Howick	15	Orderly in camp, 1/ per diem	
MC Swart	Pietermaritzburg	14	Army Service Corps	No
NG Swart	Pietermaritzburg	18	Army Service Corps	No
JJ van den Berg	Pietermaritzburg	20	Burger guard	No
PJ van der Westhuizen	Merebank	17	Burgher guard	

PRN Vermaak	Pietermaritz burg	25	Schoolmaster	Yes
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Against this background the Natal authorities could not but admit defeat. On 18 March 1902 a memo went out stating that no further action was to be taken with regard to people who were already in the concentration camps. All accounts for maintenance charges were to be accompanied by a list containing the names of Natal Afrikaners.²⁵⁵

The upkeep of Natal Afrikaners in concentration camps did hold an unforeseen sting in the tail for the Natal Government. In June 1903 the Burgher Camps Department issued them with a statement “to refund of costs of maintenance of, and repatriation issues, to Natal families, as incurred and paid by the Burgher Camps Departments at the initial cost of the Imperial Government.” The costs referred to amounted to £3 358.4. and were calculated at 1/6d per day for the 23 Natal Afrikaners kept in the Standerton Concentration Camp and the 71 in the Volksrust Camp.²⁵⁶ This amount was to be added to the £7 171.2. owed to the Burgher Camps Department for the upkeep of Natal families in Natal Camps, - a total of £10 529.6.

The Natal Government was not prepared to pay unconditionally and had each of the Natal Afrikaners who were resident in either the Standerton or Volksrust Camps²⁵⁷ investigated by the Natal Police to determine whether they were *bona fide* Natalians. The matter of the maintenance of Natal Afrikaners in the two Transvaal Camps remained unresolved and on 13 June 1904 the auditor-general of Natal requested a detailed statement of how the amount was made up. Major Leggett, the person in charge, found it impossible to detail every item and opted to merely forward a certified copy of the original statement.²⁵⁸ Once the investigation was satisfactorily concluded a cheque for the full amount was forwarded, on 28 March 1904, to the Burgher Camps Department.

9.3.3 The support of the Natal Afrikaner community for the concentration camp inhabitants

In contrast to their government the Afrikaner society in Natal, not directly affected by war, rendered great support on various levels to fellow Afrikaners, friends and family members caught up in the

255. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding financing the Natal Afrikaners in the Natal Camps, no date.

256. It is difficult to determine why claims were made for only 71 Natal Afrikaners in the Volksrust Camp. In reality 194 Natal Afrikaners resided in this camp at one stage or another. NAR, DBC 105-107: Register of residents in the Volksrust Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Jan 1903. An earlier attempt by the Natal Police to determine the number of rebels in the Volksrust Camp proved fruitless as the commandant had no records. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Correspondence with the camp commandant Volksrust, 3.6.1901-4.6.1901.

257. Fortunately for the Natal Government they were not billed for rebels CP and JH Hattingh of Doornkop and CH Hattingh of Rama near Estcourt who found themselves in the Middelburg Concentration Camp after they had surrendered in 1901. They were subsequently sent down to Estcourt to be tried as rebels. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Collection of evidence against CP, JH and CH Hattingh, 21.5.1901-17.6.1901.

258. PAR, CSO 1732: Correspondence regarding claims made by the Imperial Government for the maintenance of Natal Afrikaners in the concentration camps, 27.5.1903-13.6.1904.

concentration camps. Afrikaners of Greytown regularly sent loads of firewood as well as fruit and vegetables to the Pietermaritzburg Camp.²⁵⁹ Particularly active in this regard was the daughter of rebel Piet Hogg, Mrs JJ Maré. After visiting the Pietermaritzburg Camp to remove her stepmother, Maré came to the conclusion that the rations issued to the inhabitants were insufficient. She therefore enquired via the Greytown magistrate from the Natal Government if any objection existed to her making a collection in Umvoti county for the purpose of supplying extra articles of food to families detained in Pietermaritzburg. Maré was given the green light from both the colonial and military authorities.²⁶⁰ Other fundraising efforts were also undertaken in Greytown. A concert held under the guidance of Mrs Boshoff, by inhabitants of the Pietermaritzburg Camp in the Masonic Hall in Greytown in aid of the children in the camp, was so well supported that some members of the audience had to stand. The evening brought in £30.²⁶¹ A second concert held at the same venue in Greytown this time “ten voordeele der nagelaten betrekkingen van in den Oorlog gevallen Burghers” took place on 1 November 1902.²⁶²

The small Afrikaner community of Pietermaritzburg, who at the time of the war consisted of roughly 40 families, likewise gave strong support to the local concentration camp. Schoolmaster PRN Vermaak organized a concert on 6 August 1901, featuring the Pietermaritzburg Camp inhabitants, to collect funds for the local DRC.²⁶³ A second concert was held at the YMCA in Pietermaritzburg.²⁶⁴ But the biggest support, especially for the Pietermaritzburg Camp, came from the local dominee WP Rousseau who galvanised some friends in Stellenbosch and other parts of the Cape Colony into action to collect clothes and money.²⁶⁵ He also managed to secure money from the Netherlands which was handed over to a committee of women in the camp to look after the needs of the poor and the ill.²⁶⁶ But most importantly he looked after the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of many of the camps. Possibly the best recollection of the dedication of Rousseau is to be found in the memoirs of AP Smuts who recalled how he preached in sunshine and in rain, while a member of the congregation held an umbrella.²⁶⁷

Assistance for the concentration camp inhabitants by Natal Afrikaners also took other forms. Friends or family members residing in Natal often requested camp inhabitants to reside with them. This was fully supported by Sir TK Murray as it served to alleviate the population pressure and the strain on

259. E Neethling, p.241.

260. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Correspondence regarding the request by JJ Maré to make a collection for the Pietermaritzburg Camp inhabitants, 24.11.1900-28.11.1900.

261. *Natal Witness*, 30.6.1902.

262. Local History Museum, Durban, 4596/1: Concert programme conducted by the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 6.8.1901 and 1.11.1902.

263. *Ibid.*

264. *Natal Witness*, 13.10.1902.

265. NAR, A 2030 98: Beknopte geskiedenis van die Pietermaritzburg Konsentrasiekamp, no date.

266. E Neethling, p.241.

267. NAR, GS Preller collection, 76: Herrinerige van AP Smuts, no date.

resources in the Natal Camp system, for as soon as inhabitants left the camp their host families took care of all their needs. In the case of surrendered burghers, surety had to be found to guarantee that they would adhere to their parole conditions.²⁶⁸

Initially this policy worked well. CM Triegaardt and her son PJ, were in December 1899, told by the Boers to proceed to Harrismith in the OFS. Here she resided with her daughter until December 1900 when the military ordered her to the Pietermaritzburg Camp. She remained here for only two weeks before she received permission to join her son-in-law near Mooi River.²⁶⁹ PR Botha of Greytown managed to obtain permission for an aged aunt and her daughter, Mrs and Miss Liebenberg, originally from Standerton but then in the Pietermaritzburg Camp, to join him,²⁷⁰ while Lewies Nel of Welgegund near Greytown took in 10 members of the Lawrence family of Beith near Dundee.²⁷¹ In other cases Mr and Mrs August Jansen, sent down on 10 November 1900 as undesirables by the military from Dundee, were allowed to proceed to Greytown on 17 November, while Mr and Mrs Adrian Jansen who arrived a day earlier for the same reason were allowed to join the Boshoff family in Loop Street, Pietermaritzburg.²⁷² Others who could afford it, such as Mrs Gregory and Miss Latty of Cotsworld near Dundee, opted to reside in Pietermaritzburg town rather than in the camp.²⁷³

The initial window period during which families could transfer from the Pietermaritzburg Camp to private homes or lodgings ended in late February 1901 when the military adopted a tougher centralised system of granting permission for inhabitants to reside outside the camps. Where the camp and colonial authorities and the local commanding officer had previously made the decisions, it now reverted to the GOC based in Newcastle. Bureaucratic paperwork, however, hampered the process and success was not necessarily always forthcoming.

The first application to suffer because of the new tougher measures was that made by EM Greene, a member of the Natal Legislative Assembly, who petitioned the Natal authorities to secure consent from the military to allow five families consisting solely of women and children to transfer from the Volksrust Camp and the temporary camp at Utrecht to friends in Natal. The application ran into problems as Greene had failed to address it to the GOC, neglected to indicate the names and addresses of the people prepared to accommodate the mentioned families, and because it did not come directly from the concentration camp inhabitants who were involved.²⁷⁴ Greene paid very little

268. JM Wassermann, *The Eshowe...*, pp.65-67.

269. PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Triegaardt, 4.4.1901.

270. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Correspondence pertaining to the application by PR Botha, 26.2.1901-28.2.1901.

271. NAR, DBC 142: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Oct 1900-May 1901.

272. NAR, DBC 141: Register of departures from the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Dec 1902.

273. NAR, DBC 138: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Jun 1901.

274. PAR, CSO 1677: Correspondence between EM Greene and the colonial authorities regarding the transfer of some families from Volksrust, 23.5.1901-18.6.1901; See also PAR, CSO 1679: Letter SW Cadle to colonial secretary, 24.6.1901 for a similar request and response.

attention to these instructions and when he submitted another list, he was curtly referred to the first letter.²⁷⁵

The military also took a dim view of applications coming from camp inhabitants who still had close family members on commando. An application by AJ Bruyns, that Mrs JS Pretorius and her children resident in the Volksrust Concentration Camp be allowed to join him failed, because her husband was still on commando.²⁷⁶ The same fate befell the requests of Lucas and W Potgieter of Kranskop who asked that their sister Catriena Stadler be allowed to join them from Volksrust,²⁷⁷ while the application by IM Botha that Mrs IM van Rooyen and family also resident in the Volksrust Camp be allowed to proceed to Greytown, did not even illicit a response from the military.²⁷⁸

Even when permission was granted it would be revoked when it was discovered that the applicants had relatives on commando. A point in case was the withdrawal of approval granted to Mrs Moolman and her family to join Mrs LL Nel near Greytown when the military discovered that her husband and two sons were still on commando. This prompted Mrs LJ Botha, the daughter of Mrs LL Nel, to raise some issues regarding the process. According to Botha, Mrs Moolman was under doctor's orders to escape the cold at Volksrust, while she also wanted to know: "Why should she be detained here because of her sons and husband? There are several families in Greytown who have husbands and sons fighting. Mrs Wessels and Mrs Maré are two I could mention." Botha also reminded the colonial authorities that the father of Mrs Moolman, Piet Uys, and several of his sons had died in the Anglo-Zulu War while fighting on the side of British.²⁷⁹ This letter served to convince the colonial authorities to request the military authorities to reconsider the application. The military, however, allowed no deviation from the set regulations and stated that Mrs Moolman had to apply to the GOC, Natal.²⁸⁰ Moolman's application must have failed for a month later her daughter Sarah sent a telegram to Lewies Nel reading, "Mother died last night." This time round the military did not hesitate to ignore procedures and granted Lewies Nel permission to travel to Volksrust to bring the Moolman children to Greytown.²⁸¹

275. PAR, CSO 1679: Correspondence between EM Greene and the colonial authorities regarding the transfer of families from Volksrust, 16.6.1901-21.6.1901.

276. PAR, CSO 1676: Refusal of application by AJ Bruyns, 21.5.1901-24.6.1901.

277. PAR, 1/KRK 3/1/3: Refusal of application by W and L Potgieter, 24.5.1901- 29.7.1901.

278. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Application by IM Botha for the transfer of IM van Rooyen, 11.6.1901-12.6.1901.

2749 This was not the only occasion during which Natal Afrikaners recalled past contributions to get family members released from incarceration. CJ (Casper) Labuschagne (MLC) asked that his 75-year-old father, JHC, a POW in the Umbilo Camp, be released on parole into his care. According to Casper Labuschagne his father came to Natal as a Voortrekker in the 1830s and served in the Weenen Burgher Force during the Free State-Basotho War. Labuschagne senior left Natal in 1866 to settle in the OFS. He did, however, return to Natal in 1873 to volunteer for service during the Langalibalele uprising. This must have counted in his favour for he was granted parole. NAR, SOP 31: Correspondence regarding the possibility of parole for JHC Labuschagne, 18.4.1902-30.4.1902.

280. PAR, CSO 1679: Correspondence regarding the transfer of Mrs Moolman and her family to Greytown, 21.6.1901-27.6.1901; PAR, PM 23: Letter LJ Botha to Major G Leuchars, 21.7.1901. For an insistence on this procedure see also: PAR, AGO I/8/80: Correspondence regarding the request by L Bester, 15.6.1901-17.6.1901.

281. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Correspondence surrounding the death of Mrs Moolman, 4.8.1901-6.8.1901.

The regulations drawn up by the military also applied to Natal rebels. L Bester applied to have his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Hester Maria Nienaber and her young child released from the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, to join him in Weenen, but this was refused because her husband, Piet Nienaber, was fighting on the Boer side as a rebel. When Nienaber was captured a while later Magistrate Matthews of Weenen again assisted Bester in an application and stated "...that no possible objection can exist in the way of the unfortunate wife's relations giving her a home." Objections did exist for once again, the request was turned down.²⁸²

By August 1901 the military started to relax their rigid regulations. FJ van der Merwe of Weenen applied successfully to have J van Rhyn and family liberated from the Harrismith Concentration Camp. The Van Rhyn's, however, turned down the offer as their financial position made it impossible for them to reside outside the camp.²⁸³ At the same time RJJ van Rooyen (JP), a loyalist from Weenen, successfully petitioned to have his sister-in-law and her children released from the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.²⁸⁴

The relaxation of regulations by the military were in anticipation of the transfer of the administration of the concentration camps to civilian authorities during October 1901. This switch signalled the turning of the tide for the transfer of concentration camp inhabitants to the residences of Natal Afrikaners. The first successful application under the new dispensation came when L van Ahlften secured permission for Mrs Kuhn and her family to reside with him on his farm Wonderboom in Umvoti county.²⁸⁵ At the same time, Johanna Catherine Rensburg, who resided on the farm Boschberg near Elandslaagte, received a pass to join her father in the Heidelberg Concentration Camp.²⁸⁶

The news must have spread amongst Natal Afrikaners that applications for removals from the concentration camps were treated with greater compassion under civilian rule, for a flood of applications streamed in. Eight requests were received from Weenen alone between 9 December 1901 and 4 February 1902, including: RJJ van Rooyen who applied to have AP, S and Jacob Nel and their families transferred from Volksrust;²⁸⁷ Martha Roos who applied to leave Merebank for Weenen;²⁸⁸ A Boshoff and her five children who appealed to leave the camp at Howick to reside

282. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the application by L Bester, 3.7.1901-18.7.1901.

283. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the transfer of the Van Rhyn family to Weenen, 9.8.1901-2.9.1901.

284. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the release of J van Rooyen and family, 1.8.1901-5.8.1901.

285. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Correspondence regarding the release of Mrs Kuhn from Merebank, 7.11.1901-9.11.1901

286. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/17: Letter magistrate Klip River district to inspector of police, 18.10.1901.

287. PAR, 1/WEN 3/1/2: Letter Magistrate CG Jackson to OC Pietermaritzburg, 9.12.1901; Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, to OC Pietermaritzburg, 14.1.1902.

288. PAR, 1/WEN 3/1/2: Letter Magistrate CG Jackson to OC Pietermaritzburg, 4.1.1902.

with AP Stieger;²⁸⁹ and CH Heine who had applied on behalf of his sister-in law, J van Rhyn of the camp in Harrismith to move to Weenen.²⁹⁰ These applications were all successful.²⁹¹

This process continued unabatedly up to the end of the war and even applications that were earlier rejected by the military, such as that of AJ Bruyns to have DJ and G van Rooyen proceed from the Eshowe Concentration Camp to his farm Weltevreden near Harburg,²⁹² met with favour.²⁹³

As far as the transfer of surrendered burghers from concentration camps was concerned, other rules came into play. JS Els of Mooi River requested for permission to be granted that ECJ Vermaak and his family from the Eshowe Camp be allowed to reside with him. For this application to be considered Els had to stand security to the amount of £500. This seemed to be beyond the financial capacity of Els.²⁹⁴ PJ van Rooyen of Middelrus had to provide security of a similar amount before his uncle, LJ Nel, could be released from the Volksrust Camp. Van Rooyen successfully raised the money with the help of family and friends, but the bureaucratic wheels turned so slowly that by 30 May 1902, a day before the signing of peace, the matter was still unresolved.²⁹⁵

Not all those Natal Afrikaners who left the concentration camps to reside with relatives or friends managed to improve their living conditions. Mrs Dauth and her two children left the Pietermaritzburg camp for Greytown and ran into trouble when charity ran out. This forced Ds GS Malan of Greytown to notify the authorities that with “the husband, being in prison up at Dundee, the wife with her two children is in most necessitous circumstances, having hardly any food to eat. The landlord of the little house they now occupy, threatens them with a writ of ejectment. We have been trying to help them for several months, but our funds too are exhausted. I therefore wish to ask whether the authorities cannot send them back to the refugee camp at P.M.Burg, where they will be perfectly cared for.” Consequently an investigation into the conditions the Dauth family found themselves in, was ordered. When Sub-Inspector R Keating of the Natal Police confirmed the conditions, as outlined by Malan, the family was allowed to return to the Pietermaritzburg Camp.²⁹⁶

289. PAR, 1/WEN 3/1/2: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, to OC Pietermaritzburg, 13.1.1902; 1/WEN 3/1/2: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, to OC Pietermaritzburg, 14.1.1902.

290. PAR, 1/WEN 3/1/2: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Weenen, to OC Ladysmith, 4.2.1902.

291. See the following registers in the DBC collection for transfers from the camps to the homes of Natal Afrikaners: Howick Concentration Camp 111, 112, 134, 135; Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp 134-145; Merebank Concentration Camp 126, 127, 129, 130; Jacobs Concentration Camp 118-119 and Wentworth Concentration Camp 153-154.

292. PAR, CSO 1678: Correspondence regarding the application by AJ Bruyns, 14.6.1901-18.6.1901.

293. Wassermann, *The Eshowe...*, p.65. Concentration camp inhabitants who left to reside with Natal Afrikaners at times passed the concentration camp diseases to their host families. See, PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Health report Kranskop district 1902, 12.1.1903.

294. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the transfer of ECJ Vermaak, 4.3.1902-30.5.1902.

295. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the transfer of LJ Nel, 1.3.1902-15.6.1902.

296. PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Correspondence regarding the re-admittance of the Dauth family into the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 24.6.1901-3.7.1901.

9.3.4 Going home

The departure from and the arrival of new inmates in the concentration camps were an intertwined process. While the military allowed certain Natal Afrikaners to return home during the war, for example, during the winter of 1901, others were removed from the same areas to concentration camps. This process, which at times defied all logic, repeated itself up to the end of the war.

Mrs MM van der Linden and her child, Mrs SJ Labuschagne and her one-year-old daughter and Widow SJ Laas and her two children and, all of the farm Paardeberg in the Dundee district, arrived in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp on 21 November 1900. Roughly six months later, on 26 June 1901, they were allowed to return to their farm. Similarly Mrs JM Labuschagne and her two children from Stonehill near Pomeroy were sent to the Pietermaritzburg Camp on 28 November 1900. She was joined by her rebel husband, Willem Adrian, on 4 October 1901 on completion of his prison sentence. The family was allowed to return home on 30 December 1901.²⁹⁷ This scenario persisted until shortly before the end of the war as can be gleaned from the case of Joseph Chiole and family of The Oaks, Dundee. They were allowed to return home on 21 March 1902, a mere 19 days after their arrival in the Howick Camp.²⁹⁸

Gaining permission to go home from a concentration camp was not necessarily an easy process. The first application of the 72-year-old JJ Kemp of Calvin, Dundee, an owner of 10 000 acres and resident of the Pietermaritzburg Camp, to return home was rejected. This did not deter him and in an interview with Attorney-General H Bale he again requested permission to return home. To have his application considered, Kemp was required to answer several questions regarding his involvement in the war. He denied that the party who had burnt down the Wasbank Station in October 1900 had taken horses from him. Kemp also denied that he looted any goods and stated that the wagons loaded with goods found on his farm belonged to his brother Gert, who was ordered away from his farm by the Boers. In his response, Clerk of the Peace Charles Tatham, made it clear that he did not believe Kemp and insisted that he provided horses to the raiding party and that he had numerous disloyal family members. Based on Tatham's statement Kemp was denied permission to return home. Less than a month later this decision was overturned without any new evidence being introduced.²⁹⁹

Carl Posselt was not that fortunate. On completion of his prison sentence he requested that he and his family be allowed to return from the Pietermaritzburg Camp to their farm De Waar near Dundee. His reasoning was simple, he wanted to reap his crops and tend the stock that might be left. Furthermore, all his neighbours, JH Ries, JD Pelster and JJ Kemp were given permission to return.

297. NAR, DBC 138: Register of residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Dec 1902. These are but a few examples of the numerous Natal Afrikaner families who were removed by the military for a period of time only to be allowed to return home.

298. NAR, DBC 111: Register of residents in the Howick Concentration Camp, Jan 1901-Dec 1902.

299. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Application by JJ Kemp to return to his farm, 12.4.1901-24.4.1901.

The military at Dundee did not view matters as Posselt did and regarded him as “most undesirable” and therefore he was denied permission.³⁰⁰

When peace came about the repatriation process of the relatively small number of Natal Afrikaners resident in the concentration camps was much easier to administer than the large numbers of people from the former Republics. This was partially the case because the civil administration for the various Natal districts was up and running. In most cases the husbands and fathers were also able to accompany their families home, except for the small group of rebels who were still serving their sentences. To a certain extent it was also easier to repatriate Natal Afrikaners since the structural damage in Northern Natal to homes under the scorched earth policy was not as extensive as in the former Republics.³⁰¹

Before repatriation could commence certain administrative tasks had to be completed. Under instructions from the British Army Headquarters, men in concentration and POW camps could only depart for home once they had taken the oath of allegiance.³⁰² It was therefore expected of Natal Afrikaner men over the age of 21, despite being British subjects, to sign an oath of allegiance. The camp superintendents were appointed as administration officers to manage this process.

Natal Afrikaner inhabitants of the Merebank Camp which took such oaths included Johannes Phillipus Kemp of the Dundee district, Hendrik Huyser, Cornelius Janse Uys, Daniel Petrus Botha, Joshua Joubert, Abraham Johannes Swamers and Petrus Johannes Swart of the Newcastle district and Jacobus Philipus Moolman of Melmoth.³⁰³ The oath forms of the Newcastle men were forwarded by the colonial secretary to the magistrate of Newcastle who in turn forwarded Kemp’s form to the Dundee magistrate.³⁰⁴ This procedure was only nullified by a notification in the *Natal Government Gazette* of 24 February 1903.³⁰⁵

To facilitate the prompt return home of Natal Afrikaners, special arrangements were made. From mid-June 1902 the Natal Government Railways laid on special trains to Northern Natal which carried residents from the various Natal Camps. Tents and rations for 30 days were also issued. Transport from the railway line to the farms was provided by the Natal authorities. The same preferential treatment was extended to the residents of the two newly acquired districts, Vryheid and

300. PAR, PM 21: Correspondence regarding the return of Carl Posselt, 30.4.1901-6.5.1901.

301. NAR, DBC 141: Departure register from the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Dec 1902.

302. PAR, GH 545: Telegram GOC Natal to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 12.6.1902.

303. PAR, CSO 1710: List of Natal residents resident in Merebank who have taken the oath, 16.8.1902.

304. PAR, CSO 1719: Letter and counterfoil HM Bousfield to colonial secretary, 12.12.1902; PAR, CSO 1719: Note AH Hime to magistrate Newcastle, 13.12.1902; PAR, CSO 1719: Note magistrate Newcastle to magistrate Dundee, 16.12.1902.

305. PAR, GH 554: Monthly report for Natal Concentration Camps - June 1902, 7.7.1902.

Utrecht.³⁰⁶

The repatriation of Natal rebels resident in the Volksrust and Standerton Concentration Camps took on a different dimension. Under the terms of surrender no rebel could be compelled to return to his domicile. Although this safeguarded them from prosecution it meant that no assistance, including rations, was to be given to them on leaving the concentration camps.³⁰⁷

Not all Natal Afrikaners did, however, return home readily. In December 1902, TK Murray forwarded a list of 13 destitute Natal Afrikaners families or individuals to the Natal Government with the view to “obtaining instructions regarding their destinations on the closing of the Pietermaritzburg Camp.” Each of those listed had their own visions for the future. Aletta Sophia Lezar of Rattlekloof, Newcastle wanted to be transferred to the Volksrust Camp where her relatives would assist her. Likewise the 84-year-old former rebel, Jasper Johannes Slabbert and his 63-year-old wife and their children aged 20 and 13 wanted to go to the Volksrust Camp. Maria Elizabeth Kok of Situnga, Dundee wanted to be transferred to Middelburg, Transvaal, to join a friend, JN Swart, on the farm Rietkuil, while HJ Pitzer, a convicted rebel, wanted to return with his family to the Transvaal. Elena Vermeulen of Rietspruit, Newcastle, whose husband had died in prison, could not return to the farm where they had resided as she had no friends or relatives in Natal. She also needed a marquee because her dwelling was destroyed. Lucas Johannes Meyer of Berlinge, Newcastle, was likewise prepared to return home if provided with a marquee. Former POWs, Petrus Gerhardus and Philip Jacobus Meyer of Brakwater, Newcastle, were willing to proceed home if a marquee and transport were provided for them and their families. Johannes Jacobus Coetzer also indicated that he would only be able to return to the farm Laingsnek of Frank Johnstone (MLA) near Newcastle if he and his family were supplied with a tent. Johannes Stephanus Swart, a bywoner with a wife and six children, formerly of Huddersfield, Dundee, applied to his brother-in-law, Jan van Rensburg of Dannhauser for a portion of land to live and farm on. If the Pietermaritzburg Camp broke up before he received an answer, he requested to be transferred to Dundee. He also asked for a tent, table and bedstead. Hermanus Stephanus Lombard of Mowtherp, Upper Tugela, was prepared to return to the farm as his father and brother-in-law resided nearby. All he needed was transport from Ladysmith.

The hopes of all except the Slabberts were immediately dashed. The ruling was that they belonged to Natal and that the Transvaal was not prepared to pay for their maintenance. After enquiries were made by the magistrates of the districts from where the families and individuals emanated, the following decisions were made. The three Meyer’s and Coetzer were to be provided with marquees

306. AU Wohlberg, *The Merebank...*, pp.228-232; PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/19: Correspondence from camp commandant Wentworth Concentration Camp to Magistrate A Crawford, Newcastle, 29.7.1902-1.8.1902.

307. NAR, CS 206: Enquiries and orders regarding the repatriation of Natal rebels from the Volksrust and Standerton Concentration Camps, 16.12.1902-20.12.1902.

and despatched to Newcastle and then to their farms or the farms they resided on, JS Swart and his family were to be sent to Dundee, the family of HS Lombaard was willing to provide for him on condition that he undertook to find work, while HJ Pitzer found employment with the repatriation department. The destitute women, Lezar, Kok and Vermeulen, were to be sent to the almshouse should they be unable to earn a living in domestic service or otherwise.³⁰⁸

The plight of ME Kok and her four children were typical of the economic impact of the war on numerous Natal Afrikaners. Prior to the war she had leased a farm on which she farmed successfully. Her removal to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp resulted in her losing all she possessed. The inventory of her losses were 11 pages long. She, however, received some reprieve when she was compensated to the amount of £515.15.1. in 1903 for losses sustained.³⁰⁹ Other Natal Afrikaners suffered equally. Paul Jacob Lombard, the son of a Natal rebel and resident of the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp recalled that they only returned to their farm near Oliviershoek in 1904 because they had no transport or movable property. They used corrugated iron sheets to create a shelter in the ruins of the farmhouse. This was later replaced with a thatch roof. For an economic start an African provided them with a cow and a calf and mealie meal.³¹⁰

9.4 Natal Afrikaners in internment in Portugal

During the diaspora caused by the war, some Natal Afrikaners, such as the Dreyer family, ended up in another camp system, the internment camps in Portugal. Hercules Albertus Dreyer (49), his wife Lucia Maria (45), and their nine children were from a farm near Pieters Station, Ladysmith. On the advance of the Boers into Natal the Dreyer's moved to Colenso, where the British troops ordered them to move further south. The Dreyers subsequently camped with their wagon, nine oxen, a bull, 20 cows, two horses and some goats on Johannes Christoffel Buys', farm in the Weenen district. When the Boer forces sojourned as far as Weenen the Dreyers decided to return to their home.³¹¹ Their homecoming was, however, short-lived because they decided to follow the retreating Boers into the Transvaal when the British forces gained the upper hand.

When the invading British forces penetrated into the Eastern Transvaal in mid-1900 many families of the ZAR, OFS, the Cape Colony, and seven members of the Dreyer household crossed the border into Mozambique. The two oldest sons, HA and LJ Dreyer, remained to join a Boer commando that operated in the Barberton area. They were eventually captured in mid-1901 and returned to Natal to

308. PAR, CSO 1719: Correspondence regarding the destinations of destitute Natal Afrikaners in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. 13.12.1902-23.12.1902.

309. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by HE Kock, 13.1.1903.

310. Interview conducted by Ina van Rensburg with PJ Lombaard on 10.10.1987 at Aandrus, Geluksburg. Lombaard was born on 18.7.1900 at Kerkenberg in the OFS, his family having fled Natal.

311. PAR, AGO I/7/34: Sworn statement by JC Buys before the magistrate of Weenen, 19.7.1901.

stand trial.³¹²

One of the refugee groups to cross into the Portuguese Colony tallied 290 people. This group included 153 Afrikaners from the Cape Colony and the Dreyers. Proposals to return home did not suit the members of this group because they were viewed as rebels and would therefore be tried as such.³¹³ They could, however, not remain in Lourenco Marques indefinitely, and when the pressure by Britain on Portugal became too much the Afrikaners were deported to Portugal. The Dreyers were interned at Caldas Da Rainha, 96 kilometres north of Lisbon. After the conclusion of peace, the refugees returned to South Africa on board the *Bavarian* which arrived in Cape Town on 5 August 1902.³¹⁴ All the men older than 16, including HA Dreyer and his son MJJ, were on arrival removed to the Simon's Town POW Camp. The purpose of this was to identify the rebels in the group. HA Dreyer was eventually cautioned and discharged. His son was also discharged because his name appeared on none of the lists of wanted rebels.³¹⁵

With all the men removed the women and children were taken to the Port Elizabeth Concentration Camp.³¹⁶ By the end of September 1902, all the interned women and children, except the Dreyer family had left the concentration camp.³¹⁷ Uncertain of what had happened to her husband and son, Mrs LCJ Dreyer wrote to Ds HF Schoon in Ladysmith, asking him if he knew anything about their whereabouts.³¹⁸ Schoon replied that the Dreyer men were not in prison but were residing in the Weenen district.³¹⁹

Bringing the rest of the Dreyer family from Port Elizabeth to Weenen proved to be a major undertaking. On the request of the military authorities it was decided to bring the Dreyers back at the expense of the Natal Government. The government could, however, not decide from which budget the expense to be incurred should come. The bureaucratic gridlock came to an end when finances were allocated from the "contingencies" account.³²⁰ The funding secured a third class berth for the

312. PRO, CO 179/222: Correspondence regarding the capture and surrender of Natal rebels outside the Colony, 24.12.1901-7.3.1902. For the legal uncertainties and impact surrounding the trial of the Dreyer's see, pp.207-208.

313. Another internee, Jan Jonathan Maré, was born on 27.04.1869 on the farm Politique near Pietermaritzburg. He grew up and attended school in Greytown. After school he worked as a shopkeeper in Natal before moving to Vryheid. His two brothers and four of his five sisters remained Natalians. PAR, A 743: Herrinerige van JJ Maré, 17-18.11.1952. Casper Johannes Combrinck of the Peniche Camp had numerous relatives in the Helpmekaar area and enquiry about their well being from Ds HF Schoon. See, PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Letter CJ Combrinck to HF Schoon, 26.12.1901. The Combrinck's were loyalists who enlisted with the UMR.

314. For a detailed analysis of the Afrikaners who sought refuge under Portuguese rule see: OJO Ferreira, *Boeregeinterneerdes in Portugal tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902: 'n Kultuur-historiese studie*. DPhil-thesis, UP, 1994.

315. PAR, SOP 34: Telegram Natal Police, Ladysmith to CIO, 25.8.1902.

316. OJO Ferreira, p.197.

317. JJ Roodt, *Die Port Elizabethse Konsentrasiekamp, 1899-1902*. MA-thesis, UPE, 1990, p.179.

318. PAR, A 72 HF Schoon collection: Letter LMJ Dreyer to HF Schoon, 16.9.1902.

319. PAR, A 72 HF Schoon collection: Letter Johanna Dreyer to HF Schoon, 27.9.1902.

320. PAR, CSO 1717: Report of landing officer on the departure of the Dreyer family, 24.11.1902.

Dreyers to Durban aboard the *RMS Saxon*. The passage, excluding food, amounted to £10.2.6.³²¹ while Messina Bros had to be paid £1.8.9. for transfers and the handling of baggage in Port Elizabeth. On arrival in Durban the journey home was only halfway completed and it took 12 telegrams between the Natal Government, the Natal Government Railways and the military to organize the second part of the journey on 25 November 1902 by “kafir mail” to Ladysmith. This delay came about because the military had thus far only dealt with POWs, and it needed to be pointed out to them that the Dreyers case required different treatment.³²²

9.5 Concluding comments

The imprisonment in one form or another of Natal Afrikaners had a range of impacts, both individually and collectively. Individually those who were imprisoned, as well as their families, had to carry the burden and scars of the experiences peculiar to them. Collectively those incarcerated alongside Republicans in the concentration and POW camps experienced a collective sense of suffering which served to create a sense of unity and shared experience and emotionally integrated Natal Afrikaners into the broader Afrikaner society. Others, especially imprisoned on charges of high treason, were extremely bitter. Oscar Prozesky made it clear that he would only asked forgiveness from God and “not the English Government - on the contrary, they or their representatives have sinned against me. They have sent us to prison for a short time by their false witness; if we do not forgive them we deliver ourselves into an eternal prison.”³²³ These shared experiences and bitterness in time contributed to a new unity amongst Afrikaners which transcended geo-political boundaries and challenged British overlordship.

321. PAR, CSO 1718: Account for the passage of the Dreyer family from Union Castle Mail, 1-4.12.1902.

322. PAR, CSO 1717: Report of landing officer on the departure of the Dreyer family, 24.11.1902.

323. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, Introduction, p.386.

CHAPTER 10

NATAL AFRIKANER WOMEN AND THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

The role and plight of the Republican Afrikaner women have always formed an integral, and sometimes even central part of the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War. The emphasis in the large number of academic and popular works and published memoirs invariably falls on the suffering of Afrikaner women and children in the concentration camps. Despite this volume of work, Helen Bradford¹ maintains that one of the seminal questions faced by the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War is the neglect of the unique war experiences of women.

One group previously neglected was Natal Afrikaner women who formed a stratified and diverse group. Some, like MJ Zietsman of Snelster near Estcourt, whose daughter, the widow Wallace had been to England and who kept thoroughbred Pointers, were wealthy and sophisticated.² Another, like ME Kock, read Tennyson and Shakespeare,³ while Emily Pieters owned 20 bound music books for playing the piano and harmonium.⁴ On the other end of the social scale were women like Annie Katrina Slabbert of Dundee who sewed and took in laundry to survive.⁵ These class differences were underpinned by the patriarchal system in which the women functioned. Married women had the least power and received little support or recognition from the authorities. In contrast widows wielded much more economic and political power and were also able to generate letters and other documents.⁶ However, regardless of their educational, social, economic or marital status, most Natal Afrikaner women suffered, in one way or another, during the war.

10.1 Military related involvement in the Anglo-Boer War by Natal Afrikaner women

One of the lasting controversies surrounding the Anglo-Boer War relates to the military role played by Boer women in the conflict. Historian Fransjohan Pretorius managed to demythologise claims by American journalist Howard C Hillegas and other authors that “scores of Boer women” fought on the side of the commandos.⁷ A photograph of 15 women and seven children, dressed up in their Sunday best, posing with rifles and bandoliers in front of the Newcastle Town Hall, links Natal Afrikaner women to this myth. This photograph appears in *A few months with the Boers* by Sophia Izedinova with a caption stating that these women from Newcastle, thus Natal Afrikaner women, took up

1. H Bradford, Gentleman and Boers. Afrikaner Nationalism, Gender, and Colonial Warfare in the South African War, in G Cuthbertson, A Grundlingh, and M-L Suttie (eds.), *Writing a wider war. Rethinking gender, race, and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, pp.37-67.

2. PAR, CSO 2911: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MP Wallace, 6.4.1900.

3. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME Kock, 24.10.1902.

4. PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by E Pieters, 18.4.1901.

5. PAR, CSO 2905: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AK Slabbert, 6.12.1900.

6. The experiences of Natal Afrikaner women in the concentration camp system were dealt with in Chapter 9.

7. F Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp.347-350; P Marais, *Die vrou in die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp.162-167, is generally a summary of the work done by Pretorius.

arms.⁸ The original photograph, titled “Dutch Amazons at Newcastle Natal” was taken by RE Gell on 16 December 1899,⁹ possibly during commemorations of Dingaan’s Day. This would serve to explain the elaborate dress and posed nature of the photograph.¹⁰ In fact it must have been a festive weekend in Newcastle since President Paul Kruger had declared Sunday 17 December 1899 a day of thanksgiving for the Boer victories at Stormberg, Colenso and Magersfontein. The main religious service in Newcastle was conducted by Reverend Prozesky who preached from Exodus 15: 9-13, with the key text being: “It is God who humbles the proud.”¹¹

How then did Natal Afrikaner women really feel about the war? During the visit of General Piet Joubert to Helpmekaar on 13 December 1899, the 22 Natal Afrikaner women listed in Table 10.1 presented the following address to him:

Highly respected General, on this occasion of your visit to the laager of the Natal Burghers here, we, the undersigned, female members of the families of these burghers, heartily welcome your Honour to Helpmekaar. We glory (*sic*) in your material genius again proved in this war and heartily congratulate you on the brilliant victories gained by our people under your direction and with the arms blessed by the Almighty. We pray God’s blessing to continue with us and that He may continue to grant you the wisdom and strength to bring under His higher assistance this difficult war to a prosperous conclusion, and that you may be in a position to speedily return to your home as victor, covered with the thanks of the whole Africander people, and we hope that then also will be fulfilled the desire of all true Africanders, namely unison of the different states of South Africa into a united South Africa under the Boer flag, so that the ground shamefully robbed from our ancestors shall once more belong to the Africanders. This your obedient servants hope, pray and beseech.¹²

The address, carelessly left behind by the retreating Boer forces, was discovered by the British military in Pretoria. The Natal authorities, and especially Charles and Frank Tatham, made much of the document especially the part they had underlined and which they regarded as conclusive proof that a conspiracy existed to oust the British from South Africa and that the Transvaal Government “acquiesced in the sentiment expressed.”

Table 10. 1: List of Natal Afrikaner women who signed the address of welcome to

8. S Izedinova, *A few months with the Boers*, p.186.

9. PAR, C 1482: Photograph of Afrikaner women taken in front of the Newcastle Town Hall, by RE Gell, 16.12.1899.

10. The women in question were not the only Natalians who had their picture taken in front of the Newcastle Town Hall at the time. GH Shorter who were commandeered by the Boers also posed armed in front of the town hall. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs GH Shorter, pp.121-124; *Natal Witness*, 2.11.1900.

11. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 17.12.1899, p.107.

12. PRO, CO 179/213: Address of welcome to Commandant-General PJ Joubert as well as related correspondence, 23.9.1900-25.9.1900.

Commandant-General PJ Joubert on 13 February 1900¹³

DA Kemp	S Kemp	CF Vermaak	H Nel
A Vermaak	AM de Villiers	VA Vermaak	M Venter
M Mcw Meyer	DA de Villiers	CG Vermaak	J Labuschagne
M Maher	SM de Villiers	E Hambridge	J Dekker
SJ Potgieter	JM de Villiers	MM Badenhorst	
A Webb	DA de Villiers	BJJ Laatz	

In reality the Tathams were reading far too much into the document and were confusing sympathy for the plight of the Republics with military support. Of the 22 women who signed the document the Vermaaks, Hambridges and Kemps were related, while Mrs Webb's husband was a sharecropper working for the Vermaaks. In all likelihood the five De Villiers women were also related to each other, meaning that the petition came from a few extended families of "true Afrianders" and not from Natal Afrikaners at large. Sixty two men signed a similar petition. This was 34 signatures less than the number of Natal Afrikaner men who petitioned the ZAR authorities about concerns they had serving in the Republican forces.¹⁴ It would therefore be true to say that the vast majority of Natal Afrikaner women shared the sentiments of their menfolk about direct physical involvement in the war and were as reluctant in supporting the Republican war effort as their sons, fathers and husbands. Substantial proof exists to support this reluctance.¹⁵

The Boers commandeered the youngest son of Mrs ME de Waal of Carolina, Dundee, in November 1899 against his and her will. Three weeks later she wrote to him asking him to come home. Only "after considerable trouble" did he manage to get an order from Louis Botha which gave him permission to return to his mother. Young De Waal handed back his rifle and despite being commandeered on six subsequent occasions, refused to go.¹⁶ Similarly the sister of the loyal Strydom brothers, Johanna de Jager who was married to Fritz de Jager, stated that she had tried to convince her husband not to join the Boers. He did not listen to her or her brothers.¹⁷ Also a young Afrikaner of Weenen only identified by his Zulu name, Bensela, wanted to join the Boers but his

13. PRO, CO 179/213: Address of welcome to Commandant-General PJ Joubert as well as related correspondence, 23.9.1900-25.9.1900.

14. NAR, KG 819: Letter to General JJ Ferreira signed by 96 Natal Afrikaners, 8.1.1900.

15. For a comprehensive account of Afrikaner women in a later rebellion, that of 1914, see: SS Swart, *The rebels of 1914: Masculinity, republicanism and the social forces that shaped the Boer Rebellion*, August 1997, MA-thesis, UND, pp.130-143.

16. PAR, CSO 2874: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME de Waal, 27.2.1902.

17. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Correspondence regarding the looting of property belonging to J de Jager, 4.10.1899-5.1.1901.

mother forbid him,¹⁸ while the wife of JJ Kemp became hysterical when she was told that the Boers had commandeered her husband.¹⁹

MMCW Kemp of Kempenveldt near Dundee possibly, in referring to her sons, best sums up the views of the majority of Natal Afrikaner women about involvement in the war:

I spoke to them when there was rumour of war and after war broke out about not joining the Boers. This was about Nov 1899 and January 1900 and on other occasions whenever I had the opportunity. My sons joined the enemy between December 1899 and February 1900. In the month of January 1900 I visited my son Johannes at his house and pleaded with him not to join the Boers and he promised he would not do so but the pressure was too great and he eventually joined the Boers during the month of January 1900. Several times before the commandeering before they had gone to the laager I did my utmost to keep my sons back also after they had gone to the laager²⁰

In the light of the above attitude, and in the historical context of the war, direct military involvement by Natal Afrikaner women was highly unlikely. They did not possess the same rabid patriotism as the Republican women because their country was not under threat. Despite this, the military regarded Natal Afrikaner women as the most disloyal inhabitants of the Colony;²¹ a view possibly shaped by Kitchener's statement that the women were more bitter than the men.²² The closest any Natal Afrikaner woman came to possible military participation in the war was Miss L Meyer of Weenen who was captured at Newcastle together with a large number of Natal rebels.²³ It is not known what became of her. Except for one occasion no Natal women were charged with high treason. Annie Catherina Gowthorpe of Newcastle was accused of sheltering, harbouring and supplying food to the enemy; joining the Boers and accompanying them to Volksrust. Numerous members of the local community, however, testified in her favour. WM Rogers stated that she had given him £50 to flee to Delagoa Bay and H Dunn testified that she had nursed a wounded Hussar. All charges against her were eventually dropped.²⁴

In an incident unconfirmed by official sources, JH Labuschagne, who was imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg, declared: "Hier is ook een vrouw ingebring, zij is gevonniss ver een maand en twee hondert pont boete wegens hoog veraad zij heef vande boere kos gegeef die by haar gekomen was, twee was haar eigen zoons, dat is hard om gestraf te worde voor u eigen kinders, zij is een Mevrouw

18. PAR, SNA I/7/40: Report of native intelligence officer No. 1, 14.12.1899.

19. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14223: Declaration by JJ Kemp, 22.5.1900.

20. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MMCW Kemp, 6.12.1901.

21. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Application by JJ Kemp to return to his farm, 12.4.1901-24.4.1901.

22. P Warwick, and SB Spies (eds.), *The South African War*, p.168.

23. PAR, AGO I/7/46: Lists of Natal rebels capture between 10.5.1900 and 4.6.1900 as well as incriminating documents compiled by Lt-Col AE Sandbach.

24. *Natal Witness*, 17.10.1900.

van Tonder.²⁵ Apparently the Van Tonder boys, who had joined the Boers, visited their mother Hannie van Tonder at her home near Helpmekaar one night. When they left they were seen by Africans who reported the incident to the military. As a result Mrs van Tonder was arrested and sentenced under Martial Law because she had not reported their visit as was required.²⁶ The Natal Government was also erroneously under the impression that the wife of NM Dekker of Bloemhof, Dundee, was imprisoned alongside him in Pietermaritzburg. This was, however, denied by the governor of the prison.²⁷

A small group of Natal Afrikaner women were nevertheless actively involved in an auxiliary role as go-betweens, providers of food, purveyors of war news, nurses, and agents in the field of intelligence.²⁸ The widow Jacoba Barrett, née Groenewald, was a loyalist Natal Afrikaner woman who did sterling work for the British authorities and was described by the then attorney-general as "...the only loyal Dutch women I know of..."²⁹ Barrett was born in Natal but had resided in the Transvaal for a number of years. Shortly before war broke out she and some family members returned to Natal.³⁰ It seems that during this time she was recruited into the Intelligence Department by a certain Simpson who tasked her to gather information on Afrikaner attitudes in Umvoti county. To enable her to successfully achieve this Barrett managed to move in with a leading Afrikaner, LL (Lang Lewies) Nel, and his family. Two days after her arrival, on 19 October 1899, she submitted her first report informing Simpson and the local magistrate that three people related to the Nels had joined the Boers. The Nel's youngest son was also recalled from school "...so that he could ride around and warn the local Natal Afrikaners when they were to mobilise."

On the same day the eager Barrett submitted a second report notifying the authorities that the local Afrikaners were keeping their wagons back and not using them to despatch wool to the market. The wagons and horses were apparently kept ready for the planned arrival of the commandos in Greytown on 25 October 1899. The plan was to attack Umvoti via Dundee and the Midlands before an assault would be launched on Pietermaritzburg and Durban. This plan, according to Barrett, was underpinned by boastful talk about taking the magazine in Greytown by force; about teaching England a lesson; about God being on their side and how they would not hesitate to kill women and children. A very alert Barrett undertook to warn the authorities immediately if danger arose.

The following day, 20 October, Barrett reported that the Battle of Talana dominated discussions amongst Afrikaners, some of whom were criticising the sluggish Boer commanders for allowing

25. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 23.9.1901, p.30.

26. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 22.9.1901, p.527.

27. PAR, CSO 1648: Passenger account for discharged prisoners, 6.8.1901-29.8.1901.

28. See Marais, pp.167-177, for an overview of the spy activities of Boer women during the war.

29. Not to be confused with Mrs Berrett that is referred to in PHS van Zyl, *Die heldealbum*, p.86.

30. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 11.12.1899.

large numbers of British troops to escape to Ladysmith. The envisaged Boer invasion of Umvoti remained very much on the cards and she also reported that the local Afrikaners were full of passion and excitement while they waited for the sign of the Boer invasion of Umvoti, the cutting of the telegraph wires. In preparation for the invasion they were stocking up on rusks and ammunition. War talk, however, only took place when the local Englishmen and loyal Afrikaners such as Tony Keyter and "Old Laatz" were absent.

Barrett's overeagerness, and the fact that she was an outsider, seemed to hamper her for in her report dated 21 October it became clear that her hosts distrusted her. Much of the conversation was now taking place in bedrooms where Barrett could not overhear them. She was also informed by Mrs Nel that the local magistrate, Henry Koch, had warned Nel and his sons to be careful, for if they rebelled their property would be confiscated. Barrett managed to get her report out by sending it with John Ogle, the local post cart driver. On the third day of her mission, Barrett perceived a change in the attitudes of the local Afrikaners. The passion of the previous days made way for silence. This was brought about by the Boer losses at Talana and the lack of success around Ladysmith. Now the talk was about a desperate attempt to take Ladysmith. If this failed, an attack on Pietermaritzburg would be attempted. By now Barrett had also engaged her brothers-in-law, the Brownings, in espionage and they reported that a meeting was to be held at the house of Lang Lewies Nel.

Barrett's mission ended on 22 October, four days after her arrival. She had failed to infiltrate the close knit Afrikaner community of Umvoti. In her last report she stated: "I dare not send a wire for the Dutch Boys (messengers) let the news out - they know all the magistrate knows, or how do they find it out."³¹ It seems that she immediately left the Nels to go and reside in Pietermaritzburg.

Jacoba Barrett must have felt that very little had come of her efforts and attempted to convince the authorities of her worth as a source of information. She found a sympathetic ear in Attorney-General Bale. Barrett generally repeated the same information she had despatched earlier to Simpson, but also added some known facts, rumours, half-truths, and gossip. She reported the Boers said that they would never allow England to rule the Transvaal; that England had the habit "of taking countries because they could make money out of them"; that the Natal Afrikaners were only prevented from a general rebellion because they were afraid that they would lose their properties; that dynamite was laid down at Pretoria to blow up the town should the British be victorious; and that five months before the war she had seen the son of Gert Maritz wearing the colours of the Transvaal under his clothes. Barrett even offered Bale the services of her son "who knows the Transvaal well."³²

The encounter with Bale prolonged interest in Barrett's reports for a few days. Her earlier report

31. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statements by Jacoba Barrett before SO Samuelson, 22.12.1899.

32. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 11.12.1899.

were dug up and she had to confirm their authenticity by signing each of them. Governor Hely-Hutchinson then forwarded the reports to the colonial office where they were filed.³³ In May 1900, Charles Tatham showed some interest in the work done by Barrett but not enough to revive her career.³⁴

If Allan Hershensohn, a Natal Afrikaner and intelligence officer for the civil intelligence department is to be believed, Mrs Eksteen of Ingogo, who stayed at Pieter Keytel's home³⁵ in Pietermaritzburg, was actively involved in the Boer intelligence department. Hershensohn claimed that Eksteen received information from Keytel about the undefended areas along the railway line and an indication that Boer forces might succeed in raiding the line near Ingogo. When Eksteen returned to her farm she forwarded this information, possibly by using an African runner, to the Boer forces. Eksteen was furthermore accused of taking a letter to a certain Pretorius in the Tin Town POW Camp when stopping in Ladysmith on her way home.³⁶ Understandably the military did not act on these tales.

Natal Afrikaner women also became involved in the Anglo-Boer War by giving logistical and humanitarian support. Mrs Meyer provided logistical support by working in Handleys store in Dundee when it was taken over by the Boer commissariat,³⁷ while Mrs Arnold Boers of the Klip River district, who lost a son in the war, baked 14 loaves of bread per week for three weeks for the Boer hospital north of the Tugela River. The hospital authorities supplied the flour and she was allowed to retain a small portion for her services. According to Mrs Boers, who at this stage was cut-off from Ladysmith, the arrangement was their saving grace. Without it her children would only have had mealie-porridge to eat. Boers also received medicine for her services. Her sister-in-law, Mrs Gert Boers, also baked bread for the Boer hospital under the same arrangement,³⁸ while Mrs CM Vermaak, whose husband was an active rebel, rendered comparable support around Dundee.³⁹ Similarly SJ Laas of Paardeberg, Dundee, who had four sons and two sons-in-law convicted as rebels, also baked bread for the Boers. The response of the Natal Government to these actions was to declare that "the baking (of) bread for the enemy appears to be active assistance."⁴⁰ None of these women were, however, charged with high treason.

33. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statements by Jacoba Barrett before SO Samuelson, 22.12.1899.

34. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter C Tatham to Attorney-General H Bale, 14.5.1900.

35. The house of the Keytel's seems to have been a hotbed of pro-Boer activities. Mrs Keytel apparently helped Felix Coetzee, a burgher sentenced to seven years imprisonment with hard labour for executing a joiner, once he had escaped from the Pietermaritzburg Prison to make it to the Boer lines. Coetzee was arrested ten days later by Africans in Zululand. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, pp.4-5, 1941.

36. PAR, MJPW 117: Report by civilian intelligence officer A Hershensohn, 25.5.1901.

37. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LLA Zietsman, 18.3.1901.

38. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900.

39. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Vermaak, 6.10.1900.

40. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by SJ Laas, 11.12.1901.

Several Natal Afrikaner women took to nursing the casualties of war be it on opposite sides. Nurse SMG Otto, a Natal volunteer nurse and member of a very pro-British family, did sterling work at Intombi Hospital during the Siege of Ladysmith. Lt-Col Hyslop had no “...hesitation in saying, that but for their devotion to duty, and their untiring care of the patients placed under their charge, our death roll would have been much heavier than it is.”⁴¹ As a result he recommended her for the Royal Red Cross. Like Otto, Mrs MC (Gert) de Haas also worked as a nurse during the siege. The difference was that she only nursed Boer POWs for a brief period before she and her family were removed to the Intombi Camp.⁴² Likewise CM Vermaak of Rooifontein, Dundee, provided medical assistance by nursing an invalid Boer from Pretoria for eight days.⁴³

Nursing was also done by Lucy Lydia Bester, the sister-in-law of Ds HF Schoon, and one of the sixteen children of WAC (William) Bester of Fourieskraal, Ladysmith. Lucy left for the Paarl shortly before war broke out to study organ music. When large numbers of Boer POWs started arriving in Cape Town, Bester abandoned her studies and volunteered to be a nurse in the Simon’s Town POW Camp. In a letter written in English to her sister, Mary Schoon, she reflected on her work: “... I have lost 4 patients: oh Mary, the one I shall never forget, he was too sweet a boy about 16 or 17. His eyes looked me full in the face till the end and after his death such a Heavenly Smile...I can never tell you how pleased I am that I have come to nurse them.”⁴⁴ Her working conditions were made even more difficult by the animosity which existed towards her, forcing her to decline an invitation to lunch extended to all the nurses by the commanding officer, Lieut-Col TF Brinckman. Her reason for not attending was that as an “...Africander and especially this time when politics are always discussed...” she would not feel welcome. Her perception on how she, as an Afrikaner, was viewed was confirmed during an encounter with Harry Tatham, a member of a prominent Natal English family. Tatham saw Bester at a lunch and later called on her. As she was on night duty, she could not meet with him. He than asked Mrs Vince, the manager’s wife, to give Bester his compliments and intended to leave his card. When he was told that Bester was nursing Boer prisoners Tatham became so disgusted that he put the card back in his pocket and left. Bester eventually took ill with typhoid in mid-June 1900,⁴⁵ but managed to survive. It is uncertain if she resumed her nursing career.⁴⁶

41. PAR, PM 90: Recommendation by Lt-Col Hyslop, 3.5.1901; Nurse Kate Driver (JJ Boyd) *Experience of a Siege* (a Nurse looks back at Ladysmith. Ladysmith Historical Society, 1978.)

42. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 28.10.1899, p.35.

43. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Vermaak, 6.10.1900.

44. In total 81 Boer POWs died at the Simon’s Town POW Camp.

45. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 16.6.1900, p.371.

46. A Davey, Lucy Bester and the nursing of Boer prisoners at Simon’s Town, 1900, *Simon’s Town Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol XIX, No. 1, January 1996. In time Bester followed two of her sisters to the USA where they eventually settled.

Two of Lucy Bester's sisters, Maggie and Mrs Mandy, also took up nursing during the war. Maggie Bester and her family arrived in the Harrismith area in the wake of the retreating Boers in March 1900. She initially resided on their farm near Elands River Bridge Harrismith before joining her sister in town where the pair nursed for two and a half months.⁴⁷

10.2 Natal Afrikaner women in the shadow of the war - psychological and physical treatment

The general war experience of Natal Afrikaner women in the areas occupied by the Boers, apart from the above outlined involvement, meant psychological or physical harassment at the hands of either Boers or British soldiers. One of the first encounters between Natal Afrikaner women and British soldiers proved extremely traumatic for the women involved. Reverend Prozesky noted in his diary that British soldiers violated women in Northern Natal from the start of the war. The first mentioned case took place on 14 October 1899 when African women were shamefully treated near Dundee and Ladysmith.⁴⁸ Soon afterwards a family of Natal Afrikaners experienced similar treatment. According to three unrelated sources the 17th Lancers visited the De Waal's farm near Ladysmith in early November 1899. The whole family was accused of being spies and were arrested. Mrs de Waal and her two daughters were then raped. On arrival in Ladysmith Jan de Waal was imprisoned as a spy while his wife, two daughters, one of them 15-years-old, and an African servant were kept in military confinement. Here they were continuously raped, one daughter claiming that she was raped by ten "young officers" in one night.⁴⁹ The two girls and their African servant eventually managed to escape to the Boer lines. In the meantime their mother had died as a result of the "outrage and exposure perpetuated on her by Lancers." The two De Waal girls were then sent to Pretoria by the Boers for medical treatment. This incident raised emotions and the Boers made it clear that Lancers should not expect any mercy from them.⁵⁰

Fears of sexual harassment were also expressed by a Mrs van Niekerk whose husband was in the lunatic asylum in Pietermaritzburg where he later died. She lived with her children at Lennoxton near Newcastle and complained that an African had behaved insolently and in a forward manner towards her. As a result she asked Magistrate Jackson for protection. He subsequently ordered the arrest of the African in question. Several nights later four drunken soldiers arrived at her house and made "shameful suggestions" to her and her daughters, aged 12 and 15. The women had to keep them at bay all night. Mrs van Niekerk again complained to the magistrate, who this time would not accept the charge. His reason, according to Mrs van Niekerk, was that the soldiers would be

47. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: My experiences during the Anglo-Boer War by Maggie Bester, 26.9.1900.

48. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 14.10.1899 and 14.11.1899, p.26 and pp.84-86.

49. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 14.11.1899 and 18.11.1899, pp.84-92; ES Leversage, *Christiaan de Wet Annale, No.10*, pp.135-136.

50. NAR, A 739 Vol 5 Book 2: Telegram Roos to Reuter, 15.11.1899.

punished too severely. At the same time he released the African in question.⁵¹

Natal Afrikaner women also suffered during the first month of the war because of the actions taken by the British army against their husbands. A point in case was the arrest of PC Cronjé of the farm Rest in the Dundee area by the Natal Carbineers in October 1899. Three months later, in a letter written on her behalf and signed by her, Mrs EM Cronjé asked the colonial authorities about the whereabouts of her husband. PC Cronjé had in the meantime been released on parole on 6 February 1900 with strict instructions to reside in Pietermaritzburg. It is unclear when Mrs Cronjé received this information because letters addressed to areas under Boer occupation were kept back until liberation took place.⁵²

Harsh treatment of Natal Afrikaner women by Boers was almost exclusively reserved for the female family members of loyalists. The treatment of Mrs Liebenberg of Dundee, whose husband Barend remained loyal, was such an example. Liebenberg and her children were given a passport to cross into the British-held territory via Pomeroy and Greytown by wagon. When the family group reached Helpmekaar they were stopped and kept prisoners in the laager for three days. Guards surrounded the wagon and the Liebenbergs were told that they would be shot should they try to escape. The family was returned to Dundee where the eldest Liebenberg boy was imprisoned, apparently because he was a British subject. On 2 January 1900 Mrs Liebenberg and the rest of her family were banned to Pretoria from where they were eventually allowed to proceed to Durban via Lourenco Marques.⁵³

A similar fate befell the widow Emily Pieters, owner of the farm Maxwelton, and her two young sons in May 1900. When the British attack on the Boer positions on the Biggarsberg commenced she and her children attempted to get to her loyalist uncle Adrian (AL) Jansen. They were, however, stopped by two Boers who became angry when she told them she was going to the farm of a loyalist. She was subsequently ordered to Dundee under guard. Here her request to proceed to the farm of her father, WS Naude, was denied. Pieters was then sent to Johannesburg by rail and later to Lydenburg where she stayed with an aunt. Eventually, in September 1900, she received permission to go to Lourenco Marques.⁵⁴ Pieters and her sons could not make their way back to Natal since the military prohibited the British consul-general from issuing permits to people wishing to travel to Durban because of the overcrowded state of the city. She did, however, manage to inform her father by telegram of their predicament. Naude acted immediately and when the military commander stationed at Dundee did not act fast enough, he and his brother-in-law Adrian Jansen, wrote to the editor of the *Natal Afrikaner*, Joshua Hershensohn, and the Dundee magistrate respectively. Hershensohn was

51. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 13.9.1900, p.298.

52. PAR, CSO 1640: Correspondence regarding the whereabouts of PC Cronjé, 23.1.1900-19.2.1900.

53. PRO, CO 179/211: Letter Mrs B Liebenberg to PUS C Bird, 24.4.1900.

54. PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by E Pieters, 18.4.1901.

the first to react and in a letter to the colonial secretary explained the circumstances under which Emilie Pieters ended up in Lourenco Marques. In the meantime the magistrate obtained a testimonial for Pieters from the lawyers, Tatham and Tandy. Armed with these documents, and wanting to please loyalist Afrikaners, Governor Hely-Hutchinson telegraphed the consul-general instructing him to supply Pieters with a permit enabling her to proceed to Durban. A short while later she and her sons joined Adrian Jansen.⁵⁵

Frequent contact between British soldiers and Natal Afrikaner women in the war zone resumed after the Siege of Ladysmith ended. The first Afrikaner woman to experience the wrath of the British was Mrs SM (Sannie) Colling of the farm Georgina near Ladysmith. Shortly after the Boers had retreated, her cart horses were confiscated by an Englishman named Allison. Her husband Fred Colling, who was commandeered by the Boers as a small-pox guard, arrived home after the event but immediately left to visit his ill father. On 15 March 1900, four Natal Policemen, amongst them Trooper Nicholson, arrived at Colling's farm. Some Boers and Natal Afrikaners hiding in the vicinity of the farm house fired on them killing Nicholson's horse from under him, resulting in his and an African policeman's capture. During this skirmish the heavily pregnant Colling fled into the house.⁵⁶ Not long afterwards a group of policeman arrived and proceeded to kill all her poultry and damage the property. They guarded Colling for a while before arresting her and removing her and her two children to the farm Fourieskraal on the outskirts of Ladysmith. They remained there as prisoners only receiving porridge for food. After persistent requests Colling was allowed to proceed to Ladysmith where her youngest child was born.⁵⁷

The military's attitude towards Colling was expressed by Lt-Col AE Sandbach who stated that no consideration was to be shown to her because her husband was a rebel. Instead she and her family were to be sent to Pietermaritzburg before the end of April 1900, without expense to the military authorities. Since the Natal Government refused to maintain people deported to Pietermaritzburg by the military, Colling's livestock was sold to pay for her keep in Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg. The balance was left in credit with the director of supplies.⁵⁸ When her newborn child was 10-days-old she was deported to Pietermaritzburg. Shortly after her arrival the commandant informed her that there was no more money and that she had to see to her own needs.⁵⁹ She consequently spent some time on Afrikaner farms between Durban and Pietermaritzburg and near Greytown.⁶⁰

55. PAR, CSO, 1659: Documents relating to the daughter of WS Naude in Lourenco Marques, 1.10.1900-11.10.1900.

56. OE Prozesky private collection: Diary of JJA Prozesky: Attached statements, p.438.

57. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entries, 6-7 May 1900, pp.311-312; PRO, CO 179/213: Statement by Trooper ATS Boyle to Sub-Inspector Hellett, 24.3.1900.

58. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter Lt-Col AE Sandbach to provost marshal, 26.4.1900.

59. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entries, 6-7 May 1900, pp.311-312; PRO, CO 179/213: Statement by Trooper ATS Boyle to Sub-Inspector Hellett, 24.3.1900.

60. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Attached statements, p.438.

The physical and psychological trauma suffered by Colling took its toll and she fell very ill after the birth of her child.⁶¹ Initially she lost her speech but in time her health improved.⁶² On 17 August 1900 she could return to Ladysmith to visit her imprisoned husband.⁶³ A week later she was allowed to return to the farm of her mother Mrs Cronjé.⁶⁴ Colling's experiences at the hands of the British caused much bitterness in the area. As a result she and her mother were suspected of readily providing accommodation to six members of the party who had attacked the Wasbank Station in October 1900.⁶⁵

When Buller's Army advanced north other Natal Afrikaner women suffered experiences similar to that of Colling. According to RC Billington, a muleteer with the advancing force of General Buller, they encountered their first three Natal Afrikaner women on 12 May 1900 on the farm Vermaakskraal. These women were immediately arrested and sent, under escort, to Ladysmith. The same happened a short distance away at the farm of the Kemp's where two more Afrikaner women were taken prisoner.⁶⁶ Reverend Prozesky, without providing details, claimed that the wife of PR Vermaak was cruelly and disgracefully treated in the process.⁶⁷ Approximately one month later, on 9 June 1900, three women captured at Vermaakskraal namely, the wives of PR and Coenraad Vermaak, and P van Breda, arrived in Pietermaritzburg telling tales of horror, destruction, and looting of livestock by the military. The wife of Coenraad immediately left for her parents, the Odendaals, at Noodsberg.⁶⁸ The others in all probability remained in Pietermaritzburg becoming, along with Sannie Colling, the first of hundreds of Natal Afrikaner women to be removed from their homes to the capital. The experiences of the above-mentioned groups of women were repeated in one form or another at almost every single Afrikaner farm in Northern Natal as can be gleaned from the cases discussed below.⁶⁹

MC Cronjé of Camelot, JS van Niekerk and LP Adendorff of Welgedacht and JJ Smit's husbands were commandeered by the ZAR when they occupied Northern Natal. With the arrival of the British

61. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 29.5.1900, p.338.

62. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 23.6.1900, p.378.

63. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 17.8.1900, p.423

64. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 25.8.1900, pp.430-431.

65. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Correspondence regarding the request by HB Cronjé to be allowed to visit his mother, 31.10.1900-7.11.1900.

66. RC Billington, *A mule-driver at the Natal front. Transport experiences in Natal*, pp.53-56.

67. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Attached statements, p.438.

68. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Dairy entry, 9.6.1900, p.354. No amount of research could reveal where the women were kept when imprisoned in Ladysmith and Pietermaritzburg.

69. PAR, CSO 2869: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AF Byloo, 28.9.1900; PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Dairy entry, 16-17.10. 1900 and 22.10.1900, pp.489-490 and p.493; PAR, CSO 2864: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JBS Adendorff, 8.10.1902; PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/17: Letter magistrate Klip River district to LW Meyer, 24.4.1901.

forces in Newcastle they adhered to the proclamation of Buller and surrendered. The men were subsequently arrested and imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg or on the *Catalonia* in the Durban harbour. On 30 May 1900, some days after the surrender of their husbands, two European members of the Natal Police arrived on the respective farms. They took all Cronjé's cattle and horses as well as a spider and wagon, leaving her with only three cows and calves. On the same day they took all the livestock belonging to Van Niekerk, Smit and Adendorff, leaving the latter without means and a baby and blind brother to care for.⁷⁰ Also near Newcastle, Mrs Boshoff, whose husband was arrested as a suspected rebel and who owned more than 1 300 head of sheep and goats and 80 head of cattle, lost all of it to the military except for five goats. These the family had to slaughter to survive and with nothing left she came into town to ask the commandant for food for her and her children.⁷¹

Similar events happened around Dundee. Mrs PC Cronjé of Rest near Helpmekaar complained, in an letter to the magistrate of Dundee, that soldiers of the Imperial Light Horse had taken seven horses, 1 330 sheep and 550 goats, her spider and the harness for her oxen. She appealed to the magistrate to tell her what documentation she should send him to obtain an order to stop the looting of her remaining livestock.⁷²

Natal Afrikaners not only lost the livestock they had to take care of but at times were even turned out of their homes. FAJ van Niekerk, AMJ Cronjé and JC Hattingh, imprisoned rebels, asked that their wives be removed from the farm Loskop near Newcastle to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp because they were being intimidated by Africans. Mrs Cronjé and her three children were turned out of her house on the farm Applebloom by an African who took clothes and featherbeds. She joined the other two women on the farm Loskop where they were also intimidated by Africans one night. The government, however, refused to heed the call of the husbands and suggested that they be allowed to reside in a town by the military.⁷³

The psychological trauma experienced by Natal Afrikaner women as described above serves to illuminate the circumstances surrounding the death of the 45-year-old Mrs Renier Dannhauser of Newcastle. During July 1900 she visited her farmhouse. Some damage had been done by the retreating Boers but this could not be compared with what it looked like after the British soldiers had passed through. The latter had even ripped up the steps in search of weapons and loot.⁷⁴ The shock caused by the devastation of their property was followed by the arrest of her husband, a local justice

70. PAR, PM 18: Request for assistance from the Natal Government in securing cattle removed by members of the Natal Police, 19.7.1900-15.8.1900.

71. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 9.9.1900, p.292.

72. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Mrs PC Cronjé to magistrate Dundee, 21.5.1900.

73. PAR, CSO 1688: Application by FAJ van Niekerk, AMJ Cronjé and JC Hatting for their wives to be removed to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 21.10.1901-30.10.1901.

74. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of Caroline Prozesky: Diary entry, 19.7.1900, p.420.

of the peace, on charges of high treason which later proved to be unfounded. The impact of these two events caused her health to deteriorate. Despite this, Mrs Dannhauser attempted to continue her husband's business duties while also running errands for other rebel prisoners. Her health took a turn for the worse in the beginning of August 1900, a fact she blamed on the sadness and sorrow brought on by the war.⁷⁵ When her health deteriorated further several calls were made to have her husband released on bail. This failed and as a result their daughter, Hettie Dannhauser, sent a telegram to Attorney-General Bale proclaiming: "Mothers life in danger father in agonies in prison for gods sake have pity let him out." This had the desired effect and he was released on bail on condition that he remained in Newcastle.⁷⁶

The release did not have the desired effect and Mrs Dannhauser passed away on 30 August 1900. *De Kerkbode*, mouthpiece of the DRC, reported that the funeral were "...meer dan hartroerend. Er zijn in de buurt van NewCastle geen manspersonen genoeg, op vrije voeten, om een lijkstoet te vormen. Slechts eenige weenende vrouwen en diepverslagene mannen volgden der stoffelijk overschot grafwaarts."⁷⁷ Missionary Prozesky provided an even more surreal description of events: "Very close to the cemetery English soldiers were playing football; when the wagon came by, bearing the coffin, they all stood still and took off their caps - but when the first clods fell on the coffin loud cheering was heard from that quarter, a player must have kicked the ball particularly high. It made a sad impression on the mourners."⁷⁸ Prozesky was adamant that Dannhauser had died of a broken heart and that her death was tantamount to murder.⁷⁹ This view was partially shared by Dr CJ Douglas, who declared that her death was "probably the result of the war."⁸⁰

The circumstances surrounding the death of Mrs Renier Dannhauser served to sour the relations between Little, the commandant of Newcastle, and the daughter of the deceased. On 1 September 1900 Miss Adendorff asked him for a pass for Miss Hettie Dannhauser to reside in Newcastle, so that she could nurse her father. Little said they should come back the following day. The next day Adendorff, accompanied by Hettie Dannhauser, returned. When he was informed of the identify of Dannhauser he flew into a rage and said if it depended on him he would have all rebels "transported." He continued: "You Dutch girls are a lot of deceitful wrenches - go, come back tomorrow."⁸¹ At a subsequent meeting the commandant informed Hettie Dannhauser that once he had obtained better proof against her father, brother and herself, he would send the whole family to Ceylon.⁸²

75. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 22.8.1900, p.257.

76. PAR, AGO I/8/73: Application for R Dannhauser to be released on bail, 26.8.1900-31.8.1900.

77. *De Kerkbode*, 11.9.1900 and 27.9.1900.

78. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 31.8.1900, p.272.

79. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 22.8.1900, p.257.

80. PAR, AGO I/8/78: Letter CJ Douglas to Attorney-General H Bale, 26.3.1901.

81. OE Prozesky private collection: Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 3.9.1900, p.278.

82. OE Prozesky private collection: Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 10.9.1900, p.295.

Verbal insubordination was often the only way in which Afrikaner women could fight back, especially against the military, and numerous examples of such conduct exist in the literature on the Anglo-Boer War. Natal Afrikaner women were no different. In the Newcastle district Mrs O'Reilly, an Afrikaner woman married to an Irishman, was at the forefront of verbal abuse and belittling of British soldiers. When her husband was arrested by the British she accused the soldiers of being "too cowardly to catch the Boers in the Transvaal for you are too scared, but this you can do, arrest tame people (mak menschen)."⁸³ Such verbal abuse did not stop the soldiers from searching the houses of Afrikaner women in the area.⁸⁴ Annoyed by this, O'Reilly directed a number of soldiers into a dark bedroom, saying there was something under the bed and that they should look for a Boer in it. She meant the chamber-pot which was placed under the bed.⁸⁵ O'Reilly did not let up in her private war and on two occasions came into Newcastle without a permit. The first time she was reprimanded but still rebuked the soldiers. On the second occasion she was detained under Martial Law. This apparently did not dampen her spirit or her verbal abuse.⁸⁶

Further south in Ladysmith, Mrs MC de Haas, also ran into trouble because of her utterances.⁸⁷ The problems for De Haas started when one of the male residents in her boarding house spat at the picture of General de Wet which she had in her parlour. De Haas rebuked him and said the English would be glad to have someone of that calibre.⁸⁸ She was reported, and as a result, in January 1901, under Martial Law, deported to Pietermaritzburg and on her own costs.⁸⁹ In an open-hearted letter to Prime Minister Hime, De Haas explained her predicament: "I am a resident of Ladysmith. On the 6th Jan. last (1901) on false reports to the commandant of Ladysmith I was reported by some men who were living in my house as boarders, men of no reputation and who has (*sic*) bitter feeling and prejudice (*sic*) against the Dutch nation. I being Dutch my self was cruelly taunted and provoked several times from the men living in my house. I admit I spoke indiscreetly several times of their insolent taints and disgraceful language."

Unfortunately for De Haas she did not know the names of the men, presumably because she ran an establishment that offered short-term boarding. What made her situation even more unfair was that she never had the opportunity to defend herself against the various accusations, inter alia that she

83. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.7.1900, p.238.

84. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 11.1.1902, p.758.

85. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of Caroline Prozesky: Diary entry, 25.7.1900, p.423.

86. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 13.7.1900, p.420.

87. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Dairy entry, 4.1.1901, pp.556-557. MC de Haas was the sister of Otto Krogman the leader of Ladysmith Commando and daughter of the feisty Annie Krogman. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MC de Haas, 12.9.1900.

88. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 12.5.1901, p.502; OE Prozesky private collection: Letter MC de Haas to JJA Prozesky, 10.7.1901.

89. PAR, AGO I/8/76: Minute paper regarding men to be removed from Ladysmith to Estcourt, 28.12.1900-24.1.1901.

had taken messages to the Boer POWs at Tin Town; that she had put a wire cutter in a plum pudding presumably to be used by the POWs to escape; and that she had held a Boer meeting at her house. When the charges started to surface, De Haas being a real firebrand, went to see the local commandant informing him that the accusations of disloyalty were false as could be proved by her behaviour during the Siege of Ladysmith. Her explanation fell on deaf ears.

Five months after her removal De Haas felt that the period of separation from her husband and children was sufficient punishment for any discretion she might have been guilty of. She therefore requested permission to return to Ladysmith, but her request was denied by the military.⁹⁰ This did not keep her down. She opened a boarding house in Boshoff Street in Pietermaritzburg;⁹¹ visited rebel prisoners like the Buys brothers in the local prison taking them pineapples as gifts;⁹² and corresponded with Reverend Prozesky in the Eshowe Prison, sending him some dye on one occasion which he used to colour his old overcoat.⁹³

Almost all aspects of the family and private lives of Natal Afrikaner women were affected by the psychological trauma and disruptions caused by the war. LLA Zietsman of the Dundee district was to have married a fellow Natal Afrikaner, Daniel Dekker, in October 1899. The outbreak of war put an end to this dream because Dekker was commandeered and then continued to serve with the Vryheid Commando. By March 1901 Zietsman still had not heard from Dekker.⁹⁴ The uncertainty about the whereabouts of loved-ones forced at least one Natal Afrikaner woman into a new relationship. Louis Triegaardt from the Umvoti county joined the Boer forces leaving his wife without any financial means. As time passed by and Mrs Triegaardt heard nothing from her husband, she assumed that he was dead. She therefore left Greytown for Durban to marry J Diot. This incensed her father, CJ Vermaak, who believed that his son-in-law was still alive. Vermaak despatched a telegram to both the magistrates of Pietermaritzburg and Durban informing them of his daughter's intentions and the fact that he believed Triegaardt was possibly still alive. The Durban magistrate and former magistrate of Greytown, HC Koch, who knew Vermaak and Triegaardt well, ignored Vermaak's telegram and accepted Mrs Triegaardt's declaration under oath that she believed her husband to be dead. According to Triegaardt the sole reason her family opposed the marriage was because of her pro-British stance. When Vermaak could supply no proof for his point of view, Koch proceeded to marry the couple. This disturbed the attorney-general who demanded an explanation from Koch. His verdict was very pragmatic; in the unlikely event of her first husband

90. PAR, PM 22: Correspondence regarding the request by MC de Haas to return to Ladysmith, 11.6.1901-24.6.1901.

91. PAR, MJPW 88: Correspondence regarding the application of LJ de Jager to enter the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 31.10.1901-18.1.1902.

92. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 27.1.1901, p.5.

93. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 15.8.1901, p.520.

94. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LLA Zietsman, 18.3.1901.

materialising she would have to bear the consequences.⁹⁵

Uncertainty about the whereabouts of family members and friends during the war was a common occurrence. EM Botha, who went to Rhodesia prior to the war, had no idea what had happened to Gideon Joubert and Coenraad Breytenbach, who had worked on her farm Lekkerwater near Newcastle.⁹⁶ Similarly MMCW Kemp of Kempenveldt, Dundee, did not know the whereabouts of some of her sons.⁹⁷ Rebel leader Commandant LJ de Jager, arrested by the Natal Carbineers on his farm Doornberg near Vryheid, heard through African informants that his wife and daughters had been removed by the military. He therefore asked his lawyer, TF Carter, to try and determine their whereabouts as his wife was an important witness in his upcoming trial. This proved to be a very difficult task because by late February 1901, the only persons who had been located with the surname De Jager were Mrs L de Jager of Leeuwspruit, Standerton, and Mrs J de Jager of Fraserspruit in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.⁹⁸ In the meantime the real Mrs LJ de Jager was evading capture by moving around in the Vryheid district.⁹⁹

The experiences of Maria CE Prinsloo of the farm Ingagane Ford, near Newcastle, is probably representative of those of many Natal Afrikaner women in the war zone. She had six children, the oldest being 14, and her husband Paul Hans Petrus Prinsloo was imprisoned on charges of treason. All the family's cattle, except three cows and calves, were looted. Initially some assistance was rendered to the Prinsloos by their neighbour, JC Adendorff of Bradford farm, while goods from Greytown for needy Afrikaners also served to alleviate their plight. By 24 October 1900, Maria Prinsloo found surviving on boiled mealies only very difficult and wrote to Magistrate Jackson of Newcastle for material support. Jackson's enquiry about what could be done placed the Natal Government in a quandary as no policy existed to deal with cases such as this. The colonial secretary suggested two alternatives: have the women and children removed to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp or make arrangements to serve rations to the destitute Afrikaners on their farms. The first alternative was immediately labelled as too expensive. This seems to have determined the procedure in this particular case and, rather than remove the Prinsloos, Sergeant RW Bentley of the Natal Police was ordered to investigate the family and to report to his superiors. Bentley disclosed that the Prinsloo's 1 600 acre farm was bought under crown land-regulations which prohibited them from charging rent from the Africans residing on the farm, while only seven buckets of mealies, comprising about four acres, were planted at the end of 1900. Maria Prinsloo could also not rely on the support of any family members because her one brother-in-law resided

95. PAR, CSO 1703: Documents relating to the marriage of Mrs Triegaardt to J Diot, while her husband was possibly still alive, 14.4.1902-4.5.1902.

96. PAR, CSO 2868: Invasion losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by EM Botha, 19.1.1903.

97. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MMCW Kemp, 6.12.1901.

98. PAR, CSO 1667: Correspondence regarding the whereabouts of Mrs LJ de Jager, 29.1.1901-25.2.1901.

99. Interview conducted with Sarie Mehl, great grand daughter of LJ de Jager, Waterkloof, Pretoria, 6.7.2002.

near Vryheid and the other in the OFS. Furthermore, five of her sisters were resident in the OFS and another, Mrs Blanze, lived near Nongoma in Zululand, while five brothers were resident in the Transvaal. The addresses and whereabouts of all were unknown. Only the location of one brother, Franz A van Niekerk of the farm Langklip near Newcastle, who was in prison in Pietermaritzburg, was known. Despite her hardship Prinsloo made it clear to Sergeant Bentley that although she would appreciate any assistance from the government she “would prefer to remain on the farm under existing conditions rather than be removed to a place where she would be cared for.”

Three months elapsed before the Natal authorities seemed to be satisfied that the Prinsloos were indeed indigent and some effort was made to relieve their plight. Subsequently PUS Bird wrote to the Reverend SS Clarke of Ixopo, a member of the Society of Friends in Natal, asking him if he would be prepared to receive an application on behalf of the Prinsloos. On Clarke’s request Bird forwarded him the report regarding the family. Clarke could, however, only act on the recommendations of the representative of the society in Cape Town and finally on 5 June 1901, received permission to support the family and forwarded £5, received from Joshua Rowntree of Scarborough in Britain, to Bird to assist the Prinsloos. A receipt, obtained from Maria Prinsloo, was forwarded to Clarke on 5 July 1901. Assistance for the Prinsloos finally arrived, more than eight months after they originally requested it.¹⁰⁰

The tide must have turned further against the Prinsloos because they arrived in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp on 2 August 1901. They were joined a month later by their husband and father, PHP Prinsloo, after his release from prison. On 29 May 1902, two days before the signing of peace they left for the Newcastle townlands, in the care of GT Hesom.¹⁰¹

10.3 The economic experiences of Natal Afrikaner women during the war

The psychological and physical hardships imposed on Natal Afrikaner women by the war were amplified by their economic suffering. The large scale arrests and surrender of Natal Afrikaner men in Northern Natal placed the economic burden of farming and dealing with labour on the women. This generally proved to be very difficult and at times virtually impossible as even simple masculine tasks proved to be demanding,¹⁰² as explained by Vonnie Bester: “I have to clean the horses myself, Mag and I grind mealies & and we have to look after the cattle and I do lots of other rough work. It is not any good telling Mama no to go to the cattle, as she wont listen, every morning she stakes that cattle away & at night she & I fetch the cows to milk.”¹⁰³

100. PAR, CSO 1662: Correspondence regarding the complaint by MCE Prinsloo that they were destitute, 24.10.1900-5.7.1901.

101. NAR, DBC 138: Register residents in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Aug 1900-Jun 1900.

102. P Marais, pp.33-35.

103. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Letter Vonnie Bester to Mary Schoon, 11.9.1900.

The women were not only burdened by their new economic roles but also had to deal with the looting and confiscation of property by the military, Natal Police, and Africans.¹⁰⁴ At the same time the men, for example CJ Labuschagne, in a letter from the *Catalonia* to his mother J Laas of Angora Hill, Dannhauser, placed pressure on the women by requesting them not to let the farming slip in their absence.¹⁰⁵

In this context, the following question posed by Reverend Prozesky cuts to the heart of the matter: “What is to become of these women now when the ploughing season comes? Very few have any oxen, and the kaffirs living on the farms are not likely in most cases to be very obedient to them.”¹⁰⁶

Many Natal Afrikaner women were unable to deal with these unfamiliar roles and ended up as vulnerable as Prozesky had feared. The economic experiences of the following women are cited as examples. On one day the military and police removed all the livestock belonging to Mesdames van Niekerk, Smit and Adendorff, leaving them without any means. All three women immediately called on their government to intervene and to assist them in the return of their property. The Natal Government could, however, not render any support for when stock was received from the military by the Derelict Stock Fund, the curator bonis Charles Lloyd, was not informed where it originally came from. This lack of record keeping, the hardship it caused families and the trouble it meant to the government, displeased both Attorney-General Bale and Governor Hely-Hutchinson. The governor tried to cover-up the administrative bungling by ordering Bale to inform the three women: “... that if any of your cattle are amongst those recently taken over by the Commissioner of Agriculture, in his capacity of Curator Bonis, you are at liberty, if so advised, to apply to the Supreme Court for the release and delivery of such stock.” The letter dated 15 August 1900 and addressed to JJ Smit, was returned unclaimed.¹⁰⁷

The attitude of the Natal Government towards the economic suffering endured by Natal Afrikaner women is contextualised by the complaint from Johanna de Jager, the wife of the rebel Fritz de Jager. She explained that as a loyal woman, she and her four children, suffered because of her husband's actions. According to De Jager five bales of wool, three head of cattle and five hundred sheep were looted, her furniture was destroyed or taken, and her piano smashed. All she and her children had left were the clothes they stood in and the farm Kemp's Hoek on which a bond of £250 existed. When that, and the fine of £500 imposed on her husband, was paid no money would be left.

104. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Mrs PC Cronjé to magistrate Dundee, 21.5.1900.

105. JM Wassermann, Controlling intelligence by means of censorship, in JM Wassermann and BT Kearney, (eds), *A warrior's gateway...*, p.345.

106. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 9.9.1900, p.292.

107. PAR, PM 18: Request for assistance from the Natal Government in securing cattle removed by members of the Natal Police, 19.7.1900-15.8.1900. For similar examples of suffering see: OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 20.5.1900; 26.5.1900 and 31.5.1900, p.194, p.207 and p.214.

As a result she and her children were residing with her brother and mother. De Jager, therefore, asked the government to act on her behalf. Henry Bale made the position of the Natal Government very clear: “The Colonial Government is unable to recognise any obligation to compensate people in respect of the action of forces subject to the control of the Imperial Authorities.”¹⁰⁸ This meant that, especially women and children, were sitting ducks that could be exploited at will to end up impoverished and dependant on alms.

Natal Afrikaner women were not only exploited and taken advantage of economically by the military but also by unscrupulous individuals. The magistrate of Klip River district gave Mrs HC Smidt permission to occupy the farm Wesselshoek between Underberg and Van Reenen. She and her neighbour, D Mcfarlane, were intimidated and harassed by H Povall, a former Boer POW onboard the *Catalonia*. In the case of Smidt, Povall burnt down the grazing on her farm in the middle of the winter, while he also grazed his own as well as government sheep on it. The report written by Sergeant Batterbury of the Natal Police elicited immediate reaction from the magistrate who asked the military to remove Povall. This request was instantly adhered to.¹⁰⁹

Others managed much better and not only exhibited innovation but also economic and political sense beyond what was stereotypically expected of their gender at the time. Mesdames Meyer and Marais, who had lost all their stock, travelled roughly 40 kilometres to Ladysmith with a spider pulled by oxen to visit their imprisoned husbands.¹¹⁰ Rachel van Reenen, who together with her children was paroled to Durban from Ladysmith, showed entrepreneurial skills when she set up a boarding house in Durban to cater for the 200 Boer POWs on parole in the city and the local concentration camp inhabitants.¹¹¹ By late June 1901 she was still in Durban operating this endeavour.¹¹² A keen economic sense was likewise displayed by Mrs William Bester of Fourieskraal near Platrand just outside Ladysmith. With the war raging and her husband and son imprisoned, General Cronjé of the OFS ordered the family to evacuate their farm on 9 November 1899. The Besters moved to their farm Spitzkop until 1 March 1900 when, in the wake of the retreating Boers, they left for their farm near Elands River Bridge, Harrismith. The Bester women remained in the Harrismith area until the British arrived; thereafter they suffered severe losses. One hundred and five oxen, for which Mrs Bester with much effort managed to get a receipt for £10 a head, were taken. Next 637 head of sheep were confiscated but no receipt was issued. Later another 400 head of sheep were taken, many of which had their throats slit, according to the soldiers: “to spite you Dutch.” Mrs Bester unsuccessfully tried to deal with the situation by speaking to Major Cavendish and to ask for a

108. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Correspondence regarding the looting of property belonging to J de Jager, 4.10.1899-5.1.1901.

109. PAR, 1/LDS: 3/3/14: Correspondence regarding the behaviour of H Povall, 15.7.1901-2.8.1901.

110. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entry, 29.9.1900, p.456.

111. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entry, 17.11.1900, p.511.

112. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entry, 25.6.1901, p.645.

passport to return to Natal. In the meantime soldiers looted the Bester farmhouse at Elands River Bridge. Bester did not take this lying down and went to the camp close by and confronted the officer in charge, Lieutenant Playne. The next day Playne visited the farm and Mrs Bester managed to get a receipt from him for one trap, four horses, 103 bags of mealies and other odds and ends. Her complaints to the superior officer, Colonel Morrison, about the unfair treatment her family had received from Playne, made no difference. Morrison did, however, provide the Bester women with a pass to return to Natal.¹¹³ Mrs Bester and some of her children only arrived back in Ladysmith on 18 September 1900, meeting up with their husband and father William Bester for the first time in 11 months.¹¹⁴

Possibly the most economically opportunistic and astute Natal Afrikaner woman was the 74-year-old Annie Charlotte Krogman of Driefontein, Ladysmith. Krogman was forced to leave her farm when it became the scene of hostilities. The Boer forces allowed her to proceed to the farm of her son Andries Krogman in the OFS. Krogman maintained that the seizure of her 500 mixed head of cattle, three spans of oxen, 1 600 sheep, 500 goats, 15 horses and two wagons by the military left her destitute. Closer inspection by the Natal colonial authorities exposed Krogman's claim as not entirely true. The British had only taken 281 head of cattle for which a receipt was issued, while the Boer forces had commandeered the horses, one wagon and the greater part of the sheep and goats. Since Krogman owned 16 000 acres and received £250 for mining rights on one of her farms and was awaiting compensation from the military she was not regarded as destitute. Her daughter, who was married to John de Waal, fully agreed with the Natal Government's decision.¹¹⁵ This did not break the stride of the elderly Mrs Krogman, who now claimed that five of her oxen were running with the cattle of J van der Westhuizen,¹¹⁶ and that the Boers had commandeered nine large oxen from her.¹¹⁷ She was also quick to intervene on behalf of her imprisoned rebel son, Otto, demanding rent from the Africans placed on his farm Margate, by the military.¹¹⁸

The sudden elevation to unaccustomed positions of economic authority of many married Afrikaner women also caused strains with African labours and tenants. Ellen Hattingh of Nooitgedacht, Estcourt, whose husband was detained by the military, complained: "I am unfit to cope with unwilling caffirs",¹¹⁹ while the wife of Izak Meyer, who had to take over the ploughing and stock raising, found the task very demanding since the African labourers did very little in the absence of

113. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: My experiences during the Anglo-Boer War by Maggie Bester, 26.9.1900.

114. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entry, 18.9.1900, p.453.

115. PAR, CSO 1667: Correspondence concerning the complaint of being destitute by AC Krogman, 16.1.1901-19.2.1901

116. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/17: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to Sergeant Reynolds, 7.9.1901.

117. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AC Krogman, 5.4.1901.

118. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Correspondence in the matter of the military placing Africans on the farm Margate, 21.8.1902-1.9.1902.

119. PAR, PM 24: Correspondence to and from E Hattingh regarding the detention of her husband, 25.9.1901-2.10.1901.

her husband.¹²⁰ Payments and the rent collection from Africans also proved problematic. Mrs Adrian Marais had a dispute with her African labourers. She wanted to keep all the mealies reaped by them as she thought she was entitled to it while they claimed half,¹²¹ while Mrs GP Kemp of Gowrie, Dundee, had to request the magistrate to act on an earlier complaint of hers to collect rent money owed to her by certain Africans.¹²² In turn, Alfred Gasas complained to the Umsinga magistrate that Mrs H Strydom of Uithoek owed him £4.10. for work done. To avoid a quasi-criminal procedure Strydom was advised to pay Gasas if she agreed with his statement.¹²³ Strydom was later reminded that agreements entered into with Africans prior to the outbreak of war had to be honoured until further notice.¹²⁴

The relations between labourers and Afrikaner women, who as matriarchs were already in control of farming activities from before the war, was generally different than those described above. The labourers of the 73-year-old MMCW Kemp of Kempenveldt, Dundee, remained loyal in their duties.¹²⁵ In like manner EEM Meyer of Boschberg, Dundee, maintained the allegiance of her workers.¹²⁶

Married Afrikaner women, especially those whose husbands had been convicted of high treason, also suffered because their claims for war losses were mostly refused. They were ironically disempowered and oppressed by their marital status. The defining decision which illustrates this was the claim by Mrs ME Labuschagne of De Waar, Dundee. Her husband, a convicted rebel, was declared insolvent five months prior to the war. On 14 November 1900, Labuschagne was ordered to Pietermaritzburg by the military. She left all her property on the farm except for the horses which had earlier been taken by the military. Soon after her deportation all her livestock was looted by the British Army. Labuschagne's claim for compensation from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission met with the following response:

After full consideration it was decided not to allow damages for property lost by wives and minor children of convicted rebels. It will in some cases mean that innocent persons will suffer thr'o the act of another if compensation is not allowed it would mean that property really belonging to the convicted person would also be claimed for by the wife. In the present case it is clear that the property belong to the claimant but the commission is of opinion that it would be a mistake to break the rule even in this case.¹²⁷

120. PAR, PM 90: Correspondence regarding the removal of Izak Meyer to Ladysmith by the military, 6.11.1901-22.11.1901.

121. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/16: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to commandant Ladysmith, 26.11.1900.

122. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Letter Mrs GP Kemp to magistrate Dundee, 16.6.1902.

123. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter acting magistrate Umsinga to Mrs H Strydom, 14.12.1900.

124. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter acting magistrate Umsinga to Mrs H Strydom, 19.3.1901.

125. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MMCW Kemp, 6.12.1901.

126. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by EEM Meyer, 5.4.1901.

127. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME Labuschagne, 25.10.1901.

In the light of the Labuschagne ruling claims by married women on behalf of their children were also not honoured. As a result Annie Elizabeth Vermaak's claim on behalf of her son, 13-year-old Andries Cornelius Vermaak (jnr), for the cattle which he had received annually since he was a baby,¹²⁸ and a claim by MJ Oosthuysen on behalf of her two stepsons, both imbeciles, aged 31 and 33 respectively, were dismissed.¹²⁹ All in all only four of the 13 claims for compensation by married Natal Afrikaner women were processed. Of these, two were from areas outside the war zone.¹³⁰

In stark contrast were the experiences of Natal Afrikaner widows for whom the lack of a husband proved to be economically beneficial. Economically empowered before the war, these women were generally much more assertive and successful in dealing with the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission. A point in case was MMCW Kemp who for many years had managed the farming activities because her husband was bedridden. This continued after he passed away in 1901. Since she held the economic power she was paid £3 735.13.1. in compensation for losses incurred at the hands of the British forces. This happened despite the fact that four of her sons were convicted of treason.¹³¹ An equally economically powerful woman was EEM Meyer who managed the farming activities on her farms Boschberg, Dundee, and one near Newcastle. Her livestock was continually raided by the military and their African supporters. Some of the animals were slaughtered at Elandsplaagte and others taken to the derelict stock yards in Ladysmith and the military stock yards at Pepworth and Reid's farm. A determined Meyer, assisted by her labourers, managed to track some of her livestock down and convinced the military to hand them back to her. Meyer was eventually paid £2 447.15.11. for losses incurred.¹³² The largest amount paid in compensation to a Natal Afrikaner woman was the £5 076.17.9. paid to MJ Zietsman of Snelster, Estcourt, who not only lost all her livestock but also had her house completely ruined.¹³³

Widowed Afrikaner women of lesser economic means also successfully petitioned for compensation. Anna Katrina Slabbert of Dundee who did sewing and washing and who fled Dundee on 16 October 1899 to escape the advancing Boers, received £1 11.26.9.,¹³⁴ while Susanah Pelster of Bergvliet who farmed with mealies, goats and pumpkins was also fully compensated.¹³⁵

128. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AE Vermaak on behalf of AC Vermaak jnr, 9.10.1900.

129. PAR, CSO 2897: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission claim by MT Oosthuysen on behalf of MJ and TJ Oosthuysen, 26.11.1902.

130. See PAR, CSO 2864-2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission claims, *passim*.

131. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MMCW Kemp, 6.12.1901.

132. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by EEM Meyer, 5.4.1901.

133. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MJ Zietsman, 29.5.1901.

134. PAR, CSO 2905: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AK Slabbert, 6.12.1900.

135. PAR, CSO 2898: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JS Pelster, 13.1.1903.

Only 11 out of 39 claims from widows and unmarried Natal Afrikaner women were not honoured. Of those seven were disallowed because they had followed the Boers into the Republics,¹³⁶ while the claim of Mrs JM Pieters of Paddafontein, Dundee, was disallowed because she had attended “nachtsmaal” at the headquarters of the Natal Commando at Helpmekaar,¹³⁷ and that of Mrs ME de Waal of Carolina, Dundee, because she had sold oxen to the Irish Brigade.¹³⁸

10.4 Correspondence with men in authority - Natal Afrikaner women pleading for their menfolk

One of the few measures available to Natal Afrikaner women to voice their opinions, raise issues and confront the authorities within the gender constraints of the time was by means of letter writing. These letters invariably followed the trials and tribulations of their husbands, sons, fathers and other male relatives and friends. In the correspondence the women often tried to convince the Natal authorities of the innocence of their husbands or sons, asked for their release or transfer to a prison closer to home to prevent economic decline and ruin¹³⁹ and made other requests to make their lives easier.¹⁴⁰ Such correspondence, mostly subservient in nature, invariably followed the bureaucratic process and under Martial Law very few of the requests met with success. Despite this Natal Afrikaner women persisted with their correspondence simply because that was their only hope of finding favour with the patriarchal government system that existed at the time.

Correspondence with the authorities commenced as soon as the military authorities started to detain suspected rebels. Mrs M Scheepers of Wagon Drift, Estcourt, requested the assistance of PUS Bird in securing the release of her husband NB and his brother B Scheepers when they were arrested and imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg by the military authorities in November 1899. In the absence of the Scheepers men, the family had their horses commandeered, and lost some cattle and sheep. Scheepers's request placed the colonial authorities in a predicament which they were frequently confronted with thereafter. Since the arrest was a military matter they could not interfere. Subtle pressure was, however, placed on the military to speed up the process. This did seem to have paid dividends for the Scheepers brothers were not charged and were released on 5 February 1900.¹⁴¹

136. See for example: PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by HM Potgieter, 16.4.1901; PAR, CSO 2903: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JS Schalkwyk, 16.12.1901; PAR, CSO 2097: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JMM Coke-Smyth, 11.4.1901.

137. PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JM Pieters, 18.2.1901.

138. PAR, CSO 2874: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME de Waal, 27.2.1902.

139. PAR, PM 24: Correspondence to and from E Hattingh regarding the detention of her husband, 25.9.1901-2.10.1901; PM 90: Letter from BA Bester to HD Winter, 22.11.1901; PM 90: Correspondence regarding the removal of Izak Meyer to Ladysmith by the military, 6.11.1901-22.11.1901.

140. PAR, CSO 1663: Correspondence regarding permission for Hendrik Buys to travel to and from Ladysmith to the farm Rietkuil, 28.11.1900-10.12.1900.

141. PAR, CSO 1638: Correspondence regarding the detention of NB and B Scheepers by the military, 17.1.1900-19.2.1900.

A similar complaint was lodged by Johanna Meyer of Eversholt, Estcourt, in letters dated 12, 16 and 27 July 1900 to the colonial secretary, Charles Smythe. She complained that her husband Izak Johannes Meyer and son John had been wrongfully arrested seven months earlier and were still awaiting trial. All their cattle, as well as their wagon and furniture, were taken by the military. As a result she and her four daughters were left destitute and had to rely on the charity of fellow Afrikaners. Frederick R Moor (MLA) who was also a resident of this constituency pursued the affair and suggested that the "...matter be taken in hand at once as I am informed that the woman and her children are absolutely destitute." The colonial secretary's response was curt: "I do not see how the Government can take this matter in hand, unless you can suggest some practical way of dealing with the case", but Moor had no suggestion. The Natal Police were tasked with investigating the case. They reported that Mrs Meyer had five or six head of cattle and a few sheep while 200 angora goats belonging to a relative were grazing on her property for which she possibly received some income. Apart from this she had little money and struggled to survive. This report failed to generate much sympathy in government circles. Instead, Prime Minister Hime merely pointed out that the Meyers had only been in prison for two months and not seven as claimed. He also questioned their innocence since they were held for looting and carrying arms and ordered that the matter be referred to the military. To make matters worse for Meyer, she was informed by the authorities that the military had no record of receiving livestock or furniture from her farm.¹⁴² No proof was found that Izak Johannes Meyer was ever convicted of treason vindicating Johanna Meyer's claim that her husband was unfairly arrested.

Not only ordinary Natal Afrikaners women like Scheepers and Meyer requested the release of their husbands and complained about their economic plight, but also the wives of more prominent Natal Afrikaner such as ME Labuschagne, the wife of one of the most prominent Natal Afrikaner politicians of the time, CJ Labuschagne. Mrs Labuschagne complained that after her husband was removed as a suspected rebel, and all their horses, livestock and food were taken by the military. Their position subsequently became so dire that she had to borrow some oxen from a neighbour to take her and her two daughters to their family at Chieveley. She claimed that she was promised that her husband would be able to return to his farm from his parole in Durban when the Boers were driven past Colenso. As this had happened in early March 1900 she requested Prime Minister Hime to exercise his authority to have her husband released. Labuschagne's letter posed a predicament for the colonial authorities since there was no military objection to her husband's return but merely a civil question, namely was he a rebel or not?¹⁴³ As a result Prime Minister Hime, in a secret despatch to the general officer lines of communication, requested that Labuschagne and another Natal Afrikaner politician, WJ Pretorius, be kept in Durban for a further three weeks to allow the attorney-

142. PAR, CSO 1654: Correspondence between Johanna Meyer and the colonial authorities, 12.7.1900-4.8.1900.

143. PAR, PM 87: Correspondence relative to the removal of CJ Labuschagne to Durban by the military authorities, 8.3.1900-27.4.1900.

general to finalise evidence against them. The military granted this request.¹⁴⁴ As in the case of IJ Meyer Labuschagne was not charged.

Mrs H Labuschagne of Kopje Alleen near Acton Homes likewise wrote that the menfolk in her family were innocent. She was convinced that her husband had never left their farm while her sons, who trekked with sheep to the OFS, were prevented from returning home by the Boer forces. As a result she requested the authorities to release them from prison, offering their farm as security for bail. Labuschagne was informed that once the preparatory examinations were completed she could apply under Rule 103 of the rules for the Special Court for their release on bail.¹⁴⁵

Convicted wives and families of rebels also regularly corresponded and requested the transfer of fathers, brothers, sons or husbands to prisons closer to their places of residence. Anna Susanna Hogg originally from Dundee, but residing with her daughter, Mrs TJ Maré,¹⁴⁶ on the farm Welgevonden near Greytown, applied to have her husband Piet (Peter) Hogg, 73-years of age with failing eyesight and suffering from debility, transferred from the Eshowe to the Pietermaritzburg Prison. Mrs Hogg had not seen her husband since his imprisonment ten months earlier as she did not have the means to visit him and undertook “not to trouble the goal officials with frequent visits to my husband” should he be transferred to Pietermaritzburg. Surprisingly her request found favour with the authorities on condition that either Piet Hogg or his wife paid the rail and postcar fare for him and his escort for the transfer to the Pietermaritzburg Prison. Piet Hogg was able to pay because he had £8.1.11. in his possession. The authorities deducted the expenses of £6.11.11. to bring Hogg to Pietermaritzburg from this amount before handing the remaining monies over to his wife.¹⁴⁷

The success of Anna Susanna Hogg’s dealings with the colonial authorities convinced Annie Vermaak, wife of PR Vermaak of Vermaaks Kraal, Helpmekaar, then residing in Prince Street, Pietermaritzburg, to write a similar letter to that of Hogg. Vermaak even offered to pay for her husband’s transfer. Fearing that they would be inundated by requests from the wives of rebels for transfer to Pietermaritzburg so that they could be close to their families, the prison authorities dug in their heels. To them the case of Piet Hogg was an exception because of his high age and illness. The

144. PAR, MJPW 116: Correspondence regarding the further detention of CJ Labuschagne and WJ Pretorius, 9.4.1900-17.4.1900.

145. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Correspondence regarding the release of the family of H Labuschagne, 19.9.1900-5.10.1900.

146. Sarie Maré (Marais?) immortalised in the Afrikaans song *My Sarie Marais*, based on the American ditty “My Sweet Ellie Rhee”, is according to one theory one of the most renowned Natal Afrikaner women. The song were apparently composed to honour Ds Paul Nel, her son, who always told stories about his mother. According to Jac Uys she came from Greytown, Natal and was married to Louis Jacobus Nel. Her grave can be visited on the farm Welgegund on the D479 road 14 km outside of Greytown. *Natal Witness*, 8.3.1993. For a comprehensive analysis of the various theories surrounding the song see: AC van Vollenhoven, Die kenmerke en herkoms van die volkslied, *Sarie Marais*, *South African Journal for Cultural History*, 14 (1), June 2000, pp.92-110.

147. PAR, CSO 1683: Correspondence regarding the removal of Peter (Piet) Hogg from the Eshowe to the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 8.8.1901-25.9.1901.

policy statement issued in response was simple: The principle of allowing rebel prisoners the privilege of moving from one prison to another was wrong. Thus the rebel prisoners and Annie Vermaak were informed that such requests would not be considered in future.¹⁴⁸

This decision did, however, not prevent other Natal Afrikaner women from applying to have their husbands transferred. Both CM von Benecke and Johanna Jordaan requested that their husbands be transferred from Eshowe to Estcourt to serve the final six months of their sentences closer to home. Von Benecke's reason for this request, namely that her spouse was old and ill, was rejected as insufficient while it was also regarded as inconvenient to have rebel prisoners in Estcourt.¹⁴⁹

The tough attitude adopted by the prison authorities ended the requests for the transfer of rebel prisoners. Only three and a half months after the war ended requests were again put forward by Natal Afrikaner women for the transfer of prisoners. Attorneys Carter and Robinson, applied on behalf of Mesdames HW Boers and GJ Boers, that their husbands be transferred from the Eshowe to the Ladysmith Prison. As ample accommodation was available in the Ladysmith Prison and the war something of the past it was decided to relocate the two prisoners at no costs to the families. The advantages of their relocation did not last long for they were both released on 17 October 1902 under a remission of sentence ruling.¹⁵⁰

In an attempt to overcome the refusal of the prison authorities to transfer rebels between prisons, at least one request was received to allow the wife of a convicted rebel to relocate to the town in which her husband was incarcerated.¹⁵¹ JJ Webb wanted his wife, who had been removed from Dundee to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp by the military and subsequently allowed to reside in Weenen county, to be granted permission to reside in Eshowe which according to him had by "far a healthier climate than Weenen or Maritzburg." The matter was referred to Chief Commissioner Dartnell who deemed it a military matter. The military thought otherwise and referred the case back. The Natal Police subsequently started a full-blown investigation into the economic and family affairs of Mrs Webb. At the conclusion of the investigation which started on 15 December 1900 and ended on 14 February 1901, eleven pages of correspondence were produced, enough evidence to inform Webb, without providing reasons, that his request had been refused.¹⁵² Mrs JJ Webb,

148. Previously Annie Vermaak had requested permission to see her husband as he passed through Pietermaritzburg to Dundee where he had to appear as a witness. Attorney-General Henry Bale initially entertained the idea but this proved to be impossible since Vermaak left for Eshowe earlier than anticipated. PAR, PM 23: Correspondence regarding the transfer of PR Vermaak from Eshowe to the Pietermaritzburg Prison, 4.9.1901-14.9.1901

149. PAR, PM 25: Correspondence regarding the removal of GE von Benecke and GE Jordaan from the Eshowe to the Estcourt Prison, 20.12.1901-6.1.1902. A similar request by the 76-year-old Mrs AC Krogman for the transfer of her son OW Krogman were also refused. PAR, MJPW 91: Application by Bale and Green on behalf of AC Krogman, 7.1.1902-17.1.1902.

150. PAR, MJPW 96: Correspondence concerning the transfer of HM and GJ Boers from the Eshowe to the Ladysmith Prison, 19.9.1902-22.10.1902.

151. PAR, MJPW 82: Letter minister of lands and works to T Hellett, 6.2.1901.

152. PAR, MJPW 80: Minute paper regarding the correspondence of JJ Webb to have his wife transferred to Eshowe,

however, did not give up and asked that her husband's 18 month sentence be remitted. The governor responded that except in cases of illness no petition for remission or reduction of sentences would be considered as long as the war raged.¹⁵³

The release of convicted rebel prisoners did not necessarily ease the burden on the women, especially since the men were not always allowed to return home. Mrs MMCW Kemp requested that her two sons-in-law, BJ Badenhorst and AJG Meyer, return home after their release to assist with the farming. Her request failed since both men had been convicted of treason.¹⁵⁴ As time went by and the war ended, the attitude towards time-expired rebels softened. As a result BA Bester, on behalf of Mrs JN Scheepers, had no difficulty in convincing the colonial and military authorities to allow her husband and son, on their release, to return to their farm near Estcourt.¹⁵⁵

Adopting an angry and aggressive tone in the letters was sometimes to the detriment of those whom they wished to help. The husband and son of Nellie Botha, CS (Chris)¹⁵⁶ and Vincent, were arrested on charges of high treason. Vincent, a frail 15-year-old boy, was first sent to the Tin Town POW Camp and then transferred to the Newcastle Prison. The fact that he was an undersized child and that no real evidence existed against him made the state hesitant to prosecute. In an attempt to secure the release of his son, Chris Botha wrote to the colonial secretary explaining that his son was innocent and that prison life and a lack of education was to his detriment. The letter seems to have had the desired effect for Attorney-General Labistour ordered the boy's release. A problem arose when the military refused to sanction his transfer to join his mother at Greytown, mainly because of the tone of a letter written by Nellie Botha to her husband. In this letter she made it very clear that she did not take kindly to the fact that her husband's letters were censored and would consider making it public after the war. Furthermore, well aware that her letters were being read by the British military, she attacked the judges in her husband's upcoming trial. According to Nellie Botha "there were many English gentlemen born, but I think they all died young." She also asked her husband to dispense the following advice to Vincent: "Tell him to look his tormentors straight in the face and to show no signs of fear, no one connected with me must show any signs of fear to an Englishman, whatever happens." After reading the inflamed letter, the military contemplated sending Vincent Botha out of the country, while the civilian authorities could merely comment that as long as such seditious language was used the military would offer little consideration to requests for transfer.

15.12.1900-14.2.1901.

153. PRO, CO 179/218: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.7.1901.

154. PAR, AGO I/8/80: Correspondence regarding the return of the sons-in-law of Mrs MMCW Kemp, 30.5.1901-10.6.1901.

155. PAR, PM 29: Correspondence regarding the return of GJA Scheepers and son to their farm on their release from prison, 15.5.1902-11.6.1902.

156. Chris Botha was one of the most notorious rebels. For his conviction see p.196.

Possibly in an attempt to pick up the pieces of his wife's outburst, Chris Botha, in a civil manner, requested the Newcastle magistrate to release his son so that he could proceed to Greytown to resume his education.¹⁵⁷ Nellie Botha was not at all accommodating and confronted the civil authorities:

You are doubtless well aware that my husband CS Botha has been confined in the Newcastle Goal since the beginning of November last and my little boy Vincent since the 9th of December. The latter, also on a charge of High Treason. And it is in connection with him that I wish to address you. From a letter from my husband I understand that Vincent was discharged by the Magistrate of Newcastle of this charge viz High Treason. This was on the 27th of January. Since that date he has remained in the Goal but on what charge I do not know, and my object in writing to you is that I may be informed why he is retained. I feel sure that you will agree with me that this is a lamentable state of affairs under which a lad's future life, may be ruined through being, from no fault or sin of his, precluded from obtaining the necessary tuition, food and suitable surroundings for ripening into manhood. Whilst he remained with his father in one Goal I felt easy about him, but as it is, my husband was removed to the Dundee Goal on the 5th inst (5 January) to stand his trial, and he still remains in Newcastle Goal, on learning this my anxiety at once rose which is only natural for any mother to do who has the welfare of her child at heart and it is this that prompts me to write to you.

The tone of Nellie Botha's letter galvanised the colonial authorities into action and two weeks after his release from civil custody, the military was persuaded to let him go. Vincent Botha was released into the care of his uncle IM Botha to be taken to his mother at Greytown.¹⁵⁸

Nellie Botha did not get off scot free and the Natal Police were instructed to investigate her. Sergeant G Hunnable, on completion of the investigation, notified the criminal investigation officer that Botha was in possession of a considerable number of Transvaal promissory notes commonly known as "Bluebacks" which had apparently been paid to her husband by the Transvaal Government for services rendered. The idea existed that the British Government would redeem these notes at face value at the end of the war, thereby in actual fact rewarding rebels for services rendered to the Republics. The treasury, however, declared that: "this Administration declines to recognise any such liabilities of that Government." This ended the investigation and rendered the "Bluebacks" valueless.¹⁵⁹

10.5 Concluding comments

Natal Afrikaner women were not archetypical *volksmoeders* as embodied by AP van Rensburg,¹⁶⁰ because they did not share the tradition of militarised citizenship as embodied by the Boer Republics in which women were "mirrors to male war".¹⁶¹ In spite of this, they, like the Boer women in the Republics, suffered

157. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Correspondence regarding the release of Vincent Botha, 3.1.1902-14.2.1902.

158. PAR, CSO 1698: Correspondence regarding the release of Vincent Botha, 13.2.1902-18.2.1901.

159. NAR, PMO 38: Correspondence regarding the possession of "Bluebacks" by Mrs CS Botha, 23.3.1902-7.4.1902.

160. AP van Rensburg, *Moeders van ons Volk*, p.26.

161. J Elshtain, *Women and war*, p.58.

much during the war and many a time saw how the most important cog of Afrikaner life, the domestic domain of the farm household, were destroyed.¹⁶² As British subjects, however, they suffered because they were of the same ethnic origin as the invading Boer forces.

The reaction to this was two-fold. Firstly it bred a resentment towards what the English stood for as can be gathered from the following incident: A Mrs Walton who had just returned from Britain wrote to Mary Schoon and her sister-in-law, Nellie Schoon, inviting them to become members of the "Guild for Loyal Women." Nellie Schoon's reply was stinging. She proclaimed that although she knew little of the "Guild for Loyal Women" she remembered the time when the organization was simultaneously involved in the applause for the looter and thief Leander Starr Jameson at the Ladysmith Station and the booing of the representative of the crown, the governor. If this was the loyalty the Guild stood for, she did not think highly of it. Nellie Schoon furthermore pointed out they had received the invitation to join, with surprise, since they had been branded and treated as rebels since the inception of the war despite the fact that they had done nothing to deserve such treatment. In the process the hypocrisy of the English were exposed "and we will despise them for that for the rest of our lives."¹⁶³

Secondly the persecution of Natal Afrikaners galvanised them into the broader nationalist Afrikaner fold. This is best described by Maggie Bester, the sister of Mary Schoon: "How do these people feel who have brought this upon us? Have they any shame? We are staying with relatives and kind Dutch friends, until we have a home to go to. To-day I am proud to be called a dutch girl, and hope no more will take me for an English girl as most of the military did in Harrismith, most of them said But you're not Dutch? Most certainly I am, and proud of it."¹⁶⁴

162. B Nasson, *The South African War 1899-1902*, pp.62-63.

163. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: Diary entry, 12.2.1901, pp.577-578, containing a copy of the letter of Nellie Schoon,

164. PAR, HF Schoon collection A 72: My experiences during the Anglo-Boer War by Maggie Bester, 26.9.1900.

CHAPTER 11

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATAL AFRIKANERS, AFRICANS¹ AND INDIANS
DURING THE ANGLO-BOER WAR²**

Ever since the 1880s, but especially after Natal obtained responsible government in 1893, the official policy towards Africans undermined their institutions and created an ever-growing disparity between them and whites.³ Natal Africans were also suffering from ecological disasters, grazing land shortage, exploitative labour practices, rigorous state control,⁴ and overpopulation.⁵ Despite this, Natal Africans, at the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War generally rallied to the Imperial cause.⁶ The most plausible explanation for this was that they viewed British rule as preferable to Boer rule.⁷ A perception had also developed that loyalty to the British, would be rewarded and an Imperialist victory would lead to an improvement in their political and economic position.⁸

Notwithstanding the obvious loyalty of the Africans, the Natal Government, white Natalians, and the Imperial Government were in agreement that the Anglo-Boer War was a “white man’s war.”⁹ The rationale behind this idea is best expressed by the prime minister of Natal, Colonel AH Hime: “...employment of natives...would be in opposition to the generally acknowledged trend of colonial public opinion, and would ultimately lead to the lessening of the prestige of the white man, and of the natives’ respect for the British government.”¹⁰ It was furthermore feared that participation in the

1. For the pre-war scrambling for the favour of Natal Africans see, pp.40-47.

2. Very few records could be found of interaction between coloureds and Natal Afrikaners during the war. The Jacobs family who resided in the Helpmekaar area was one such group. They fled south when the Boers tried to commandeer Mr Jacobs. PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by Lena Jacobs, 10.12.1901. Other relations were more of a personal nature. Frederick Krüger of Talana, a German veteran of the Crimean War stated that his wife, an Afrikaner, resided with a coloured man, Hans Russow, in Dundee. The latter refused to be commandeered, resided with the Jacobs family for a while and were eventually imprisoned for his loyalty. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claims by F Krüger senior and junior, 12.12.1901. The odd Natal Afrikaner, like Van Rooyen of Oliviershoek, also employed coloureds. See, PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by S Clements, 31.5.1901.

3. J Lambert, *Betrayed trust. Africans and the state in colonial Natal, passim*.

4. B Nasson, Black communities in Natal and the Cape, in D Omissi, and AS Thompson, (eds), *The impact of the South African War*, pp.38-39.

5. J Lambert, *Betrayed trust...*, p.159.

6. For the historiography on Natal Africans and the Anglo-Boer War see amongst others: P Warwick, *Black People and the South African War 1899-1902*, pp.75-95; J Lambert, Loyalty its own reward. The South African War experiences of Natal’s “Loyal” Africans, in G Cuthbertson, AM Grundlingh, A-L Suttie, (eds), *Writing a wider war. Rethinking gender, race and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, pp.115-135; J Lambert, *Betrayed trust. Africans and the state in colonial Natal, passim*; J Maphalala, *The participation of the Zulus in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*. MA-thesis, University of Zululand, 1978, *passim*; J Pridmore, “The military wanted to see a Zulu dance.” *White history and black anthropology in the Natal narrative, c. 1890-1905*. UNISA Library Conference - Rethinking the South African War, 3-5.8.1998, no page numbers; B Nasson, Black communities in Natal and the Cape during the South African War, in D Omissi, and AS Thompson (eds), *The impact of the South African War*, pp.38-56; N Nkuna, Black involvement in the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902, *Military History Journal*, 11(3-4), October 1999, pp.133-136.

7. J Pridmore, no page numbers.

8. P Warwick, pp.15 and 75-95.

9. PAR, GH 1040: Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 13.2.1900.

10. PAR, GH 1040: Minute Prime paper Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 14.2.1900.

war could lead to a general uprising amongst Africans.¹¹

Support for Hime came from Attorney-General Henry Bale who was adamant that Africans should not be involved in the war against the Boers, except when they were defending their cattle from “extensive looting.” He feared that once Africans were armed and they could rise up and kill Natal Afrikaner women and children.¹² Bale’s fears were echoed by certain Dundee Afrikaners.¹³

Despite the above mentioned reservations, the context of the war and the demands it placed on manpower and people with knowledge of the local environment, made the notion of a “white man’s war” unfeasible.¹⁴ This is proven by the 1 782 Natal Africans listed for war medals for services rendered as scouts in the intelligence division during the Anglo-Boer War. Many of the Africans who participated in the war against the Republics, especially as spies, witnesses, scouts, looters and in transport matters, were labourers and tenants on Natal Afrikaner farms.¹⁵ This caused much conflict between Afrikaners and Africans.

11.1 Natal Afrikaners and Indians and the Anglo-Boer War

The war not only influenced relationships between Africans and Afrikaners but also between Afrikaners and Indians. By 1899 the lives of Natal Afrikaners and Indians were intertwined in especially two ways: Indians as shopkeepers and providers of labour, and Afrikaners as consumers of goods and labour.¹⁶ Examples of these relationships are shown by DMM Bayat who had a shop on the farm of JM Kemp at Helpmekaar,¹⁷ and BG Zietsman sold his fruit to Indian traders.¹⁸

In the Dutch Districts Afrikaners often frequented Indian shops because they were, amongst other reasons, the closest trading places.¹⁹ The reliance of Afrikaners on Indian shops in the outlying areas is illustrated by the problems the Bouwen family experienced when the military ordered the local Indian store not to sell goods to Afrikaners. Willem Bouwen, who was partially blind, came to Ladysmith, lead by an African, to ask for permission to be granted to the local Indian shopkeeper to trade with his family. It was denied. Instead, Bouwen was arrested under Martial Law and forced to reside with Ds HF Schoon and his family for ten months, before being transferred to the Howick

11. P Warwick, pp.77-79.

12. PAR, AGO I/8/67: Minute paper by Attorney-General H Bale on African involvement in the war, 19.10.1899.

13. P Warwick, p.76.

14. B Nasson, Black communities..., in D Omissi, and AS Thompson (eds.), *The impact of the South African War*, p.38.

15. PAR, SNA I/4/20: Distribution of war medals to various natives who have served as scouts during the Anglo-Boer War, 22.5.1903.

16. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Documentation on the crowded nature of the Ladysmith Prison, 19.1.1900-29.1.1900.

17. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter JAS Anderson to licensing officer, Dundee, 1.8.1900.

18. PAR, CSO 2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by BG Zietsman, 17.1.1903.

19. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 13.8.1900, p.252; 21.8.1900, p.257; 23.8.1900, pp.260-261.

Concentration Camp.²⁰

A small number of Natal Afrikaners, like IJ de Jager²¹ and JG Hattingh (snr)²² also used indentured Indian labourers.²³ This practice continued during the war, especially since the military gobbled-up large volumes of African labourers and because Afrikaner landlords were often at odds with African tenants and workers. Against this background Carter and Robinson applied on behalf of HW Boers, then imprisoned as a rebel, to secure a married Indian couple from Calcutta as indentured labourers.²⁴

On completion of their contracts these Indian labourers sometimes remained in the service of Natal Afrikaners as “Free Indians” under different economic arrangements. One such agreement existed between Girdahari and Mrs Annie Krogman. In exchange for Girdahari’s labour Krogman gave him some land to cultivate. He was also allowed to keep poultry, goats and pigs. This arrangement worked well for five years and Girdahari remained on the farm during the Siege of Ladysmith, taking care of Krogman’s crops and furniture. The relationship deteriorated when Girdahari gave evidence in treason trials against the two Krogman brothers which led to the conviction of Otto. After this Annie Krogman wasted no time in getting rid of Girdahari. She and one of her daughters-in-law’s ordered him to leave. When this failed, Krogman assaulted Girdahari’s wife, threatened to confiscate all his animals, and demanded that the effects handed to him by the military be handed to her. The only course of action open to Girdahari was to complain to Magistrate TR Bennett of Klip River district. As a result of this complaint Major-Gen Wolfe-Murray’s order to prevent the eviction of Africans for war related reasons were broadened to include Indians.²⁵

By far the most peculiar interaction between Indians and Natal Afrikaners involved the Boer appointed commissioner of native affairs, Lodewyk de Jager. One of De Jager’s duties was to order Indian refugees into the besieged Ladysmith. Amongst a group of Indian refugees was a woman with a newborn baby girl. As she had no food to feed the child it was left with an African family resident on De Jager’s farm with instructions from him to keep it until called for. When the Boer occupation ended, the African lady was instructed by the British to keep the child while they tried to locate the parents. The child, called Mara, had in the meantime become absorbed into the African family.²⁶ As a grown-up Mara became the De Jager housekeeper and an intricate part of the household. Upon her

20. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entries, 6-9.7.1900, pp.395-39.

21. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by IJ de Jager, 14.1.1903.

22. PAR, CSO 2882: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JG Hattingh (snr), 14.4.1900.

23. PAR, Indian Immigration Department (hereafter II) 1/103: Application by HW Boers for a married male Indian from Calcutta, 29.11.1900-6.12.1900.

24. PAR, II 1/103: Application by Carter and Robinson on behalf of HW Boers for indentured Indian labour, 29.11.1900.

25. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Deposition by Girdahari on his treatment by Mrs A Krogman, 12.11.1900-27.11.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.12.1900.

26. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Major (name illegible) to Magistrate RH Beachcroft, Dundee, 29.6.1900.

death she was buried in the family cemetery.²⁷

11.2 Africans loyal to Natal Afrikaners

Claims that Natal Africans supported the Imperial war effort *en masse* were not completely true.²⁸ FR Moor (SNA), was a person who understood this. He believed that the loyalty of the Natal Africans could not be relied upon in the areas occupied by the Boers, since they feared punishment by the Boers.²⁹

What Moor failed to understand was that some Africans were loyal towards the Afrikaners they worked for and resided amongst and not because of fear. Natal Afrikaners, from both personal and political viewpoints, expected and demanded loyalty from their African labourers and tenants, which was often forthcoming. Several examples of this exist.³⁰ Prior to the outbreak of the war Chief Mdiya already stated that if the Natal Government should call out levies he would join the Boers because “he was not familiar with the English, but he was accustomed to the Boers.”³¹ When it was reported in late November 1899 that RD van Rooyen of Umvoti had prepared large quantities of food in anticipation of the Boers invading the area, his labourers denied any knowledge of this.³² By March 1900, Native Intelligence Officer No. 2 could relay the following information from Umvoti county: “Mdeni a son of Mzawangedwa informed me that the Dutch near the Matimatolo were in a rebellious state, and that their leader was Udane. I asked him why he and the other natives living near these Dutch people did not inform the Government. He said it was because they sided with the Dutch.”³³ Furthermore, several Africans carried letters between Umvoti and Helpmekaar on behalf of their Afrikaner landlords,³⁴ while others testified in favour of their landlords before the Invasion Losses Commission.³⁵

Some Natal Africans also proved their loyalty to Natal Afrikaners on the economic front. In the absence of Natal Afrikaners from their farms, while either on commando service or in prison, Africans took care of the physical property and farming activities. In the Klip River county Africans were left in charge of the mealie fields on the farms of Piet Uys, Koos Kemp, Saul van Tonder, and Gert Jordaan.³⁶ The same happened in Proviso B on the farms of Afrikaners who had joined the

27. Talana Museum, collection of documents of the De Jager family: Mara, the Indian girl, 1996.

28. PAR, ZA 33: Return of persons convicted of high treason during the Anglo-Boer War, no date.

29. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report by FR Moor on the loyalty of Africans in the area occupied by the Boers, 19.1.1900.

30. PAR, SNA I/7/40: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 14.12.1899.

31. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report by native intelligence officer No. 2, 31.8.1899.

32. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Two reports by Africans, 23.11.1899.

33. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report by native intelligence officer No. 2, 31.3.1900.

34. PAR, GH 549: Papers with reference to the arrest of certain Greytown Afrikaners, 13.2.1900-3.4.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/46: List of Europeans and Africans incarcerated in prisons in Natal, 31.5.1900.

35. PAR, CSO 2912: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Wessels, 28.11.1900.

36. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/16: Letter magistrate Klip River district to commandant Ladysmith, 5.6.1900.

forces of the ZAR. Here Africans reportedly reaped good harvests which the army wanted them to keep for possible future military use.³⁷

Natal Afrikaners also tried to save their livestock by leaving it in charge of loyal Africans.³⁸ This step was taken for two reasons: the Afrikaners were afraid that their livestock would be confiscated or looted by the authorities, and they were unable to take all their animals along while fleeing Buller's advancing forces. The scale of this practice varied. Carl Cronjé left two head of cattle in the care of an African,³⁹ JJ van Rooyen of Proviso B left 27 head of cattle and eight sheep with Mjipa,⁴⁰ while DC Uys (MLC) distributed the largest number of his stock amongst Africans for safe custody.⁴¹ In at least two instances Natal Afrikaners left their best cattle in the care of the followers of Mbila and Sobuza as a gene pool for future breeding.⁴²

It was no easy task for Africans to be in charge of Natal Afrikaner property as they were threatened by Boers, British and Natal Afrikaners alike. Those who had to look after the property of the Potgieters of Rose Cottage, Acton Homes, for example were told they would be shot if they tried to prevent the Boers from looting.⁴³ Similarly, the African who was left in charge of Gert Jordaan's farm Prestwick, Dundee, was driven away by British troops who then proceeded to loot and destroy the property.⁴⁴ The most extreme of these cases involved JJ van Rooyen. The cattle he left in the care of Africans were, on the instruction of Magistrate Thomas Maxwell, seized by the military. When amnesty was granted to rebels in 1903, Van Rooyen returned and wanted to institute a civil action for neglect against the Africans left in charge.⁴⁵

The Natal authorities were unsure how to deal with a situation during which Africans were in charge of Natal Afrikaner livestock. When CJ de Villiers of the Helpmekaar area left 200 sheep,⁴⁶ 50 horses and 13 head of cattle in the care of Africans, Governor Hely-Hutchinson indicated that, by law the livestock could not be confiscated but that an embargo should be placed on the sale of the cattle so that De Villiers would not benefit. The stock belonging to De Villiers was consequently impounded. Attorney-General Bale, however, found it difficult, in legal terms, to comprehend the concept of an

37. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Report by Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, that Africans in charge of Afrikaner farms in Proviso B were reaping mealies, 25.5.1900-18.6.1900.

38. Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

39. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to C Cronjé, 18.9.1901.

40. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/9: Correspondence regarding the cattle of JJ van Rooyen confiscated in 1900, 15.6.1903-15.8.1903.

41. PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DC Uys, 23.8.1902.

42. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report of native intelligence officer No. 2, 31.3.1900.

43. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by Johanna Potgieter, 6.9.1900.

44. PAR, CSO 2887: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JJ Jordaan, 18.7.1902.

45. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/9: Minute paper regarding the cattle of JJ van Rooyen confiscated in 1900, 24.6.1903-15.8.1903.

46. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to A Klingenberg, 28.9.1900.

embargo.⁴⁷ As a result he instructed that livestock belonging to Afrikaners and in the possession of Africans should not be removed, except if the local magistrate deemed it necessary to take additional steps to secure safekeeping. Magistrate Maxwell of Umsinga thought additional steps were necessary. Animals belonging to De Villiers were therefore impounded for two months after which some horses were released to L Combrink who had to sell one to pay for the accumulated pound fees. The remainder of the livestock belonging to De Villiers were placed for use in the care of the loyalist WW Strydom (JP) and loyal Africans such as Ngobozana and Zwebu by Maxwell. Livestock belonging to other rebels from the area were treated in a similar fashion, while cattle belonging to the Vermaaks were placed for use with loyal Africans Petrus Masali and Benjamin Kunene so as to “show natives that they could not hide rebels’ stock without impunity.”⁴⁸

Africans not only saved livestock but also came to the assistance of Natal Afrikaners in other ways. Valuable family heirlooms belonging to the Vermaaks of Helpmekaar were saved by their African labourers.⁴⁹ Natal Afrikaners were also supported by Africans on humanitarian levels. In an interview conducted with the 87-year-old Paul Jacob Lombaard on 10 October 1987, he recalled how, on their return to their farm in the Bergville area from the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, a Xhosa had provided them with a cow and a calf and mealie meal until they could fend for themselves. His brother, CJ Lombaard, had also suffered an injury to his lower leg in the concentration camp, making it impossible for him to walk. Back on the farm an elderly Zulu put the leg in splints, regularly adjusting it until he could walk, be it with a stiff leg.⁵⁰

Natal Africans paid dearly for this kind of loyalty. When the British forces liberated Northern Natal, large numbers of Africans were imprisoned for supporting the invading Boer forces.⁵¹ In the Ladysmith Prison alone 23 Africans were locked up on treason-related charges.⁵² Fourteen Africans were eventually convicted on charges of high treason. The heaviest sentences given were three-years imprisonment with hard labour.⁵³

11.3 Natal Afrikaners, Africans and the occupation by the Boers

An obstacle faced by any invading force is the problem of managing the local population in the conquered area. As a result of the collapse of the British administration, the arrival of thousands of

47. PAR, CSO 1661: Correspondence regarding the livestock left by CJ de Villiers in the care of Africans, 25.10.1900-28.1.1901.

48. PAR, MJPW 117: Correspondence regarding the removal of cattle belonging to rebels, 9.10.1901-18.11.1901.

49. Interview with Foy Vermaak conducted at Helpmekaar, 10.7.2000.

50. Interview conducted by Ina van Rensburg with PJ Lombaard, Aandrust, Geluksburg, 10.10.1987.

51. PAR, AGO I/7/46: List of Europeans and Africans incarcerated in prisons in Natal, 31.5.1900.

52. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Documentation on the crowded nature of the Ladysmith Prison, 19.1.1900-29.1.1900.

53. See Appendix A for the names of Africans convicted on charges of high treason.

Africans in Natal from the Witwatersrand;⁵⁴ a smallpox threat; a rumoured African attack;⁵⁵ and the problems of numerous unprotected houses and farms; near anarchy reigned in Northern Natal. In an attempt to create some semblance of order, the rudimentary Boer administration in Northern Natal appointed two local Afrikaners, LJ (Lodewyk) de Jager and Missionary JJA Prozesky of the Berlin Missionary Society, to manage the local African population. De Jager, his African name being Lontshi,⁵⁶ was designated native commissioner, while Prozesky had to fill the role of magistrate.

Prozesky took office in the Newcastle area on 17 October 1899. He performed his duties of issuing passes, trying simple cases, passing judgement and overseeing punishment along strict religious guidelines. He also commandeered Africans from his mission station at Köningsberg for police work.⁵⁷ Most importantly, he initially compelled 24, and later another 18, of the African members of his congregation to proceed to the Tugela line to work for the Boers, laying telegraph lines and constructing roads. Prozesky remained in this position until the Boer occupation ended after which he was arrested and convicted of high treason.⁵⁸

Further south the wealthy Lodewyk de Jager of Wasbank performed his role by focussing on a range of issues. He controlled the movement of Africans with a pass system and appointed smallpox guards from amongst the local Afrikaners to prevent the spread of the disease.⁵⁹ De Jager also tried to crowd Ladysmith with African and Indian refugees to bring the siege to an end.⁶⁰ He furthermore attempted to convince some of the local African leaders to join the war on the side of the Boers by promising them relief from hut tax for three years in return for labour.⁶¹ This offer did not convince leaders like Mabizela,⁶² Dumisa, and Sandanezwe who, when they refused to join or aid the Boers, were threatened with punishment.⁶³ Most importantly he used his position as native commissioner to coax his fellow Natal Afrikaners into joining the Republican forces by claiming that an African

54. For a comprehensive account of the march of Africans from the Witwatersrand to Natal during the early part of the war, see: E Brink, *The long march home: a little known incident in the Anglo-Boer War*.

55. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Diary by Chief Dumisa of events around Dundee during the Boer occupation, 15.3.1900.

56. The high regard which the local African population had of De Jager was still prevalent 100 years after the war ended. His grave on the farm Wasbank Manor was dug up with the idea to use his remains as *muthi* against HIV-Aids. The reasoning being that as a wealthy, powerful and well spoken person his remains would provide potent medicine. *Die Huisgenoot*, 1.7.2000.

57. PAR, AGO I/7/5: Regina vs JJA Prozesky, pp.65-69; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, November 1899-March 1900, pp.69-139; P Warwick, p.80. Warwick erroneously stated that Prozesky was attached to a DRC Missionary.

58. PRO, CO 179/213: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 5.7.1900; P Warwick, p.80.

59. PAR, PM 87: Deposition by James Thorrold before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/8: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900; PAR, PM 87: Deposition by FJT Brandon before Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 10.7.1900.

60. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420.

61. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report inspector Natal Native Trust, WJS Newmarch, 13.1.1900.

62. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report by Mabizela that Boers were urging members of his tribe to join them, 28.11.1899.

63. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899; PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899.

attack was imminent.⁶⁴

Lodewyk de Jager vacated his position on 2 April 1900, when he moved his stock across the Buffalo River into the Transvaal. When he left, the rudimentary control measures instituted by the Boers to control the local Africans, collapsed. Passes were no longer issued to Africans and they could move about freely⁶⁵ making it easier for them to observe which Afrikaners were involved in treasonable offences.⁶⁶

It seems as if Prozesky and De Jager did not exercise much authority and protection over Natal Africans during the Boer occupation because a number of Africans levelled complaints against the Boer administration. The grievances included accounts of beatings, threats, intimidation, bullying, the confiscation of crops and livestock, and labour conscriptions.⁶⁷ Natal Afrikaners were similarly reported for ill-treating and flogging young Africans who had fled from their farms when war broke out.⁶⁸

11.4 Africans spying on Natal Afrikaners

Africans, for a range of reasons, some of which are given above, also volunteered information against Natal Afrikaners and Boers.⁶⁹ The first link in this information gathering chain consisted of the elaborate system of African spies employed by the SNA. Continuing their prewar work these “Native Intelligence Officers” were mostly active in the Weenen and Umvoti Counties gathering information on Africans and Afrikaners. Natal Afrikaners were well aware of the activities of these spies⁷⁰ and as a result much of the information gathered, such as that an Afrikaner near Greytown instructed his labourers to stay near his house and to raise a white flag should the Boers arrive,⁷¹ and that another near Rietvlei was hiding six fat oxen in the bush to be slaughtered when the Boers arrive, was of little value.⁷²

On the odd occasion the native intelligence officers provided more useful information on the activities of Natal Afrikaners. From New Hanover it was reported that Afrikaners were using Africans to determine what was “really” happening in the war. Some of these informants were even sent as far as Ladysmith to gather information,⁷³ while the Afrikaners near Mooi River used African runners to take news of the war from one farm to another. Native Intelligence Officer No.1 reported

64. PAR, AGO I/7/23: Rex vs LJ de Jager, pp.415-420.

65. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Statement by ZM Masuku on Boer fortifications on the Biggarsberg, 2.4.1900.

66. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Statement by a African on the doings of Natal Afrikaners, 18.4.1900-24.3.1900.

67. P Warwick, p.70; J Lambert, *Betrayed trust...*, p.160;

68. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899; PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899.

69. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 1941, pp.14-15.

70. PAR, SNA I/7/40: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 14.12.1899.

71. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 10.2.1900.

72. PAR, SNA I/7/40: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 14.12.1899.

73. PAR, SNA I/4/6: Report by native intelligence officer No. 2, 9.12.1899.

that the Mooi River Afrikaners had visited the commando under General Piet Joubert during its activities in the area, that Louis Lotter had donated five oxen as food to the commando, and that Rufus van Rooyen had gone to Pietermaritzburg to determine the location of the magazine in the city should the Boers attack the Natal capital.⁷⁴ Especially the latter two pieces of information proved to be nothing more than hearsay and neither Lotter nor Van Rooyen was ever charged with high treason.

The SNA intelligence system was supported by large numbers of Africans employed by the Military Intelligence Department.⁷⁵ These African scouts were active throughout Natal in various capacities, including gathering information about disloyal Afrikaners, such as the Van der Merwes, Hattinghs and Oosthuysens who resided north of Estcourt,⁷⁶ and on the activities of Afrikaners resident in Proviso B.⁷⁷

Africans not employed by either the SNA or the military also provided information on Natal Afrikaners. In Proviso B, Godkleweni Ka Mbotshwa reported Andries Pretorius for joining the Boers on a horse he had hired from himself.⁷⁸ From Umsinga, Umtloyi, who had arrived from Johannesburg, disclosed the names and actions of Natal Afrikaners who were active in the Boer ranks such as LJ de Jager, JS Vermaak, EOL Du Bois and Gert Kemp.⁷⁹ Chief Dumisa likewise volunteered to gather information on the Afrikaners who were fighting on the Boer side.⁸⁰

The extensive system of spying and information gathering by Africans on Natal Afrikaners was very advantageous for the colonial authorities. In many high treason court cases against Natal Afrikaners the information provided by Africans sealed the fate of their fellow British subjects. Natal Afrikaners did not forget this in a hurry.

11.5 The relationship between Africans and Natal Afrikaners after the Boer retreat

The period during and immediately after the reoccupation of Northern Natal by the British forces, that is from May 1900 onwards, proved problematic for the relationship between Africans and Natal Afrikaners. With the withdrawal of the Boer forces large numbers of Afrikaners and their African retainers fled, or were arrested as suspected rebels. Labourers and tenants who remained behind tried

74. PAR, SNA I/7/40: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 14.12.1899; PAR, SNA I/4/6: Two reports by Africans, 23.11.1899.

75. PAR, SNA I/1/301: List of Natal Africans who received war medals for services rendered as scouts, 22.5.1902.

76. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Information collected by Military Intelligence Department on disloyal Afrikaners, 9.12.1899.

77. PAR, SNA I/4/7: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Melmoth, to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, 20.10.1899.

78. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Report on the attack by a Boer commando on Mount Prospect, 26.9.1901-1.10.1901.

79. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899; PRO, CO 179/209: Statement by Umtloyi, 16.12.1899.

80. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Request by Chief Dumisa to guard Afrikaner farms, 26.2.1900-9.6.1900

to recoup losses and settle old scores by, alongside the military,⁸¹ looting and stealing.⁸² In the process cattle, horses, crops, poultry, household goods, and whatever they could lay their hands on, were taken.

Pieter Cronjé of Weltevreden, Dundee, who arrived in the Colony as a na-trekker in the early 1840s, complained: "That on the 16th day of May 1900 a native named Ngomay and four other natives armed with knob kerries came to my house on Weltevreden and producing a document in English which I could not read they commandeered my goods and stock for General Buller's Army." To avoid any further confrontation with the Africans, Cronjé and his family trekked to the Transvaal.⁸³ Other Natal Afrikaners had similar experiences. IJ de Jager complained that an African scout had removed 230 goats from his farm,⁸⁴ while CM Meyer complained that military pickets, under the leadership of Nkabazi, had removed horses and cattle from the charge of his Africans.⁸⁵ As Natal Afrikaners were absolutely powerless to resist, Africans cashed in on the vulnerability by pretending to be scouts and then took their livestock away. One such opportunist was Umsinda who swindled a loyalist who fought on the British side, LP de Jager.⁸⁶ Actions such as the above, both legal and illegal, were relatively easy to accomplish since most Afrikaner farms were, at this stage, occupied by women without male protection.⁸⁷

The problem of the looting of Afrikaner livestock and property became so serious that Magistrate Maxwell of Umsinga had to ask the commandant of Dundee to issue an order to Africans stating: "...that any (African) found damaging, entering into or touching stock or effects of these undesirables will be most severely handled."⁸⁸

Natal Africans also used the period immediately after the Boer retreat from Natal to enhance their position at the expense of Natal Afrikaners by making statements about treasonable acts and displaying actions of loyalty. Chief Mabizela, for example, felt that the farms of the disloyal Afrikaners should be taken away and given to the English.⁸⁹ Chief Dumisa on the other hand asked the government for permission to place guards on the farms of Afrikaners who retreated with the

81. PAR, CSO 2899: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by E Pieters, 18.4.1901.

82. J Lambert, Loyalty its own reward..., in G Cuthbertson, AM Grundlingh, A-L Suttie, (eds)., *Writing a wider war. Rethinking gender, race and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, p.117.

83. PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by P Cronjé, no date.

84. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by IJ de Jager, 14.1.1903.

85. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Meyer, 30.10.1900.

86. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LP de Jager, 14.1.1903.

87. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Orders by the commanding officers to all units in the Dundee district, no date.

88. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to commandant, Dundee, 7.2.1901. Getting livestock lost in this manner back did not prove to be easy as the former rebel LW Meyer found. He recovered two cows he believed belonged to him from Inabjo. As a result he was charged with stock theft. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/9: Preparatory examination Rex vs LW Meyer, 29.1.1903-10.1.1903.

89. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Statement by Chief Mabizela on his loyalty, 26.1.1900.

Boers to protect and supervise their crops until the government was re-established. He was also prepared to gather information about the Afrikaners who had fought on the Boer side.⁹⁰ Natal Afrikaners expressed their feelings about these developments as: “de kaffers zyn nu in hun glorie.”⁹¹

It was against this background that, what JC Adendorff called insolent behaviour by Africans towards Afrikaner women, started.⁹² Mrs Lezar complained that Africans armed with a revolver had broken into her house and also stolen her goats.⁹³ The Cronjé family of the farm Applebloom, Newcastle, suffered an even more traumatic experience. On 26 September 1901 they were turned out of their house by an African and had to join the Van Niekerk and Hattingh families at Loskop. Even here they felt insecure since two strange Africans sat on the verandah of the house the whole night of 15 October 1901 and refused to leave. Only the arrival of P Hattingh, who resided nearby, made them go-away. Two nights later Africans again entered the house at Loskop, removed two featherbeds and clothing, and remained in the house for the entire night. Henceforth the three families spent their nights with P Hattingh. Fearing what might happen to their families, if they remained in the area without protection, AMJ Cronjé, JC Hattingh, and ADC van Niekerk, then rebels imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg, made application for their families to be transferred to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. The colonial government's response to this request was firm: They could not “undertake the cost of maintaining these people in the Refugee Camp but presumably the Military Authorities would not object to their residing in one of the towns or villages...” The attitude of the authorities later softened somewhat, and the Natal Police were instructed to investigate the matter and provide protection.⁹⁴

The defeat of the Boers in Northern Natal also impacted on the labour supply available to Natal Afrikaners. Many Africans and their children left the service of Afrikaners under the impression that the Natal Government would confiscate all the farms and livestock belonging to the Afrikaners.⁹⁵ When this did not happen, loyalist Afrikaners around Dundee expected their labourers to return to their farms. The military objected to this, and the Africans themselves were not keen to return to the service of Natal Afrikaners.⁹⁶ The military in fact went a step further and a Mrs Boshoff complained that five Natal Volunteers had told her washing-maids that if they kept on working for the Afrikaners they would be punished.⁹⁷ Louis Handley likewise complained that a similar order by the

90. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Request by Chief Dumisa to guard Afrikaner farms, 26.2.1900-9.6.1900

91. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.3.1901.

92. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Letter JC Adendorff to Attorney-General H Bale, 11.7.1900.

93. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.7.1901, p.512.

94. PAR, CSO 1688: Application for permission to allow three families to be transferred to the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, 21.10.1901-30.10.1901.

95. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Report to SO Samuelson by Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, 31.5.1902.

96. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Minute paper Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, Klip River district, to magistrate Dundee, 21.6.1900.

97. OE Prozesky private collection: The Anglo-Boer War diary of Caroline Prozesky: Diary entry, 19.7.1900, p.420.

Natal Carbineers had resulted in difficulty to secure labour.⁹⁸ Also further south at Willow Grange, outside of the area directly affected by war, similar complaints emanated. DB Snyman complained that African scouts prevented his labourers from weeding his maize fields and his wife from selling goods.⁹⁹

The seriousness of these informal orders is best illustrated by the complaint of August Jansen to Frederick Moor (SNA). Africans were, according to him, not fulfilling their labour or rental contracts with Afrikaners because of rumours which stated that Natal Afrikaners no longer had any rights and would have to vacate their farms. As a result Afrikaners resident between Dundee and the Sunday's River had no labour. Attempts to get the police and agents like Walton and Tatham to force the Africans to honour their contracts failed miserably.¹⁰⁰ To address the situation, the VCR had to impress on Africans that they were compelled to work for Afrikaners if they resided on their properties.¹⁰¹

The presence of the military also caused other problems concerning African labour. According to the Dundee magistrate: "Native labour, as usual is scarce, and in consequence of the very high wages paid by the Military, the civil population has to suffer."¹⁰² It is therefore not surprising that JN van der Westhuyzen of Meshlynn near Kamberg, welcomed back, in June 1901, Sanuse Ndlovu alias Englishman, who had moved away from his farm seven years earlier to settle in the OFS. Ndlovu returned despite having worked as a scout for the British in the Harrismith area, and being wounded in the face and captured by rebel Cor Potgieter, previously of Kamberg. He managed to escape from Potgieter and subsequently received a message that he would be shot if he returned to the OFS. By 1904 Ndlovu was still residing with Van der Westhuyzen and had accumulated 16 head of cattle, ten horses, and two pigs. For his part Van der Westhuyzen was happy to put up with Ndlovu despite his problems with a fellow Natal Afrikaner and his services to the British military, since it meant that he had managed to secure labour.¹⁰³

11.6 Dealing with Africans who collaborated with the British

Not long after the Boer retreat in May 1900, relations between Africans and Natal Afrikaners deteriorated to such an extent that the latter started to use extreme measures such as intimidation, violence, and eviction to exert their power and authority. These drastic actions were caused by the

98. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Letters by L Handley and Major D McKenzie to Magistrate RH Beachcroft, Dundee, 23.11.1900.

99. PAR, CSO 2907: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by DB Snyman, 30.5.1900.

100. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter A Jansen to FR Moor, 24.8.1900.

101. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Letters by L Handley and Major D McKenzie to Magistrate RH Beachcroft, Dundee, 23.11.1900.

102. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1901.

103. PAR, SNA I/1/297: Minute paper regarding the application by "Englishman" to remain in Natal, 25.8.1902-24.10.1904.

fact that Africans were viewed as the nemesis of the Natal rebels, especially during the treason trials; but also to punish the Africans for supporting the Imperial war effort.

11.6.1 Murders

Although rumours abounded of regular executions of Africans during the Boer occupation, little evidence was forthcoming. Proof does, however, exist of the murder of two Africans by Natal Afrikaners. On Saturday 1 December 1900 an African messenger, Magota, was sent to Botha's Hoek and Spitzkop near Botha's Pass to serve a summons on Mpondo to appear before the acting magistrate of Newcastle in order to give evidence in the case against William Coetser, then in the Pietermaritzburg Prison.¹⁰⁴ The following day Magota was informed by some local Africans that he was being followed by four white men who spoke Zulu very well. Two of the men stopped at various homesteads and demanded African beer while the remaining two, a very young man and a stout middle-aged man, continued their pursuit of Magota. The pursuit finally ended at the Ingogo River on the farm of the rebel leader, Thomas Joubert. Although the evidence of various Africans, who witnessed the incident, differed, they all agreed on the most important aspect - after a brief conversation one of the men executed Magota by shooting him between the eyes. The body was stripped of its clothes which were searched for messages. The pair then rode off in the direction of Thomas Joubert's house and on the way informed an African, Umangwa, that Magota had been shot because he was a spy. All the Africans resident in the area stated that they did not know the men.¹⁰⁵

The responses to this incident varied. The *Natal Witness*¹⁰⁶ and *De Natal Afrikaner* called it cold-blooded murder. The latter publication made it clear that the Afrikaners would have nobody but themselves to blame if Africans adopted similar tactics in the Newcastle district.¹⁰⁷ The district officer of the Natal Police in Newcastle was, however, more concerned with pragmatic matters. He was worried that it was "becoming very difficult to get evidence from Natives regarding Treason Cases, and such action as this will render the obtaining of reliable evidence still more difficult."¹⁰⁸

Several days later another African was murdered on the farm of Mr Steel in the Botha's Pass area. Two young white men who spoke Zulu well arrived at the homestead of Usgquala. After they dismounted they shot and wounded his dog and then started hitting and kicking him. They then untied a rein from one of their horses and thrashed him. Only then did they start questioning him and asking about the whereabouts of a certain Umkankanyeki. Usgquala was accused of supporting the British by supplying them with food. Nine oxen were removed from the kraal and one of the

104. No Afrikaner with the name William Coetser were convicted of high treason. The only Coetser convicted were Johannes Jacobus Coetser of the Newcastle area.

105. PRO, CO 179/215: Various documents dealing with the murder of an African messenger, 3.12.1900-9.12.1900.

106. *Natal Witness*, 6.12.1900.

107. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 11.12.1900.

108. PRO, CO 179/215: Telegram district officer Natal Police, Newcastle, to chief commissioner of police, 3.12.1900.

inhabitants had to drive them to the Free State. Usquala died three days later of injuries sustained during the assault. Sub-Inspector Petley speculated that the two men were also the ones who had shot Magota.¹⁰⁹

Both these cases remained unresolved. The men who committed the murders probably felt their purpose had been served because Africans in the area were subsequently so intimidated that very few were willing to testify in the treason trials.¹¹⁰

11.6.2 Evicting Africans

Natal Afrikaners were especially angered at how both the military and the Natal Police used labourers and tenants to obtain evidence about their activities during the Republican occupation of Northern Natal. This meant that a large number of the 409 rebels found guilty of high treason were convicted on account of evidence provided by Africans witnesses. Similarly, the Natal Afrikaners who did not commit high treason but nevertheless sympathised with the Republics, blamed the evidence provided by Africans for the plight of their kin.¹¹¹

The Natal Afrikaners reacted in the only way they could to exact revenge and enforce their authority. Firstly, they intimidated labourers and tenants loyal to the British cause, as in the case of Bambatha whose landlord ploughed up his mealie and pumpkin gardens and claimed it as his own.¹¹² Secondly, the Afrikaners used the law to evict Africans loyal to the British from their farms. This practice only came to light when Bambatha spoke out. He confronted Under Secretary for Native Affairs SO Samuelson on 16 May 1900 with two letters which had been sent to two of his followers, Ugotoba and Nondemba, by JC Becker on behalf of his clients, LJ Nel and PR Botha.¹¹³ The letters, dated 20 April 1900, stated: "I am instructed by Messrs LJ Nel and PR Botha your landlords to give you notice as I hereby do to quit with all your belongings the farm known as Aangelegen on or before 31 July 1900. Unless you comply with the above notice on or before 31st July application will be made to the Magistrate for your ejection."¹¹⁴

Bambatha declared that 50 similar letters, affecting a quarter of his followers, were addressed to owners of homesteads of his tribe living on land owned by Natal Afrikaners. He believed that the evictions were taking place because his tribesmen provided the Greytown magistrate, Henry C Koch, with information about the activities of Natal Afrikaners, refused to carry letters for them to the Boer

109. PRO, CO 179/215: Correspondence regarding the attack on Usquala, 11.12.1900-12.12.1900.

110. PRO, CO 179/215: Telegram district officer Natal Police, Newcastle, to chief commissioner of police, 3.12.1900.

111. PAR, AGO I/7/40: Information collected by Military Intelligence Department on Natal Afrikaners, 11.12.1899; PAR, GH 549: Documents with referring to the arrest of certain leading men in Greytown, 13.2.1900.

112. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Report by native intelligence officer No. 1, 13.1.1900.

113. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Letter SO Samuelson to FR Moor, 16.5.1900.

114. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Letters JC Becker to Nondemba and Ugotoba, 20.4.1900.

forces, and assisted the British in various ways. Bambatha was concerned that his people had nowhere to go as there was no land available in the district. He therefore pleaded with the Natal Government to intervene.¹¹⁵

The above-mentioned evictions, which coincided with the collapse of the Boer forces in Natal in May 1900, and the surrender or arrest of numerous Natal Afrikaners as suspected rebels, caught the Natal Government off-guard as no law existed to prevent mass evictions. Landlords had the right in the absence of a special agreement, to terminate tenancies upon “reasonable notice.” This meant that eviction could take place between reaping and planting time, roughly June to August. Especially Africans in Umvoti county were subjected to evictions.¹¹⁶ The local police at this stage mistakenly described the evictions as a seasonal process indulged in by both Afrikaners and English.¹¹⁷

The governor of Natal, Walter Hely-Hutchinson, made it clear that “a bad effect would be produced if we leave these men to suffer for their loyalty.” He believed that only two possible solutions existed: to try and convince the Natal Legislative Assembly to enact laws protecting Africans from unfair eviction, or to have such evictions referred to the Supreme Court which would judge whether the evictions were fair, in other words, brought about by actions such as theft or refusal to render agreed-upon services.¹¹⁸

The Natal Government, well aware that the existing legislation provided loyal Africans with little protection against evictions, asked Attorney-General Henry Bale to investigate the matter of evictions. Bale confirmed that apart from the concept of “reasonable notice”, which implied that eviction notices could only be issued between harvesting and planting time, no law existed to protect Africans against eviction from farms.¹¹⁹

To bring the complaints and call for protection by Bambatha to some solution, Magistrate Koch was instructed on 23 May 1900, to urgently compile a full report on the number of Africans given eviction notices in the Greytown district. He was also asked to identify the farms, the evicting farmers and landlords, and the reasons for the eviction of Africans.¹²⁰

Even before Koch could start compiling his report, he received a further four notices¹²¹ from

115. PRO, CO 179/213: Memorandum SO Samuelson to FR Moor, 16.5.1900; PAR, SNA I/4/8: Memorandum SO Samuelson to FR Moor, 16.5.1900.

116. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Notices by Botha and Nel to members of the tribe of Chief Bambatha, 16.5.1900-23.6.1900.

117. PAR, SNA I/8/76: List of Africans ordered from farms in the Estcourt district, 2.9.1900-22.9.1900

118. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Prime Minister AH Hime, 20.5.1900.

119. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 21.5.1900.

120. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter PUS C Bird to FR Moor, 23.5.1900; PAR, SNA I/4/8: Letter FR Moor to Magistrate HC Koch, 30.5.1900.

121. PRO, CO 179/213: Minute paper by SO Samuelson, 28.5.1900.

Bambatha issued on behalf of PR Botha and LJ Nel to Umbamu,¹²² Swenswenie, Julie, and Umgagwa, instructing them to leave the farm Aangelegen with all their belongings before 31 July 1900.¹²³ Botha and Nel were not the only Umvoti Afrikaners to serve eviction notices on members of Bambatha's tribe in this period. Paul Hansmeyer, Hendrik Hansmeyer, JC van Rooyen, GT van Rooyen, and PH van Rooyen evicted members of his tribe without even giving them notices.¹²⁴

The latter spate of evictions increased the pressure on Magistrate Koch. He acted with some haste and called a meeting with Bambatha and his headmen during which the scale of evictions was revealed. Two more followers, Umhlahlana and Sipihlika, had received notices from the acting magistrate to evacuate the farm of Paul Hansmeyer. The heads of eight households, all followers of Bambatha, were instructed to leave the farm Aangelegen, jointly owned by LJ Nel and PR Botha, by Mr Ente, another agent for the owners. Gabela, who resided on another farm owned by Botha, also received an eviction order. None of the men who had received eviction orders were able to present a reason for their eviction, except for Vunizwe who had to leave the farm for keeping a dog against the wishes of the owners. The only solution Koch could offer was that magistrates should be more careful in granting eviction orders under Ordinance 2 of 1855. Furthermore, he advised magistrates to pay particular attention to Ordinance 8 which provided for three months leeway in each eviction case which allowed Africans the opportunity to harvest their crops and find a place to reside.¹²⁵

Fearing political unrest in the Greytown district because of the evictions, FR Moor, requested on 21 June 1900, an explanation for the evictions from TJ (Theunis) Nel (MLA), a relative of LJ Nel.¹²⁶ Theunis Nel, after meeting with numerous Afrikaner farmers, replied a week later. According to him the evictions were not related to the collaboration of Bambatha followers with the British military, but were issued because they had not fulfilled their contracts, i.e. they had failed to provide labour or pay the rent per hut as agreed upon. He further elaborated that the evictions were in the areas closest to Greytown where the followers of Bambatha were informed that they were under no obligation to fulfil contracts, since the farms belonging to Natal Afrikaners would soon be confiscated by the Natal Government. As a result Africans had apparently become arrogant towards the Afrikaners. Nel believed that the dispute could only be solved if all chiefs, including Bambatha, were informed that the Natal Government had no such intention.¹²⁷

Moor, in recognition of Nel's letter, asked him, in confidence, to provide the names of all those who

122. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter JC Becker to Umbamu, 16.5.1900.

123. PRO, CO 179/213: Letters JC Becker to Swenswenie, Julie and Umgagwa, 20.4.1900.

124. PAR, AGO I/8/76: List of Africans evicted from farms in the Greytown district, 1900.

125. PRO, CO 179/213: Minute paper by Magistrate HC Koch to FR Moor, 7.6.1900; PAR, SNA I/4/8: Minute paper by Magistrate HC Koch to FR Moor, 7.6.1900.

126. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter FR Moor to TJ Nel, 21.6.1900.

127. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter TJ Nel to FR Moor, 30.6.1900.

had meddled with the Africans of Umvoti and created the impression that Afrikaner land would be taken away.¹²⁸ Nel failed to comply with this request¹²⁹ possibly because he was unable to provide names to substantiate his claims.

At this stage, coinciding with the start of the rebel trials, evictions also started in Northern Natal. This set another process in motion; the eviction and intimidation of witnesses against Afrikaners who resided in the area formerly occupied by the Boers. One of the first to evict African witnesses were Mrs Gert Boers whose husband was the first Natal Afrikaner to be convicted of high treason. On her instructions Carter and Robinson successfully evicted five households, consisting of 62 people, for giving evidence against her family.¹³⁰ Around Estcourt similar processes took place and PJ and CJ van Rooyen, JC Labuschagne and CP Hattingh, amongst others, evicted Africans for their willingness to give evidence against Natal Afrikaners. The notice by ED Hattingh, on behalf of her husband, made Afrikaner emotions clear: "You are required to quit this farm by 9 am tomorrow. Should you be found on the farm off the main road by tomorrow 9 am you will be treated as a trespasser & I shall not be responsible for consequences."¹³¹ Africans were also expelled from farms in other Dutch Districts. From Ladysmith Sergeant WH Miller¹³² and from Dundee Inspector WF Fairlie reported that several suspected Natal rebels were evicting loyal Africans because they had testified against their landlords.¹³³

The punitive and intimidatory measures by Natal Afrikaners took its toll and from Estcourt it was reported that although some of the Africans ejected complained to either the police or the magistrates, most were too afraid. According to Inspector Mardall: "There is almost a panic among the natives who have been called into court - they say that they may not be protected by the Government." Mardall further declared that it would be fatal to release any suspected rebels on bail as it would only lead to further intimidation.¹³⁴ He was supported by Inspector Dorehill who complained that because of the actions of Afrikaners, African witnesses were "hanging back."¹³⁵

The steps taken by Natal Afrikaners to prevent Africans from testifying against them proved very successful in the Estcourt and Weenen districts. In the latter area only two Africans came forward to testify in treason trials. As a result Henry Bale vowed to make an example of at least one Afrikaner in the Estcourt district who intimidated witnesses by evicting them. This threat was not followed

128. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter FR Moor to TJ Nel, 11.7.1900.

129. PRO, CO 179/213: Telegram SO Samuelson to Prime Minister AH Hime, 25.8.1900.

130. PAR, SNA I/8/76: Report by Sergeant HW Miller, 7 1900.

131. PAR, SNA I/8/76: List of Africans ordered from farms in the Estcourt district, 2.9.1900-3.12.1900.

132. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Sergeant WH Miller to Inspector Dorehill, 7.8.1900.

133. PRO, CO 179/213: Telegram Inspector WF Fairlie to minister of lands and works, 17.8.1900.

134. PAR, SNA I/8/76: Telegram chief commissioner of police to Inspector Dorehill, 28.9.1900.

135. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

through and in the end he merely informed the Special Court of the pressures faced by African witnesses.¹³⁶

With the evictions of Africans by Natal Afrikaners spreading from Umvoti to the other Dutch districts, the Natal Government was concerned that it would have a negative impact on loyal Africans, while also obstructing justice.¹³⁷ As a result other measures were taken, not necessarily to protect Africans or punish Afrikaners, but rather to maintain the pre-war *status quo*. The Natal Police were called upon to compile lists of Africans evicted and by whom.¹³⁸ An appeal was also made to firms of lawyers not to serve eviction notices. The request was met with mixed reactions. Walton and Tatham undertook to cease the issuing of such notices,¹³⁹ while others, such as Carter and Robinson, could not see their way clear to relinquishing such easy money-making opportunities and continued to serve eviction notices on behalf of their numerous Afrikaner clients.

These measures did not solve the problems of the Natal Government as it was impossible to legally interfere with the right of a landlord to terminate contracts.¹⁴⁰ The Natal Cabinet was also not prepared to alter the legal situation by following the advice of Governor Hely-Hutchinson and Attorney-General Bale¹⁴¹ to have the Legislative Assembly pass measures for the protection of Africans against Afrikaner aggression.¹⁴² The prime reason for the lack of political support for legislation to protect loyal Africans was the fear whites had that it would make Africans “insolent and unruly”¹⁴³ and that it would come back to haunt the Colony once the war was over.

With the idea of legislation defeated, an alternative needed to be found to safeguard the position of loyal Africans. According to Attorney-General Bale the only solution was to advise the GOC of Natal, Major-General J Wolfe-Murray, to issue an order prohibiting the eviction of Africans in the affected districts without the consent of the magistrate.¹⁴⁴ The thinking by Bale was that such an order should apply to any African already evicted but not to cases in which the magistrate was

136. PAR, SNA I/8/76: List of Africans ordered from farms in the Estcourt district, 2.9.1900-22.9.1900

137. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

138. PAR, SNA I/8/76: Telegram chief commissioner of police to Inspector Dorehill, 28.9.1900.

139. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of African tenants on account of them having given evidence in treason cases, 4.1.1901.

140. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works, 23.8.1900; PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

141. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

142. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 27.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Prime Minister AH Hime, 24.8.1900.

143. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works, 27.8.1900.

144. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to minister of lands and works, 23.8.1900.

satisfied that the eviction was based on matters unrelated to the war.¹⁴⁵

Bale's proposal found favour with both the Natal Government and the governor. It was therefore decided that Major-General J Wolfe-Murray would be asked to "issue an instruction to all magistrates in the Counties of Klip River, Weenen, and Umvoti that they are not to issue orders for the ejection or removal of natives from any of the farms in their Districts without his sanction, unless the magistrate, in each case, is satisfied that such ejection is not due to circumstances connected with or arising out of the war and rebellion."¹⁴⁶ To suppress any undercurrent of unrest, the military was requested, when issuing the order, to inform all Africans that the steps taken against eviction were "only a temporary arrangement which is necessary owing to the present unsettled state of the country."¹⁴⁷ This request was forwarded without wavering, by the governor to Wolfe-Murray.¹⁴⁸

Wolfe-Murray complied without hesitation and under Martial Law, issued Proclamation 5 of 1900 to magistrates in the Dundee, Ladysmith, Weenen, Greytown, Upper Tugela, Kranskop, Umsinga and Newcastle districts:

No orders for the eviction or removal of natives from any of the farms in your district are to be issued without my sanction, unless you are satisfied in each case that such ejection is not due to circumstances connected with or arising out of the war and rebellion. All orders for the eviction of natives which have already been issued by you, should be recalled and not put into operation, unless there is some definite charge unconnected with the war or rebellion on the part of the native which can be proved or substantiated to your satisfaction. You should inform natives concerned and natives generally, that this is only a temporary arrangement due to the unsettled state of the country.¹⁴⁹

In the light of the order issued, Africans were informed that they should not move, if they receive eviction orders, without the consent of the magistrate. The Klip River district magistrate could therefore veto the order delivered by Walton and Tatham, on behalf of Mrs Sannie Colling, to evict 45 people from her farm because they gave evidence against her husband.¹⁵⁰

Governor Hely-Hutchinson described the proclamation as a "crude and temporary measure" that would lose its effect as soon as Martial Law had run its course.¹⁵¹ It nevertheless served to restore some semblance of order and evictions came to a virtual halt. The Natal Government should have been happy.

145. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

146. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Papers relative to the eviction of Africans by Afrikaners for giving evidence, 17.8.1900-5.9.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

147. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 30.9.1900.

148. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 1.9.1900.

149. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Proclamation No. 5 of 1900 issued by Major-Gen J Wolfe-Murray, 3.9.1900.

150. PAR, SNA I/8/76: List of Africans ordered from farms in the Estcourt district, 2.9.1900-22.9.1900

151. PRO, CO 179/213: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 27.9.1900.

The military had been able to restore order without the Natal Government having to revert to some form of legislation or having to dirty their hands. A key member of the government, Frederick Moor (SNA), however, felt that the proclamation fell short of its real intent. He therefore circulated an additional minute to the magistrates, emphasising that they must inform all Africans that the proclamation in no way liberated them from contracts of service or the payment of rent.¹⁵²

For his part Moor, whose political power base was Afrikaner voters, was cautious, and narrower issues such as the upcoming election, started to dominate the political scene.¹⁵³ Although he did not want Africans to suffer for their loyalty he stressed the fact that Africans must realise that they were not relieved from their obligations towards their landlords. What worried him was the impression that existed amongst Africans that they could take liberties with their Afrikaner landlords in this regard and he, therefore, wanted the point impressed on magistrates.¹⁵⁴

Natal Afrikaners responded swiftly to this proclamation by exploiting a loophole. They prevented Africans, who were now protected from eviction by the military, from cultivating the land.¹⁵⁵ This meant that if they had not planted they could be evicted at any time in the future and not only between harvesting and planting times.

Again the Natal Government was unwilling to act, and the GOC was again asked to intervene under Martial Law and to inform landlords that Africans were to be treated according to their pre-war rights which meant they could not interfere with the “proper and usual cultivation” of the land. The suggestion was supported by Governor Hely-Hutchinson who feared that if not followed, Proclamation 5 of 1900 would become null and void.¹⁵⁶ Lt-Gen HJT Hildyard agreed fully and on 4 December 1900, informed landlords that “natives now have the same rights as before the war and they must not be interfered with in the proper and usual cultivation of the land.”¹⁵⁷

This order tilted the scale of wartime power in favour of the Africans residing on the farms of Natal Afrikaners as the Rudolphs and Robbertses discovered. Africans living on the farm Spitzberg of JF Robbertse complained to the Estcourt magistrate and Inspector Mardall that because they gave evidence against Robbertse they were told to pay £5 and leave the farm. One African also

152. PRO, CO 179/213: Minute paper FR Moor to magistrates, 18.9.1900.

153. J Lambert, Loyalty its own reward..., in G Cuthbertson, AM Grundlingh, A-L Suttie, (eds.), *Writing a wider war. Rethinking gender, race and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, pp.11-12.

154. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Note FR Moor to colonial secretary, 14.9.1900.

155. PRO, CO 179/215: Telegram Magistrate AD Gibson, Newcastle, to Attorney-General H Bale, 14.12.1900.

156. PRO, CO 179/215: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to GOC, 30.11.1900.

157. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Notice under Martial Law issued by Lt-Genl HJT Hildyard, 4.12.1900; PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/4: Notice under Martial Law issued by Lt-Genl HJT Hildyard, 4.12.1900; PAR, 1/UMS 28: Notice under Martial Law issued by Lt-Genl HJT Hildyard, 4.12.1900; PAR, SNA I/4/8: Order issued to landlords that they must allow Africans to cultivate the land, 29.11.1900-4.12.1900; PRO, CO 179/215: Order issued to landlords that they must allow Africans to cultivate the land, 4.12.1900

complained that JF Robbertse (jnr) took his peaches because he testified against Afrikaners.¹⁵⁸ These complaints were denied by ex-Magistrate GM Rudolph who felt the Africans were “making a bold bid to make themselves masters of the situation on the farm, and this is aided, by the over ready belief of the police and Inspector Mardall particularly...” Rudolph insisted that an investigation would reveal that the complaints held very little truth, and felt that African tenants were challenging time-honoured practices such as rendering service and paying rent.¹⁵⁹

At this stage the Natal Government was literally caught between two fires. They wanted full African loyalty but did not want to pass legislation or provide any support to protect them against disloyal Afrikaners. In their opinion, once Martial Law had been repealed, Africans who had received eviction notices would have ample time to make alternative arrangements. This was definitely not a very sympathetic attitude to the loyal Africans persecuted by disloyal Afrikaners, but rather a determined effort to prevent Africans from using the war to improve their economic position or gaining any long-term benefits at the expense of whites. On 4 January 1901, the Natal Government finally made their position clear: “Ministers are not in favour of the introduction of any legislation in the direction ...and are of opinion that by the time Martial Law has been repealed those natives who fear eviction will have had ample time to make arrangements with regard to their future residence.” This decision was regretted by Governor Hely-Hutchinson but he realised that the Legislative Assembly would not pass such legislation.¹⁶⁰

Against the background of orders issued under Martial Law to protect Africans living on farms belonging to Afrikaners, magistrates were very hesitant to evict them. The first request for ejections in 1901 came from Annie Krogman who wanted 12 Africans removed from her farm. Although they did not testify in any of the high treason court cases, they had assisted the police in gathering evidence. The Klip River district magistrate did not make a decision but forwarded the documents to Attorney-General Bale who returned them with the comment: “Officers of the government should learn to apply instructions and opinions which they receive in similar circumstances.”¹⁶¹ This comment eased the mind of the magistrate, and when Sipika and Mahanjana were unlawfully evicted by B Labuschagne of Tintwa Road, he acted with conviction by preventing the removal.¹⁶²

In the light of the above, the Natal Government could by August 1901 claim that not a single war-

158. PAR, CSO 1669: Minute paper containing the petition by GM Rudolph, 10.12.1900-9.2.1901.

159. PAR, CSO 1669: Letter GM Rudolph to Attorney-General H Bale, 16.2.1901.

160. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 4.1.1901

161. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/14: Correspondence regarding notices handed to Africans to quit the farm of Mrs A Krogman, 8.2.1901-17.4.1901

162. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/7: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett to B Labuschagne, 28.6.1901.

related eviction had taken place since December 1900.¹⁶³ The government also made it clear that they were not prepared to relax the prohibition placed on evictions.¹⁶⁴

Evictions of Africans from Afrikaner farms were, however, still taking place under Sections 3 and 4 of Ordinance 2 of 1855. This was allowed by magistrates when they deemed the expulsions not to be military related and as long as it took place between the harvesting and ploughing seasons. Such evictions took place in the Ladysmith area,¹⁶⁵ but specifically in the Umvoti district. On 15 August 1901, Bambatha complained to Moor that the Natal Afrikaners, and specifically one known as Voizane (P Botha), had, by order of Magistrate JY Gibson of Greytown, given 14 days' eviction notices to Nondwengu, Mhlongo, Mkwane, and Mgwaqo. Of these Nondwengu had already left. Other members of his tribe had also been expelled from the farm of Hendrik Hansmeyer. Gibson had also heard cases against Soqotsha, Mpangisa and Mzane and had subsequently ordered them to leave. Bambatha maintained that the Natal Afrikaners involved did not supply reasons why they had to leave. He claimed that only those who gave evidence against their landlords were evicted. The case of Mgwaqo was an exception. He was evicted because he had refused to supply a messenger during the early part of 1900 to take a letter from Botha to his son at the Boer lines at Helpmekaar.

In a desperate plea referring to his loyalty, Bambatha asked: "... that the natives be permitted to remain and that the rent be fixed by the government. Not one of my people sided with the Boers. I told them that they were to report to me anything they heard being said against the Government."¹⁶⁶ Bambatha's plea fell on deaf ears and he received no support, primarily because the Africans exploited both the war and Martial Law orders relevant to evictions. This made the Natal authorities weary. An example was the difficulty AL Jansen experienced in evicting Mbuto from his farm for apparently refusing to work. Mbuto, however, insisted that the planned eviction was based on the fact that he gave evidence against Natal Afrikaners. Jansen initially wanted to evict him in May 1900, but the attempt was blocked. A year later he again applied for an eviction. This time the Dundee magistrate granted it because in his view it was not related to the war. The military, however, vetoed the eviction. In May 1902 Jansen applied for the third time. Magistrate Beachcroft supported the motion for two reasons: Jansen was a loyalist, but more importantly he deemed it wrong of the authorities not to support loyal citizens and landowners.¹⁶⁷ Likewise the loyalist Mrs Strydom of Uithoek, Helpmekaar, complained that an African by the name of Jacob had ignored orders to leave her farm. Magistrate Maxwell of Umsinga admitted that he could not evict him either

163. PRO, CO 179/219: Confidential despatch Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 3.8.1901.

164. 1/WEN 3/2/4: Correspondence regarding the court case between RJ van Rooyen and Umlambo, Mbohlo and Ngotcho, 15.7.1901-7.1.1901.

165. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/7: Eviction notice Magistrate TR Bennett to Umkuzane, 6.8.1901.

166. PAR, SNA I/4/8: Complaint by Bambatha that members of his tribe were being evicted by Afrikaners, 15.8.1901.

167. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/19: Notice to Mbuto to vacate the farm of AL Jansen, 3.5.1901-4.6.1902.

because of Martial Law orders.¹⁶⁸

Africans also manipulated the wartime conditions and Martial Law in other ways, like refusing to pay hut tax stating that they were protected by Martial Law.¹⁶⁹ It was also difficult for Natal Afrikaners to procure payments from African renters.¹⁷⁰ Agents who wanted to collect rent first had to receive permission from the local magistrate.¹⁷¹ The loyal Strydoms of Uithoek, Helpmekaar, therefore had to call in the assistance of Magistrate Maxwell of Umsinga to get the Africans resident on their farm to pay their dues.¹⁷²

Other Natal Afrikaners faced more serious problems. PWJ and JH Hattingh, co-owners of the farm Doornkloof in the Ladysmith district, had a verbal agreement with the Africans resident to supply either labour or pay rent. This was adhered to only up and until war broke out. According to their lawyers: "They (Africans) have been gradually going from bad to worse and are now practically unapproachable." The African residents ploughed where they wanted to while they also chopped and sold wood off the farm.¹⁷³ A letter from PUS Bird informing the Africans in question that they were compelled, notwithstanding the military order, to carry out their original agreements, was ignored.¹⁷⁴ In the same vein PR Vermaak, then imprisoned in Eshowe, complained that an African had settled on the farm of his late father without the permission of either his agent or himself.¹⁷⁵

The above-mentioned developments were, according to the Dundee magistrate, happening because Afrikaner landlords were absent. This freed Africans from the restraints of the contracts which normally bound them to work at a rate of between five to ten shillings per month. As a result Africans earned four or five times that wage in the service of especially the military.¹⁷⁶

Support for the point of view of the Dundee magistrate came from Magistrate TR Bennett of Ladysmith who reported that the Africans residing on the farms of rebels who were absent from their property, were "thievish, exhibiting disreputable habits and becoming a source of danger to the

168. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter magistrate Umsinga to Tatham and Tandy, 2.12.1901.

169. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 14.8.1901.

170. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 28.8.1901.

171. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to James Anderson, 23.6.1901.

172. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Tatham and Tandy, 11.3.1901; 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to James Anderson, 3.8. 1901

173. This was not the only complaint by a Natal Afrikaner that their wood were being stolen. JAF Ortlepp of Melmoth complained that armed members of the Nonqai had removed wood from his farm. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Letter JAF Ortlepp to magistrate Melmoth, 18.12.1899.

174. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Letters Tatham and Tandy to the Klip River district magistrate, 28.4.1902 and 6.5.1902.

175. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter PR Vermaak to Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, 14.11.1901. Agents acting on behalf of imprisoned Afrikaners did from time to time place Africans on their farms as a means to earn some money. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Tatham and Tandy, 22.10.1901.

176. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

community.” They also paid no rent and performed no labour. He was adamant that: “A policy calculated to demonstrate to these natives that in spite of the absence of their landlords they are not free to do as they like, is absolutely indispensable.” Bennett suggested imposing compulsory services on the road or military work, the so-called *isibahlo*.¹⁷⁷

Otto Schwikkard, a renowned local scout and interpreter, also found the situation unacceptable. In September 1901 he travelled all the way from Ingogo to Pietermaritzburg to complain to FR Moor: “We are very much handicapped as we cannot turn natives off our farms who will not fulfil their agreements owing to Martial Law and cannot get any assistance to compel the natives to carry out their contracts.”¹⁷⁸

As a result of the outlined experiences colonial wariness of African involvement in the war turned into apprehension. The fear existed that Africans were “using the war to overturn rights of property.”¹⁷⁹ Under these circumstances the Natal authorities decided to act against the loyal Africans who were at odds with Natal Afrikaners.

11.7 Natal whites close ranks against loyal Africans

The Natal Government realised that the measures demanded from the military to protect Africans from abuses by Natal Afrikaners were posing serious challenges to the tight pre-war control that existed over Africans. Under the circumstances Prime Minister Hime, SNA Moor and Governor McCallum supported Magistrate Bennett’s suggestion that Africans resident on Afrikaner farms be called out for labour. Not only could the Natal Government deal with Africans they viewed as troublesome in this way, but the military could also be supplied with the 200 ox drivers and leaders they needed.

Magistrate Bennett was instructed to, with the assistance of the Natal Police, compile a list of the unoccupied Afrikaner farms and the Africans resident on them, while the military was informed of the possible labour that could become available to them. Major HE Vernon jumped at the opportunity and requested 56 labourers by 2 April 1902 to work in Standerton. The arrival of these African labourers was somewhat delayed and they only arrived on 8 April. In the meantime Magistrate Bennett secured a further 20 Africans labourers from Afrikaner farms.

Using the successful callout of Africans residing on rebel farms in the Ladysmith area as a yardstick, Moor implemented the same process in the Newcastle district, and men from the following Afrikaner owned farms were conscripted: Dewetstroom, Roodepoort, Geelhoutboom, Donkerhoek,

177. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett, Klip River district, to FR Moor, 25.2.1902.

178. PAR, SNA I/1/293: Letter O Schwikkard to FR Moor, 31.8.1901.

179. *South African News*, 26.1.1900.

and Bernard. The men were earmarked to be employed by the Remount Department who needed 70 labourers at Mooi River and 30 at Harrismith. The military felt that: "If this does not exhaust the number of boys on these farms the remainder may be sent to the ALC Labour depot in Maritzburg." As it turned out only 30 men from the Newcastle area were drafted into service. This was ascribed to the fact that most of the African men on the listed Afrikaner farms were already working for the military at Botha's Pass.¹⁸⁰

The callout of loyal Africans on Afrikaner farms for *isibhalo* left the former baffled and resentful. They felt they were paying the price for the restoration of colonial stability.¹⁸¹ Some Natal Afrikaners were also unhappy with the call-out, fearing that they would lose precious labour in the process. The fears of JP van der Westhuyzen of Sundays River had to be allayed with the assurance that no Africans from his farm would be called out.¹⁸²

To the Natal authorities, however, this was the solution to reasserting control over Africans. The labour-intensive military was supplied with workers, the power of the Natal Government was reiterated, and a clear message was sent to Africans that they could not do as they pleased on Afrikaner farms. For Africans, the illusion that their war efforts would be rewarded, was shattered.¹⁸³

As feared by Governor Hely-Hutchinson, the end of the war and the repeal of Martial Law opened up the opportunity for Natal Afrikaners to carry out reprisals on African tenants and labourers who supported the British war effort or who testified against them. The easiest way to do this was once again evictions. On 3 June 1902, three days after the signing of peace, JH Potgieter had Magistrate Maynard Matthews issue eviction notices to Luvavo, Ngidi, Mtshikatshika, Mtshwelshe and several others from the farm Parys in the Dundee district.¹⁸⁴

From mid-June 1902 onwards, as rebels returned to their farms, the eviction of loyal Africans gained momentum. In the Normandien area near Newcastle, WD Adendorff of Brooklyn gave 30-day eviction notices to Ugomisa and Ukoni ka Nkosi for being scouts for the VCR; Pahlana and Diamond for giving evidence against Natal rebels; and Mgamba ka Mladhla for giving evidence against Adendorff's stepson, Gert Rall. Mgamba was, however, offered reprieve; he could pay two large oxen as penalty and all would be forgiven. He replied that he did not have two oxen and even

180. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Correspondence regarding using Africans resident on unoccupied Natal Afrikaner farms as military labour, 25.2.1902-16.6.1902.

181. J Lambert, *Betrayed trust...*, p.60.

182. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/17: Letter Acting Magistrate CG Jackson, Klip River district, to JP van der Westhuyzen, 8.3.1902.

183. J Lambert, *Betrayed trust...* p.161.

184. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Notice Magistrate M Matthews to Luvavo, Ngidi and others, 3.6.1902.

if he did he would not have paid. Ukoni ka Nkosi in turn refused to leave the farm and claimed to have paid taxes to Adendorff, and worked for the Natal Government. This he felt should provide him with some protection. JC Adendorff of the neighbouring Bradford, who was fined £100 or four months imprisonment for high treason, gave eviction notices to Mbothswa alias Tom Jantje who worked as a scout at the Königsberg Mission Station, and Msindu ka Mfinjuna and Ukemfu ka Kytshana for providing evidence against rebels, and for the way in which they spoke of the Boers in general.

DC van Niekerk of Doornpoort likewise gave an eviction notice to Pikeleli ka Mabamzana for giving evidence against his son-in-law CJ Smit, who had to serve an eight month prison sentence. According to Pikeleli another reason existed for the eviction. Two of his daughters had worked for Van Niekerk for two years and were not paid. When he asked for their salaries he was evicted. AMJ Rall of Klipoort, who had served a five month prison sentence, also gave an eviction notice to the female chief Nomandhleni and all her followers since her sons Mdevu and Mqeqwana, had worked for the military leaving Rall without labour. Furthermore, MC Adendorff who was fined £200 and had served eight months in prison, gave eviction notices to Tunga, Mkystana and George Ntombela for their lack of loyalty to him.

These evictions did not have the support of the authorities in Newcastle. The view of the acting commander of the VCR, Lt HE Meek, was: "I think this thing should be stopped. If not many others will do the same." RW Bentley, the sergeant of the Natal Police who took the evidence of those who had received eviction orders feared that, "...when all the rebel farmers are back there will be similar cases of natives who had assisted the British being ordered to quit."

With the evidence of the latest evictions in hand Frederick Moor instructed Acting Magistrate A Crawford: "When application is made to you for the ejection of these natives it will then be incumbent on you to see that they are protected according to law and that they have the notices to leave at the proper time which usually are given in January. A copy of instructions under Martial Law which is shown by the papers to have been sent to you is put up for your information dated 3.9.00." This placed the ball firmly back in the court of Crawford, with one important amendment - Africans could be evicted regardless of their loyalty as long as it was by law. To Crawford the law was Ordinance 2 of 1855, Section 3 which stated "...the native must be given time to collect his crops." According to Crawford, supported by Moor, this meant that the eviction notices given in the Normandain area could only be executed during January 1903.

The return of Magistrate O Jackson to Newcastle relieved Crawford from his burdens. Jackson, since he was expecting many more evictions, immediately sought the opinion of Attorney-General GA de R Labistour. Matters were complicated when the attorney-general declared that Section 3 only

applied to a lease or a contract that had expired due to “any act or omission of the native.” As this implied an agreement, Labistour advised Jackson that in such cases the terms of occupancy should be liberally interpreted in favour of the Africans involved. Labistour, who was not entirely sure of his own interpretation of the law, spoke to Prime Minister Hime and SNA Moor to gain clarity. These discussions resulted in the final verdict namely, that all cases of evictions against Africans should be dealt with under ordinary law and not Martial Law and that Africans should therefore, according to custom, receive their notices during the beginning of January. In short “...the rule should not be departed from except under any special circumstances.”¹⁸⁵

The lone voice that spoke out against this decision in favour of disloyal Afrikaners taken by the upper echelons of power in Natal, was that of Magistrate CG Jackson of the Klip River district. In a letter to Frederick Moor he placed the decision in context:

I have the honour to draw your attention to the fact that the removal of Martial Law will operate badly on many loyal natives who are resident on the farms of men convicted of High Treason. Under an order by the G.O.C. dated 3 September, 1900, the eviction of natives from farms was prohibited, unless such eviction was not due to circumstances arising out of the war or rebellion. I have had occasion to enforce this order in a great many instances where it was apparent that the sole cause of ejection was due to evidence given in treason cases. Now, honour, in the absence of a Peace Preservation Act, the protection thus afforded to natives is withdrawn and I fear that hardship and injustice may be entailed on men who gave valuable evidence against rebels.¹⁸⁶

In his reply Moor ignored all the concerns raised by Jackson and merely stated that the government could not interfere in matters arising between landlords and tenants. This provided little consolation to loyal Africans.¹⁸⁷ The only reprieve they thus got was that they would receive their eviction orders during January 1903, but evicted they would be. This was scant reward for loyalty to the crown and the Natal Government who clearly chose the side of disloyal Afrikaners over that of loyal Africans.

How this played out in real life can be gauged from the following case. CJ Pieters, after serving a sentence of 18 months, arrived back on the farm Georgina near Dundee in December 1902. He immediately gave an eviction notice to Nozulela who had testified against him. Nozulela took his case to the Natal authorities stating that he had fulfilled his part of the contract by providing labour and paying rent and was therefore victimised for being loyal and giving evidence. The response of the Natal Government by means of Frederik Moor was very unsympathetic:

185. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/24: Minute paper regarding the eviction of Africans from farms in the Newcastle district, 27.6.1902-9.7.1902.

186. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Letter Magistrate CG Jackson, Klip River district, to FR Moor, 2.10.1902.

187. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Letter FR Moor to Magistrate CG Jackson, Klip River district, 6.10.1902.

...this is a matter between landlord and tenant, that so long as he resides on private property he will have to comply with the conditions of occupation, and that owners of property have a right to terminate tenancies if such conditions are not fulfilled. This is not a matter in which the Government can interfere. In the event of Nozulela having to leave the land upon which he resides at present, he may count on the assistance of the Government in obtaining a kraal site on location lands should he desire it.¹⁸⁸

The issue surrounding the complete and final desertion by the Natal Government of loyal Africans, in favour of Afrikaners, was raised in March 1903, at the time when all the remaining rebels were being pardoned, by Charles Tatham:

The men was of very considerable service to the Crown and anticipated trouble with their landlords. Many natives spoke to me or mentioned the matter to the then Attorney-General (H. Bale) who said that they should, and would, be protected. I so informed the natives and under Martial Law such ejections were subsequently prohibited. But now the landlord is free to do as he like and the natives are without assistance. There is doubtless a combination amongst the Biggarsberg Dutch against these natives and I think Govt should, if possible do something for them.¹⁸⁹

This proved to be in vain as the net of Afrikaner revenge were cast even wider. Not only Africans who testified against Afrikaners or who had served in the military suffered after the signing of peace, but also those who were resettled on rebel farms by the military. Annie Krogman informed attorneys Walton and Tatham that numerous Africans were settled on the farm Margate, the property of her rebel son, Otto. What particularly irked her was that Krogman had to pay his annual instalments while the settled Africans paid nothing whatsoever and at the same time were, without permission, turning the best grazing into lands.¹⁹⁰ Krogman's complaint was forwarded to both the resident magistrate of Newcastle and the military authorities.¹⁹¹ The response from the military provided the solution, namely that the owners of such farms should provide the Africans with sufficient notice so as to allow them time to make alternative arrangements.¹⁹²

Tensions were not only brewing in post war Natal between Natal Afrikaners and Africans regarding land and settlement rights, but also regarding livestock and unpaid hut tax. JC Truscott (snr), a rebel who resided in the ORC and who was never brought to trial, had two head of cattle seized in 1900 by the Natal Police and handed over to an African, Mazwi. These were only returned to him on 22 July 1903, after extensive correspondence on his behalf by his lawyer.¹⁹³ Mrs GP Kemp, removed to

188. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/9: Correspondence regarding the eviction of Nozulela by CJ Pieters, 30.12.1902-27.1.1903.

189. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/12: Minute paper regarding African witnesses during the treason trial, 19.2.1903-28.3.1903.

190. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Letter AC Krogman to Walton and Tatham, 21.8.1902.

191. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Letter Walton and Tatham to magistrate Newcastle and Capt AH Taylor, 27.8.1902.

192. Europeans settled in the same manner on Afrikaner farms by the military required two weeks notice before they could be evicted. PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Letter magistrate Newcastle to Walton and Tatham, 1.9.1902.

193. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Minute paper regarding the delivery of cattle in the possession of Mazwi to JC Truscott,

Pietermaritzburg from her farm Gowrie near Dundee, complained that she had reported the non-payment by some Africans residing on her farm to the magistrate more than a year previously. She had also unsuccessfully called in the help of the convicted rebel, PWR Jordaan, to acquire the £20 owing to her. She believed the only way to solve the matter was for Magistrate Matthews of Dundee to collect the money on her behalf.¹⁹⁴

The above-mentioned events were, according to Magistrate Matthews, a result of the war because the military had allowed Africans to settle on the farms of Natal Afrikaners and at times left them in sole possession of the land, free of constraints, especially labour. This resulted in confusion regarding property and other rights which civil authorities now had to deal with.¹⁹⁵ In a letter to the SNA, Matthews elaborated on the problems by the ensuing economic struggle between Africans and Natal Afrikaners: "We Magistrates north of the Tugela are going to have no light task in getting these Dutchmen and their native tenants settled down on satisfactory terms together again. I am watching carefully for any signs of the Zululand spirit spreading across the Buffalo, and will always keep you informed of any rumours or tendencies of a disquieting nature."¹⁹⁶

At least one incident of a "disquieting nature" occurred in the newly acquired Vryheid district when Africans turned the tables by evicting a substantial number of Afrikaners. The reaction of the Natal Government was in stark contrast to when Africans were evicted, they hastily provided 20 large tents as temporary residences.¹⁹⁷

11.8 Concluding comments

From the outset of the war Colonial Natal did its best to prevent Africans from using the event to overturn their political and economic position. To achieve this much was done to keep local Africans from fighting on the British side. At the same time, while expecting loyalty for the sake of loyalty, the Natal authorities were not prepared to legally protect Africans from Afrikaner persecution. Instead, they relied on the military and Martial Law.

For their part Natal Africans believed that their loyalty would count for something. This was especially the case since they contributed to the war effort as, amongst other things, spies and witnesses against Natal rebels. This involvement gave them the impression that they would receive some reward, possibly at the cost of the Afrikaners.

22.7.1903-11.12.1903.

194. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Letter GP Kemp to Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, 16.10.1902.

195. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

196. PAR, PM 92: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, to FR Moor, 24.7.1902.

197. PAR, MJPW 95: Minute paper ordering De Villiers to bring 20 tents to issue to Boers ejected by Africans, 10.7.1902.

This did not happen and African ambitions soon took a backseat in attempts to heal the relations between Afrikaners and English.¹⁹⁸ Natal Afrikaners, who were either actively or passively disloyal to the Imperial cause, were given preferential treatment over Africans. Significantly, neither the British Army, nor the British or Natal Governments, fully recognised the loyalty and role Africans performed in the war, leaving them bitter and unhappy.¹⁹⁹ This snubbing was enshrined by the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging and specifically clause 11 which shelved all African political ambitions.²⁰⁰ This had a profound impact on African thinking about the trustworthiness of the Natal and British Governments, while at the same time providing ample ground for dissatisfaction, distrust, and grievances. The resentment eventually culminated in a series of uprisings in Natal popularly referred to as the Bambatha rebellion.²⁰¹

This post-war disillusionment felt by Natal Africans is summed up by John Dube. During the Bambatha rebellion, in an editorial in the *Ilanga lase Natal*, he wrote: “You supported the English side most faithfully in their war with the Boers because you expected to be treated better by the English than by the Boers. But your faith brought disappointment. You have not found anything in respect of which you are better off than being under Boer rule, but in some respects it is worse than it would have been under the Boers.”²⁰²

The war also served to exposed Natal Afrikaners to levels of racial equality not experienced before. Rebel prisoners, for example, shared ablution facilities with African inmates and African wardens had authority over Afrikaner prisoners. This did not go down well with Natal Afrikaners who felt this treatment went against the order of things. The rebel prisoners were also bitterly opposed to being guarded by African wardens. In the end flare-ups and threats of letters to the colonial secretary forced the prison authorities to remove the African wardens.²⁰³ JC Buys similarly was appalled when he observed that Africans who could speak English attended church services alongside whites and shared the same cells in the Pietermaritzburg Prison.²⁰⁴

In the light of the above-mentioned racial attitudes, the loyalist *De Natal Afrikaner* was wasting its time when it, in an attempt to convince Natal Afrikaners to change their sentiments, reminded them that while they looked down on people of colour they had to remember that the latter were the loyal ones in the Cape Colony. Natal Afrikaners were also informed that while they were suspected of

198. J Lambert, Loyalty its own reward..., in G Cuthbertson, AM Grundlingh, A-L Suttie, (eds), *Writing a wider war. Rethinking gender, race and identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, p.129.

199. JS Maphalala, The story of compensation, silver and bronze medals for the Zulu after the Anglo-Boer War, *Historia*, 24 (2), September 1979, pp.26-31.

200. P Warwick, pp.3, 164, 175-177 and 180-181.

201. S Marks, *Reluctant rebellion. The 1906-8 disturbances in Natal, passim*.

202. *Ilanga lase Natal*, 2.11.1906.

203. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.32, 1941.

204. WM, Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys: Deel 2, 18.8.1901, p.26.

disloyalty, in India, Hindus and Muslims alike, were displaying loyalty to the crown by contributing money, horses, and gifts and by passing pro-Empire resolutions. According to the paper this could lead to the marginalization of the Afrikaner after the war. To avoid such humiliation the answer was simple; Afrikaners needed with immediate effect to show their undivided loyalty to the Empire.²⁰⁵

This message had very little impact and in time Natal Afrikaners came to view Africans as the real enemy. When the Bambatha rebellion broke out, former Natal Afrikaner rebels were quick to join up to, as the magistrate of Klip River district observed at the time, avenge themselves for the services Africans rendered to the British during the Anglo-Boer War.²⁰⁶

205. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 6.2.1900.

206. S Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion...*, p.219.

CHAPTER 12

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR ON NATAL AFRIKANERS

In simplified Marxist theory the economy is the substructure on which the other societal aspects rest. For Natal Afrikaners this substructure was farming and almost every single one from the most affluent to the poorest, relied on this sector of the economy. As a group of people this made them extremely vulnerable to economic annihilation. This especially proved to be the case in Northern Natal with all the Afrikaners of the area suffering under either the Boer occupation, the British liberation, or both. In each of these situations some grouping within the Afrikaner society found themselves in a losing situation. Under the Boer occupation it mostly proved to be the loyalists and those who chose to join the Republicans in their flight from the area. When the British forces returned the mere fact of being an Afrikaner meant being subjected to an ethnic orientated economic liquidation under Martial Law by means of looting, confiscation, commandeering, and wanton destruction. In time only those Afrikaners who remained loyal managed to receive some relief. For the majority of Natal Afrikaners directly affected by the war, economic recovery never happened or took a long time to achieve.

12.1 Economic experiences during the Boer occupation of Northern Natal

Realising that the war would result in shortages of food, fodder and other necessities, some Northern Natal Afrikaners bought up large quantities of maize and slaughter animals in the Vryheid district as well as wheat and slaughter animals in the eastern districts of the Transvaal.¹ These products were then sold to the Republican forces in Natal.² This enabled individual Afrikaners to exploit the war economy for financial gain. Lodewyk de Jager of Wasbank delivered ten oxen and four goats to the value of £162 to the Transvaal forces on 10 October 1899, a day before war broke out. On 25 October he sold them a further 50 “hamels” and four goats to the value of £58.5. The final transaction between De Jager and the Transvaal government took place on 4 December 1899 when he sold them seven oxen to the value of £105. De Jager’s account was settled on 8 March 1900.³ Similarly JH Ries, JJ Kemp⁴ and JS Vermaak of Helpmekaar sold large numbers of slaughter animals, fodder and maize to the invaders. Vermaak’s son, JC Vermaak, took receipts to the value of £1 500 to Pretoria where he exchanged them for cash which was buried on the farm Vermaakskraal, Helpmekaar. In the face of the Boer retreat in April 1900, JS Vermaak fled to the farm Vlakfontein near Newcastle, taking the money with him only to bury it again. He was subsequently imprisoned as a suspected rebel and shortly afterwards died in jail. In the meantime the money was removed by

1. J Ploeger, *Die lotgevalle van die burgerlike bevolking gedurende die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902, Deel I*, pp.4:4-4:5.

2. WM, 3097: Kwitansies vir 6 sakke meel, 130 sakke mielies, 1 sak sout en 2 kiste vleis, 9.12.1899 and 28.2.1900.

3. NAR, KG 886: Proof submitted by the commandant-general of slaughter animals purchased from LJ de Jager, 10.10.1899-8.3.1900.

4. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Documentary evidence relative to Natal rebels who either surrendered or were captured, 21.5.1900.

an unknown party.⁵

Apart from the Natal Afrikaners, English businessmen like Albert Dunton, RD Kidd and Co. and Oldacre and Co. who remained in Northern Natal during the Boer occupation, conducted a roaring trade with the Boers. In the view of the Natal Government they hardly “hesitated to make any profit they could...and all of them either by themselves or their agents, seem to have had dealings with the enemy without compulsion.”⁶

At least one Natal Afrikaner saw the war as an opportunity to trade with the British forces. When it became clear that war was about to break out, JB van Blerk went down to Ladysmith from Newcastle to trade cattle with the military but was arrested for his initiative and had to endure the Siege of Ladysmith in prison.⁷

Just as the British military needed to be fed, so the Boer commandos also required food. In most cases, when food was requisitioned from local Afrikaners, the commandos provided them with either medicine goods, or some form of documentation which presupposed that payment by either of the Republican Governments would take place. In the case of Gert Boers for example, the Boers commandeered 100 bags of maize against a receipt.⁸ In other cases Mrs WA Bester produced vouchers to the amount of £124 for payment by the landrost of Harrismith,⁹ while Thomas Joubert, a rebel leader from Newcastle, commandeered slaughter cattle by means of a receipt from JJ Wessels.¹⁰ Others suffered theft and looting from the commandos just as they would later suffer from the British forces. Especially vulnerable were loyalists who lost livestock, crops and other property on a large scale to the Boers.¹¹ JJS Maritz of Aletta near Dundee, lost 273 sheep to a Boer camp close to his home, within days after the Battle of Talana,¹² while FJ Swartz of Newcastle, lost sheep, goats, horses, and furniture to the invaders.¹³

The invading Boers, however, in all likelihood also brought some economic relief to the many Afrikaners in Northern Natal who were eking out a marginal existence as renters or as bywoners. Just after Christmas 1899, the Dundee justice of the peace, JB Wolmarans, reported that there were

5. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2554/1: Document entitled “Besonderhede van die uitgraving van die geld, hoe dit uitgehaal is en hoe ek gevang is”, no date.

6. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 27.2.1901.

7. PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JB van Blerk, 11.10.1902.

8. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900.

9. PAR, CSO 1661: Receipt issued to Mrs WA Bester by J van Rensburg, 2.2.1900.

10. PAR, CSO 2925: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JJ Wessels, 14.2.1901.

11. PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by L Combrinck, 6.10.1900; PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by A Jansen, 27.10.1900; PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by Johanna Potgieter, 6.9.1900.

12. PAR, CSO 2892: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JJS Maritz, 8.1.1903.

13. PAR, CSO 2906: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by FJ Swartz, 17.1.1901.

numerous Natal Afrikaners who due to poverty and other circumstances, did not have the necessary equipment such as plough shares to farm effectively. They applied to Wolmarans for such equipment and in turn asked General Piet Joubert whether he could supply this and if so, under what terms.¹⁴ In further support of local Afrikaners food aid was given to the wives and children of the poor men of the Newcastle district who had been conscripted into service.¹⁵

Despite supportive measures such as the above committing high treason by joining the Boers was not a deed done by Natal Afrikaners in the hope of a better economic deal should the Republics be victorious. This is borne out by lists compiled in October 1901, regarding the economic status of suspected rebels not yet apprehended, for the governor of Natal. Of the 75 names that appeared on the first list 19 were landowners, 21 renters, while 29 were sons residing with their fathers. Only six names appearing on this list were managers/workers/bywoners. On a second list of suspected rebels, the names of 83 landowners appeared.¹⁶

Generally the economic experience of the majority of Natal Afrikaners during the Boer occupation was positive. This, however, changed dramatically when the Republicans retreated. One of the key questions faced by the military and the Natal Government alike was what economic measures were to be taken against Natal Afrikaners who were fighting with the Boers. One of the suggestions made was the confiscation of landed property belonging to Natal Afrikaners convicted of high treason. This, mainly due to the intervention of the Colonial Office, was discarded as an option.¹⁷ With the confiscation of landed property not being an option, how then were Natal Afrikaners dealt with in economic terms during the war?

12.2 The economic impact of the actions of the British forces on Natal Afrikaners

Unlike the conduct of the Boer forces the actions of the British forces had a profoundly negative economic impact on the total Natal Afrikaner populace of Northern Natal in the occupied area. The tone of what was to happen was set soon after the relief of Ladysmith when WAC (William) Bester's farm, Fourieskraal near Ladysmith, and his house in the town were severely damaged and looted. According to *De Kerkbode* this damage was done "niet door de vijanden maar door degenen die zijne beschermers moesten geweest zijn."¹⁸ Further south losses were also suffered. In the Weenen area Sergeant Jeffries of Thorneycrofts Mounted Infantry took 68 head of cattle belonging to CJ van Rooyen,¹⁹ while CFW Snyman of Uitzicht, Gourton, lost more than 500 sheep to the military. His sheep were eventually sold as loot stock in Newcastle. Snyman also lost his baled wool and the 400

14. NAR, KG 818: Letter JB Wolmarans (JP) to General PJ Joubert, 28.12.1899.

15. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 9.12.1899, p.103.

16. PAR, GH 1450: Name lists of suspected rebels who owned land, 27.10.1901.

17. See pp.157-160 for the debate pertaining to the suggested confiscation of the landed property of rebels.

18. *De Kerkbode*, 19.4.1900.

19. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Enquiry about the number of cattle taken from CJ van Rooyen, 15.6.1900-22.6.1900.

sheep he had hired from a Mr Gray to the British forces.²⁰

Part of the problem was the view adopted by the military on property looted from Natal Afrikaners. A point in case was a matter-of-fact report in the *Natal Witness* which stated that three Hattingh families from near Estcourt had fled leaving the opportunity for, “our mounted pickets...to secure a supply of delicacies, such as poultry, fresh butter, and eggs.”²¹ These were not the only losses suffered by the Hattinghs. JM Hattingh also protested that his cattle were being rounded up by the military and was told to speak to the officer in charge at Chieveley. When attempting to do this, he was imprisoned and then along with his family, deported to Mooi River. He was also refused a permit to go to Estcourt to make a sworn affidavit regarding his cattle.²²

Such economic punitive measures aimed at Afrikaners were not unique in the area south of the Tugela River. During November and December 1899 the military indiscriminately arrested Afrikaners in the Weenen and Estcourt districts and looted their livestock, including the 31 cattle belonging to Miss EJ Hattingh “a cripple and lady of weak intellect” whose affairs were managed by a local lawyer, Chadwick. To recover the cattle Chadwick asked Colonel Long to intervene. At the same time he raised the cases of Izaak Marais, DB Snyman, PJ van Rooyen and the youthful McDuling brothers who had been arrested and had their cattle confiscated. Long reacted by asking Chadwick not to write to him as he was not in charge of the matter, but to Major Chichester, the provost marshal. Undeterred Chadwick kept up his correspondence. Matters came to a head when 70 cattle belonging to Van Rooyen were put up for sale by Colonel HG Morgan for the benefit of the Imperial Government at Nottingham Road on 20 December 1899. Chadwick asked that the cattle be released or withdrawn from the sale pending the investigation against his client and Lt-Col EJ Gallwey responded by conceding that a representative could be sent to Nottingham Road to identify and claim the cattle from the military authorities. Chadwick consequently went to Nottingham Road himself to identify the cattle branded with Van Rooyen’s mark. He, however, ran into difficulties as the officer in charge and the auctioneer both stated that they could not release the cattle except on the production of a sworn affidavit. As a result the cattle belonging to both Miss EJ Hattingh, Van Rooyen²³ and JM Hattingh were sold.²⁴

This particular auction at Nottingham Road conducted by J Raw and Co²⁵ in conjunction with the Nottingham Road Farmers’ Association, worked out well for the military, the Imperial Government, and those Natalians who purchased livestock. All in all 936 sheep and goats, 756 head of cattle and

20. PAR, CSO 2907: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CFW Snyman, 3.6.1901.

21. *Natal Witness*, 30.11.1899.

22. PAR, CSO 1881: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JM and JG Hattingh, 6.4.1900.

23. PAR, CSO 1637: Correspondence between Chadwick and the Natal authorities regarding the looting and sale of cattle of Natal Afrikaners, 6.12.1899-10.1.1900.

24. PAR, CSO 1881: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JM Hattingh, 7.4.1900.

25. PAR, CSO 1642: Application by JW Holding to be considered as an auctioneer, 14.3.1900-24.3.1900.

22 horses belonging to Natal Afrikaners were sold.²⁶

All Chadwick could do was to express his anger and frustration to the colonial secretary about the economic persecution of innocent Afrikaners: "It is not just to seize a persons (*sic*) cattle, sell them, and keep the owner in goal, without trial and to sell their stock so I appeal on their behalf to His Excellency as Commander-in Chief of H.M. forces, to order the necessary steps to be taken to have a thorough investigation at once. How can these men be sufficiently compensated for their imprisonment if found not guilty?" The response from the military via the Natal Government to this serious accusation was standoffish. The cattle belonging to Van Rooyen and Hattingh got mixed up with looted stock and were therefore sold; the two individuals could claim for their losses from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission.²⁷

In fact that it was virtually impossible for Natal Afrikaners resident south of Ladysmith to get their livestock back once the military took hold of it as can be gathered from the case of WAC Bester. He was detained in Ladysmith for the duration of the Siege and afterwards banned to Pietermaritzburg on suspicion of collaborating with the Boers. During this period the military took "possession of his Title Deeds, Securities, Livestock, Household Effects, and various movable property, in fact he was divested, so far as he knows, of everything, that he had on which the Imperial authorities could lay their hands, including cash to the extent of £437..." One of the biggest concerns Bester had was the plight of his herd of 1 463 Angora stud goats.²⁸

The problem Bester faced was that security was necessary for the return of his goats and the guaranty required was in the form of a mortgage bond from someone other than himself. When approached on this matter by the lawyers Hathorn and Co acting on his behalf, the Natal Government, despite the fact that Bester was not charged with treason, offered no assistance and merely stated that the matter should be raised with the military. For their part the military did not bother responding to letters from the lawyers and the director of supplies, Colonel HG Morgan, proceeded to place an advertisement for the sale of the goats in the *Natal Witness*. Again Hathorn and Co remonstrated with the military about their ludicrous regulations regarding a guaranty. As an alternative they suggested that the goats be handed back to Bester on the undertaking that he produced them when required. Again the military did not bother replying. Hathorn and Co regarded the matter in such a serious light that they advised Bester to take it to the Supreme Court. The problem was that such a step would take time and the sale of the goats was about to take place on 19

26. *Natal Witness*, 15.12.1899, 18.12.1899, 19.12.1899. Similar auctions by the military were, for example, held at Melmoth, see: DAR, 1/MEL III/2/9: Correspondence regarding the confiscation of the cattle of JJ van Rooyen, 16.7.1903-15.8.1903.

27. PAR, CSO 1637: Correspondence between Chadwick and the Natal authorities regarding the looting and sale of cattle belonging to Natal Afrikaners, 6.12.1899-10.1.1900.

28. *Natal Witness*, 7.5.1900.

May 1900. As a last resort the Natal Government was therefore approached and told “that the Imperial authorities are exercising powers under Martial Law in a matter which does not seem to be justifiable...wrong is being done and we appeal to the Government to assist in this matter and to prevent the loss of Mr. Bester of these goats. It is in the power of Government to bring pressure to bear on the Imperial Authorities.”²⁹ Hathorn and Co regarded this as necessary as they “believe it is not impossible that the Military Authorities are acting without, we think, troubling to enquire or attempting to exercise discretion under the influence of persons who are anxious to acquire these much prized goats of Mr. Bester’s.”³⁰ The Natal Government did nothing to intervene or to rescue the goats belonging to Bester.

But the greatest economic deprivation amongst Natal Afrikaners took place north of Ladysmith during and immediately after the advance of Buller’s Army in May 1900.³¹ In its northward drive almost all the livestock belonging to Natal Afrikaners amounting to tens of thousands of animals, were swept away by the “looting corps.”³² Especially active in this regard were the Natal colonial and British irregular troops as a Natal Carbineer testified in May 1900: “I have looted lots of grub. I looted lots of horse feed last night for ‘Scout’. It’s rather a quick business looting, as Thorneycroft’s, BMI, SALH, and BMR are awful beggars at it, and you always know that there are thousands of men after just what you are wanting.”³³

Examples of such operations repeated on almost every Afrikaner-owned farm, took place in the Dundee district. On passing the farm Rest in May 1900 the British military took seven horses, 1 330 sheep and 550 goats from Mrs EM Cronjé,³⁴ while Mrs Pieters of Dundee lost 480 sheep and 459 head of cattle and Mrs Kemp 1 000 sheep.³⁵ Others suffered even more and Jan Meyer was left with only the clothes he was wearing.³⁶ In the shadow of Buller’s Army came the Natal Police and agents who worked for the military and mopped up what the army might have missed. On 30 May 1900 all the cattle, a wagon, a spider and horses belonging to Mrs MC Cronjé of Camelot Newcastle were confiscated by two white members of the Natal Police. The two policemen on the same day also took the cattle belonging to Mrs JJ Smit, JS van Niekerk, and LP Adendorff.³⁷ The scale of the looting of farm animals is reflected in a report in the *Natal Witness* of 25 May 1900: “A herd of about 2 000

29. PAR, CSO 1643: Correspondence regarding the detention of WAC Bester and the sale of his property by the military, 22.3.1900-17.5.1900.

30. PAR, CSO 1643: Letter Hathorn and Co to colonial secretary, 17.5.1900.

31. PAR, CSO 2900: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JH Potgieter, 12.11.1903.

32. PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by WS Naude, 9.12.1901.

33. MS Coghlan, p.146; PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AA Jansen, 19.3.1901.

34. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter EM Cronjé to magistrate Dundee, 21.5.1900.

35. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entries, 24.5.1900 and 31.5.1900, p.206 and p.214.

36. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Letter PC Cronjé to HF Schoon, 23.6.1900.

37. PAR, PM 18: Request for assistance by MC Cronjé, JS van Niekerk, JJ Smit and LP Adendorff for the return of their cattle, 19.6.1900-15.8.1900.

head of cattle was left at Dundee, and the number of sheep, cattle and goats at Newcastle is already very large.”³⁸

In the process of looting almost all the Afrikaner farms north of the Tugela, the military initially drew no distinction between the property of those who were guilty and those who were merely accused or suspected of treason, or those who were completely innocent like the loyalist Jansen family.³⁹ Plundering as part of the military operations in Northern Natal was supposed to end on 11 June 1900 when the following orders were issued:

No stock, supplies or other property, except such as may be required for military purposes, and then only by orders of Directors of Transport, Supplies, or Remounts, is to be taken by the troops. Officers who may have issued to others orders or authority to collect stock, etc., are held strictly responsible that such orders or authority are at once cancelled. Collection and custody of derelict stock and horses, whether of loyalists or rebels is entirely a matter for civil authority. If any such stock is brought in, it should be directed to the nearest Magistrate or Police post, who have received instructions on the subject.⁴⁰

The rationale behind this order was spelt out by Buller: “The proper way to end a war is to defeat the enemy in the field. This you will never achieve if you scatter your forces and turn them into herds to guard cattle or sheep.”⁴¹ The reality was, however, different and Africans and Europeans like J Browning of Newcastle,⁴² and Wade of Dundee,⁴³ employed by the military and by units like Loxton’s Horse⁴⁴ and the Dundee Local Farmer’s Corps’ also known as Symon’s Horse or Symon’s Looters continued to seize livestock from Afrikaner farms up to the end of the war.⁴⁵ Within this context not even Natal Afrikaners arrested outside the Colony could save their livestock. PJ Cromhout and JCJ Cronjé were arrested near Louis Trichardt (modern day Makado) on their way to Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe). On instruction of Lord Kitchener their wagons and cattle were confiscated and handed over to the appropriate military units.⁴⁶

Complaints to the military concerning the continued looting and confiscation of livestock had little impact since no uniform answer was forthcoming. Responses ranged from “all goods captured

38. *Natal Witness*, 25.5.1900.

39. PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by A Jansen, 27.10.1900; PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AA Jansen, 19.3.1901; PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ADC van Niekerk, no date.

40. PAR, PM 87: Orders by Lt-Col H Heath, 29.7.1900; PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Telegram GOC to officer commanding, troops, 11.6.1900.

41. PAR, PM 17: Letter General R Buller to GOC lines of communication, 24.5.1900.

42. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* November 1900, p.430; PAR, NT 93: Letter Watt and Pike to J Browning, 19.8.1903.

44. PAR, CSO 2925: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by HJ Strydom, 9.10.1900.

44. PAR, CSO 2876: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AS Eksteen, 6.10.1902.

45. MS Coghlan, p.344.

46. NAR, PMO 22: Documentation regarding the cattle belonging to PJ Cromhout and CJ Cronjé, 17.7.1901-8.12.1901.

become contraband of war”,⁴⁷ to the GOC, Natal, claiming that the looting of livestock by the military from Afrikaners was never ordered. All he was prepared to do was to hand the livestock back once located.⁴⁸ What made matters worse for the Afrikaners was that the military only issued receipts for the animals taken in exceptional cases⁴⁹ since it was argued that “during a campaign, it is not practicable to keep complete records of transactions...”⁵⁰

The looting and uncontrolled movement of livestock by the military had a further negative impact on the animals which Natal Afrikaners managed to save.⁵¹ Veterinary regulations were generally ignored by the military prompting the Natal Cabinet to complain that diseases were introduced into Northern Natal and Zululand by the introduction of captured stock from the Transvaal and the OFS.⁵² Scab amongst sheep⁵³ and lungsickness amongst cattle⁵⁴ became relatively common and even rinderpest appeared in June 1901 between Greytown and Pietermaritzburg, prompting convicted rebel JC Vermaak to comment philosophically that it did not bother him since he had no cattle left to lose.⁵⁵

In the end livestock taken from Natal Afrikaners by the British forces were disposed of in three ways: oxen and horses were taken for transport and remount purposes; large numbers of sheep, goats and cattle were slaughtered to feed the thousands of troops passing through the area, and substantial numbers were either sold at the initial military auctions or handed over to the commissioner of agriculture to be sold as derelict stock.⁵⁶

With such large numbers of stock up for grabs under the lawless conditions, an unofficial way of disposing of animals taken by the military, appeared. At the heart of these illegal operations were men like J Browning who worked as a conductor of captured stock⁵⁷ and GP “Digger” Robinson of Mooi River who worked as a guide for Buller’s army. Livestock and other moveable property would be commandeered from Afrikaner farms in the Newcastle area under the pretext that it was on

47. PAR, CSO 1707: Enquiry by NC Adendorff regarding the commandeering of his cattle and sheep, 27.6.1902-11.8.1902.

48. PAR, PM 99: Correspondence about the removal of livestock in Northern Natal by the military, 22.6.1900-3.7.1900.

49. PAR, CSO 1663: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JW de Jager, 7.6.1900-6.1.1901.

50. PAR, CSO 1707: Enquiry by NC Adendorff regarding the commandeering of his cattle and sheep, 27.6.1902-11.8.1902.

51. See for example: PAR, PVS 3, 5, 9,11, 12.

52. PAR, GH 1040: Minute paper by the Natal Government, 16.7.1901.

53. PAR, PVS 5: Report by Stock Inspector Klingenberg regarding the sheep of PRN Vermaak, 11.10.1900; PVS 20: Report by District Veterinary Surgeon Hutchinson on the cattle of PRN Vermaak, 7.9.1901.

54. PAR, PVS 5: Report by Stock Inspector Klingenberg that the sheep of PRN Vermaak had scab, 11.10.1900; PVS 20: Report by Stock Inspector Walker that the cattle of PRN Vermaak had lungsickness, 5.2.1902.

55. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

56. PAR, CSO 1663: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JW de Jager, 7.6.1900-6.1.1901.

57. PAR, NT 93: Letter J Browning to Watt and Pike, 28.8.1903.

instruction of the military. This was partially true because some animals and goods would be handed over to the military, but the rest was kept to be sold for personal gain.⁵⁸ Although well aware of this fraud, neither the military nor the civil authorities were willing to take action. The final links in the chain of “shady transactions in connection with loot stock” were men like Ludwig Ohlson who would buy it from men like Robinson.⁵⁹ Postwar enquiries made by PR⁶⁰ and AC Vermaak to the government reveal the scale of these criminal activities. Both men wanted to know how they could reclaim their cattle from the people who had taken possession of them. It was easy to recognise the cattle as they did not carry the brands of animals that were sold by either the Derelict Stock Fund or the military. Rather than intervene, however, the government suggested that they speak to a solicitor, Hathorn and Co, who “has(d) several cases of a similar nature in hand.”⁶¹

The looting, confiscation and commandeering of property belonging to Natal Afrikaners by the military continued for the duration of the war and, under Martial Law, the military became a law unto themselves. Even graves in farm cemeteries were broken open in search of loot.⁶² Afrikaners who owned goods other than livestock were also targeted for confiscation. One of the favourite targets by military patrols was wool⁶³ and mohair which was sold on behalf of the Imperial Government.⁶⁴ Maize was another product regularly taken from Afrikaner farms.⁶⁵ The military apparently waited until the maize was harvested and removed from the cobs before they commandeered it.⁶⁶ A man by the name of Jowett was awarded the contract by the commandant for Dundee, Colonel Gore, to bring in all the maize found on uninhabited Afrikaner farms in the district. Jowett was rewarded handsomely as he could keep half the maize he collected as payment. Initially the maize brought in was stored under the authority of the local magistrate, RH Beachcroft, who operated on the assumption that since the Natal Government had taken over all Afrikaner livestock from the military, the same applied to crops. Beachcroft was, however, quickly informed by his superiors that the order excluded crops and that he should hand back all crops to the military. Five hundred bags were consequently returned to the military who had it crushed and issued at Dundee and Colenso. Once the government distanced itself from the reaping of Afrikaner-owned maize, Jowett was ordered to cease cutting maize but between Beachcroft and the entrepreneurial Jowett they found alternative Afrikaner “farm produce” to confiscate. Jowett had to collect all the wool and

58. PAR, CSO 1707: Enquiry by NC Adendorff regarding the commandeering of his cattle and sheep, 27.6.1902-6.8.1902; PAR, AGO I/8/89: Enquiry by Griffin and Muller on behalf of AM Cronjé regarding the removal of livestock by GP Robinson, 27.4.1903-2.6.1903.

59. PAR, SGO III/I/150: Permission requested for the transfer of the farm Ouklip, 10.1.1902-1.2.1902.

60. PAR, AGO I/8/89: Letter PR Vermaak to attorney-general, 12.4.1903.

61. PAR, CSO 1730: Correspondence regarding the cattle of AC Vermaak which were in the possession of other people, 7.2.1903-19.3.1903.

62. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, *circa* November 1900, p.427.

63. *Natal Witness*, 11.10.1900.

64. PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by SJ Naude, 4.6.1903.

65. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JSJ van Rensburg, 4.2.1903.

66. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 28.8.1901.

deposit it with the magistrate.⁶⁷

Beachcroft was not the only Natal official involved in dealing with crops belonging to Afrikaners. The overzealous Magistrate Thomas Maxwell of Umsinga mailed a cheque for the sale of maize from the farm of CJ de Villiers to the Natal Government on 20 November 1901.⁶⁸ Maxwell had to defend himself against other allegations of irresponsible economic behaviour as well namely the exploiting of absentee Afrikaners. Some local Africans and the Natal Police claimed that cows belonging to CJ de Villiers and pigs and poultry belonging to a certain Vermaak had been taken by Maxwell for his own use.⁶⁹ This was not the end of the accusations against Maxwell who ended up in a war of words with HE Wohlberg about the orange grove on the farm of De Villiers. Wohlberg accused him of claiming the oranges as his own and of interfering with the property of De Villiers. In turn Maxwell stated that Wohlberg was undermining his authority by removing large quantities of oranges from the farm. The dispute was eventually settled when Wohlberg was told that the African overseer on the farm would give him some oranges on Saturdays.⁷⁰ This did not end the saga and Maxwell had to reprimand the Reverend Dedekind of Elandskraal because his son had also taken some of the oranges without permission.⁷¹

The losses suffered to moveable property went hand in hand with the wanton destruction of immovable Afrikaner property. Reminiscent of the situation during the total war that raged in the two Republics, Afrikaners in parts of Northern Natal also experienced farm burning and property wreckage. Around Dundee Lord Kitchener's scorched earth policy was implemented by Colonel GR Blomfield, the regional commander.⁷² Especially active in these operations were the volunteer units made up of English Natalians such as the VCR. In October 1900, JAF Meyer of Mauchlin, Dundee, complained that the house on his farm Meyer's Land was destroyed by volunteers. At roughly the same time Mrs CJ Pieters complained that her house and four outbuildings on the farm Zwartwater between Dundee and Helpmekaar were burnt down by a band under the leadership of Major Mckenzie of the Natal Carbineers. Mckenzie, then commander of the VCR, denied the charges.⁷³

67. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Correspondence regarding the request by R du Bois to purchase maize confiscated from Natal Afrikaner farms, 23.7.1900-22.8.1900.

68. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to PUS, 20.11.1901.

69. PAR, MJPW 117: Report that Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, had seized and retained cattle belonging to rebels for his own use, 12.10.1901-28.10.1901; MJPW 117: Correspondence regarding the removal of cattle belonging to rebels, 9.10.1901-18.11.1901. This was not the first time that such an accusation was leveled against Maxwell. LJR and MAS Kritzinger of Melmoth, the previous posting of Maxwell, charged him with confiscation of their milking cows for his personal use, and keeping a horse of theirs for five months for his personal use and that of his friends. DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Letter MAS and LJR Kritzinger to Magistrate A Hulley, Melmoth, 30.7.1900.

70. PAR, 1/UMS 30: Request by HW Wohlberg to rent grazing rights on the farm Craigwether, 29.5.1901-4.6.1901; 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to HW Wohlberg, 1.6.1901.

71. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Reverend Dedekind, 11.6.1901.

72. MS Coghlan, pp.341-342.

73. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Correspondence regarding the burning of farms by the Natal Volunteers, 30.11.1900-5.11.1900.

Other Afrikaner farms such as Kilburnie⁷⁴ and Blinkwater⁷⁵ in the Dundee district, Snelster near Estcourt,⁷⁶ Geduld Nr 2 near Dannhauser,⁷⁷ and the farmhouses of JW O'Reilly and Jacobus de Wet who resided roughly ten kilometres north of Newcastle, were also completely wrecked by the military either as a punitive measure or as a means to flush out rebels.⁷⁸ In this process of "pacification," the burning of houses was from March 1901 onwards followed by orders to also destroy farm equipment and "Dutch crops" in Northern Natal. The order remained intact until the end of the war and resulted in the routine destruction of everything in the path of in this case, the VCR.⁷⁹ The extent of the destruction of immovable property is illustrated by the 11 page inventory of lost goods compiled by ME Kok of Dalry, Dundee.⁸⁰

Within the context outlined above the scorched earth strategy was not a military response to a guerrilla situation since this hardly existed, but rather a punitive measure against an ethnic group related by blood but not political affiliation to the invading force. For Northern Natal Afrikaners this meant, alongside the fines meted out and the imprisonment imposed, a triple punishment.

In addition to the physical destruction meted out by the military the oppressive measures enforced under Martial Law made farming very difficult. Permission to move livestock between farms in a district or to visit other farms that they owned were not readily granted to Afrikaners.⁸¹ Similarly Afrikaners, loyalist or otherwise, found it hard to secure permits to move about, which hampered their ability to transact their business.⁸²

Very little action was taken by the Natal Government concerning the loss of Afrikaner property. In April 1900 Attorney-General Bale suggested that the Natal Police take steps to protect houses containing moveable items belonging to Natal Afrikaners by placing all their goods in one room of the house which would then be nailed shut and guarded by an African appointed at 5/- per month. The problem was, however, that by the time these measures were implemented very little remained to be stored. At the same time it did little to prevent continued pillage by the military.⁸³

74. PAR, CSO 2892: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by MF Maritz, 4.6.1901.

75. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 6.7.1901, p.512.

76. *The Morning Leader*, 14.2.1900 and 15.12.1900. Robertson's statements caused a heavy debate in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 18 and 20.12.1900 and *The Times* of 20.12.1900.

77. JC Kannemeyer, *D.J. Opperman - 'n Biografie*, p.19.

78. PAR, PM 24: Letter Prime Minister AH Hime to GOC, Natal, 17.9.1901; PAR, CSO 1726: Enquiry by CL de Wet regarding the destruction of his house by the military, 23.2.1903-7.3.1903.

79. MS Coghlan, pp.342-343.

80. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME Kok, 24.10.1902.

81. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to H Adams, 10.6.1901.

82. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Correspondence regarding the request by AJG Meyer for a permit, 30.10.1900-4.11.1900.

83. PAR, AGO I/8/71: Correspondence regarding the protection of Natal Afrikaner property, 16.5.1900-9.6.1900; PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by CM Meyer, 13.1.1903.

Subsequent attempts to protect Afrikaner property did not originate from the central administration but rather the local authorities. In an attempt to safeguard what remained of the livestock of Afrikaners absent from their farms on the Biggarsberg, Magistrate Maxwell moved all the livestock to the farm Balgownie near Helpmekaar, the property of PRN Vermaak. WW Strydom (JP) who held the keys to all the deserted houses, was placed in charge of the stock while Sergeant Salter of the Natal Police kept the property under surveillance.⁸⁴ This arrangement brought Maxwell into conflict with the commandant of Dundee who wanted all animals belonging to rebels and undesirables rounded-up. The commandant was informed that the outlined arrangement was made pending the Natal Government's decision on the disposal of the livestock, and that any other orders issued would be regarded in conflict to this.⁸⁵ This had little impact and during the night of 13-14 October 1901, 29 head of cattle belonging to Vermaak were removed by the military.⁸⁶

The farm Balgownie situated approximately three kilometres from a military camp was continuously looted.⁸⁷ In April 1901, planks and an old rifle were removed despite the protests of the loyalist overseer, Combrink.⁸⁸ Magistrate Thomas Maxwell's enquiry into the matter led to a promise from the commanding officer at Helpmekaar that the goods would be returned. This never happened. A month later the soldiers again looted the farm, this time removing four pigs. In a strongly worded letter Maxwell requested the military to return the pigs and to "desist from taking anything further from Balgownie."⁸⁹ From the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp, Vermaak complained to Maxwell about the military looting his property while WW Strydom, the local JP, did likewise. All Maxwell could do, having had little support from the commanding officer at Helpmekaar, was to forward the complaints to the Dundee commandant.⁹⁰

In the light of the continued military plundering and destruction of Natal Afrikaner property Attorney-General Henry Bale could do nothing but admit that such happenings were common in Natal and were bringing discredit on the English. He also felt that the looting of livestock was an extremely severe punishment as women and children were in many cases the sufferers, and that these deeds were impoverishing the Afrikaners of upper Natal.⁹¹ This feeling is supported by the statement of Dr Douglas of Dannhauser. Making it very clear that he was not pro-Boer, Douglas informed Magistrate Jackson of Newcastle that several Afrikaner families in his neighbourhood were facing or would soon face food shortages. The Natal Government's response to Jackson's

84. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Sergeant Salter, 10.11.1900.

85. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to commandant, Dundee, 7.2.1901.

86. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to officer commanding troops, Helpmekaar, 19.10.1901.

87. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by PRN Vermaak, 11.10.1900 and 9.1.1903.

88. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to officer commanding troops, Helpmekaar, 18.4.1901.

89. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to officer commanding troops, Helpmekaar, 28.5.1901.

90. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to PRN Vermaak, 20.7.1901.

91. PAR, AGO I/9/74: Correspondence regarding the looting of the property of JM de Jager, Kemp's Hoek, Dundee, 13.10.1900-4.10.1900.

enquiry about what he should do was cool, punitive, and impractical. He was asked to supply a list of the Afrikaner families who faced hunger “so that their male representatives who are now in goal may be afforded an opportunity of arranging for maintenance of such families.”⁹² This inhumane attitude of the Natal Government to Afrikaners impoverished by the war, is further highlighted by the response to the plight of the time-expired rebel TR Dannhauser and his extended family of eight. Both the Natal Police and JP Cooke reported early in 1903 that the family was starving, had no animals apart from an old mare, and were begging mealies from Africans to survive. The cold reply from the Natal Government was that Mr Dannhauser’s relations were well off, and that it was their duty to assist him.⁹³

Cases of poverty because of the war also appeared south of the Tugela River. ILJ Pieterse of Ladysmith was arrested and sent to the central prison in Pietermaritzburg only to be released a short while later and allowed to reside under police surveillance in Weenen. Pieterse subsequently successfully applied to the Mansion House Fund⁹⁴ for assistance to his extended family to the value of £8 to be distributed by Magistrate Matthews over a four month period. When this amount ran out Matthews applied to the treasurer of the local Transvaal Relief Committee. This time he had no success and the suggestion was made that the Pieterse children should find employment for board and lodging from wealthy Afrikaners who resided in the Weenen area.⁹⁵

In some cases the Natal Government did waver and allowed poor Natal Afrikaners into the concentration camps on their account.⁹⁶ This was, however, the exception rather than the rule as can be gleaned from the analysis in Chapter 10 on the policy and attitude of the Natal Government towards allowing Natal Afrikaners entry into the concentration camps.

Throughout this process of economic destruction and willful impoverishment of Northern Natal Afrikaners the Natal Government did very little to either protect them as subjects, or confront the military about their actions. In the light of this it would be fair to assume that the view of the Natal Government was, as is borne out by the derelict stock sales explained later in this chapter, that the loss of movable and destruction of immovable property suffered by Afrikaners were part of the punishment they deserved. This would also serve to explain why all representations on the matter to the Natal Government by Afrikaners and their legal representatives alike, elicited no reaction.

92. PAR, CSO 1650: Correspondence between Magistrate Jackson and the colonial authorities regarding destitute Afrikaner families, 15.6.1900-21.6.1900.

93. PAR, CSO 1723: Petitions by JP Cooke and the Natal Police regarding the poverty TR Dannhauser and his family were living under, 30.1.1903-18.2.1903.

94. This fund was named after the official residence of the mayor of London and collected money for victims of wars and disasters.

95. PAR, 1/WEN 3/2/3: Correspondence regarding assistance to the Pieterse family, 14.2.1900-10.4.1900.

96. PAR, PM 22: Letter HE van Vure to Lt CM Threlfill, VIII Hussars, 29.6.1901; PM 22: Correspondence relative to HE van Vure, 7.7.1901-21.7.1901.

According to the historian Mark Coghlan, this could be explained by the popular view of Victorian and Edwardian Britain, namely that the burning of farmhouses and confiscation of livestock were just desserts for challenging the Empire.⁹⁷

The most critical voice regarding the economically destructive actions of the military came from Judge William Smith, President of the Special Court:

In almost every case in which rebels have been convicted before us, it is stated that the whole of their stock, in some instances to the value of some thousands of pounds, was, at the time of their arrest, seized by the military or police authorities. It is urged upon us that these rebels have already been severely punished in anticipation of the sentence of the Court, and the matter places us in some difficulty in determining the amount of fine that should properly be imposed on conviction. We are unaware of the reasons which led to these seizures, whether any of the stock can be recovered, or whether any claim for compensation can be sustained. It is undesirable that the effect of the sentence upon the rebels should be so severe as to reduce them and their families to absolute beggary, and we are reduced, in the fixing of the amount of fines, to make them proportionate to such rough estimate of the landed property of the prisoners as we are able to form from the meagre evidence before us. In one instance a prisoner, whose stock had been seized, was acquitted. The result of these seizures is that those whose wealth consists solely of stock suffered a far greater measure of punishment than those whose property is land, and that this punishment is incurred irrespective of the degree of a person's guilt. The seizure of the whole of the farming stock must inflict incalculable hardship on the families of rebels.⁹⁸

Smith's was a lone voice and it had no impact on alleviating or ending the economic suffering of Natal Afrikaners because it was ignored by the Natal Government and drowned out by more acceptable jingoistic statements.

The Afrikaners who best dealt with the destructive wartime economic policy as outlined above were those with business acumen. Jan Meyer jnr of Eversholt, Estcourt, was acquitted after 10 months in prison. The fact that he lost everything he owned and was not eligible for compensation did not bring him down as he himself testified: "I have recently been trading with the military exchanging horses for cattle and goats. I commenced with £15 which I borrowed from Mr Lawford and I now have 60 goats and ten head of cattle. I sold 8 head of cattle to Mr George Spearman, 4 for £26 and 4 for £28. I have since repaid £2.10 to Mr Lawson and now owe him £12.10."⁹⁹ Economic ingenuity

97. MS Coghlan, p.340.

98. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Representations regarding the seizure of the property of rebels, 16.11.1900-3.12.1900.

99. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by J Meyer jnr, 1.6.1901.

was also shown by Natal Afrikaners who rented their land to English Natalians as a means to not only earn money but also to protect their property against looting.¹⁰⁰ WS Naude of Dundee who was banned south, for example, managed to make an arrangement with William Wade to work his lands on a half-share basis. This worked well for both parties because in 1901 Wade harvested 380 bags of maize. Naude was also quick to take advantage of the sales of property of fellow Afrikaners and bought carriage horses belonging to Mrs Pieters.¹⁰¹

For most of the other Afrikaners the best they could hope for was some form of compensation from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission.

12.3 The question of compensation - The Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission

From the moment that war broke out both the Boer commandos and British Army caused extensive damage to civilian property. The question uppermost in the minds of many Natalians who suffered material losses was: Who would pay? The answer came via an article in mid-November 1899 in the *Natal Mercury* which stated that General Buller had issued an order to General Gatacre, then stationed in the Eastern Cape, that: "Owing to the distance from the Government, it has not been possible to give the frontier districts at first the protection they need; and the enemy's troops having in places entered our territory, make it known as widely as possible that her Majesty's Government will exact compensation for any actual injury done to property of individuals who remain loyal."¹⁰²

Natal politicians immediately raised the issue of compensation sustained in the Colony with Governor Hely-Hutchinson who in turn asked for clarification from Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain and High Commissioner Alfred Milner.¹⁰³ The reply from Milner hardly satisfied the Natal authorities. According to his sources the damage was caused by rebels acting against loyalists and therefore "the rebellious district ought in the first instance to be held responsible for the damage..."¹⁰⁴ This was disputed by the Natal Government who clarified that it was actually the "Boer Irregular Horse" who were destroying property, raiding stock, and driving inhabitants from their homes.¹⁰⁵ This explanation won the day and on 21 November 1899 Buller's proclamation was extended to include Natal.¹⁰⁶

To implement the proclamation, the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission was constituted in

100. Foy Vermaak private collection, letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias C Hertog, 22.3.1901.

101. PAR, CSO 2896: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by WS Naude, 9.12.1901.

102. *Natal Mercury*, 17.11.1899.

103. PRO, CO 179/207: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 18.11.1899.

104. PAR, GH 1035: Telegram High Commissioner A Milner to Governor W Hely-Hutchinson, 19.11.1899.

105. PAR, GH 1035: Minute paper Prime Minister AH Hime, 21.11.1899.

106. *Natal Witness*, 21.11.1899.

December 1899,¹⁰⁷ underpinned by the philosophy that “compensation is an act of grace to those who were loyal and had suffered through adherence to their loyalty.”¹⁰⁸ In terms of its brief, the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission was only to consider direct losses and was responsible directly to the governor. The funding would come from an Imperial advanced account created for the purpose.¹⁰⁹ The three members initially appointed to the committee were supplemented by another three in August 1900 to deal with the immense workload,¹¹⁰ the complexity of the “Compensation Question,”¹¹¹ and complaints that the “most enterprising and persistent” were favoured over “modest sufferers.”¹¹²

Natal Afrikaners found the process of claiming from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission a difficult task. Many were disadvantaged because they spoke no English,¹¹³ and others lacked a political understanding of the system which demanded that claimants file their claims with the resident magistrate of the district in which the losses were sustained.¹¹⁴ Crucially some lacked information of what had happened to their movable property; information without which they were unable to submit a claim.¹¹⁵

Natal Afrikaners also had questions about possible compensation. One of the first concerns raised was by attorneys Chadwick and Miller of Estcourt who wanted to know “whether the said Commission will deal with the claims made against the Imperial Government for direct losses sustained through the action of the military such as houses in Natal suffering damage by the acts of the Imperial forces, during the absence of the owners - and claims for cattle, the property of loyal Dutch Natal residents which have been seized by the Military and sold on account of the Imperial Government.”¹¹⁶

This query received no quick answer and the initial policy that only losses suffered at the hands of the Boers would be compensated, was maintained. Sir William Smith, the president of the Special Court, added his voice by declaring: “Looting is not considered to be in harmony with modern military law, but I do not think this Government is under any obligation, either legal or moral, to

107. PAR, CSO 2859: Government notice No. 673. 1899, 13.12.1899; PRO, CO 179/208: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.12.1899.

108. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 27.2.1901; PAR, CSO 1726: Enquiry by CL de Wet regarding the damage to his property by the military, 23.3.1903.

109. PAR, GH 1707: Letter Governor HE McCallum to High Commissioner A Milner, 3.8.1903.

110. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 24.8.1900.

111. *Times of Natal*, 14.7.1900; *Natal Witness*, 17.9.1900.

112. PRO, CO 179/213: Report chairmen of the Invasion Losses Enquiry Committee, MS Evans to colonial secretary, 7.7.1900.

113. PAR, GH 1707: Letter Governor HE McCallum to High Commissioner A Milner, 3.8.1903.

114. PAR, PM 118: Letter Secretary GO Plowman to JD Marais, 5.6.1903.

115. PAR, AGO I/8/91: Enquiry by nine Natal Afrikaners of what happened to their moveable property, 1.10.1903.

116. PAR, CSO 1637: Letter Chadwick and Miller to the colonial secretary, 11.1.1900.

compensate people in respect of these actions of men who were subject to military discipline and control."¹¹⁷ This point of view was adopted despite initial estimates indicating that of the £117 000 damage and losses sustained south of the Tugela River £16 000 were caused by the Imperial forces and a further £25 000 by both armies. In the light of this Governor Hely-Hutchinson made it clear to Joseph Chamberlain that many cases of serious damages caused by the military existed on both sides of the Tugela River and that the loyal farmers expected prompt compensation.¹¹⁸ The Imperial Government was reluctant to agree to this.¹¹⁹ The Natal Government thus had no choice but to tow the line. In the words of Henry Bale: "The Colonial Government is unable to recognise any obligation to compensate people in respect of the action of forces subject to the control of the Imperial authorities."¹²⁰ The Natal authorities were, however, placed under immense and continuous pressure by the public on this issue and eventually capitulated and decided to authorize the payment of 75% of the assessed claims "in the full belief that the Imperial authorities will ultimately agree to reimburse such advances."¹²¹ This the Imperial authorities eventually agreed to do.¹²²

Where then did the outlined process leave Natal Afrikaners suspected or convicted of high treason? For those guilty of treason the decision was, as far as Governor McCallum was concerned, simple: they had lost all their rights since they were considered to have "unclean hands"¹²³ and would not be compensated in any way.¹²⁴ This meant that all the claims received from convicted rebels were rejected; a bitter financial blow to more than 400 Natal Afrikaners and their families.¹²⁵ The disdain with which their requests for compensation was treated is illustrated by the reaction to JG Döhne's letter written from the Pietermaritzburg Prison. He complained that the military had destroyed his farm, including fences, house, outbuildings, fruit trees and had removed all movable property causing damages estimated between £5 000 and £6 000. All his family was left with were two head of cattle and some bedding and clothes. Döhne's request that his letter be forwarded to the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission received a venomous response from Bale: "I do not care to correspond with rebels on matters of this kind."¹²⁶

117. PAR, AGO I/9/74: Correspondence regarding the looting of the property of JM de Jager, Kemp's Hoek, Dundee, 13.10.1900-4.10.1900.

118. PRO, CO 179/213: Telegram Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 24.8.1900.

119. PRO, CO 179/214: Government notice No. 426. 1900, 25.8.1900.

120. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Correspondence regarding the looting of property belonging to J de Jager, 4.10.1899-5.1.1901.

121. PRO, CO 179/213: Correspondence regarding the unwillingness by the Imperial Government to pay compensation for losses caused by the British military, 14.9.1900-21.9.1900.

122. PAR, 1/UMS 30: Notice by Capt FS Reeves regarding claims against the military, 13.5.1902.

123. PAR, GH 1707: Letter Governor HE McCallum to High Commissioner A Milner, 3.8.1903.

124. PAR, CSO 1657: Correspondence regarding claims by imprisoned Natal Afrikaners for compensation, 1.9.1900-2.10.1900.

125. PRO, CO 179/214: Application on behalf of HW and GJ Boers by TF Carter, 4.10.1900; PAR, CSO 1681: Correspondence regarding the claim by W Adendorff, 15.7.1901-17.7.1901.

126. PAR, AGO I/8/81: Representation by JG Döhne that all his property had fallen into the hands of the military, 4.9.1901-7.9.1901.

What made matters worse for convicted rebels was the declaration by Governor McCallum that rebels could not claim compensation for losses sustained subsequent to their conviction.¹²⁷ Not only did this mean that rebels were punished twice for the same crime, but also that their property would not be protected by the authorities.

Not so clear-cut was the question of compensation to Afrikaners merely suspected or acquitted of treason. On enquiry to the secretary of state if compensation should be paid to persons acquitted of treason, the following statement was issued: "...the fact of a charge being withdrawn or an accused person acquitted after trial, where no malice or impropriety of conduct existed, or can be imputed to the Police or any public official concerned on behalf of the public in the conduct of prosecution, affords no grounds for 'compensating' such accused person at the public expense."¹²⁸ The Natal Cabinet approved this and made it clear that only once innocence was proven beyond doubt would compensation be paid. Consequently 75% of the payments were withheld from Natal Afrikaners suspected of treason. If the commission found that their suspicions could be upheld, the outstanding amounts were not paid.¹²⁹ This was, however, not a clear-cut issue and the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission continued to grapple with claims from Afrikaners who were not charged or convicted of high treason.¹³⁰ These men and women invariably found themselves at the wrong end of the stick as can be gathered from the examples below.¹³¹

Salomon Hercules de Jager was arrested and spent the duration of the Siege of Ladysmith as a prisoner in Ladysmith. Afterwards he was banned to Pietermaritzburg for several months thus taking no part in the war. De Jager eventually claimed compensation for losses sustained to the value of £865.3.2 from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission. His claim was, however, not honoured because his wife and children had moved to the OFS during the war.¹³² Seasonal migration or movement of any kind to any of the Republics became a crime; that of going to the country of the enemy. The vagueness of the workings of the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission is further illustrated by the application of JW de Jager of Cotswold, Dundee, a Republican who owed allegiance to Natal. Such being the case, he could be found guilty of treason. His claim for compensation was, however, rejected because he was a Boer. Scant wonder De Jager proclaimed: "If I had taken refuge in the Colony, I should have been liable to stand my trial for High Treason. This

127. PRO, CO 179/224: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 24.10.1902.

128. PRO, CO 179/208: Letter KE Digby to under secretary of state, 27.4.1900.

129. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Minute paper on the payment of compensation to suspected and convicted rebels, 17.8.1900-22.8.1900; PAR, CSO 1657: Correspondence regarding claims by imprisoned Natal Afrikaners for compensation, 1.9.1900-2.10.1900; PAR, GH 1707: Letter Governor HE McCallum to High Commissioner A Milner, 3.8.1903.

130. PAR, GH 1302: Report Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 14.12.1900.

131. For a comprehensive account of claims by Natal Afrikaners from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission see: PAR, CSO 2864-2914.

132. PAR, CSO 2874: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by SHF de Jager, 6.9.1900.

is what I mean by saying I owe local allegiance and have a right to claim.”¹³³

In an equally absurd case Mrs ME Labuschagne received no compensation. Her husband became insolvent prior to the war meaning that all the horses, cattle and other property looted by the military from their farm, belonged to her. Regarding women and children the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission had a special rule: “...it was decided not to allow damages for property lost by wives and minor children of convicted rebels. It will in some cases mean that innocent persons will suffer thr’o [sic] the act of another. If compensation is allowed it would mean that property really belonging to the convicted person would also be claimed for by the wife. In the present case it is clear that the property belong to the claimant. But the commission is of opinion that it would be a mistake to break the rule even in this case.”¹³⁴

The only group of Natal Afrikaners who benefited from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission were the loyalists. Although they sometimes had to wait up to three years before compensation was paid they were handsomely rewarded and the 121 loyalists who successfully submitted claims, received more than £63 000 or an average of roughly £520 each.¹³⁵ Even losses incurred outside the war zone by loyalists were entertained by the commission. JC Martens of Broedershoek, Kranskop, for instance, successfully claimed for damages caused by the military to his farm in October 1901. Amongst others he claimed for the damage caused by the building of sangers.¹³⁶

Invariably these loyalists, as can be gleaned from the Table 12.1 below, suffered at the hands of both the Boers and the British, with most of the damage occurring in the Dundee district. However, the compensation received made remaining loyal economically worthwhile. Furthermore many of the loyalists had retained some of their livestock and were allowed by the military to continue relatively uninterrupted with their economic activities.

Table 12.1: Losses sustained by 121 loyal Natal Afrikaners per district as recognised by the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission (75%)¹³⁷

DISTRICT	LOSSES TO BRITISH	LOSSES TO BOERS	DUAL	TOTAL
Dundee	£17 072	£8 133	£7 070	£32 275

133. PAR, CSO 2874. Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JW de Jager, 4.12.1901. For a similar verdict, see: PAR, CSO 2904: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by SJ Schoeman, 24.8.1901.

134. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by ME Labuschagne, 25.10.1901.

135. For the names of those compensated see Appendix C.

136. PAR, CSO 2892: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JC Martens, 26.11.1902.

137. PAR, CSO 2864-2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claims, 1900-1903.

Newcastle	£397	£5 890	£2 600	£8 887
Ladysmith	£7 816	£3 396	£1 676	£12 888
Estcourt	£2 422	£433	£2 426	£5 281
Weenen	£3 215	£152		£3367
Upper Tugela		£86		£86
Melmoth	£116	£563		£679
TOTAL	£31 038	£18 653	£13 772	£63 463

The Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission brought no relief to the majority of Natal Afrikaners who suffered losses due to the war. In time an alternative compensation option would open up, namely the Derelict Stock Fund.

12.4 The Derelict Stock Fund

On 17 June 1900 General Buller declared that the military would hand over to the civil authorities all the livestock they had looted or taken as booty in Northern Natal. The rationale behind this was that the civil authorities were in the best position to return the thousands of animals held on the farm of Lodewyk de Jager near Wasbank to their rightful owners.¹³⁸ The Natal Cabinet agreed to accept the livestock as soon as they had made the necessary arrangements for herding and grazing at Newcastle and Wasbank.¹³⁹ By 26 June 1900 the military had handed over 2 951 head of cattle, 29 144 sheep, 6 122 goats - both angora and other, 281 horses and five donkeys to the Natal authorities.¹⁴⁰ While the military and specifically Major-General Wolfe-Murray harboured the chivalrous idea of handing back livestock to the wives and families of suspected rebels,¹⁴¹ this was not the intention of the Natal Government who via Attorney-General Henry Bale declared: "Booty belongs to the captor."¹⁴²

To deal with the livestock looted from Natal Afrikaners the Supreme Court on, 22 June 1900, appointed the commissioner of agriculture, CB Lloyd, as curator bonis of all derelict stock.¹⁴³ Lloyd was placed in control of:

...all derelict stock of which the owners are unknown or nonresident, with power to arrange for the care, custody and control thereof, with power to sell the same or any part thereof by public auction at such time's, in such manner and upon such conditions as he may think fit, but so

138. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Telegram GOC to Prime Minister AH Hime, 17.6.1900.

139. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Telegram Prime Minister AH Hime to GOC, 19.6.1900.

140. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Representations regarding the seizure of the property of rebels, 16.11.1900-3.12.1900.

141. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Affidavit by Major-General J Wolfe-Murray, 8.8.1900.

142. PAR, AGO I/7/43: Letter Attorney-General H Bale to Prime Minister AH Hime, 31.8.1900.

143. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Minute paper Colonial Secretary C Smythe to Magistrate RH Beachcroft, 31.7.1900.

that a true and correct description and account be taken and kept of all stock sold, and of the proceeds of the sale thereof; such proceeds after deduction of all expenses, to be paid to the Master of this Court; with liberty to any person prejudiced by the order to apply to redress.

A clause stating that he could hand back cattle to owners on proof of ownership and payment of charges was added to the brief.¹⁴⁴

The appointment of the curator bonis and the process involved did not appeal to amongst others, JC Adendorff of Newcastle who declared that Afrikaner livestock was taken in an unlawful manner. He believed that the advertising of the livestock was a farce since: "...all the farmers in this district with the exception of only a few, are imprisoned, and some are forced to remain in town on parole, there is no one who could claim the cattle, and hand them back to the starving families. In accordance with the notification appearing in the paper a further sum of 5/- per head for large cattle, and 1/- per head for sheep and goats, is to be paid in order to recover the same, adding to the misery of our families have had to undergo..." Attorney-General Bale reacted in a sympathetic manner and while asking Prime Minister Hime to deal with the matter he suggested that care should be taken not to impoverish Natal Afrikaners. He also suggested that facilities be afforded to Afrikaners to identify their stock.

When probed by the prime minister on the possibility of allowing Natal Afrikaners on parole or awaiting trial to point out their animals, the Natal Police indicated that this would be very difficult to achieve for a number of reasons including an objection that allowing suspected rebels under escort to search for their livestock amongst thousands of animals would be time-consuming and expensive, and would mean that all rebels would, at some stage or another, be allowed out of prison. Hime immediately latched onto this hardline stance and declared: "I foresee great difficulty in letting these men go up to identify their cattle, as their word will not be sufficient, and they will have to furnish proof by means of other witnesses of their ownership of the stock." Thus the Natal Police managed to, greatly based on an argument of logistics, deny Afrikaners from Northern Natal the opportunity to regain their livestock. This step meant instant impoverishment to most suspected rebels. The only recourse they had was to apply to the Special Court for bail to then search for their stock.¹⁴⁵

Curator Bonis Lloyd, when he took office, thus inherited a messy situation. He could not assist Natal Afrikaners in the search for their livestock since the military neither informed him where the stock handed to him originally came from and whom it belonged to, nor did they provide appropriate written records. The sole solution, according to Attorney-General Bale, was for the affected parties

144. PAR, PM 18: Supreme Court order appointing CB Lloyd as curator bonis, 22.6.1900.

145. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Correspondence regarding the difficulties suspected rebels had in releasing their livestock, 11.7.1900-14.8.1900; AGO I/8/72: Correspondence involving AG Debenham regarding the difficulties suspected rebels faced in getting their livestock back, 30.7.1900-14.8.1900.

to apply to the Supreme Court for the release of their livestock.¹⁴⁶

Some Natal Afrikaners, when their requests to the police and military to be allowed to search for their livestock failed, decided to follow the advice of Bale. AJ Nel and LC Koch instructed their legal representatives to apply for an order from the Supreme Court to prevent Curator Bonis Lloyd from selling their livestock. This was fought tooth and nail by the Natal Government. Affidavits were secured from amongst others, Major-General Wolfe-Murray and Lloyd, to justify the government's hardline position. Both Koch and Nel were also thoroughly investigated in preparation for the case. In the case of Koch it was argued that he was a Republican fighting for the Boers and the military therefore correctly viewed his livestock as loot. The strongest argument against Nel was that he did not correctly complete the affidavit for the release of his stock. Up against such formidable forces Nel and Koch found the legal route to secure their property closed; their order was refused and their animals sold.¹⁴⁷

Other legal attempts surrounding the sale of derelict stock also failed. JDJ de Necker of Bultfontein in the OFS, a surrendered burgher, was allowed to reside in Natal with his livestock. In the course of military operations he was arrested and his 1 050 sheep were sold by the curator bonis for the amount of £596.17. De Necker regarded this action as unlawful and wanted the proceeds of the sale to be paid to him and not to the colonial government. When it seemed that he might be successful in his application, the Natal Government hastily applied to the Supreme Court that the money owed to De Necker be paid to the GOC, Natal "without prejudice to any legal claim to the said money which any person may thereafter establish." This neat legal sidestep ensured that he did not get his money, but more importantly, also served to close all legal routes for the recovery of Natal Afrikaners' stock or the amounts they were sold for.¹⁴⁸

The curator bonis could thus advertise without impediment the derelict stock up for sale. Such advertisements appeared regularly, for example in the *Natal Mercury* in September 1900: "The government informs the public OHMS that the auctioneers Walton and Tatham will on various days sell derelict stock, i.e. confiscated stock, in Estcourt, Ladysmith, Wasbank, Newcastle, Acton Homes and Greytown without reserve. Altogether 412 horses, 6 mules, 2 006 head of cattle, 1 625 goats, 11 800 sheep, 60 pigs. Scab and lungsickness is present."¹⁴⁹ At other times the curator bonis advertised the stock to be sold as well as their brands. Owners were also informed in the advertisements that should they want to claim their own animals they "must apply for permission to inspect the same,

146. PAR, PM 18: Request for assistance by MC Cronjé, JS van Niekerk, JJ Smit and LP Adendorff for the return of their cattle, 19.6.1900-15.8.1900.

147. PAR, AGO I/7/43: Application by LC Koch and AJ Nel to have their livestock released, 6.8.1900-9.8.1900; AGO I/7/43: Applications and affidavits in the case of LC Koch and AJ Nel, 2.8.1900-14.8.1900.

148. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Application by JDJ de Necker for the proceeds of sale of his sheep, 13.11.1900-24.4.1901.

149. *Natal Mercury*, 17.9.1900; 25.9.1900.

and, in case any are identified, must forward a “Form of Affidavit in Support for Application for Release of Stock.” If livestock was not claimed by a certain date, the sale went ahead.¹⁵⁰

For Natal Afrikaners to claim their animals from amongst the derelict stock advertised proved to be very difficult. Many of those affected were either in prison or had been banned to Pietermaritzburg. Coenraad de Wet of Newcastle for instance saw the advertisement for the sale of his livestock while in the Eshowe Prison.¹⁵¹ Some, however, mostly loyalists, were fortunate enough to receive permission to attend derelict stock sales or search such stock to identify their own.¹⁵² AJG Meyer managed to get a pass to search the derelict stock at Wasbank and recovered 50 head of cattle but no sheep,¹⁵³ while JA Landman managed to get 806 of his sheep back,¹⁵⁴ and AL Jansen 36 sheep and 31 head of cattle.¹⁵⁵ After lengthy correspondence, PRN Vermaak likewise received a pass to attend a derelict stock sale.¹⁵⁶ He recovered 13 sheep.¹⁵⁷

Like the earlier sales of Afrikaner livestock organized by the military, the derelict stock sales drew opportunists, bargain hunters, farmers, entrepreneurs and the like. As a result Newcastle was crowded on the day the sale took place in early October 1900.¹⁵⁸ These sales usually offered a range of animals and other odds and ends as can be gathered from the sales list of the Acton Homes auction held on 10 October 1900: sheep were sold @ 13/3; goats were sold @ 21/; oxen were sold @ between £9 and £17 and horses were sold @ between £8 and £19. Also sold on the day were pigs, geese, fowls, ploughs, yokes and harrows. In total the sale yielded £1 943.2.6.¹⁵⁹ A similar sale held in Newcastle on 15 December 1900 grossed £3 560.2.6. On this occasion 1 130 sheep, 35 goats, 15 mules, 26 horses and 297 head of cattle were on offer. The money earned through these sales was paid over to the master of the Supreme Court for safe keeping.¹⁶⁰

In the light of the above sales it was not surprising that rumours of large takings at these events made the rounds, for example that the auctioneer, Mr Francis, allegedly took £20 000 during the sale at Dundee.¹⁶¹ This was, however, hardly the case since by January 1901 derelict stock sales only

150. *Natal Witness*, 27.4.1901.

151. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 8.10.1901, p.533.

152. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Letter Carter and Robinson to magistrate Dundee, 9.6.1900.

153. PAR, CSO 2894: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AJG Meyer, 10.12.1901.

154. PAR, CSO 2888: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JA Landman, 11.2.1901.

155. PAR, CSO 2886: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AL Jansen, 21.10.1900.

156. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to PRN Vermaak, 3.9.1900.

157. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by PRN Vermaak, 11.10.1900 and 9.1.1903.

158. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.10.1900, pp.356-360.

159. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Account of sales by Walton and Tatham for the curator bonis of derelict stock at Acton Homes, 10.10.1900.

160. PAR, NT 93: Account for the derelict stock sale at Newcastle, 15.12.1900.

161. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 5.10.1900, pp.356-360.

amounted to £46 000.¹⁶² The sales of derelict stock came to an end in February 1902 when the depot on the farm Vrede in the Newcastle district was closed down.¹⁶³

Those who gained most from these sales, according to Foy Vermaak, a descendant of Natal Afrikaners who had their stock sold, were English farmers from the Natal Midlands who became wealthy from the healthy and well-bred stock they bought at reasonable prices.¹⁶⁴ Vermaak's claim is substantiated when the prices fetched by derelict stock is compared to that of pre-war stock sales.¹⁶⁵

In stark contrast were the raw emotions, described by Missionary Prozesky, expressed by the Northern Natal Afrikaners who suffered incredible economic losses through these sales: "How many sighs, how many oaths, how many prayers, how many curses have not ascended to, the Lord."¹⁶⁶ Little wonder then that the derelict stock sales pitted neighbours against each other. JL Colling had some cattle removed by African scouts which were eventually sold as derelict stock. Amongst the cattle sold were two bullocks which he spotted in the possession of a Mr Millar. Colling demanded these back but Millar refused to adhere to his request. When Colling took his case to the Police he was told that he had no claim over the animals.¹⁶⁷

For several years after the end of the war the money from the derelict stock sales, a rumoured £50 000, remained untouched. In time this amount shrunk to a little over £30 000 because, according to JC Vermaak, "mot en roes" managed to get into the treasure chest. The first real contestation for this money took place when a former rebel, CJ Uys of Newcastle, applied to the Supreme Court to have £242.15.6 paid to him for the loss of livestock to the military from his farm Dumblaine.¹⁶⁸ Although Uys failed in his attempt, his application was groundbreaking in two ways: the principal was established that convicted rebels could not be denied access to the derelict stock sales money, and appropriate legislation was needed to administer the fund.

By 1904 "Boereverenigings" were formed on the Biggarsberg and in the Newcastle district to amongst other things, manage the process of gaining access to the money. On the Biggarsberg the driving forces were PRN and JC Vermaak.¹⁶⁹ Their pressure, as well as that of other members of the "Boereverenigings," led to the constitution of the Derelict Stock Fund by Act 22. of 1905.¹⁷⁰ Notices

162. PRO, CO 179/217: Letter Governor W Hely-Hutchinson to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 4.1.1900.

163. PAR, CSO 1699: Statement by the curator bonis regarding the closure of a derelict stock depot, 24.2.1902.

164. Interview with Foy Vermaak conducted at Helpmekaar, 10.7.2000.

165. *Natal Witness*, January-April, 1899.

166. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 25.9.1900, p.330.

167. PAR, CSO 2871: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JL Colling, 2.4.1902.

168. PAR, NT 93: Summons by CJ Uys for payment of proceeds of sale of derelict stock, 26.9.1903-20.2.1904.

169. PAR, MJPW 130: Correspondence between JC and PRN Vermaak and the minister of justice, 9.1.1905-22.3.1905.

170. PAR, NCP 5/3/13: Act 22 of 1905, circa 1905; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak,

of the creation of the fund appeared in the *Government Gazette*, *Newcastle Advertiser* and the *Dundee Courier*.¹⁷¹

The refunding of the impoverished Natal Afrikaners from the fund did not prove to be an easy task and was obstructed by bickering and politics. The minister of justice, Thomas Watt, a Newcastle gentleman well-known to Northern Natal Afrikaners, apparently agreed that they were unjustly treated by the military during the war but he was not prepared to alter clause 11 of Act 22 of 1905 which stated that when money was accepted from the Derelict Stock Fund, all rights to claim from the Imperial Government would be waived. This deeply annoyed the Northern Natal Afrikaners, but they had no choice other than to accept the conditions.¹⁷²

HC Koch, the former magistrate of Greytown, Afrikaner sympathiser and then master of the Supreme Court, was appointed as commissioner to the fund.¹⁷³ His task was to act on the initial report regarding the fund prepared by Sir TK Murray. He held numerous meetings throughout the northern part of the Colony to explain the process and dealt with applications.¹⁷⁴ In his official report Koch somewhat unsympathetically shed some light on the duty of dividing the available £32 699 fairly: "...the task has been a very labourious one, and I am afraid to a certain extent a thankless one. Of course I could only apportion the amount in hand, and I have done so as fairly as I could, but from my knowledge of the Dutch people I may say that nothing could ever satisfy them but payment in full for every beast, fowl, pigeon, etc., they have lost either directly or indirectly during the war."¹⁷⁵

Despite the act only allowing livestock claims, demands were submitted for poultry, maize, furniture, dogs, and fines imposed on rebels. A further problem was that Afrikaners could only claim for stock which was taken to a derelict stock camp and sold there. Numerous Afrikaners, however, insisted on claiming for all stock taken by the military including those sold by the Imperial auctioneers, Raw and Co, used by the military for transport, and slaughtered to feed Buller's Army of 27 000. Apart from dealing with these claims, Koch also had to manage bogus and inflated claims amongst the 358 submissions. Eventually 78 claims were disallowed for a range of reasons but mostly for lack of proof that the livestock was sold as derelict stock. The 280 accepted claims amounted to £228 687 or an average of £816 each. These included claims for 310 horses, 2 208 head of cattle, 22 192 sheep and 5 143 goats. Koch, however, only had £32 377.5.6 to divide, which meant that each claimant received £115 on average, a far cry from the £520 which Afrikaner loyalist

pp.44-45, 1941.

171. PAR, MJPW 131: Notices of publication of the Derelict Stock Fund Act, 27.7.1905.

172. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 22.6.1905.

173. PAR, NT 106: Appointment of HC Koch as commissioner of the Derelict Stock Fund, 26.7.1905-26.9.1905.

174. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/17: Letter assistant under secretary to magistrate Klip River district, 5.10.1905.

175. PAR, NT 113: Documents relating to the Derelict Stock Fund, 1905-1906.

had received from the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission. Of the money paid out, the bulk of £21 500 went to claimants of the Newcastle and Dundee districts.¹⁷⁶ In the end Koch believed that the distributions were made in the “fairest and most conscientious manner”.¹⁷⁷ This view was not necessarily shared by everybody and enquiries regarding the fund were still received in 1908¹⁷⁸ and 1909.¹⁷⁹ However, the payments made must have gone a long way towards halting the rampant poverty amongst Afrikaners in Northern Natal.

12.5 Issues surrounding Afrikaner owned land

With confiscation of Natal Afrikaner farms ruled out by the Natal Government, the authorities, both civil and military, had to decide what to do with the unoccupied landed property which belonged to this group.

One of the uses the military envisaged for unoccupied Natal Afrikaner farms was to accommodate surrendered burghers. As early as July 1900 General Redvers Buller requested permission from the Natal Government to send hendsoppers and their stock, as a measure to protect them from fellow Republicans, to reside on Natal Afrikaner farms near Wasbank. At the time of Buller’s request he had already dispatched a Transvaler, Bernardus Johnstone, the brother of a Natal MLA, from Volksrust to Newcastle with the view of placing him on the farm Bergvlei near Wasbank. Johnstone, who brought 2 700 sheep, 200 mixed cattle and 12 horses, with him was, however, unwilling to reside on Bergvlei because he considered the grazing inferior. He gathered several witnesses, including JJ Kemp and ISJ Meyer of Dundee, to convince the military that the appointed farm was not suitable for sheep. His objection was successful and the military allowed him to settle on the farm Jackalsfontein near Hattinghspruit.¹⁸⁰

The Natal Government had a range of concerns regarding Buller’s planned placement of surrendered burghers on Natal Afrikaner farms. One such concern was that they had earmarked the Afrikaner farms as grazing for the oxen commandeered from farmers south of the Tugela. This was a necessary measure as the crown lands did not provide sufficient grazing to the oxen who were prevented from being returned south of the Tugela in an attempt to halt the spread of rinderpest and lungsickness.¹⁸¹ A second concern the Natal Government had was the fact that they had no legal authority over land belonging to people suspected of treason. Suspected rebels could furthermore be released on bail or acquitted and be allowed to return to their farms only to find them occupied by hendsoppers. It was

176. *Ibid.*

177. PAR, NT 113: Documents relating to the Derelict Stock Fund, 1905-1906; PAR, CSO 3037: List of stock claimed from the Derelict Stock Fund, 1904.

178. PAR, CSO 1851: Claims by GM and JJH Dekker for cattle lost to the Imperial authorities, 28.2.1908-3.3.1908.

179. PAR, NT 148: Enquiry by DJ van Niekerk on his claim to the Derelict Stock Fund, 26.6.1909-28.6.1909.

180. PAR, MJPW 77: Correspondence regarding the request by B Johnstone to settle on the farm Jackalsfontein, 5.8.1900-14.8.1900.

181. PAR, CSO 1690: Minute paper regarding the introduction of livestock from the OFS, 9.11.1901-11.11.1901

also a concern that loyalists who had temporarily abandoned their farms out of fear could return only to find that Transvalers had been placed on it. Another problem was that Buller's placement of surrendered burghers meant that some contract would have to be concluded with rebels for the use of their land, a step viewed as highly undesirable by the Natal Government. Concerns also existed that public opinion would disapprove of the settling of burghers rather than loyal colonists on rebel farms. Lastly the proposal was frowned upon out of fear that cattle diseases might be introduced from the Transvaal.¹⁸²

The Natal Government, however, made it clear that should the military choose to ignore their objections they would not resist, but compensation claims could be expected from individuals as a result of finding surrendered burghers residing on their farms. The solution to the concerns expressed by the Natal Government, as far as the military was concerned, was to set a precedent and charge Bernardus Johnstone rent of £10 per month for residing on an unoccupied Afrikaner farm. In addition he had to undertake to deal with any compensation claims that might be forthcoming relating to his residence on Jackalsfontein. The rent was, as instructed by Major-General Wolfe-Murray, paid into the account of the chief paymaster in Pietermaritzburg.¹⁸³

Despite the misgivings of the Natal Government other surrendered burghers were soon settled on the farms of Natal Afrikaners. Piet van Niekerk who worked as a "secret spy" for the British at the outbreak of the war was given permission to reside on the farm of Piet Potgieter near Van Tonder's Pass between Dundee and Helpmekaar,¹⁸⁴ while JZ Moolman, whose son was a scout with the column of General Spence, was settled on a farm in the Dundee district.¹⁸⁵ Loyalist Natal Afrikaners also got in on the act and AL Jansen's request to run 300 cattle on the farm Blinkwater, Dundee, belonging to the rebel leader DC (Dirk) Uys, met with favour. The commandant for Dundee wanted Jansen's £15, as a means of preventing Uys from accessing the money, paid into the colonial treasury. The Natal Government disagreed and made it very clear that: "It is very undesirable that this government should mix itself up in this matter...it is preferable that the Imperial Government acting under the powers of Martial Law should receive payment..."¹⁸⁶

The Natal Government remained steadfast in its view that it had no right to deal in any way whatsoever with unoccupied Afrikaner farms. It was difficult to stand firm in this decision as

182. PAR, GH 544: Correspondence pertaining to the request by General R Buller to place surrendered burghers on abandoned rebel farms, 25.7.1900-31.7.1900; PRO, CO 179/213: Correspondence pertaining to the request by General R Buller to place surrendered burghers on abandoned rebel farms, 25.7.1900-31.7.1900.

183. PAR, MJPW 77: Correspondence regarding the request by B Johnstone to settle on the farm Jackalsfontein, 5.8.1900-14.8.1900.

184. PAR, 1/UMS 30: Correspondence regarding joiner Piet van Niekerk, 15.4.1902-26.4.1902; SB Spies, p.187.

185. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Correspondence regarding the return of the family Moolman to Wakkerstroom, 19.6.1902-24.6.1902.

186. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/8: Correspondence regarding the running of stock on the farm of DC Uys, 11.8.1900-21.8.1900.

numerous English Natalians had their eyes on the rebel farms as can be gleaned from the following instances: E Cruikshank enquired from the Natal Government if the farms of suspected rebels would be confiscated on their arrest as he was interested in acquiring one.¹⁸⁷ A certain WJ Leslie of Chieveley in turn explained that “four young colonials” were looking for farms in the Newcastle district,¹⁸⁸ while an unemployed former Natal Carbineer, RWF Collins, wanted to try his hand at farming on one of the rebel farms in the Dundee district,¹⁸⁹ AH Cuming asked to occupy the farm Knostrope, near Helpmekaar, plus the property of NJ Vermaak with a view to purchasing same should the government decide to sell rebel farms,¹⁹⁰ while WRA White requested permission to “run stock on or cultivate a Government farm which has been sold to a Rebel and which is at present lying idle.”¹⁹¹ Not even the six colonists removed by the military because of constant commando activities from the foothills of the Drakensberg and placed on the farms of Natal Afrikaners, could get permission from the Natal Government to cultivate the land.¹⁹² Failing to receive permission to cultivate the Afrikaner farms they resided upon, had negative economic consequences as WR and AS Bowes of the farm Endsel discovered. They were unable to meet the instalments due on their own farm and had to request deferment to 1903.¹⁹³

At grassroots level the policy regarding the economic use of unoccupied Afrikaner farms was much more fluid. Noticing that the lands on the farm of CJ de Villiers in the Umsinga district had been cultivated, HW Wohlberg assumed that grazing would be available for rent from the government. His request was, however, rejected by the local magistrate, Thomas Maxwell, apparently because he had sufficient grazing available to him on his own farm. In reality the request by Wohlberg was turned down because of a feud regarding oranges with Maxwell.¹⁹⁴ As a result another local German farmer, Johannes Dedekind, less than a month later received permission to graze his cattle on the farm.¹⁹⁵ In the Klip River district PS Twyman was granted permission by Magistrate Bennett, by order of the military, to reside with his livestock on the farm Up George, Ladysmith, the property of his neighbour Mrs FI Meyer. Twyman could also reap the crops on the farm for the military, keeping half as his reward. The return of Meyer led to a series of complaints. She, backed up by the testimony of several of her African labourers, accused Twyman of not only reaping her crops but also of cutting wood on her farm and removing large quantities of tools, four bales of angora hair,

187. PAR, SGO III/I/141: Letter E Cruikshank to surveyor-general, 28.7.1900.

188. PAR, SGO III/I/143: Letter B Creydt to surveyor-general, 4.12.1900.

189. PAR, PM 19: Request by RWF Collins to be allowed to occupy an abandoned rebel farm, 19.10.1900-25.10.1900.

190. PAR, MJPW 76: Application by AH Cuming to occupy Knostrope with the view of purchasing it, 11.6.1900-19.6.1900. The author spent a large part of his youth on this farm.

191. PAR, CSO 1678: Request by WRA White to run stock and cultivate an unoccupied farm, 4.6.1901-14.6.1901.

192. PAR, CSO 1689: Correspondence regarding the placement of loyalists on rebel farms and their right to reap and sow crops, 5.11.1901-19.11.1901.

193. PAR, SGO III/I/153: Letter Walton and Tatham to surveyor-general, 4.7.1902.

194. PAR, 1/UMS 30: Request by HW Wohlberg to rent the grazing on the farms of CJ de Villiers, 29.5.1901-10.6.1901

195. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to Stock Inspector A Klingenberg, 6.8.1901.

curtains and furniture. Her accusation had little effect.¹⁹⁶

With the Natal Government being unwilling to become involved in the management of unoccupied rebel farms and the military renting some out for the benefit of the motherland, there was much room for exploitation of the farms of absentee Afrikaners. Under the circumstances the Natal Government complained that “considerable areas of unoccupied lands are being used for grazing by persons who have not asked for permission either from the military authorities or from the civil government.”¹⁹⁷ An example of such a person was R Boshoff who entered the Umsinga district without permission with the intention of settling on the farm of J van Tonder.¹⁹⁸

In the light of such opportunism the Natal Government could not maintain its tough stance and by April 1901 many of the arguments previously offered were also no longer valid. As a result they relented and adhered to a request from the military to allow hendsoppers and their stock from Volksrust, Utrecht, and Wakkerstroom to be accommodated in Northern Natal during the winter of 1901. The only condition was that the animals needed to be disease free and that all the cattle were to be subjected to the Lung sickness Act.¹⁹⁹

Despite making this decision the Natal Government remained steadfast in its resolve not to give people occupational or any other rights on uninhabited Afrikaner farms.²⁰⁰ The military could, however, now place people without impunity on farms as Afrikaners from opposing political persuasions discovered. WS Naude against whom no treasonable evidence existed, was removed from his farm and not allowed to return because the military had placed surrendered burghers on his property.²⁰¹ Similarly TJ Botha, the brother of General Louis Botha, could not visit his farms near Newcastle as they were occupied by people placed there by the military.²⁰² The experience of the convicted rebel Gerhardus Marthinus Dekker of Indumeni, Dundee, was even more traumatic. On completion of his sentence he was allowed to return home only to find a Mr Crawley, who was taking care of military stock, residing on it. Crawley had also plowed and sown maize which he intended to reap. Dekker's discussions with both Crawley and the local commandant proved fruitless. A petition by Dekker's agent, WG Griffin, to Prime Minister Hime did little to resolve the matter and Dekker was informed that the military still required his farm and would keep on renting it

196. PAR, 1/LDS 1/7/9: Correspondence regarding the charges brought by Mrs IJ Meyer against PS Twyman, 20.2.1901-2.4.1901.

197. PAR, CSO 1678: Request by WRA White to run his stock on unoccupied rebel farms, 4.6.1901-14.6.1901.

198. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to R Boshoff, 13.9.1901.

199. PAR, GH 534: Correspondence regarding a request by the military to allow surrendered burghers and their stock into Natal, 26.4.1901-27.4.1901.

200. PAR, CSO 1678: Request by WRA White to run his stock on unoccupied rebel farms, 4.6.1901-14.6.1901; PAR, SGO III/I/146: Enquiry by EH Mahon on what is to happen to the farm Koodoo Pass, 21.6.1901.

201. PRO, CO 179/213: Documents regarding the protection of livestock belonging to surrendered burghers, 27.7.1900-20.8.1900.

202. NAR, SOP 13: Refusal of application by TJ Botha to visit his farms near Newcastle, 28.6.1901.

at £5 per month.²⁰³

Actions such as these, the settlement of hendsoppers on Natal Afrikaner farms, and the unwillingness of the military to allow his daughter to return to Dundee from Greytown prompted the ultra-loyal August Jansen to request that “loyal British subjects be trusted as well or better.”²⁰⁴

The residential rights given by the military also proved very problematic to the civil authorities in the medium term. The Dundee magistrate explained this in early 1903: “A number of ex-Burghers were permitted, by the military authorities, to reside on the farms of absentees who retreated with the Boers...a good deal of confusion of property and rights has resulted which is left to the Civil authorities to endeavour to resolve and settle.”²⁰⁵

The war not only had a serious impact on the economic use of Natal Afrikaner-owned farms but also on the continued ownership thereof. Many struggled to keep up the payments on the government farms they had purchased, while others had to sell their farms. At the same time some English colonists attempted to get their hands on farms belonging to Natal Afrikaners. B Creydt for example asked whether the farms of Afrikaners who had not paid their instalments would be thrown open for purchasing.²⁰⁶ English Natalians were still petitioned against land ownership by Afrikaners as late as February 1902 when G Lawrence suggested that Afrikaners had to buy their government farms with immediate effect; that they should only be allowed to buy 1 000 acres; and that the majority of the land be transferred to “industrious English farmers.”²⁰⁷ The Natal Government again made its position clear: rebels could not be discriminated against by imposing conditions of purchase,²⁰⁸ and government farms would only become available should rebels not fulfill their financial obligations. Until such time the Natal Government exercised no control over Afrikaner land.²⁰⁹

The eyeing of Afrikaner farms during the war was not a consequence of a shortage of land, but rather a desire to get hold of farms already developed. In the Klip River county 120 000 acres of government land was available for sale and in the Weenen county 180 000. In total 12 million acres were attainable in the Colony of Natal by prospective farmers. This land was normally sold in areas not exceeding 2 000 acres by public auction at 10/- per acre and had to be paid in 20 annual interest

203. PAR, PM 24: Correspondence regarding the placement of Crawley by the military on the farm of GM Dekker, 26.10.1901-12.11.1901.

204. PAR, AGO I/8/79: Letter A Jansen to attorney-general, 17.5.1901.

205. PAR, NCP 9/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

206. PAR, SGO III/1/142: Letter WJ Leslie to surveyor-general, 15.9.1900.

207. PAR, MJPW 91: Correspondence with G Lawrence regarding quit rent farms in possession of Afrikaners, 17.2.1902.

208. PAR, SGO III/1/42: Enquiry on the payments due by Solomon Maritz, 4.10.1900.

209. PAR, CSO 1678: Enquiry by WHA White on what the Natal Government intends to do with unpaid rebel farms, 4.6.1901-13.6.1901.

free instalments. Two of the conditions attached to the sale conditions were that the land had to be occupied and that permanent buildings had to be erected.²¹⁰

Making annual mortgage payments proved very difficult during the war. By 1 July 1900, £60 956.5.8. was still outstanding on land sold on the deferred payment system. A very large portion of this amount was owed by residents of Northern Natal. Many of the defaulters were assumed to still be on commando with the Boers since demands forwarded were constantly being returned from the dead letters office. Others were willfully withholding payments fearing that their farms would nevertheless be confiscated and down payments be lost.²¹¹ With the consent of the attorney-general, the surveyor-general was given permission to, act against defaulters, despite the existence of Martial Law.²¹² Action meant the delivery of a document stating the arrears amount and a threat that if the person in question failed to pay he or she would be sued for the outstanding amount.²¹³

Prior to the war, receiving deferment on payments was not difficult. AM Cronjé and PW Huyzer, both later convicted of treason, received “two-years extension on payment of interest” in June 1899,²¹⁴ while the rebel who received the heaviest punishment, CS Botha, was granted extensions in 1897 and 1898.²¹⁵ This privilege was extended during the war to loyalist Natal Afrikaners not convicted of treason. For example, NJ Robbertse of Smaldeel, Estcourt, and AS Vos of Land’s End, Newcastle, were granted deferments.²¹⁶ Similarly Ignatius de Waal of Lombard’s Kop, Ladysmith, received extension on payments up to the sitting of the Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission in the area because he was imprisoned by the British forces in Ladysmith during the siege.²¹⁷

Rebels received far less sympathy. JC Adendorff of the farm Bradford near Newcastle for example was denied an extension and ordered to pay the arrears amount.²¹⁸ Consistent with this policy, the rebel JL Fourie of Glastonbury, Newcastle, was instructed to pay the two installments he owed with

210. PAR, MJPW 75: Minute paper regarding crown lands for sale in Natal, 28.5.1900.

211. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.7.1901.

212. PAR, SGO III/1/42: Request by Surveyor-General J Masson to proceed against those who defaulted on their payments on government land, 3.10.1900-5.10.1900.

213. PAR, SGO III/I/151: Letter GL Fraser to surveyor-general, 14.2.1902.

214. PAR, SGO III/I/136: Applications by P and AM Cronjé and PW Huyser for extension on payments due, 27-28.6.1899.

215. PAR, SGO III/1/118: Letter CS Botha to minister of lands and works, 2.6.1897-26.6.1897; PAR, SGO III/1/127: Application by CS Botha for instalments due on the farm Dry Cut, 25.5.1898.

216. PAR, SGO III/1/142: Letter T Hellett to surveyor-general, 20.8.1900; SGO III/I/142: Letter AS Vos to surveyor-general, 20.8.1900.

217. PAR, SGO III/1/42: Request by FI de Waal to defer payments on the farms Goedgeloof and Ignisdale, 29.6.1900-13.8.1900.

218. PAR, SGO III/I/142: Application by JC Adendorff for an extension on the payments due by him, 9.7.1900-7.8.1900; SGO III/I/142: Application by Mrs LM du Preez for an extension of the payments due by her husband, 12.7.1900-17.7.1900.

immediate effect.²¹⁹ The Natal Government's policy was non-negotiable and all rebels were expected to adhere to the conditions of their contracts of purchase and to pay their instalments as they became due.²²⁰ Not even a request from prison in Pietermaritzburg by JM Maritz that interest be added to his arrears on Springboklaagte, Newcastle, was accepted.²²¹

Some Natal Afrikaners managed to make their payments despite the war. DJ Opperman, grandfather of the renowned Afrikaans poet of the same name, managed to, on 6 February 1901 and 8 February 1902, make payments to the value of £27.13.3. on the farm Geduld No 2.²²² Despite numerous economic setbacks 12 Afrikaners from the Dundee district managed to pay their instalments for the year ending 31 December 1901. Most, however, were loyalists whose suffering during the war was less severe.²²³

Economic partnerships between Afrikaners involving landownership also floundered because of the war. PC Nienaber and LJJ Bester were co-owners of the farm Landmeters Draai, Dundee. The former, who had the responsibility of paying the instalments due to the government, joined the Boers. Consequently a summons was issued against Bester.²²⁴ Another partnership that did not function as planned because of the war was the one between JH Potgieter and Mrs IJ Meyer, co-owners of the farm Groot Geluk, Newcastle. Unbeknown to each other, both made payments on the farm, resulting in an overpayment of £75 according to Potgieter, a fact disputed by the government.²²⁵

Natal Afrikaners who could not pay their instalments on government farms lost their properties in a variety of ways. One way of losing your farm was when someone else held a bond over your farm. P van Breda held a bond of £1 360 over JTM Joubert's farms Darwin and Cliffdale, Newcastle. Joubert had fled with the Boers and had taken all his stock with him. While Van Breda was prepared to pay the outstanding instalments of £17.12.1. on the farm Darwin to have it ceded to him, he was not prepared to do so if rebel properties were to be confiscated. The authorities were, however, not prepared to cede the properties to Van Breda since only a small amount was outstanding.²²⁶

The second manner in which Natal Afrikaners could lose their farms was by selling it. Such a move

219. PAR, SGO III/1/147: Correspondence regarding the instalments owed by JL Fourie, 25.7.1900-27.7.1900.

220. PAR, SGO III/I/143: Correspondence pertaining to the question by E Cruikshank whether OFS burghers are allowed to suspend payments on crown lands, 1.12.1900-4.12.1900.

221. PAR, SGO III/1/149: Correspondence regarding the instalments owed by JM Maritz, 11.12.1901.

222. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/9: Letter DJ Opperman to magistrate, Dundee, 6.1.1901; 1/DUN 3/1/10: Letter DJ Opperman to magistrate Dundee, 7.2.1902; PAR, SGO III/I/43: Letter D Turnbull to surveyor-general, 25.10.1900.

223. PAR, 1/DUN 3/1/10: Letter Tatham and Tandy to magistrate, Dundee, 30.1.1902.

224. PAR, SGO III/I/150: Letter W Black to Surveyor-General JL Masson, 25.2.1902.

225. PAR, SGO III/I/146: Correspondence regarding the payments on Groot Geluk, 6.5.1901-10.5.1901.

226. PAR, SGO III/1/142: Enquiry by P van Breda on the cession of the farms Darwin and Cliffdale, 1.9.1900-3.9.1900.

was generally caused by the economic difficulties they found themselves in as a result of the war. CT Vermaak who was in exile, first in Holland and then in German South-West Africa, wanted to sell his farms Dondo and Stonehill near Umsinga on “account of severe losses sustained during the war.” A cynical Vermaak commented: “I will not need them any more during my life.”²²⁷ An additional motivation for Vermaak was the fear that rebel farms would eventually be confiscated resulting in a tremendous economic loss. Such losses, it was argued, could be minimised by selling their farms.²²⁸

According to Surveyor-General Masson especially “men who have been tried for treason are getting rid of their farms by sale.”²²⁹ Such sales were at the time prompted by the fines imposed by the Special Court. JJ and PJ Kemp of the Dundee district were, apart from a prison sentence, fined £500 and £200 respectively. The fines must have placed a heavy burden on them for they sold the farm Vlaklaagte to a Mr Havemann of Umvoti.²³⁰

These economic difficulties imposed on Natal Afrikaners were easily exploited by opportunists, speculators and entrepreneurs. One such person was Ludwig Ohlsen²³¹ who was described by the Natal Police as “vindictively anti-British in Boer company, and vice versa in British company, result produced that he is now the possessor of a number of reputed coal farms”,²³² and “the man has been mixed up in several very shady transactions in connection with loot stock”²³³ as well as being “a cattle dealer associated with the Military Authorities.”²³⁴ The depths of economic despair on which Ohlsen capitalised are illustrated by the sale of the farm Ouklip, Dundee, by rebels JC Botha and HG Jordaan. The men owed just £22 on the farm and were collectively fined £100.²³⁵ The reasoning behind men such as these selling so readily to Ohlsen is explained by two other rebels, CP Cronjé and PC Döhne, who sold the farm Zuluknoll to Ohlsen for £900: “we were being pressed for

227. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog with notes by CT Vermaak, 9.4.1902.

228. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 24.7.1901.

229. PAR, MJPW 91: Correspondence with G Lawrence regarding quit rent farms in possession of Afrikaners, 17.2.1902.

230. PAR, SGO III/1/149: Correspondence regarding the cession of the farm Vlaklaagte to Havemann, 16.12.1901-16.1.1902.

231. The dubious wartime economic activities of Ohlsen, originally from Heidelberg in the Transvaal, meant that he ended up in several court cases. See: PAR, Archives of the Registrar of the Supreme Court (hereafter RSC) 1/5/168: JC Kippen versus L Ohlsen; RSC 1/5/172: L Ohlsen versus Williamson and Gawler; RSC 1/5/172: L Ohlsen versus J Emery; RSC 1/5/172: L Ohlsen versus RA Faux.

232. Possible mineral rights was a very lucrative prospect for Natal Afrikaners. See for example: DAR, 1/MEL III/2/8: Agreement between LJR Kritzingler and CAS Yonge 12.6.1901, in which Kritzingler sold his rights for several thousand £.

233. PAR, SGO III/I/150: Permission requested for the transfer of the farm Ouklip, 10.1.1902-1.2.1902.

234. PAR, SGO III/I/147: Correspondence regarding the cession of the farm Black Bank to L Ohlsen and then to Dukes, 24.7.1901-20.8.1901.

235. PAR, SGO III/I/150: Permission requested for the transfer of the farm Ouklip, 10.1.1902-1.2.1902.

outstanding debts.”²³⁶ Similarly PRN Vermaak sold the farm Black Bank to Ohlsen possibly as a result of receiving a second reminder from the colonial treasurer that he owed £22.16.²³⁷ The speculative nature of Ohlsen’s transactions is borne out by the fact that he immediately resold Black Bank to a Mr Jukes of Johannesburg.²³⁸

Sales such as the above were not easy to conclude as the Natal authorities under the leadership of the minister of lands and works who was also the prime minister, the registrar of deeds and the attorney-general, either vetoed the sales or prolonged the process when people with Afrikaans names were involved.²³⁹ The idea behind this was not to protect Afrikaner landowners but because cession was a form of contract, the government did not want to be part of transactions involving parties who were in arms against the king.²⁴⁰ Furthermore, it was a measure to ensure that the fines imposed for high treason, and instalments due on government farms, were paid. A point in case was the delay of the sale of the farm Droogdaal, Newcastle, by NM and GM Dekker to Enoch Warwick. The Natal authorities only allowed the sale to proceed after two outstanding instalments to the value of £31.0.6. and a fine of £150 imposed on NM Dekker, were paid.²⁴¹ Likewise, CJ Uys was only allowed to sell his farm after paying the fine of £20 imposed on him for high treason.²⁴²

Despite Natal Afrikaners having to deal with continued economic hardship and being impoverished, historian Verne Harris, in studying Klip River county farm records for the period 1900-1910, claims that they loathed selling their land. In a more specific study dealing with 30 Afrikaner-owned farms from the Klip River county, he found that only three changed hands during this period and of these only one was sold to an English person.²⁴³ The truth is most probably somewhere in between. For the first year after the war, according to the records of the surveyor-general, eight farms were sold in Northern Natal by Afrikaners. Of these, five were purchased by Englishmen and three by Afrikaners. A further four Afrikaner farms were on offer to any prospective buyer.²⁴⁴

236. PAR, SGO III/I/150: Proposal by Bale and Green that the farm Zuurknoll be ceded to L Ohlsen, 23.1.1902-6.2.1902.

237. PAR, 1/UMS 38: Letter Magistrate T Maxwell, Umsinga, to PRN Vermaak, 16.8.1901.

238. PAR, SGO III/I/147: Correspondence regarding the cession of the farm Black Bank to L Ohlsen and then to Dukes, 24.7.1901-20.8.1901.

239. PAR, AGO I/8/72: Lists of suspected rebels forwarded to the registrar of deeds, 16.7.1900.

240. PAR, PM 30: Enquiry by T Watt about the reasons for the difficulty of getting government consent for the cession of Afrikaner owned land, 26.6.1902-17.7.1902.

241. PAR, SGO III/I/148: Correspondence regarding the cession of the farm Droogdaal to E Warwick, 14.9.1901-26.11.1901.

242. PAR, AGO I/8/82: Letter surveyor-general to minister of lands and works, 14.1.1902; PAR, AGO, 1/8/82: Letter attorney-general to minister of lands and works, 18.4.1902.

243. VS Harris, p.53.

244. PAR, SGO III/1/154: Application by AG Spies to cede Last Chance to TH Brokensha, 7.6.1902; SGO III/1/154: Letter Watt and Pike to surveyor-general, 1.7.1902; SGO III/1/154: Application on behalf of CJ Uys to cede Vaalkrantz to SW Reynolds, 25.7.1902; SGO III/1/154: Application by DJ Huyser to transfer Paddadors to HJ Niewenhuizen, 11.9.1902; SGO III/1/154: Application by PCJ Nienaber to cede Landmetersdraai to DWH Tandy, 19.8.1902; SGO III/1/154: Application to transfer Bernard and Byron from A Joubert to AH van Dyk, 12.9.1902; SGO III/1/154:

The largest proposed land sale in the immediate post-war period came from the extended Vermaak family of Helpmekaar. At first CT Vermaak, then still in exile in German South-West Africa, attempted despite protests, to sell two farms by public auction.²⁴⁵ This was partly successful as only one farm was sold. The Vermaaks then offered all 12 their farms, 23 000 acres in total, for sale to the Natal Government who declined the offer after due consideration.²⁴⁶ The thinking behind this was possible emigration from Natal. In time some members of the Vermaak family did move to the Vet River area in then ORC where their attempts at making a fresh start failed.²⁴⁷

12.6 The Umvoti Afrikaners fight back

Was it then not possible for Natal Afrikaners to fight back economically? Unlike in the Cape Colony Afrikaners in Natal did not have the economic muscle to retaliate by, for example, effectively boycotting English-owned businesses. The exception was in the Afrikaner stronghold of Umvoti county with Greytown as the most important town where local Afrikaners attempted to initiate a boycott of English businesses, and created a cooperative store (Boeren Maatschappij). This initiative troubled Attorney-General Bale who requested Inspector Keating of the Natal Police to investigate. Keating reported that the plan was taking shape under the chairmanship of Gert J van Rooyen of Pinedale, that land had been acquired; and that the design of a building had been submitted to the local board for approval. The only problem according to Keating, was that the monied section of the Afrikaner community was unwilling to support the venture. Consequently the envisaged venture failed and the boycott was not realised. The Afrikaners therefore still supported the shops of Ireland and Co and especially Handley and Sons. The only Afrikaner shop to open in Greytown during this time was the chemist of Thos Hannah but despite this Afrikaners continued to support the chemist of CW Handley.

As part of their attempt to create a commercial establishment free of English influence the Afrikaners of Umvoti also intended, despite the fact that an Afrikaner J Hansmeyer was already practising in Greytown, to bring an Afrikaner lawyer from the Cape Colony.²⁴⁸ They also planned to bring an Afrikaner medical doctor to Greytown. Through the initiative of Thos Hannah²⁴⁹ the services of Dr H van Niekerk Rademeyer were secured. Rademeyer previously practised as a medical doctor in Boksburg. On the British occupation of the Witwatersrand at the end of May 1900

Application by JA van Rooyen cede a subdivision of Sterkfontein, 28.11.1902; SGO III/1/154: Application by J Joubert to cede Schaap Krantz to DP Walker, 13.1.1903.

245. PAR, SGO III/I/159: Letter GS Saunders to surveyor-general, 9.12.1902; PAR, CSO 1719: Request by RJ du Bois that the envisaged sale of two farms by CT Vermaak be prevented, 8.12.1902-9.1.1903.

246. PAR, MJPW 102: Offer by PR Vermaak to the Natal Government of a number of farms, 22.5.1903-25.6.1903.

247. Interview with Foy Vermaak conducted at Helpmekaar, 10.7.2000.

248. PAR, AGO I/8/74: Report by Inspector R Keating on the creation of an Afrikaner cooperative and the boycott of English-owned businesses in Greytown, 29.10.1900; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900.

249. PAR, CSO 1682: Letter T Hannah to PUS C Bird, 30.7.1901.

he had surrendered and was subsequently sent to Germiston for political reasons. On the authority of the military governor he was allowed to proceed to Natal where he obtained a licence to practice. Dr Rademeyer did not remain in Greytown for long before he was banned to Pietermaritzburg by the local commandant, Colonel Mills. In so doing the plan of self-reliance of the Umvoti Afrikaners was partly scuttled,²⁵⁰ for Rademeyer was not allowed to return to Greytown and for the remainder of the war he worked as a medical doctor in the Merebank Concentration Camp.²⁵¹

The Afrikaners also wanted to start their own newspaper in Greytown. A printer who had previously worked for *De Natal Afrikaner* purchased machinery from P Davis and Sons with the intention of opening a business in Greytown. The editor of this envisaged paper would be Thos Hannah. Inspector WJ Clarke of the Natal Police believed the object of the newspaper was to keep the spirit of rebellion alive; to instill in the minds of the local Afrikaners the ideas of the Afrikaner Bond; and to boycott local English businesses. Clarke immediately took steps to suppress any publications of a suspected treasonable nature.²⁵²

De Natal Afrikaner in an article captioned: “Welk nut zal het hebben?” questioned the motives behind the economic empowerment drive of the Umvoti Afrikaners. The article stated that Afrikaners who were targeted as the main investors would not benefit from their investments; only the proprietors would.²⁵³ In the end the idea of Afrikaner self-reliance did not come off the ground, simply because of a lack of support for the short-sighted venture.

12.7 Concluding comments

Niemand kan dit hom voorstel met hoe `n gevoel ons weer by ons huise gekom het nie. Alles verlore, alles verwoes, ons moes van onderaf weer begin...verwoes, vervalle, verwaarloos, geen heel ruit in die vensters nie, van die deure en vensters was verwyder. Geen enkele draadheining was daar nie. Seker `n paar duisend pond se waarde draadheining was niks van oor nie as miskien net hier en daar `n paal wat aangedui het waar die draad gespan gewees het. Veekrake was ingetuimel. Die pragtige vrugteboord op Vermaakskraal, waar ook honderde-duisende lemoene elke jaar geproduseer was, was verander in `n beeskraal waar duisende beeste wat van die Boere gebuit is, elke nag in moes slaap...Geld het ons nie gehad nie, wat ons gehad het is betaal vir boete ons opgelê deur die Spesiale Hof en aan advokate wat van die geleentheid goed gebruik gemaak het.

These words by JC Vermaak²⁵⁴ explained the economic circumstances which awaited most Northern Natal Afrikaners returning to their farms during and after the war. The picture painted by Vermaak is verified by Magistrate Colenbrander of Ladysmith who, as early as 1900, already reported that crops

250. NAR, PMO 35: Telegrams relating to the position of H v N Rademeyer, 29.8.1901-8.11.1901.

251. AU Wohlberg, *The Merebank...*, pp.175-193.

252. PRO, CO 179/214: Letter Inspector WJ Clarke to minister of lands and works, 3.10.1900.

253. *De Natal Afrikaner*, 29.5.1900.

254. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2553/1: Memoirs of JC Vermaak, p.44, 1941.

had failed in most areas because of drought, and the fact that little planting, ploughing and harvesting was taking place during the war. In addition lung sickness was rife due to the influx of infected cattle while horses, cattle, and sheep were very scarce and only affordable at ridiculously high prices. Farms and houses had been ruthlessly looted and this made any homecoming a “sorrowing experience” as the work done over an entire lifetime was lost.²⁵⁵ Other economic disasters could be added to the descriptions of Vermaak and Colenbrander.²⁵⁶ The military allowed horses and other livestock to graze in planted fields, implements were stolen, and to boot in May 1901 hailstorms destroyed the crops which were not looted.²⁵⁷ At the same time the war seriously interrupted the annual livestock migration by Natal Afrikaners²⁵⁸ to the highveld in especially the Free State but also in the Transvaal.²⁵⁹

The circumstances outlined hit Natal Afrikaners particularly hard since they were almost exclusively reliant on a single economic activity, farming. In the region of between 700 and 800 Afrikaner men in some way involved in the war hardly practised any economic activities during the conflict. Simultaneously tens of thousands of head of livestock were lost and immovable property destroyed. Furthermore, in the words of the to the Dundee magistrate many Afrikaners: “... have been so impoverished by the fines they had to pay, and by the losses sustained during the progress of the war that they have not sufficient capital left to carry on their farms successfully, and it will probably take them some years to recover themselves.”²⁶⁰

These challenges Natal Afrikaners had to face were dealt with differently by each individual or family. Some had to find employment outside of farming to survive. Nicholaas Prinsloo Jordaan went from farmer near Dundee prior to the war to being a blacksmith in the town after the war and eventually ended up working on the sugar plantations on the Natal north coast.²⁶¹ Christoffel Lotz van Zyl who was a small-scale farmer near Newcastle, worked after completion of his prison sentence as a manual labourer in Kroonstad,²⁶² before moving to Germiston presumably to work on the railways.²⁶³ Others remained and tried to overcome what the Dundee magistrate described as the “irreparable injury done to farmers and stock...”²⁶⁴ by repairing buildings and fences²⁶⁵ while dealing

255. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Report on conditions in the Klip River district by Magistrate HJ Colenbrander, 12.7.1900.

256. PAR, CSO 1944: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1901; PAR, CSO 2909: Claim by G van der Merwe, 3.4.1900.

257. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 30.5.1901.

258. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Report on returning Natal Afrikaners from Magistrate HJ Colenbrander to colonial secretary, no date; PAR, CSO 1661: Request for a permit by JH Nel to remove cattle from the OFS to Natal, 5.11.1900-21.11.1900.

259. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by PAJ van Rensburg, 4.2.1903.

260. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

261. E-mail MW Jordaan to JM Wassermann, 12.6.2002.

262. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 13.10.1902, p.536.

263. PAR, NT 113: Documents relating to the Derelict Stock Fund, 1905-1906.

264. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1900.

265. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Dundee, 1902.

with poverty, rinderpest and drought.²⁶⁶

To overcome these challenges was extremely difficult as the ancestors of the renowned Afrikaner poet, DJ Opperman, found. All the family had to eat was maize porridge, green maize, and bread. Now and then this was substituted by potatoes, tinned fish, eggs, and vegetables. Meat was only eaten on Sundays since they had no animals to slaughter. Their slow process of economic recovery was halted when a hail storm wiped out their wheat harvest and livestock. This event, and the suffering caused by the war, gave birth to the following saying in the Opperman family: "Eers is ons deur die Engelse vernietig en toe deur God." As a result of this set-back the Oppermans moved to Zululand.²⁶⁷

Unlike in the two former Republics, no postwar reconstruction program was initiated for Natal Afrikaners, and the Natal Government offered very little in terms of reconciliation, relief or reconstruction. This lack of financial assistance was based on clause 10 of the Vereeniging Articles of Surrender which dealt with the provision of relief and stated that "no foreigner or rebel will be entitled to the benefit of the clause." As a result, although it cannot be described as a major exodus, the former Republics proved a favoured destination for a number of Natal Afrikaners, in all possibility because they could benefit from the economic reconstruction worth millions of pounds that was taking place in these areas.²⁶⁸ But even in this attempt they were unable to escape the long arm of the Natal Government as Natal rebels who had settled in the Vryheid district were to find out. Their efforts to gain assistance from the Repatriation Commission who was supplying seed, implements, and oxen amongst other goods was, with the assistance of the Natal authorities, snuffed out.²⁶⁹ The Natal authorities also prevented the rebels from joining the Natal Border Police in the Vryheid district.²⁷⁰

The only reconstruction project to be launched was the one initiated by Mistrs Wilson, Turton and Jansen in the Dundee area. This trio consulted with the local magistrate, WG Wheelwright, who, although open to the suggestion, only managed to identify three destitute local Afrikaners, John, Gert and JFA Dekker aged 55, 65 and 78 respectively. The first two men were convicted as rebels while JFA Dekker gave himself up after conclusion of the war. Gert Dekker also had to take care of his daughter and five grandchildren while his son-in-law, CF Marais, was serving a three-year

266. PAR, NCP 8/1/11/3/2: Annual report magistrate Newcastle, 1902; Annual report magistrate Estcourt, 1902; Annual report magistrate Umsinga, 1902.

267. JC Kannemeyer, p.20. At least two families from Dundee investigated the possibility of joining the groups of Afrikaners who moved even further afield, namely to Argentina. See, PAR, CSO 1748: Application by JW Holding on behalf of two Natal Afrikaner families about possible settlement in Argentina, 10.12.1903-15.12.1903.

268. PAR, CSO 1733: Letter of resignation as field-cornet in Umvoti by TJ Botha as he was moving to the Transvaal, 28.5.1903-29.5.1903; F Pretorius, *The Anglo-Boer War...*, p.89.

269. PAR, CSO 1713: Telegram magistrate Vryheid to colonial secretary, 23.9.1902; PAR, PM 39: Telegrams exchanged between president repatriation commission and Prime Minister AH Hime, 21.4.1903.

sentence for high treason. Magistrate Wheelwright conferred with the government who recommended that he refine his terms of assistance with the initiators of the idea. In the end it was recommended that destitute farmers who wanted to return to their land should each receive: eight oxen valued at £160; a cart and harness valued at £30; a plough valued at £2.10; two cows valued at £30; a horse and saddle valued at £15 and oats and maize valued at £3. These goods were to be lent to the farmers for a period of two years interest free after which a small interest rate set by the government would be charged. In all cases satisfactory security was required. The Natal Government agreed to this initiative but only seven Afrikaners as outlined below, applied. Of these men Labuschagne, Döhne and Hattingh, did not return to their pre-war residences.²⁷¹

Table 12.2: Profiles of Dundee Afrikaners who benefited from reconstruction

NAME	ADDRESS	SENTENCE	REQUIREMENTS
Döhne, FW	Whitebank, Dundee	12 months imprisonment and a fine of £100	6 oxen and gear; 4 bags oats, 10 rolls barbed wire, 100 standards: Value: £144. Security: His 500 acre farm. Already had a bond of £150 on his farm.
Hattingh, JH	Landmetersdraai, Dundee	18 months imprisonment	8 oxen; 2 cows; 1 cart and gear: Value: £220. Security: His 600 acre farm
Laas, CJ	Paardeberg, Dundee	10 months imprisonment	8 oxen; 2 bag of oats: Value: £162. Security: His mother Sarah Laas.
Labuschagne, WA	Schielhoek, Dundee	9 months imprisonment	8 oxen; 2 bags maize; 3 bags oats; 2 cows: Value: £195. Security: His father-in-law, PH Nel.
Landman, IJA	Ruigtefontein, Dundee	18 months imprisonment; fined £250	2 cows; 1 horse saddle and bridle; 1 bag maize; 1 cart and gear; 1 harrow: Value: £245. Security: His 2 000 acre farm. Already had a bond of £550 on his farm.

270. PAR, PM 31: Telegrams exchanged between Colonel Mansel and the Natal authorities, 1.8.1902-16.9.1902.

271. PAR, CSO 1713: Representations of relief for indigent farmers, 16.9.1902-8.11.1902.

Nel, PH	Kalverfontein, Dundee	Fined £50	6 oxen; 2 cows: Value: £150. Security: His 3 000 acre farm. He also stood security for Van Tonder and Labuschagne.
Van Tonder, TA	Dundee	He claimed to have been imprisoned for 18 months, but no rebel with this name could be identified.	6 oxen; 2 bags maize; 2 cows: Value: £152. Security: PH Nel. Had no property at all.

In conclusion one needs to consider why so few farmers took advantage of this opportunity to start again. It is possible that the scheme was not but a local initiative but also that only a limited number could offer the security required. In all likelihood those who could afford the security opted to either deal with fellow Afrikaners or the banks rather than the Natal Government. The wartime treatment they had received must understandably have hardened attitudes towards the colonial authorities. The poor Afrikaners on the other hand resumed their roles as bywoners. This group struggled the hardest to recover from the body-blow of the war.²⁷²

In the medium-term the economy of the districts north of the Tugela River took longer to recover than their counterparts to the south who benefited much more from the booming wartime economy. This recovery was constrained by the post-war depression suffered by the Colony which resulted in many businesses, for example in Dundee, grinding to a halt by 1906.²⁷³ The central victims of suffering in this process were Natal Afrikaners. In a visit in 1908, to the areas in which Natal Afrikaners resided, the co-owner of *De Afrikaner*, Ben Vorster, commented on the large numbers of “monuments to the war” or ruins of farmhouses still to be found. The residents resided in the outbuildings because they were “schijnbaar moedeloos geworden door de verwoestende oorlog.”²⁷⁴

272. VS Harris, Time to trek: landless whites and poverty in the Northern Natal countryside, 1902-1939, in RG Morrell, (ed.), *White but poor. Essays on the history of poor whites in Southern Africa 1880-1940*, p.68.

273. PAR, NT 113: Letter WH Tatham to HC Koch, 5.6.1906.

274. PJJ Prinsloo, p.23.

CHAPTER 13

THE END AND THE BEGINNING - THE AFTERMATH OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR

The peace treaty of Vereeniging signed by the Boer Republics and Great Britain, on 31 May 1902, brought the Anglo-Boer War to an end. The plight of Natal Afrikaners, unlike at the peace negotiations between Botha and Kitchener at Middelburg in February 1901, hardly featured in the treaty. Consequently, and because of the unflinching attitude of the Natal Government, Natal rebels received no concessions. Although the question of rebels remained foremost on the agenda for the Natal Government, they also faced other post-war questions such as the smooth incorporation of several Transvaal districts into the Colony, and how to reconcile with their alienated Afrikaner subjects. In this unequal power relationship, the Natal Afrikaners had no voice and were at the mercy of their government.

13.1 Geo-political changes in Natal and their impact on Natal Afrikaners

Towards the end of 1901 the Natal Government requested that the Transvaal districts of Vryheid and Utrecht in total, parts of the Wakkerstroom district, and the whole of the OFS districts of Vrede and Harrismith, be transferred to the Colony. The rationale for this request was “the close connection, commercial, agricultural, social and familial” that existed between the residents of these districts and Natal. With reference to the OFS districts a guarantee was given that “the increase of the Dutch electorate, tempered by the large British population of the town of Harrismith, would not appreciably affect the predominance of British sentiment of the electorate or the Parliament of the Colony.” The suggested transfer of the two districts was nevertheless opposed by the lieutenant-governor of the Free State, Hamilton Goold-Adams, who feared a “lasting grievance”, and that the anti-British sentiment in Natal would be strengthened by 15 000 Free Staters. These arguments convinced Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain who, on 8 March 1902, quashed the idea of the two Free State districts becoming part of Natal.¹

The position of the Transvaal districts was viewed as historically different. Most of these areas had been part of Zululand before they were annexed to the New Republic in 1884, and incorporated into the Transvaal in 1887. The return of the Vryheid and Utrecht districts, as well as part of the Wakkerstroom district, was the objective of many Natal politicians and had been discussed between High Commissioner Milner and Chamberlain as early as November 1899. While the territorial expansion of Natal at the cost of the OFS failed, the “Northern Districts”, as the areas became known, were transferred to Natal.² This ruling was formalised by Natal Act 39 of 1902, the so-called Annexation Bill,

1. Cd. 941: Further correspondence with regards to proposed addition of territory, pp.2-10.

2. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, p.211.

which was introduced and carried through by the Legislative Assembly on 12 May 1902.³ After much debate, the Representative Bill was passed on 19 May 1902. This gave the new districts representation in the Legislative Council, as well as four seats in the Legislative Assembly, two each to Vryheid and Utrecht.⁴ The formal transfer of these districts to Natal were ratified by the Imperial authorities at end of 1902 which completed the process.

The addition of the Transvaal districts increased the geographical size of Natal by 25%, and its population by 60 000. Approximately 10 000 of these citizens were white, most of them Afrikaners. Although the addition of these Afrikaners to the population of Natal did not alter the English dominance, it did add a different dimension to being a Natal Afrikaner, especially regarding cultural and political life.⁵

Despite the increase in Afrikaner Republican-orientated voters, the Natal authorities had a clear vision of the future of Natal Afrikaner political life. In a short visit to the Umvoti and Weenen districts, Governor McCallum, recommended cooperation, subordination of racial feelings, and personal sacrifice for the common good of all.⁶ Reconciliation was thus considered a duty of the conquered group. Initially the Natal Afrikaners, as defeated people, seemed to resign themselves to their inferior political position,⁷ which resulted in slow political recovery. The assertion of Natal Afrikaners in the political field was at first felt in small events and acts by individuals rather than large scale happenings. One such event involved LL Nel, a Greytown businessman, who wanted to erect a wood and iron building. To achieve this he submitted a plan and explanatory letter in Dutch to the Greytown Local Board. The board, on two occasions, informed Nel that his application would only be considered once it had been translated into English.⁸ Nel found this unacceptable and had a letter written on his behalf, in English, to PUS Bird making it clear that he could not communicate in English and had always corresponded in Dutch without encountering any resistance. He asked Bird: "Will you do me a favour to inform me whether I am compelled by law to use English, or whether the law permits me to use my mother tongue when dealing with public bodies?" The Natal Government neatly sidestepped the question by saying it had no control over the Greytown Local Board and could therefore not advise Nel.⁹

In a similar incipient nationalistic vein a letter to *De Afrikaner* warned Afrikaner parents to be careful

3. PAR, PM 28: Draft bill annexation of the Vryheid, Utrecht and parts of Wakkerstroom districts, 5.5.1902.

4. EH Brookes and C de B Webb, pp.211-212.

5. *Ibid.*

6. One of the few who attended was the local dominee, GS Malan. PAR, PM 117: Letter Secretary GT Plowman to GS Malan, 4.6.1902.

7. PAR, PM 117: Letter Secretary GT Plowman to GS Malan, 4.6.1902.

8. PAR, CSO 1727: Letters Greytown Town Clerk AA Duff to LL Nel, 18-19.12.1902.

9. PAR, CSO 1727: Correspondence between PUS C Bird and LL Nel, 9.3.1903-17.3.1903.

about what their children were taught in schools, especially since some textbooks contained false statements. He/she cited *Natal the land and its story. A Geography and History for the use of schools* which stated that the Boers had lost six guns to the British at Elandslaagte, as an example. According to the correspondent this information was “an infamous lie”, and no mention was made of the maxim taken from the British by the Boers. He also expressed the hope that the government would see that the Colony’s history “...is not taught in this way.” Superintendent of Education Mudie, when informed about the complaint, accepted the statement as untrue and circulated a correction to all the government schools,¹⁰ handing the Natal Afrikaners a small victory.

President SJP Kruger’s funeral on 16 December 1904, in a small way, also served to keep the political flame alive amongst Natal Afrikaners. Several requests from Natal Afrikaners for permits to attend the funeral were initially rejected. The colonial secretary, however, realising the potential political danger of preventing Natal Afrikaners from attending, intervened and ordered that “no obstacle should be put in the way of persons desiring to attend the funeral.”¹¹

Natal Afrikaners also showed their political colours in other ways by failing to attend either the coronation celebration or the thanksgiving for peace, held in June 1902 in Greytown.¹² However, when General Louis Botha visited the area prior to his trip to Europe, the Afrikaners gave him an enthusiastic reception. Such incidents angered Governor McCallum who, rather than try and understand the feelings of his Afrikaner subjects, commented with reference to the north-south divide amongst Natal Afrikaners, that Umvoti was one of the few Afrikaner dominated districts which had not suffered directly because of the war but remained prosperous and as a result did not know how to submit to force. Loyalty was thus a facade. In the view of McCallum, Natal Afrikaners with anti-British sentiments were “only a fraction of the population” and with time and patience they would come around.¹³

McCallum’s prediction proved to be incorrect and the majority of Natal Afrikaners did not “come around.” Ironically enough a political revival did not take place in the prosperous and politicized Umvoti county which had escaped war, but in war-torn Northern Natal. The resuscitation of the Boereverenigings, initially to deal with issues such as dissatisfaction surrounding the Derelict Stock Fund, paved the way for the political awakening of the Natal Afrikaner who formed the Het Kongres

10. PAR, CSO 1777: Minute paper regarding the communication from *De Afrikaner* on a statement in *Russell’s Natal*, 20.12.1904-16.12.1902; R Russell, *Natal the land and its story. A geography and history for the use of schools*, p.303.

11. NAR, CS 549: Telegram Natal colonial secretary to High Commissioner A Milner, 8.12.1904.

12. PAR, PM 117: Letter Secretary GT Plowman to GS Malan, 4.6.1902.

13. PRO, CO 179/224: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.8.1902.

which, by the time of Union in 1910, was “a well organised political body.” As an active supporter of the Union it became the Natal wing of the South African Party.¹⁴ The majority of Natal Afrikaners remained supporters of this party until 1948, first under the leadership of the Natal-born Louis Botha, and then under General JC Smuts. Parallel to the above mentioned political developments, however, a much more specific Afrikaner identity started to evolve in South Africa, including in Natal. This was inspired by the policies of General JBM Hertzog which promoted the cultural identity and political rights of the Afrikaner.¹⁵ This incipient Afrikaner nationalism gained momentum when the first branch of the National Party in Natal was founded in Dundee in 1915 at a meeting attended by more than 100 people. The prevalent mood of the time was captured by John Dafel who stated that the struggle was one of “Nationalisme vs. Imperialism.”¹⁶ But it took several decades before the Republican ideas of the National Party would triumph anywhere in Natal. This finally happened in 1948 when GF Fullard and JS Labuschagne, both members of the Afrikaner Party then in coalition with the National Party, were elected as members of Parliament for Vryheid and Klip River respectively.¹⁷ In time the tide turned even further and pro-Republican candidates were also elected in other Natal constituencies demographically dominated by Natal Afrikaners. On 31 May 1961, when South Africa became a Republic, Republican domination which had been lost in 1843 with the annexation of Natal by Britain, was restored.

13.2 Dealing with the rebels

In terms of the relationship between the Natal Afrikaners and their government, one of the most pressing issues both parties had to deal with was that of the rebels. For the Natal Government, like similar to the rebel trials earlier, the post-war handling of imprisoned and suspected rebels was not so much a matter of resolving the issue, but rather about the right to manage their subjects in an autonomous manner.

Certain rebel-related matters, such as the requests by rebel prisoners to be transferred to prisons closer to their homes, could be dealt with without any interference from London. The Natal Government's policy on this matter, as spelt out on 13 May 1902 by Prime Minister Hime, was clear: “In all cases refuse these requests without bringing them before me, unless there is something very special which needs consideration.” Peace was no sooner restored when Gert van Rooyen challenged this policy. He asked the main political protagonist for Afrikaner rights, FR Moor (MLA), to investigate the removal of rebel prisoners from Eshowe to Pietermaritzburg. As always, Moor rallied to the support of the Afrikaners and raised the issue of the 43 rebels still imprisoned in Eshowe. It was agreed that the

14. AJ van Wyk, *Press, public and politics in Natal 1910-1915*, paper presented at a workshop on Natal and the Union 1910-1938, UNP, 1978, p.16.

15. O Geyser and AH Marais (eds), *Die Nasionale Party, Deel 1*, pp.74-132.

16. *Ibid*, pp.180-184.

17. JM Wassermann, *Die stryd om setels en kandidate tussen die Herenigde Nasionale Party en die Afrikanerparty voor die*

prisoners could be removed to the Pietermaritzburg Prison but the decision was thwarted by the chief commissioner of police who argued that there was insufficient space in the central prison. More importantly the commissioner felt that this would be giving in to the prisoners who had similar requests turned down in the past. Moor strongly disagreed and contended that since hostilities had ended “the political prisoners should be treated as fairly as possible and those who apply to be removed from Eshowe to the Pietermaritzburg Prison or other goal in the Natal Province should have their application granted where room is available.” Moor’s point of view which was supported by the foremost Natal humanitarian of the time, Harriette Colenso,¹⁸ won the day and the cabinet decided to consider the application of each prisoner who wished to leave Eshowe, on merit.¹⁹

Consequently a small number of rebel prisoners were transferred as requested from Eshowe to either Pietermaritzburg or Ladysmith. The application of those who wanted to be transferred to smaller prisons were less successful, as in the case of AC Vermaak, CS Botha and PJ Meyer who were refused a transfer to the Greytown Prison because of the lack of accommodation due to alterations.²⁰ Likewise, the applications of CP Cronjé and JJ de Jager to be relocated from Eshowe to Dundee were not granted because all European prisoners in Northern Natal were at that stage centralised at Ladysmith. Since only Africans were imprisoned in Dundee it meant that a separate cell and a white warden would have to be appointed for one or two prisoners.²¹ JJ Dekker who was serving a seven-year sentence, received the worst treatment. All three applications on his behalf to be transferred to Pietermaritzburg were rejected. The reasons offered for this refusal ranged from an overcrowded Pietermaritzburg Prison to the fact that the PWD needed prisoners who were sentenced to hard labour to work on projects. Since Dekker did not fit into either of these categories, he could not be transferred.²²

uring the same period the Natal authorities received requests from mothers, parents, other family members, and English neighbours, for the release of rebels from prison. These requests ranged from letters to a petition signed by 59 people calling for the release of the rebel leader, DC Uys. All these appeals, in line with their policy of not releasing rebels prior to the completion of their sentences, were

algemene verkiesing van 1948, MA-thesis, UOFS, 1998, p.242.

18. PAR, Colenso collection A 204, 39: Letter CW Havemann to Harriette Colenso, 28.8.1902; Letter Secretary GT Plowman to Harriette Colenso, 3.9.1902.

19. PAR, MJPW 94: Correspondence regarding the removal of several prisoners from Eshowe Prison, 13.5.1902-23.7.1902.

20. PAR, Colenso collection A 204, 74: Letter Harriette Colenso to Sir, 29.9.1902; PAR, Colenso collection A 204, 39: Letter Secretary GT Plowman to Harriette Colenso, 7.10.1902.

21. PAR, MJPW 96: Application on behalf of CP Cronjé to be transferred from Eshowe to Dundee Prison, 20.8.1902-8.9.1902.

22. PAR, MJPW 97: Applications on behalf of JJ Dekker to be transferred from Eshowe to Pietermaritzburg Prison, 18.8.1902-4.11.1902.

rejected by the Natal Government.²³

At the same time other minor rebel-related issues surfaced. Convicted rebel PJ Meyer, for example, requested copies of the depositions made against him as he wanted to clear his name,²⁴ while FM Colling insisted that the documents he handed in at his trial be returned to him.²⁵ HA Potgieter appealed to have the case against him reopened as he felt he was convicted on false evidence.²⁶ These requests invariably had little success. The case of PJ Cromhout was, however, different. He was sentenced to a £50 fine or a three month prison sentence. As he had served 20 days before paying the fine, he managed to secure a refund of £10.17.4.²⁷

Part of the problem the Natal rebels faced was that unlike the Cape rebels on whose behalf General JBM Hertzog campaigned, no politician or military commander seriously fought for their rights.²⁸ The reason for this was simply that they were insignificant in number compared to the Cape rebels, and other post-war issues were simply more important than the rebel issue. Furthermore, the most likely candidate to speak on behalf of the Natal rebels, General Louis Botha, was otherwise occupied in the political landscape which emerged after the war. This meant that both the suspected and convicted Natal rebels were left to their own devices and the mercy of the Natal Government.

The point of departure for both the Natal Government and the English colonists had always been that Natal Afrikaners guilty of high treason should be punished by a court of law. This inflexible attitude, which failed to consider objectively the circumstances which led to rebellion, was one of the reasons for the failure of the peace negotiations between Botha and Kitchener on 28 February 1901. While Kitchener was prepared to give the rebels amnesty,²⁹ the Natal authorities had found a powerful ally in High Commissioner Milner, who for his own reasons, wanted to see the rebels punished “according to the laws of the Colony.”³⁰

23. PAR, PM 118: Letter Secretary GT Plowman to Mrs Kritzinger (jnr), no date; PAR, PM 118: Petition by the brothers of JA van Rooyen for his release from prison, 9.6.1902; PAR, 1/UTR 3/3/1: Petition for the release of DC Uys, 20.11.1902-15.12.1902; PAR, PM 32: Application for the release of PR Buys, 12.9.1902-20.9.1902; PAR, PM 32: Application for the release of AC Vermaak, 2.9.1902; PAR, PM 31: Application by Mrs JM Robbertse (jnr) for the release of her husband, 22.8.1902-25.8.1902; PAR, PM 30: Application by TB Tweedie for the release of CF Marais, 15.7.1902-17.7.1902.

24. PAR, AGO I/8/89: Letter Griffin and Muller to attorney-general, 9.4.1903.

25. PAR, AGO I/9/23: Letter Unknown to FM Colling, 14.10.1903.

26. PAR, AGO I/8/89: Correspondence between HA Potgieter and the attorney-general's office regarding his conviction for high treason, 16.5.1903-14.11.1902.

27. PAR, AGO I/8/85: Correspondence with reference to the fine of £50 imposed on PJ Cromhout, 17.9.1902-30.10.1902.

28. PW Vorster, General J.B.M Hertzog as kampvegter vir die Kaapse Rebelle 1902-1903, *Historia*, 35 (2), November 1990, pp. 20-37.

29. T Pakenham, pp.508-512.

30. LS Amery (ed.), *Times History... Vol. IV*, p.554; SB Spies, p.209.

Just over a year later in May 1902, with peace talks in the air, the issue of how to treat rebels still on a free footing, was raised again. Governor McCallum recommended that such rebels receive a prison sentence not exceeding two years and disenfranchisement for life.³¹ The Natal Cabinet however dug in their heels and rejected McCallum's suggestion.³² As stated earlier, autonomy was paramount for the Natal Government and so they would not agree to the more favourable conditions suggested by Kitchener, but were determined to keep to those proposed in February 1901.³³ It stood firm on its policy that Natal Afrikaner rebels either in prison or still on free footing, would not be pardoned and would "have to take their chance under ordinary law."³⁴

The Natal Government proved to be a minor role player and hardly featured in the affairs surrounding the peace negotiations. As a result a certain amount of confusion existed regarding the plight of Natal rebels. Matters were further complicated when, within days of peace being signed, the Natal authorities received the following telegram from Lord Kitchener: "I would personally consider it a great favour if your Ministers would grant clemency to Natal rebels who were forced to join the enemy when the Boers occupied Natal, when they had no adequate protection, on the same line as the Cape are according to their rebels, viz:- disenfranchisement for life." This telegram was the result of informal discussions held during the peace negotiations since the rebel question was avoided and no reference was made to it in the terms of the peace agreement. Governor McCallum informed High Commissioner Milner, Colonial Secretary Chamberlain, and Kitchener, on behalf of the Natal Government that they could not adhere to the latter's request, and stood firm in their earlier decision, namely - no clemency for rebels since it would be unjust to those already convicted and furthermore, they wanted to treat "rebellion as rebellion."³⁵

Confusion thus reigned in terms of the Natal policy regarding rebels. Matters only became clearer when General Schalk Burger explained during his visits to the Natal Concentration Camps and the Umbilo POW Camp in early June 1902, that Natal rebels, should they return to the Colony, would be punished in accordance with the ordinary laws, while in the Cape Colony they would be disenfranchised for life if they pleaded guilty.³⁶ With bigger issues at stake, Milner, Kitchener and the Imperial authorities had outmaneuvered the Natal Government by substituting a hard-line policy with a more moderate one and

31. PRO, CO 179/223: Confidential despatch Governor HE McCallum to Prime Minister AH Hime, 1.5.1902.

32. PRO, CO 179/223: Confidential despatch Governor HE McCallum to High Commissioner A Milner, 3.5.1902.

33. PRO, CO 179/223: Extract Natal minister's minute, 2.5.1902.

34. T Pakenham p.563.

35. PAR, GH 1304 and 497: Confidential despatch Governor HE McCallum to Lord Kitchener, 5.6.1902; PRO, CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 7.6.1902.

36. PAR, CO 179/223: Speech delivered by General SW Burger at Howick Concentration Camp, 5.6.1902.

they used Schalk Burger to make this public.

Intervening in the process in this manner resulted in chaos within the ranks of the Natal authorities. They themselves were now uncertain of the real position of the rebels, while the attorney-general, who had to oversee the prosecution of rebels, the magistrates who had to try them, and the police who had to arrest them, were equally unsure what the official position of their government was.³⁷

One Natal official who did understand the meaning of: "It has been arranged that Natal rebels who are surrendering will not be proceeded against unless they re-enter Natal",³⁸ was Governor HE McCallum. According to him the decisions made by the Natal Government were based on ignorance regarding the decision taken about rebels at the peace conference. The Natal Government was therefore taken aback by the above quoted statement, dated 17 June 1902, since they were not been informed that rebels could reside in the former Republics without fear of prosecution. As a result they asked for an explanation from the high commissioner. Milner replied: "I do not think it would be impolitic to endeavour to bring down into the Colony of Natal rebels who have surrendered without it." Though no pledge was given in this respect it was certainly assumed in the discussions that Lord Kitchener's proposal as contained in his letter to General Louis Botha of the 7th March 1901, would hold good and that the Colonial rebels would not be forced to return to their respective Colonies. If, however, they did so it would be at their own risk."³⁹

Milner admitted to McCallum that although he regarded the treatment of rebels by Natal as sound and correct, it was in the best interest of all to yield to a point which the Boer leaders attached considerable importance to, namely an acceptable post-war settlement for Natal and Cape rebels. At the same time he felt: "It would be well now to wind up this rebel business sharp." It therefore became the duty of Governor McCallum, who understood what was at stake was a South African issue and not merely a Natal one, to convince the Natal Government of his point of view. His task was made easier by the fact that Prime Minister Hime was on holiday in Britain and the acting prime minister was FR Moor, renowned for his sympathy towards Natal Afrikaners. McCallum wanted the slate to be cleaned in terms of the rebels, and that they should not be "allowed to live on our borders in daily communication with their friends in the Colony and, exiled from their homes, be an ever present sore prejudicial to the re-establishment of peace, good order an unity."⁴⁰

37. PAR, AGO I/8/85: Request by the attorney-general that his department be informed of the official policy regarding rebels, 23.6.1902-30.6.1902; PAR, PM 92: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, to FR Moor, 24.7.1902.

38. PAR, GH 545: Enquiry by GOC, Natal about Natal rebels in the Vryheid and Utrecht districts, 13.6.1902-25.6.1902.

39. PRO CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 26.7.1902.

40. PRO, CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 26.7.1902.

Governor McCallum's task was not an easy one. The Natal Cabinet was adamant that they wanted to maintain the right to punish their own subjects. They felt their autonomy was at stake and Imperial concerns paled in significance. The Natal Cabinet ironically not only received support for their stance from the English colonists, but also from the Natal Afrikaners in the Dundee district who were either themselves punished for rebellious activities, or who had suffered economic losses to Boer commandos who included rebels. According to the local magistrate:

The whisper which is going round of pardon to all these men who have hung out to the end of the war, is causing great dissatisfaction amongst the English, Dutch, and natives. The Boers who have been punished and allowed to return to their farms, and the relations of those who are still in the Maritzburg Goal, denounce the very suggestion of forgiveness of those who held out to the end, as a terrible injustice to those who surrendered under General Buller's first proclamation. They say that the imprisonment which they had suffered cannot now be undone, but that they will use every effort in their power to secure the return of the fine imposed on them by the Special Court.⁴¹

Such sentiments did not deter McCallum and to bring the Natal Cabinet round to the Imperial point of view, he had numerous discussions with Moor regarding the procedure which should be adopted. During these negotiations the Natal Government agreed that they wanted to secure good order as soon as possible and remove any evidence of rebellion which tore the Colony apart. In the process Moor came to realise that the undertaking given to the Boer delegates at Vereeniging was much more binding than originally thought and that justice demanded that rank and file rebels who were in prison should be released immediately as an act of royal clemency. This in turn would become the lever for inducing rebels outside of Natal, trusting that the same clemency would be extended to them, to come in and stand trial. As a result the Natal Government, on 2 July 1902, agreed on the principle that the governor could remit the unexpired periods of all rebel sentences of two years and under. The government, however, felt that clemency should not be exercised in more serious cases and that nothing should be done to prejudice the position of ringleaders and rebels still at large. To bring the rebels not yet apprehended in, General Louis Botha was invited to discussions with McCallum and Moor. Botha was, however, not prepared to commit himself to persuade the rebels still at large to surrender if amnesty was not offered. As he was on the verge of leaving for Europe, the initiative of the Natal Government to use Botha as bait to bring in the rebels still at large, failed.⁴²

This inability to secure the full support of Louis Botha set the process of dealing with the rebels back, and Attorney-General GA De R Labistour therefore made it clear that he intended to proceed against

41. PAR, PM 92: Letter Magistrate M Matthews, Dundee, to FR Moor, 24.7.1902.

42. PRO, CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 26.7.1902.

every suspected rebel who returned to Natal in the exact same way and along exactly the same lines as those who had already been tried.⁴³ The Natal Government dug its heels in and passed Act 22 of 1902 and Act 35 of 1902, both of which confirmed all sentences passed by military courts, and indemnified the governor and the military in regard to acts committed during the existence of Martial Law.⁴⁴ As a result the Royal Commission of Enquiry, appointed by the Imperial Government to investigate sentences passed under Martial Law, found itself in a dilemma as far as Natal was concerned for it was now improper to revise sentences which had already been confirmed by the Natal Parliament.⁴⁵ Governor McCallum therefore suggested that there was no reason for the commission to sit in Natal.⁴⁶

Colonial Secretary Chamberlain in the meantime was worried that McCallum was bullying the Natal Government into advocating clemency for rebels,⁴⁷ and had to be assured by Alfred Milner that the proposed policy which was “a good way out of a awkward situation” (*sic*), was based on a suggestion by the Natal Government. Milner therefore posed the critical question to Chamberlain: “Do you approve this policy?”⁴⁸

Chamberlain was not quite ready to support the policy, mainly because of the problems the Royal Commission of Enquiry was facing. The indemnity laws which were passed made the work of this commission obsolete in Natal as it could only review sentences passed after 10 June 1902, in other words sentences not covered by the laws. The Natal Government, in passing these laws, and remitting the sentences of seven Natal Afrikaners convicted of high treason by court martial, greatly undermined the commission and angered London.⁴⁹ The matter was only resolved after lengthy correspondence between McCallum and Chamberlain when Natal authorities relented and allowed the Royal Commission of Enquiry to sit in Pietermaritzburg on 30 September 1902.⁵⁰

Only once this permission had been granted did Chamberlain agree, on 2 August 1902, to the proposed policy of clemency whereby Governor McCallum could under Royal Instructions and Letters Patent, on advice and under recommendation of the ministers, pardon rebels convicted by courts other than

43. PAR, GH 1304: Memorandum regarding Natal rebels by Attorney-General GA De R Labistour, 29.6.1902.

44. PRO, CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 13.6.1902.

45. PAR, GH 1304: Confidential despatch Attorney-General GA De R Labistour to Prime Minister AH Hime, 23.7.1902.

46. PRO, CO 179/223: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 26.5.1902.

47. PAR, GH 497: Telegram Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain to High Commissioner A Milner, 28.7.1902.

48. PAR, GH 497: Telegram High Commissioner A Milner to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 29.7.1902.

49. PAR, GH 1302: Memorandum Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.8.1902; PAR, GH 474: Correspondence relative to prisoners who have been tried by court martial, 26.6.1902-29.9.1902.

50. PAR, GH 1680: Submission president, Royal Commission on Martial Law sentences, 30.9.1902; PAR, GH 474: Correspondence relative to prisoners who have been tried by court martial, 26.6.1902-29.9.1902.

military courts. McCallum wasted no time in having the cases of rebels still in prison investigated by the attorney-general. As a result, roughly at the time of the coronation festivities in September 1902, 35 rebels, all rank and file members whose sentences did not exceed two years, had their remaining time remitted. Fines were, however, not waived and neither was the clemency extended to Natal Afrikaners convicted of theft and sentenced to hard labour. Freeing the convicted rebels in question did not constitute a free pardon and, under the Charter of 15 July 1856, they still remained disenfranchised. On taking the decision to remit the sentences of certain rebels General Cheere Emmett, the brother-in-law of Louis Botha, and a resident of the Vryheid district where most of the rebels at large resided, undertook to recommend that the Natal rebels come in *en bloc* and stand trial on the trust that clemency would be extended to them as well.⁵¹

Shortly afterwards, in a further act of reconciliation and in an attempt to get closure on the rebel matter, the Natal Government ordered an investigation into the cases of the remaining imprisoned rebels. To gain greater clarity, the attorney-general asked Magistrate W Broome who sat on the Special Court, to provide his recommendations.⁵²

Broome revisited the cases and recommended that leaders who played an active part in the war, or participated in looting and stealing, should not be granted mercy. This meant that rebels like LJ de Jager, GF Kemp, CS Botha, and JJ Dekker who had been sentenced to five, four, ten and seven years respectively had to serve their full sentences. Broome did, however, allow for some leniency in his recommendations namely that the rebels under investigation could be released on either completion of 18 months, or two years, of their sentences. The rest could be released by the time they had served two years of their sentence, or paid their fines.⁵³

Finally, of the group under discussion, one was discharged, 13 had their sentences fully remitted, 12 had part of their sentences remitted, and for another 12 their sentences had to stand. The latter 12 rebels, the so called ringleaders, was the cause of the real problem as all of them still had a number of years to serve. To force them to serve full terms would not bring closure to the matter since someone like CS Botha could only be released in February 1912. This was not considered good for reconciliation and would also fail to encourage the “bittereinder” rebels outside the borders of Natal to come in to be tried. Little wonder then that the prime minister planted the idea of a future general revision of sentences

51. PAR, PM 92: Correspondence relative to the consideration of sentences passed on rebels, 26.7.1902-2.9.1902; PAR, GH 1302: Memorandum Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.8.1902.

52. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Minute paper Attorney-General A De R Labistour to Magistrate W Broome, 27.8.1902.

53. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Memorandum Magistrate W Broome on the cases of certain rebels convicted by the Special Court, 1.9.1902.

while remaining practical, just and fair.⁵⁴

In light of the above, Attorney-General Labistour, who had defended some rebels before the Special Court, proposed extremely lenient criteria to deal with the rebels not yet apprehended namely that those who could not secure bail should be released on their own recognizance, and that the maximum sentence would be six months imprisonment and a fine of £20 which would, except for the fine and disenfranchisement, be remitted by the Natal Government. Cases of theft, other crimes, and acting as leaders during the war, were to be dealt with on merit. In a very pragmatic manner Labistour suggested: "Let one or two of these men surrender, plead guilty and see how they are treated."⁵⁵ Governor McCallum did not agree with the proposal. His biggest concern was the fact that Labistour had given the undertaking that rebels once convicted, would have their prison sentences remitted. The governor, supported by the acting prime minister, wanted no guarantees given and decreed that magistrates should be informed that those rebels who were prepared to come in to stand trial and plead guilty would, in an attempt to clean the slate, be treated leniently.⁵⁶ As a result the Vryheid magistrate was asked to inform rebels who wished to return to Natal that no guarantee could be given but that they had to surrender unconditionally.⁵⁷ This ruling only served to undo the intention of finding closure with regard to the rebel cases since very few were willing to surrender unconditionally.

McCallum therefore had to admit that the efforts by the Natal Government to entice rebels to come in and stand trial had failed. The rebels were adamant that they wanted to come to some agreement while the Natal Government was not prepared to negotiate any deal. In an attempt to break the deadlock, the attorney-general allowed 21 rebels to discuss terms with the Vryheid magistrate. This initiative was rejected by both the prime minister and McCallum, with the latter stating: "I think we have gone too far already. These men must be told once and for all that they must stand their trial unconditionally and that if they do not do so they had better clear out of the new territories at once as they may be declared a portion of Natal by Letters any day now."⁵⁸ By making this statement McCallum played the last card the Natal authorities had available to them.

McCallum's indication that the Vryheid district where many of the 200-300 rebels not yet arrested

54. PAR, AGO I/7/44: Documentation regarding the remission of sentences of Natal rebels, 8.9.1902-9.9.1902; PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 23.10.1902.

55. PAR, GH 1304: Memorandum Attorney-General GA De R Labistour to prime minister, 30.8.1902.

56. PAR, GH 1304: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Acting Prime Minister FR Moor, 4.9.1902; PAR, GH 1304: Telegram Secretary GT Plowman to Attorney-General GA De R Labistour, 8.9.1902.

57. PAR, GH 1304: Telegram Acting Prime Minister FR Moor to magistrate Vryheid, 10.9.1902.

58. PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 23.10.1902; PRO, CO 179/224: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Secretary of State J Chamberlain, 23.10.1902.

resided was soon to be ceded to Natal, caused panic and fear among the rebels concerned. Expecting to have to flee, they unsuccessfully attempted to enlist the assistance of WH Tatham to negotiate a general pardon.⁵⁹

The Natal authorities were shown up when confronted with the practicalities involved in dealing with rebels who wanted to return and stand trial. Ten Natal rebels resident in the ORC, nine of whom were land owners and who wanted to return to the Colony unconditionally, admitted to being guilty of high treason. This step, exactly what the authorities had called for, caused a serious dilemma as it proved almost impossible to gather evidence regarding the war-time activities of the men since many shared the same names and surnames. Eventually only Johannes Pretorius of Cundycleugh was identified as a ringleader.⁶⁰ No evidence could be found of his prosecution.

Natal rebels did not only fear punishment by an unyielding government,⁶¹ but also worried about their families, many of whom who were destitute. Some suspected rebels such as GPJG van Zyl, a bywoner of The Oaks, Newcastle, were thus only prepared to return to Natal if provisions were made for their families. This Natal authorities offered to do.⁶²

The undertaking however failed to entice all the rebels to return and stand trial. Instead, possibly sensing that due to the lapse of time the evidence against them would be minimal, a group of 21 rebels including two Landmans, five Van Tonders, three Strydoms, and four Van Rooyens, made enquiries via the Vryheid magistrate about the charges against them. Although the Natal Police replied that the counts against them were insignificant, they did indicate that they were hoping to arrest Gideon Kok and GM de Waal who were suspected of participating in the attack on the Wasbank Station in October 1900. The Vryheid magistrate was reprimanded for conveying this information to the rebels and was instructed not to bargain with the rebels but merely to inform them that they should surrender and plead guilty. If they complied they would each receive a six months prison sentence and a fine of £20. Some rebels consequently decided to test the authenticity of the intentions of the Natal Government and nineteen-year-old Marthinus Koekemoer of Proviso B indicated willingness to return to Zululand to stand trial. No record could be found of him being found guilty.

59. PAR, PM 92: Enquiry by rebels in the Vryheid district about their status after annexation, 13.9.1902-30.9.1902.

60. PAR, PM 33: Petition by HJ Potgieter and other rebels who wanted to return to Natal from Harrismith, 17.9.1902-24.10.1902.

61. PAR, CO 179/224: Correspondence regarding rebels returning to Natal to stand trial, 29.8.1902-11.9.1902; PAR, PM 92: Correspondence regarding rebels returning to Natal to stand trial, 29.8.1902-11.9.1902;

62. PAR, PM 30: Enquiry by Magistrate RH Beachcroft, Utrecht, on support for families of Natal rebels who wanted to surrender, 2.7.1902-12.7.1902.

The fact that Koekemoer in all probability escaped conviction, plus the completion of the transfer in late December 1902 of the Utrecht and Vryheid districts to Natal, prompted a large number of rebels to indicate that they were willing to return to Natal⁶³ to surrender to the Dundee magistrate.⁶⁴ True to their word, 23 did so⁶⁵ and none of them were convicted of treason. These events caused Cheere Emmett to use the opportunity to ask that a free pardon be extended to the remaining rebels in prison. He was politely informed that this was not possible at the time, but an edited letter not forwarded to Emmett, gave another perspective on why this was impossible: "His Excellency the Governor, however, states that if the citizens of Dutch extraction in Natal proper, and in the new territories about to be annexed to Natal, including the Ministers of the Reformed Church, do all in their power in the cause of union, he will be willing to reopen the question and consider another petition on the same subject in a years' time from now."⁶⁶

The frustration of McCallum can be understood when one considers that by the end of 1902, an estimated 258 Natal rebels were still at large.⁶⁷ Many of them had decided to settle permanently in the Vryheid district rather than return to their districts of origin.⁶⁸ These men by their mere presence were, to a certain extent, holding the Natal authorities prisoner. Realising that this was the case, the Natal Government in its attempt to attain closure on the rebel issue, re-focused its attention on the 20 rebels who were still imprisoned, on 1 February 1903. Included within this group was NJJ Dreyer, the last rebel to be convicted, and who had been sentenced to £20 or 2 months imprisonment.⁶⁹ The plight of the 20 men, generally the most serious offenders, was reviewed and the Natal Government subsequently decided that a radical change in policy was required. The geo-political changes in the region which transferred parts of the Transvaal, and especially the Vryheid district to Natal, were partly responsible for the change in attitude since the Colony could not have a situation in which rebels resided within their territory but remained immune to arrest. The change in policy was embodied by the passing of Proclamations 23 and 24 of 1903. The latter served to dissolve Act 14 of 1900, which also meant the termination of the Special Court. Proclamation 23 in turn pardoned all rebels, both those imprisoned and those untried "in order to promote goodwill...and to remove as far as possible the recollection of all the causes of enmity which existed during the late war".⁷⁰ As a result, all the imprisoned rebels except for

63. PAR, PM 33: Correspondence regarding the charges against 21 rebels resident in the Vryheid district, 12.9.1902-17.12.1902.

64. PAR, AGO I/8/87: Minute paper Natal rebels surrendering from Vryheid district, 18.12.1902-19.12.1902.

65. PAR, AGO I/8/87: Correspondence regarding Natal rebels in the Vryheid district, 7.12.1902-23.12.1902.

66. PAR, PM 35: Petition by General C Emmett asking for a free pardon for Natal rebels, 22.12.1902-29.12.1902.

67. PAR, AGO I/8/87: Correspondence regarding Natal rebels in the Vryheid district, 7.12.1902-23.12.1902.

68. PAR, PM 39: Application by Natal Afrikaners resident in the Vryheid district for economic assistance, 21.4.1903.

69. PAR, PM 38: List of rebels still imprisoned in Natal, 5.2.1902.

70. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/57: *The Natal Government Gazette*, 12.3.1903.

TP Lezar, NP Jordaan, GP Kemp and RJ Vermaak, were released on 12 March 1903. The four men in question were not freed because they had not yet paid the fines imposed on them.⁷¹

The refusal to release these four rebels meant that the slate was still not clean. To achieve this the case of the men was taken up by several people. Warden Hunter of the Eshowe Prison, with the permission of the governor of the prison, petitioned the prime minister for the release of Vermaak,⁷² while Dominee WP Rousseau appealed to the authorities for the release of all the rebels, pointing out that all four were very poor, their families were destitute, and they were in no position to pay the fines. In the cases of Kemp and Jordaan this was confirmed by an English colonist of Dundee, Williams, who likewise asked that they be pardoned. The Natal authorities who did not accept these requests at face value, launched their own investigation into the economic status of the men and reached the same conclusion.⁷³ As the men were unable to pay the substantial fines imposed on them, the Natal Government had no choice but to recommend their release despite the disapproval of Governor McCallum. Although he agreed that Lezar and Vermaak could be released, since their fines were optional, he felt that the discharge of Jordaan and Kemp was, “a change of policy”,⁷⁴ and complained to Chamberlain: “We have hitherto treated rebellion with dignity and firmness, and it is, to my mind, a pity that Ministers did not decide to continue to do so to the end.”⁷⁵ The Natal Government defended their decision by stating that it was not a change of policy; the four men simply could not pay the fines levied and as a result they felt “that it was inexpedient that the men should remain in goal for the periods of imprisonment which constituted the alternative of the fines imposed upon them.” McCallum was still not convinced and felt that it was unjust to liberate the men without extracting payment of fines. He was, however, prepared to sign the warrants of release based on “political reasons.”⁷⁶

This brave step by the Natal Government, which brought the rebel saga to a close, was lauded by Louis Botha who felt it would mark a “new era in racial relations of South Africa.”⁷⁷ One hundred and sixty six men from Utrecht likewise signed a petition expressing their appreciation.⁷⁸ Support for the pardon

71. PAR, PM 38: Warrant for the remission of sentences passed on certain rebels, 11.3.1903-13.3.1903.

72. PAR, PM 38: Petition for the release of RJ Vermaak, 20.3.1903-28.3.1903.

73. PAR, PM 88: Correspondence regarding the release of Lezar, Vermaak, Jordaan and Kemp, 19.3.1903-16.4.1903.

74. PAR, GH 1305: Correspondence regarding the release of the remaining imprisoned rebels, 6.4.1903-6.5.1903; PAR, PM 38: Warrants authorizing the release of four prisoners, 15.4.1903-21.4.1903; PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.4.1903.

75. VS Harris, p.48.

76. PAR, GH 1305: Correspondence regarding the release of the remaining imprisoned rebels, 6.4.1903-6.5.1903; PAR, PM 38: Warrants authorizing the release of four prisoners, 15.4.1903-21.4.1903; PAR, GH 1302: Letter Governor HE McCallum to Colonial Secretary J Chamberlain, 16.4.1903.

77. PAR, PM 38: Telegram General Louis Botha to colonial secretary, 14.3.1903.

78. PAR, CSO 1747: Petition signed by 166 inhabitants of the Utrecht district, 30.11.1903-10.12.1903.

also came from the jingoistic Natal press. The *Natal Witness* expressed the hope that it would promote “unity and goodwill”,⁷⁹ while the *Dundee and District Advertiser* described it as “the most important official document published in this colony since 1899...” The latter publication also expressed the hope that this would lead to reconciliation.⁸⁰ Although the decision by the Natal Government constituted a giant step towards eradicating the legacy of the war, issues such as for example disenfranchisement, remained unsettled.

The Natal Government was only prepared to ask for the free pardon of all convicted rebels in 1905. This request was supported by the colonial secretary and his suggestion that it be done on the king’s birthday in November, was adopted.⁸¹ Proclamation No. 116 of 1905, issued on 8 November 1905, therefore removed all civil disabilities including disfranchisement, to which rebels were subjected.⁸² Although all convicted rebels were no doubt pleased, *De Afrikaner* managed to place the pardon within the context of the mood that still existed amongst Natal Afrikaners:

In some copies of our previous issue we announced the “free” pardon granted to Natal burghers who had been guilty of rebellion, or whatever one likes to call it, in connection with the Boer War. The temptation to traverse those convictions, the circumstances under which they were obtained is great but being desirous of letting the past rest we shall say nothing about the matter. We are sincerely grateful to His Majesty the King for the removal of an obstacle which has been in the way, for some years, of the good relationship between the white races in this part of his dominions. This gratitude may not, however, prevent us from declaring how much we regret the reference in the proclamation to fines which cannot be refunded and to compensation which cannot be made...this is only half free.⁸³

This statement by *De Natal Afrikaner* rang true because while the Natal Government was conciliatory in its policy towards the rebels, nothing was done in terms of the most pressing post-war need of Natal Afrikaners, namely economic reconstruction. In terms of financial assistance to rebels, the Natal Government stood by clause 10 of the Vereeniging Peace Treaty, namely that no rebel was entitled to aid. They extended this to include all Natal Afrikaners and the granting of free pardon in 1905 merely served to underscore this point of view. The Natal Afrikaners therefore had to fend for themselves under extremely difficult conditions as explained in Chapter 12. Historian Verne Harris believes the lack of financial aid and economic reconstruction hardened the essentially negative pre-war feelings Natal Afrikaners had towards the government.⁸⁴

79. *Natal Witness*, 14.3.1903.

80. *Dundee and District Advertiser*, 19.3.1903.

81. PAR, PM 53: Proposal by the Natal Government that persons convicted of high treason be pardoned, 14.4.1905-15.5.905; PAR, PM 100: Telegrams regarding free pardon of Natal rebels, 14.10.1904-17.10.1905.

82. PAR, NCP 6/1/1/61: *Natal Government Gazette*, 8.11.1905.

83. PAR, CSO 1803: Translation from *De Afrikaner*, 13.11.1905.

84. VS Harris, p.50.

13.3 Post-war relations and reflections

While Natal Afrikaners were, in the macro processes outlined above, mostly passengers, their fate being decided by much bigger forces outside their control, in other matters they were to a certain extent able to control their own destiny. Some issues, such as reclaiming symbols of culture and masculinity which had been removed during the war, were relatively mundane.⁸⁵ Others issues, such as healing the rift the war had caused within the broader Afrikaner society,⁸⁶ were more complex and played themselves out within both a regional context and in individual households and families. Within Natal Afrikaner society numerous such examples existed. JP Eksteen of Quaggas Nek, Charlestown, had brothers on commando who threatened to shoot him,⁸⁷ while LP de Jager of Serpentine, Newcastle, had joined Loxton's Horse and the Normandien Volunteers Corps while his father, AP de Jager joined the Boers and was convicted as a rebel,⁸⁸ to name but two such examples.⁸⁹

Natal Afrikaners not only had to reflect on post-war relations with fellow Afrikaners but also on those with Natal Africans and English colonists. Although both Afrikaners and Africans were marginalised groups within the Colony, Natal Afrikaners could, within the context of the racial politics prevalent in post-war Natal, resume their pre-war *status quo*.⁹⁰

While Natal Afrikaners, by virtue of their ethnic origin, found themselves in a superior position to Africans, the post-war relations with English Natalians were much more complex. Inter-marriage between Natal Afrikaners and their English neighbours were common in the Dutch Districts. Two of the sisters of JJ Maré of Greytown, who fought on the Boer side, were married to Englishmen.⁹¹ Even two of the first Natal Afrikaners convicted of high treason, PR Buys and GJB Boers, had family members who were married to English Natalians.⁹² It therefore generally did not take long before good relations were restored between the Afrikaners and those English in the Dutch Districts who made a living out of agriculture and thus formed part of a sub-culture with shared sentiments, including a suspicion of the government.

85. PAR, 1/LDS 3/3/15: Correspondence regarding the return of firearms to the farmers of Klip River district, 16.7.1902-22.10.1902; PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/1/9: Letter Acting Magistrate AL Crawford, Newcastle, to colonial secretary, 2.8.1902; PAR, CSO 1706: Minute paper regarding the policy on returning firearms to time expired rebels, 20.6.1902-4.7.1902.

86. AM Grundlingh, *Die hendsoppers en joiners...*, pp.337-353.

87. PAR, CSO 2876: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JP Eksteen, 13.10.1902.

88. PAR, CSO 2873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by LP de Jager, 6.1.1903.

89. For other examples of divided Natal Afrikaner families, see: PAR, CSO 2891: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JJS Maritz, 8.1.1903; PAR, GH 562: Intercepted letter to Dina de Lange, 9.10.1901-13.10.1901.

90. See Chapter 11 for the war-time relations between people of colour and Natal Afrikaners.

91. PAR, A 743: Herinnering van JJ Maré, 17-18.11.1952.

92. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900 and 15.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/8/71: *Corpus Dilecti* in the case of the Boers brothers, 1.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/7/1: Treason trial of AGJ, GJB and HW Boers, 5.6.1900.

Much more strained were the relations between Natal Afrikaners, the Natal authorities, and individuals like the war-time volunteer leader Colonel George Leuchars of Greytown, who clashed with the Afrikaner nationalist political ideology of General Hertzog, then gaining a foothold amongst Natal Afrikaners.⁹³ Leuchars was not alone and other English Natalians wanted, in the words of Alfred Milner,⁹⁴ the bottom knocked out of Afrikanerdom. As a result the patronising sense of superiority prevalent during the Anglo-Boer War continued to exist. The war-time discriminatory measures introduced in the inter-related fields of education and language, remained, and by the time the Union of South Africa was proclaimed in 1910, the position of Natal Afrikaners was virtually unchanged from the time the war had ended in May 1902,⁹⁵ making the integration of Natal Afrikaners into broader Natal society impossible. Juxtaposed to this was the lingering Afrikaner memory of the Natal Government's desertion of their Afrikaner subjects, as explained by Missionary Prozesky: "There are men amongst us, it is true, Natalians who, when the Transvalers entered the country, joined them voluntarily and fought against English soldiers, but they are few. The guilt of the others lie in the fact that, after the (Natal) authorities fled, leaving them in the lurch without advice, directions or instructions or orders as to how they should behave, they placed themselves under the authority which had power over them and obeyed those appointed as officials over them by this authority."⁹⁶ The above memory was compounded when the Natal Government, in the eyes of most Natal Afrikaners, adopted punitive measures with little reason or compassion, on political, economic, and socio-cultural fronts. This in turn merely served to affirm the perceptions many Natal Afrikaners had formed of British rule during the preceding 50 years.

Natal Afrikaners also had to reflect on their post-war relationship with their Republican kin. Within the context of the economic losses suffered during the war, the deaths of an estimated 34 Natal Afrikaners while on military duty, (Appendix H)⁹⁷ and the prison sentences endured, pro-Boer and Republican sentiments were greatly moderated by May 1902. In the light of the aforementioned, JC Vermaak, while serving a prison sentence for high treason, questioned the continuation of the war since matters were already lost for the Boers and destruction mounted daily. Vermaak claimed that he had always felt the

93. O Geyser and AH Marais, (eds), pp.105-115.

94. T Pakenham, p.509.

95. AJ van Wyk, *Press, public and politics in Natal 1910-1915*, paper presented at a workshop on Natal and the Union 1910-1938, UNP, 1978, *passim*.

96. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, Introduction, p.388.

97. PAR, ZA 33: List of Boers reported killed during the war by Africans, *circa* 1899-1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14209/1: Family tree of the Vermaaks compiled by JC Vermaak, no date. The reliability of most of the sources used to compile Appendix H is to be doubted as it was often based on rumours and speculation. Furthermore, according to the records of the Natal Government, only 21 Natal Afrikaners died in combat. See, PAR, AGO I/8/87: Correspondence regarding Natal rebels in the Vryheid district, 7.12.1902-23.12.1902.

sooner the Boers were forced to surrender the better.⁹⁸ However, in his memoirs on the war written in 1941, Vermaak tells a different story and greatly contradicts the views he expressed in 1901.⁹⁹ Time, political circumstances, the Republican ideal, rising Afrikaner Nationalism, and the outbreak of the Second World War, amongst other considerations, all contributed to Vermaak coming to believe in a different, more glorious historical truth, which in turn conjured up a collective memory dissimilar from that which he had experienced and expressed between 1899 and 1902. Therefore, possibly the most succinct and true-to-life summary of the experiences of Natal Afrikaners during the Anglo-Boer War is the one given by Andries Stephanus Eksteen of Potterhill/Laingkrantz, Charlestown: “I had three enemies. The Boers, The British Troops and Kaffir Scouts. They took my things just as they liked by night or day - and just told me to shut up.”¹⁰⁰ From the perspective of the Natal Afrikaners, “The Boers”, proved to be the most acceptable of the three enemies, for with them they felt they belonged.

98. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 17.6.1901.

99. VTR, Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 03/2553: *passim*, 1941.

100. PAR, CSO 2877: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AS Eksteen, 6.10.1902.

**APPENDIX A: DETAILS OF THE NATAL AFRIKANERS CONVICTED OF HIGH TREASON DURING THE ANGLO-BOER WARⁱ
CASES 1-276: TRIED BY THE SPECIAL COURT CONSTITUTED UNDER ACT 14 OF 1900**

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
1	Vermaak, Philip Rudolph	Vermaak's Kraal, Helpmekaar, Dundee	18.9.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £1500 or a further 2 years in prison	Affluent. Joined invaders in October 1899. On 27 October 1899 assisted in operations at Pomeroy including burning of magistracy, looting of stores. Assisted in the commandeering of goods from Handley & Sons, Matheson, Peters and cattle from RJ du Bois. Several loyalists were arrested with his assistance and their property commandeered. Very active around Rorke's Drift and Elandskraal. Acted as an interpreter.
2	Davel, Hendrik Abraham Isaac	Schurvering, Dundee	19.9.00	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 6 months in prison	Age 45. Provided food (sheep), shelter and information after the initial invasion. Joined the Boers in December 1899 and rendered general assistance. Active in the Biggarsberg area, patrolling and general cooperation.
3	Davel, Johannes Josias (Jan)	Schurvering, Dundee	19.9.00	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Age 20. Joined the Boers in December 1899 and rendered general assistance. Active in the Biggarsberg area, patrolling and general cooperation. Assisted the Boers in erecting a fort.
4	Vermaak, Johannes Coenraad	Zuurkop, Dundee	24.9.00	High Treason	2 years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 26. Joined in November 1899. Assisted in operations on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrol work and acted as a night guard. On 9 March 1901 took part in the Battle at Pomeroy. Attempted to commandeer loyalists.
5	Volker, Heinrich Georg Paul	Glencoe, Dundee	25.9.00	High Treason	Fine of £100 or 6 months imprisonment	Joined and assisted the Boers around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg from November 1899. Took part in operations at Modderspruit. Crossed the Tugela River to surrender to the UMR on 9 May 1900.
6	Jordaan, Nicholas Prinsloo	Craighead, Dundee	26.9.00	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment and a fine of £300 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 40. Poor. Joined the invaders in November 1899. Assisted the Boers in commandeering and looting the farm Balgray and the property of some Africans in the area. Otherwise active around Helpmekaar and the Biggarsberg by patrolling. Delivered notice to the loyal Strydoms.
7	Hogg, Peter (Piet)	Driefontein, Dundee	26.9.00	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment and a fine of £300 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 72. Died in prison. Fought on the British side at Battle of Congella. In October 1899 provided the Boers with food, shelter and clothes. Assisted the Boers in removing goods from the homes of J Anderson and HT Nurse. Assisted in the removal of goods from Navigation Collieries. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
8	Nel, Jan Andries	Wonderlaagte, Dundee	26.9.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment and a fine of £40 or a further 3 months in prison	Age 35. Joined in December 1899. Generally inactive.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
9	Havemann, Frederick Daniel Johannes	Waterfall, Dundee	26.9.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 31. Poor. Represented by Anderson. Joined on 5 December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Delivered notices to loyalists. Secretary to Field-Cornet van Rensburg. Fairly well educated.
10	De Jager, Frederik Johannes (Fritz)	Kemp's Hoek, Dundee	27.9.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 40. Resided in the Transvaal for long periods. Joined the Boers shortly after the invasion. Involved in action at Mpati, Talana, Lombard's Kop. Acted as a policeman and arrested people in November and December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
11	Meyer, Lucas Willem	Langverwacht, Dundee	29.9.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 32. Wealthy. Joined in December 1899. Acted as commandeering officer.
12	Webb, Johannes Jacobus (Jan)	Earnscliffe, Dundee	29.9.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Age 35. Tenant farmer. Joined in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Involved in the Battle of Talana.
13	Marais, Coenraad Frederik	Burnside, Dundee	3.10.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £600 or a further 18 months in prison.	Age 37. Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Worked as a policeman around Glencoe. Commandeered Africans as labourers. Assisted in the looting of the farm Vleipoot and commandeering of cattle.
14	Meyer, Phillipus Jacobus	Kilburnie, Dundee	4.10.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 37. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar conducting patrols. In January 1900 took part in operations at Vant's Drift.
15	Audie, Johannes Jacobus	Dewaar, Dundee	4.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Age 29. Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg conducting patrols. Delivered notices to loyalists during February 1900.
16	Lezar, Theunis Paulus	Afgrond South, Newcastle	15.10.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment, and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Age 34. Poor. Joined the invaders in October 1899. Active from October-December 1899 around Newcastle. Took part in the Battle of Talana. Took part in operations on the Zululand border during December and January. Took part in the attack on the magistracy of Nqutu on 31 January 1900.
17	Prozesky, Johannes Julius August (Rev)	Köningsberg, Newcastle	15.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 9 months in prison	Age 61. Missionary, Berlin Missionary Society. Joined Boers on 17 October 1899 as magistrate. For the next three months tried Africans and issued passes to those who wanted to proceed to Newcastle. Commandeered Africans to perform certain tasks such as acting as policemen, to lay a telegraph line and to build a road along the Tugela line.
18	Uys, Cornelius Janse	Vaalkrantz,	18.10.00	High	14 months imprisonment	Age 29. Joined Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. In December

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
		Newcastle		Treason	and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	and January accompanied the Natal Commando into the Vryheid district and did duty along the Zululand border. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900.
19	Collyer, Thomas	Stelazieskop, Newcastle	18.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Age 28. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the Vryheid district and on its operations along the Zululand border.
20	Collyer, Michael Christian	Elandsklip, Newcastle	18.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the Vryheid district and on its operations along the Zululand border.
21	Eksteen, Johannes Cornelius	Elandsklip, Newcastle	18.10.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Age 20. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the Vryheid district and on its operations along the Zululand border.
22	Donovan, John Clark (Jnr)	Roselands, Newcastle	19.10.00	High Treason	6 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 6 months in prison	Young. Joined the Boers in November 1899. Received cattle from the Boers that he herded on his father's farm. Active around Newcastle. Served as a policeman. Assisted in the arrestation and guarding of prisoners. Assisted in the removing of a cart, grain bags and barbed wire belonging to the Newcastle Municipality.
23	Gowthorpe, John William	Newcastle	19.10.00	High Treason	Fined £20	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Performed duty as policeman and guard. On 16 May 1900 provided some Boers with food and drink free of charge. Committed suicide shortly after the treason trial.
24	Bosman, Lindley	Newcastle	22.10.00	High Treason	Fined £50 or 4 months in prison	Age 16. Son of Ds Bosman. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Clerk to the field-cornet, and accompanied him on the looting of the cattle of JG Kemp. Acted as a guard. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando to Vryheid and the Zululand border. Active on duty in the ZAR.
25	Adendorff, Gerrit	Modderlaagte, Newcastle	22.10.00	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Age 31. Heart problem. Joined the Boers on 5 December 1899. Tried to convince Neumann and Biddulph to join. Generally inactive.
26	Brooks, Stephanus	The Peak, Newcastle	23.10.00	High Treason	11 months imprisonment	Age 46. Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied the Natal Commando to the Vryheid district and the Zululand border. Performed other duties in the ZAR.
27	Adendorff, Wynand Peter John	Glenbarton, Newcastle	25.10.00	High Treason	Fined £50	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Acted as Native Commissioner in Charlestown. Issued passes. Managed to protect the Africans to a certain extent. Did not take up arms.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
28	Adendorff, Michael Christian	Sandford, Newcastle	26.10.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 8 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899 and took up arms. Acted as a small-pox guard in the Ingagane area. Took office to avoid active service.
29	Badenhorst, Bernardus Johannes	Kempenveldt Dundee	29.10.00	High Treason	Fined of £100 or 3 months imprisonment	Only came to Natal in 1898 after his marriage to Miss Kemp. A Transvaal citizen but resident in Natal. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg conducting patrols.
30	De Waal, Daniel Jacobus	Carolina, Dundee	29.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 8 months in prison	Age 21. Joined Boers in December 1899. Active around Dundee and Ladysmith. Delivered a notice to a loyalist.
31	Prozesky, Johannes Gottfried Paul	Köningsberg, Newcastle	30.10.00	High Treason	Fined £20	Young. Joined the invaders in October 1899. Clerk to the JP. Issued passes. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied some prisoners to Pretoria. Provided information on Africans.
32	Lotz, Christoffel van Zyl	Cardie, Newcastle	30.10.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment	Age 27. Illiterate and poor. Claimed to be an OFS citizen. Joined the Boers on 12 October 1899. Took part in the Battle of Talana. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and to the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900.
33	Shorter, George Henry	Spectacle Spruit, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and fine £100 or further 4 months	Took up arms in December 1899. Worked as a small-pox guard in the Newcastle district. Militarily active around Newcastle. Received a wagon from the ZAR Government. Acted as a detective. His brothers were Natal Carabineers. English speaking and born in the UK.
34	Fourie, Franz Abraham	Slotenhoek, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	1 years imprisonment and fine £200 or further 8 months	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Chosen as corporal. Active around Dundee and Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in operations around Helpmekaar.
35	Boshoff, William Henry (snr)	Hawarden, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	1 years imprisonment and fine £150 or further 4 months	Father of the three sons listed below. Joined in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border.
36	Boshoff, William Henry (jnr)	Hawarden, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899. Continued military duty until June 1900.
37	Boshoff, Johannes Nicolaas	Hawarden, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899. Continued military

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						with duty until June 1900.
38	Boshoff, Izak Johannes	Hawarden, Newcastle	31.10.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899.
39	De Wet, Coenrad Lukas	Rietspruit, Newcastle	5.11.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £1000 or a further 18 months in prison	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Affluent. Removed goods from the house of AH Throw at Ingogo. Active in the Newcastle area. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu magistracy on 31 January 1899.
40	De Wet, Pieter Jacobus	Rietspruit, Newcastle	5.11.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Affluent. Removed goods from the house of AH Throw at Ingogo. Active in the Newcastle area. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899.
41	De Wet, Daniel Rudolph	Rietspruit, Newcastle	5.11.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Affluent. Removed goods from the house of AH Throw at Ingogo. Active in the Newcastle area. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899.
42	Degenaar, Nicholas Johannes (jnr)	Ballingeich, Newcastle	7.11.00	High Treason	10 months imprisonment, fine £50 or further 3 months	Joined the Boers in late December 1899. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Active in the Vryheid district. Worked as small-pox guard and as a policeman near Ingagane and Spitzkop.
43	Degenaar, Johannes Jacobus	Ballingeich, Newcastle	7.11.00	High Treason	1 years imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Active in the Vryheid district. Hospitalized while on duty near Vryheid.
44	Degenaar, David Izak Petrus	Ballingeich, Newcastle	7.11.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Worked as small-pox guard and as a policeman near Ingagane and Spitzkop.
45	Adendorff, Pieter John Christoffel	Mountain View, Newcastle	8.11.00	High Treason	Fined of a £100 or 4 months imprisonment	February and March 1900 acted as clerk to the JP and issued passes to Africans.
46	Botha, Hermanus Lambertus	Glendale, Newcastle	13.11.00	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 6 months in prison	Joined the invaders in December 1899. Poor. Active around Newcastle and in the ZAR. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu magistracy on 31 January 1899.
47	Adendorff, Dirk Cornelius	Slangberg, Newcastle	13.11.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle, Nqutu and in the Vryheid area. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
48	Hattingh, Jan Hendrik	Connaught, Newcastle	14.11.00	High Treason or otherwise theft	21 months imprisonment, the first 12 with hard labour and a fine of £400 or a further 1 year in prison	Age 38. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Served as policeman and small-pox guard. Active around Newcastle. Looted the shop of M Schaffer and the house of HJ Hearn near Hattingspruit. Removed cattle belonging to H Hoosen.
49	Cronjé, Abraham Marthinus (jnr)	Grootklip, Newcastle	15.11.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle and in the Vryheid area and around Nqutu. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1899.
50	Cronjé, Abraham Marthinus (snr)	Middlen, Newcastle	15.11.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £150 or a further 6 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Took part in the attack on the Nqutu magistracy on 31 January 1899.
51	Raal, Friedrich Raynard	Tatham's Camp, Newcastle	15.11.00	High Treason or otherwise theft	16 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 6 months in prison	Poor. Joined in December 1899. Assisted in the looting of the store of JWS Dimock. Active in the Vryheid area, around Dundee and near Nqutu.
52	Van der Merwe, Johannes Francois	Sophia's Rest, Weenen	22.11.00	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers on 16 November on the farm Sophia's Rust. Active in the Weenen and Dundee area. Assisted the Boers in an attempt to free two prisoners.
53	Van der Merwe, Jacob Albertus	Sophia's Rest, Weenen	22.11.00	High Treason	Fined £50 or 4 months imprisonment	Age 18. Joined the Boers on 16 November on the farm Sophia's Rust. Assisted the Boers in an attempt to free two prisoners.
54	Bester, William Abraham Ludovic	Sandvlei, Upper Tugela	23.11.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment or a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded with his family to the OFS with the intention of assisting them. Active on the Basutoland border as a guard.
55	Jordaan, Joseph Erasmus	Rietvlei, Estcourt	24.11.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899 near Estcourt. Active around Weenen and Estcourt. Assisted in the removal of goods from th farm Zuur Laager. Retreated with the Boers across the Tugela.
56	Robbertse, Johannes Francois (snr)	Spitzberg, Estcourt	29.11.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment or a fine of £500 or a further year in prison	In November 1899 harboured the Boers and provided them with food and shelter. Took up arms in November/December 1899. Active in the area around Springfield.
57	Robbertse, Johannes Francois (jnr)	Spitzberg, Estcourt	29.11.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £150 or a further 6 months in prison	Took up arms in November/December 1899. Removed goods from the police station at Gourton. Active in the area around Springfield and Ladysmith. Retreat across the Tugela and then to the OFS. Present at the Battle of Wagon Hill.
58	Smit, Marcus Albert	Wessels Hoek,	4.12.00	High	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in January or February 1900. Active with the Boer forces in the Klip

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
		Ladysmith		Treason		River area. Worked on the railway. Guard at the top of the Drakensberg. On 31 March 1900 involved in Boer operations.
59	Smit, Michael Eckstein	Wessels Hoek, Ladysmith	4.12.00	High Treason	1 day imprisonment	Age 17. Joined the Boers in January or February 1900. Guarded horses for two days.
60	Potgieter, Hermanus Antonie	Brakfontein, Ladysmith	8.12.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Owner 3 100 acres. Age 60. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area.
61	Potgieter, Johannes Jurgens	Bloemhof, Ladysmith	8.12.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Poor. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area. Removed property belonging to A Wright from the farm Rhenosterfontein.
62	Potgieter, Gerhardus Cornelius	Brakfontein, Ladysmith	8.12.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Poor. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area.
63	Engelbrecht, Johannes Cornelius	Kromelboog, Ladysmith	10.12.00	High Treason	2 years imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 9 months in prison	Old. Joined the Boers in October 1899. On 18 October 1899 involved in a skirmish at Uziko's Kraal.
64	Engelbrecht, Jacobus Frederick	Kromelboog, Ladysmith	10.12.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. On 18 October 1899 involved in a skirmish at Uziko's Kraal. Involved in the action around Ladysmith during early 1900.
65	Engelbrecht, Hermanus	Kromelboog, Ladysmith	10.12.00	High Treason	3 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. On 18 October 1899 involved in a skirmish at Uziko's Kraal. Involved in the action around Ladysmith during early 1900.
66	Zietsman, Jacobus Gerhardus	Snelster, Estcourt	13.12.00	High Treason	6 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Well educated. Joined the Boers in December 1899 and assisted them in operations. Active around Ladysmith and Newcastle.
67	Brandon, Frederick James Thomas	Jackalsspruit, Ladysmith	15.12.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Took part in operations at Wasbank, Doornkraal, Elandslaagte, Mhlumayo and around Ladysmith. Appointed as a small-pox guard. Removed property from the farm Millican.
68	Leibrandt, Hendrik Albertus Jacobus	Rustenburg, Upper Tugela	15.12.00	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Went to the OFS. Assisted the Boers in the attack on Ladysmith on 8 January 1900. In early 1900 provided Boers with food and shelter on the farm Rustenburg. Active around Ladysmith and at Olivier's Hoek Pass.
69	Marais, Jan Lodewyk	Meyers Hoek, Ladysmith	18.12.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment, and a fine of £200 or a further 6 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November/December On service at Elandslaagte and Mhlumayo. Acted as military policeman.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
70	Marais, Adrian Izak	Waterval, Ladysmith	18.12.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £300 or a further year in prison	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active around Ladysmith. 1899. Active around Ladysmith and Modderspruit. On service at Elandslaagte and Mhlumayo. Acted as military policeman. Involved in the action at Wasbank in March 1900.
71	Cronjé, Hermanus Bernardus	Mielietuinhoek, Ladysmith	19.12.00	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 8 months in prison	Owner of two farms. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active at Ladysmith, Wasbank, Doornkraal, Elandslaagte and Mhlumayo. Worked as small-pox guard and policeman in early 1900 around Ladysmith. Took sandbags and railway material to the Klip River.
72	Von Benecke, Gerhardus Ignatius	Whitstones, Upper Tugela	20.12.00	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Poor. Age 53. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Upper Tugela area. Part of the force that attacked the Upper Tugela magistracy. Remove goods from the store at Rookdale. Gathered information for the Boers.
73	Truscott, James Charles	Elandspruit, Ladysmith	21.12.00	High Treason	1 years imprisonment, and a fine of £100 or a further 4 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Took part in operations around Wasbank in March 1900.
74	Truscott, Frederick Adrian	Elandspruit, Ladysmith	21.12.00	High Treason	2 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Removed property belonging to RM Gray from the farm Doornpoort. Took part in operations around Wasbank in March 1900.
75	Truscott, Caspar Jeremiah	Elandspruit, Ladysmith	21.12.00	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Removed property belonging to RM Gray from the farm Doornpoort.
76	Truscott, Jan Thomas	Elandspruit, Ladysmith	21.12.00	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Removed property belonging to RM Gray from the farm Doornpoort.
77	Minnaar, Gerhardus Ignatius	Bellvue, Upper Tugela	3.1.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899. Active in the Upper Tugela area. Went to the OFS by order to reap crops. Assisted in operations in Klip River county.
78	Nel, Benjamin Joseph	Krantzhoek, (Paardekraal) Ladysmith	5.1.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	Owner of a section of Paardekraal. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Entertained Boer visitors. Assisted in the removal of property from the home of W Wright of Colworth. Participated in operations around Ladysmith before retreating to the OFS to assist with the war effort.
79	Nel, Samuel Stephanus	Lichfield, Ladysmith	5.1.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	Owner of the frm Lichfield. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Entertained Boer visitors. Participated in operations around Ladysmith before retreating to the OFS to assist with the war effort.
80	Du Plessis, Christoffel Johannes	Maggiesdale, Ladysmith	5.1.01	High Treason	Fined £200 or 9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Entertained Boer visitors. Participated in operations around Ladysmith before retreating to the OFS to assist

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						with the war effort.
81	Swarts, Jurie Johannes Hermanus	South Dalton, Upper Tugela	7.1.01	High Treason and theft	2½ years imprisonment, the first 18 months with hard labour	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations at Tintwa, Witzieshoek, and on the Natal/OFS/Basutoland border up to February 1900. Stole a plough and two bags of bone dust from Leigh Farm. Stole numerous goods from the Upper Tugela Magistracy, house of the gaoler and the government.
82	Swarts, Gerhardus Jacobus (Piet)	South Dalton, Upper Tugela	7.1.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations at Tintwa, Witzieshoek, and on the Natal/OFS/Basutoland border up to February 1900.
83	Swarts, William. Johannes	South Dalton, Upper Tugela	7.1.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Age 19. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations at Tintwa, Witzieshoek, and on the Natal/OFS/Basutoland border up to February 1900.
84	Bester, Johannes Jurie	Aberfeldie, Upper Tugela	8.1.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Age 19. Sent by his father to join the Boers in October 1899. Assisted from then until December in operations around Ladysmith. In December he proceeded to the OFS assisting in operations until March 1900 when he surrendered.
85	Krogman, Otto William	Driefontein, Ladysmith	10.1.01	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £750 or a further 2 years in prison	Joint owner of a farm in the OFS and owner of a farm in Natal. Joined in November 1899 at Doornkraal. Elected field-cornet for Ladysmith. Removed property from the farm of RM Gray and from Acol mine near Elandslaagte by order. Active around Ladysmith. Took part in operations at Wasbank, Elandslaagte, Doornkraal and Mhlumayo. Assisted in the commandeering of property.
86	Potgieter, Johannes Jurgens	North Dalton, Upper Tugela	10.1.01	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in the Upper Tugela area. Proceeded to the OFS and took part in operations on the OFS/Natal border.
87	Buys, Jan Christoffel	Rietkuil, Ladysmith	11.1.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Uneducated. Young. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area. Went to Mhlumayo with the Boers. Performed duties as policeman and small-pox guard.
88	Buys, Izak Johannes Mathys	Rietkuil, Ladysmith	11.1.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Uneducated. Age 22. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area. And participated in operations. Went to Mhlumayo with the Boers. Performed duties as policeman and small-pox guard.
89	Colling, Frederick Moolman	Georgina, Ladysmith	11.1.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Resident in the OFS for long periods of time. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River area. Went to Mhlumayo with the Boers. Performed duties as policeman and small-pox guard.
90	Colling, Thomas George	Zuurfontein,	11.1.01	High	7 months imprisonment and	Bad health. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active in the Klip River

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
		Ladysmith		Treason	a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	area. Went to Mhlumayo with the Boers. Performed duties as policeman and small-pox guard.
91	Van der Berg, Johannes Jacob	Rietfontein, Upper Tugela	14.1.01	High Treason and theft	2½ years imprisonment, the first 18 months with hard labour	Age 53. Poor. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900. Active at Ntabanyama and other places in Klip River county. Stole goods from Leigh Farm and G Coventry.
92	Van der Berg, Samuel Jacobus	Rietfontein, Upper Tugela	14.1.01	High Treason and theft	2½ years imprisonment, the first 18 months with hard labour	Poor. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900. Active at Ntabanyama and other places in Klip River county. Stole goods from Leigh Farm and G Coventry.
93	Van der Berg, Hendrik Stephanus	Rietfontein, Upper Tugela	14.1.01	High Treason and theft	2½ years imprisonment, the first 18 months with hard labour	Age 50. Poor. Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900. Active at Ntabanyama and other places in Klip River county. Stole goods from Leigh Farm .
94	Meyer, Lukas Wilhelmus	Meyersrust, Ladysmith	16.1.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment, fined £200 or a further 6 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Assistant-Field-cornet. Active around Ladysmith. Assisted in the removing of goods from the farm Millican.
95	Scheepers, Jacobus Nicholas (snr)	Diel, Upper Tugela	18.1.01	High Treason and theft	18 months imprisonment, first 9 months with hard labour	Age 49. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900. Stole property belonging to the magistrate of Upper Tugela. Stole chairs from the Upper Tugela court room. Stole property belonging to the gaoler at Upper Tugela.
96	Scheepers, Gerhardus Johannes	Diel, Upper Tugela	18.1.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment, first 9 months with hard labour	Age 21. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900. Stole property belonging to the magistrate of Upper Tugela.
97	Scheepers, Jacobus Nicholas (jnr)	Diel, Upper Tugela	18.1.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and assisted in operations on the Natal/OFS border up to June 1900.
98	Raath, Hendrik Nicholaas	Putini's Ladysmith	Spruit, 19.1.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	No land. Baked bread for the Boers during November and December 1899.
99	Nel, Jan Christoffel	Putini's Ladysmith	Spruit, 19.1.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899 and took part in operations in the Klip River area.
100	Nel, Hendrik Nicholas	Putini's Ladysmith	Spruit, 19.1.01	High Treason	2 months imprisonment.	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899 and took part in operations in the Klip River area.

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101	Potgieter, Hermanus Antonie	Beauvale, Ladysmith	22.1.01	High Treason	Fined £400 or 1 years imprisonment	Old. Accompanied the Boers in operations around Ladysmith from November 1899-February 1900. Pointed out drifts to the Boers.
102	Bester, Philip Jacobus	Droogkop, Upper Tugela	22.1.01	High Treason	Fined £150 or 6 months imprisonment	Moved with his family and stock to OFS in December 1899, and took part in operations on the OFS/Natal border up to February 1900. In January 1900 active around Ladysmith specifically at Thabanyama. Looted the area around Acton Homes.
103	Bester, Christoffel Carolus Johannes	Brakval, Upper Tugela	22.1.01	High Treason	Fined £150 or 6 months imprisonment	Brother of PJ Bester. Moved with stock and family to the OFS. Came into Natal and looted mealies from the farm of G Coventry. Returned to the OFS and remained until February 1900.
104	D'Arcy, James Henry	Tylden, Ladysmith	24.1.01	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Irish. Served with the Cape Mounted Rifles for five years. Joined the Boers in October/November 1899. On active military duty in Klip River county, dealing especially with transport. After the relief of Ladysmith went to the OFS.
105	Muller, Lodewyk Joseph Jurgens	The Oaks, Newcastle	24.1.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Owner of 750 acres. Joined the Boers and in December 1899, took part in operations near Ladysmith up to February 1900. Acted as a small pox-guard on the farm of Arthur Good.
106	Muller, Louis Jezajjes	Doornkraal, Ladysmith	24.1.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	No land. Joined the Boers and in December 1899, took part in operations near Ladysmith up to February 1900. Acted as a small pox-guard on the farm of Arthur Good.
107	Kemp, Jurie Johannes	Zuurfontein, Dundee	30.1.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 18 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. On 15 December assisted in the commandeering of goods from FA Peters at Rorke's Drift. On 31 December 1899 assisted in the commandeering of a horse from MA Neumann. Active around Pomeroy in February 1900. On 9 and 28 February 1900 removed goods from the mission station at Dannhauser. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar. Involved in patrols and sentry duty.
108	Strydom, Stephanus Lukas	Uithoek, Dundee	30.1.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment	Owner of 310 acres. Assisted the Boers in November 1899 to remove a horse from the property of RJ Du Bois near Helpmekaar. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols. Guarded a prisoner. Delivered a notice to a loyalist, HW Wohlberg.
109	Strydom, Hendrik Josephus	Uithoek, Dundee	30.1.01	High Treason	1 day imprisonment	Age 14. Removed from school to join the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
110	Laatz, Herman Hendrik (snr)	Krantzkop, Dundee	31.1.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrol work and commissariat work. Served the Boers with food.

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111	Laatz, Herman Hendrik (jnr)	Krantzkop, Dundee	31.1.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg for three weeks.
112	Laas, Andries Johannes	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
113	Laas, Johannes Casparus	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
114	Laas, Jacobus Stephanus	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
115	Laas, Cornelius Johannes	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
116	Labuschagne, Casper Johannes	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
117	Van der Linden, Barend	Paardeberg, Dundee	1.2.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Conducted patrols and general military work.
118	Vermaak, Coenraad Marthinus	Kilburnie, Dundee	5.2.01	High Treason	16 months imprisonment and a fine of £150 or a further 6 months in prison	On 12 and 13 December 1899 assisted the Boers in arresting W Adams, FA Peters and others near Rorke's Drift. Commandeered cattle belonging to HW Wohlberg. Delivered notices to the loyal Strydoms. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar.
119	Craig, John	Coalfields, Dundee	6.2.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 4 months	Resided in the ZAR for long periods of time. Poor. Took office as a farrier during November and December 1899. Assisted in the arrest of several prisoners and accompanied them to Pretoria.
120	Nel, Johannes Andries	Goedekuis, Dundee	7.2.01	High Treason and theft	15 months imprisonment the first 9 with hard labour	Joined the Boers in November/December 1899. Active on the Biggarsberg, at Job's Kop and near Ladysmith. Stole goods belonging to Esob Hoosen.
121	Nieuwenhuizen, Hendrik Johannes	Langefontein, Dundee	7.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar. Rode patrol to Pomeroy. In March 1900 took control of some wagons that transported goods to the ZAR.
122	Wiggill, John Grimes	Sweetwaters, Dundee	7.2.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Only resident in Natal since 1897. Joined the Boers In November/December 1899. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar.

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123	Ries, Johannes Hendrik	Langefontein, Dundee	12.2.01	High Treason	Fined £50	Joined the Boers and was active up to March 1900 in the Helpmekaar area. Served as a guard and policeman. Brother-in-law of Commandant Steenkamp.
124	Pieters, Cornelius Jansen	Zwartwater, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Owned 6 000 acres. Joined the Boers on 22 December 1899. Active around Dundee, Wasbank and Umbulwana-Ladysmith. Served with the ZAR artillery for nine days. Active up to 31 January 1900.
125	Maritz, Jacobus Johannes	Alletta, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations at Elandslaagte, Ladysmith, Wasbank, Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Commandeered cattle for the Boers from loyalists.
126	Maritz, Adolph Andries	Adelaide, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations at Elandslaagte, Ladysmith, Wasbank, Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Commandeered cattle for the Boers from loyalists.
127	Posselt, Carl Frederick Hendrik (snr)	De Waar, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	Fined £50	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Assisted them in the removing of goods from the store of CG Wilson. Harboured Boers and provided them with food, shelter, clothing and housing.
128	Posselt, Carl Frederick Hendrik (jnr)	De Waar, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	7 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Assisted in the removing of goods from the store of CG Wilson. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar as well as near Ladysmith.
129	Labuschagne, Johannes Coenraad Lukas	De Waar, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	7 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Assisted in the removing of goods from the store of CG Wilson. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar as well as near Ladysmith.
130	Tshali	Kelvin Grove, Dundee	13.2.01	High Treason	Fined £5	
131	Meyer, Stephanus Johannes	Mauchlin, Dundee	18.2.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers on 23 December 1899. Active in the Dundee district. Commandeered the cattle of loyalists like AL Jansen.
132	Meyer, William Lodewyk	Mauchlin, Dundee	18.2.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers on 23 December 1899. Active in the Dundee district. Commandeered the cattle of loyalists like AL Jansen.
133	Vermaak, Andries Cornelius (jnr)	Sigtuna, Dundee	20.2.01	High Treason	27 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations at Vant's Drift, Rorke's Drift, Elandskraal, and on the Biggarsberg. Assisted in the commandeering of cattle belonging to loyalists. Arrested some loyalists. Took part in the Battle of Pomeroy on 9 March 1900.
134	Webb, Theunis Johannes	Kliphoek, Dundee	21.2.01	High	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December. Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
				Treason		
135	Du Bois, Edmund Ormond Lionel (snr)	Vergelegen, Dundee	22.2.01	High Treason	Fined £250	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Assisted the Boers in removing the belongings of Africans residing on the farm Douglas. Assisted in the removal of goods from the store of Esob Hoosen. Part of the operations at Wasbank, Paddafontein and Job's Kop.
136	De Waal, Pieter Jacobus	Gowan Brae, Dundee	22.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active on the Biggarsberg and near Helpmekaar. Proceeded into the ZAR, Vryheid area, to render assistance to the Boers.
137	Spies, Abraham Gerhardus	Jackalsfontein, Dundee	25.2.01	High Treason	Fined £5	In March 1900 proceeded with his family and belongings to the OFS. Never joined the Boers.
138	Kok, Cornelius Coenraad	Driefontein, Dundee	25.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Performed the duties of postman.
139	Kok, Gert Stephanus	Driefontein, Dundee	25.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Performed the duties of postman.
140	Labuschagne, Willem Adrian	Stonehill, Dundee	25.2.01	High Treason	7 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Inactive when possible.
141	Labuschagne, Pieter Hendrik	Stonehill, Dundee	25.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
142	Prinsloo, William Frederick Jacobus	Adelaide, Dundee	27.2.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Active on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar. Assisted in the taking of some horses from loyalists. Claimed to be a OFS burgher.
143	Wellmann, August	Roundheuvel, Dundee	8.3.01	High Treason	Fined £100 or 6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
144	Cronjé, Abraham Marthinus	Witbank, Dundee	8.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Dundee and proceeded to render assistance to the Boers in the ZAR.
145	Hattingh, Jan Hendrik	Oribi Flats, Dundee	8.3.01	High Treason	7 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
146	Randlehoff, John Henry	Wasbank, Dundee	9.3.01	High Treason	Fined £10 or 1 month imprisonment	Joined the Boers in 1899 and acted as clerk and interpreter to the commandant or native commissioner, LJ de Jager.
147	Uys, Dirk Cornelius	Blinkwater, Dundee	11.3.01	High	5 years imprisonment and a	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Elected to the position of assistant

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
				Treason	fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	field-cornet and commandeering officer. Active in the Wasbank, Dundee and Biggarsberg area. Assisted in the commandeering of property and possessions of loyalists. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Took some of the prisoners captured at Nqutu to Helpmekaar. On 28 February 1900, removed goods from the mission station near Dannhauser. Only arrived in Natal in 1897.
148	Van Rooyen, Johannes Marthinus	Cinderford, Dundee	11.3.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 18 months in prison	Joined the Boer in October 1899. Elected to the rank of corporal. Active in the area around Dundee and Helpmekaar. Assisted in the removal of goods from the farm Sheepridge. In May 1900 assisted the Boers with their retreat. Went to the ZAR.
149	De Jager, Lodewyk Johannes	Wasbank, Dundee	14.3.01	High Treason	5 years imprisonment and a fine of £5000 or a further 5 years in prison	Affluent. Brother-in-law of General Lucas Meyer. Claimed to be a Transvaal citizen. Accepted the title of commandant for Dundee, Ladysmith and Newcastle. Joined the Boers in October 1899. Removed large quantities of goods from the British camp at Dundee on 24 October 1899. Removed large quantities of goods from Natal Collieries at Wasbank, as well as goods belonging to W Patterson. Harboured the Boers and provided them with food and shelter. Commandeered locals to attend a meeting at Wasbank. Occupied the position of native commissioner and issued passes and controlled the local Africans. Assisted the Boers in operations at Elandslaagte, Ladysmith, Spioenkop and Helpmekaar. Assisted in the commandeering of property of residents of the Dundee area. In March 1900 left for the ZAR with his family and property.
150	Cronjé, Abraham Marthinus	Loskop, Newcastle	16.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Age 23. Joined the Boers in December 1899. In December and January accompanied the Natal Commando into the Vryheid district and on their duty along the Zululand border. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu.
151	Van Niekerk, Andries Daniel Cornelius	Horseshoe, Newcastle	16.3.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR and on its service along the Zululand border. Assisted in operations around Nqutu.
152	O'Neil, Johannes Theodorus	Sampson's Klip, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR
153	Colling, James Philip	Gainsmore, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
154	Cronjé, Adrian Matthys Johannes	Aylesbury, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
155	Cronjé, Jacobus Ludwig	Loskop, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Age 18. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR .Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
156	Eksteen, Johannes Albertus	Elandsklip, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899. Served as commandeering officer. Served commandeering orders to several loyalists and took their cattle in several cases. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR. Commandeered the property of GW Dicks.
157	Matthie, John Henry	Lennoxton, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason and theft.	18 months imprisonment the first year with hard labour	Poor. Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Active around Newcastle. Acted as policeman at Lennoxton. On 5 December 1899 proceeded to the ZAR to serve the Boers. Stole cattle belonging to J Davidson and various belongings belonging to AJ Crawford.
158	Eksteen, Louis Cornelius	Onderberg, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	1 day imprisonment	No land. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. On 5 December 1899 proceeded to the ZAR to serve the Boers. Trekboer from the OFS.
159	Rall, Johannes Wilhelm	The Shelter, Newcastle	19.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. Assisted in the removal of cattle belonging to GW Dicks and H Hoosen. Filled the position of policeman.
160	Adendorff, Johann Christoffel	Bradford, Newcastle	20.3.01	High Treason	Fined £100 or 4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Assisted the Boers in the removal of goods from the store of A Oldknow & Co. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900. Acted as commissariat.
161	Maritz, Johannes Marthinus	Sprinklaagte, Newcastle	20.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. Assisted the Boers in November 1899 to remove goods from a shop near Lower Inhambane. Served as policeman.
162	Maritz, Solomon	Spokmill, Newcastle	20.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £150 or a further 6 months in prison	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district.
163	Cronjé, Pieter	Middlen, Newcastle	20.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Age 21. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR .Was part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900. His father also sentenced as a rebel.
164	Raal, Joseph William	Slangberg, Newcastle	21.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Active in the Newcastle and Ladysmith area. Assisted in the attack on Platrand. Claimed to be a OFS burgher.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
165	Fourie, Johannes Louis	Glastonbury, Newcastle	21.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in the Newcastle area. Commandeered cattle for the Boers from the farm Snipemarsh. Served as a small-pox guard on the Biggarsberg.
166	Fourie, Dirk Bernard	Glastonbury, Newcastle	21.3.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Age 22. Served as a small-pox guard on the Biggarsberg.
167	Louw, John Blyth	Fairbreeze, Newcastle	21.3.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Assisted the Boers in operations around Helpmekaar. Under the protection of the Boers crossed with his family into the ZAR in May 1900.
168	Van Reenen, Jacob	The Shelter, Newcastle	21.3.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Assisted in the removal of cattle from GW Dicks. Filled the position of policeman. Member of the Natal Police up to June 1899.
169	Van Niekerk, David Jacobus	Doornpoort, Newcastle	25.3.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district.
170	Botha, Johan Hendrik Ludwig	Elandsklip, Newcastle	25.3.01	High Treason	7 months imprisonment	Age 16. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
171	Smit, Cornelius Johannes	Fouriesspruit, Newcastle	26.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
172	Raal, Gerhardus Adrian	Brooklyn, Newcastle	26.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
173	Boshoff, Abraham Stephanus	Sleutel Poort, Newcastle	26.3.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Assisted the Boers to commandeer goods from the farm Mooi Plaats. Acted as Policeman. Induced some loyalists to join. Assisted in the arrest of AS Carbarns.
174	Breytenbach, Johannes Hendrik	Bluebank, Newcastle	26.3.01	High Treason and theft	6 months hard labour	Age 60. In October or November 1899 stole some pots and a tin of paraffin from A Suliman.
175	Breytenbach, Coenraad Ludwig	Bluebank, Newcastle	26.3.01	High	1 year imprisonment	Active around Newcastle. Assisted the Boers in removing goods from the stores of

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
				Treason		Mulna and Suliman. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
176	Breytenbach, Frederick Johannes alias Franz Abraham Jurgens Breytenbach	Bluebank, Newcastle	26.3.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Active around Newcastle. Assisted the Boers in removing goods from the stores of Mulna and Suliman. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
177	Adendorff, William Daniel.	Welgedacht, (Brooklyn) Newcastle	28.3.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Owner of two farms. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
178	Van Niekerk, Daniel Laurens	De Wet's Stroom, Newcastle	28.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
179	Cronjé, Pieter Christian	Schaapdoorns, Newcastle	28.3.01	High Treason	2 months imprisonment	Very young. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
180	Cronjé, Carel Pieter	Schaapdoorns, Newcastle	28.3.01	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Elected as assistant field-cornet on 29 November 1899. Assisted in the commandeering of horses and cattle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900.
181	Laas, Christian Johannes Hermanus	Sweet Home, Newcastle	28.3.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Active in operations around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900.
182	Saddler, Thomas Johannes	Kromdraai, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accepted the office of policeman in January 1900. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900.
183	Van Greuning, Barend Jacobus	Spectaclespruit, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900.
184	Van Greuning, Jacobus Johannes	Spectaclespruit, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. Part of the force that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy on 31 January 1900. Continued service with the Newcastle

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						Commando in the area around Nqutu.
185	Boshoff, Johannes Christoffel	Goed Hoop, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district.
186	Boshoff, Jacobus Nicholas	Yarl, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Age 20. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. In February and March 1900 took part in operations around Helpmekaar.
187	Maritz, Alexander Pieter	Margate, Newcastle	29.3.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	From December 1899 to March 1899 worked as a policeman. Arrested a deserter, Laurens Badenhorst, and took him to Scheepers Nek in the ZAR.
188	Hoolahan, Joseph James	Durban	30.3.01	High Treason	4 years imprisonment	Also known as Hooligan by the Boers. Of Irish origin. Served with the Cape Mounted Rifles for two years. From October to December 1899, assisted the Boers in operations in Klip River county. Took part in the Battle of Talana. Member of the Irish Brigade.
189	Burns, John Patrick	Durban	30.3.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Englishman born in Durban but married to an Afrikaner woman. Formerly a volunteer for the colonial forces. Took part in operations around Nqutu from March to May 1900.
190	Triegaardt, Carolus Johannes	Schoongezicht, Weenen	2.4.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Property in the OFS. Joined the Boers in November 1899. Active in operations in and around Weenen. In December 1899 proceeded with his family and belongings to the OFS. Assisted the Boers in operations in the Klip River area in January and February 1900. Continued his support for the Boers in the OFS.
191	Du Plessis, Jan Abraham	Mount Plessis, Weenen	2.4.01	High Treason	Fined £10 or 1 month imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Assisted the Boers in removing goods from the house of T Newton, Leigh Farm. Proceeded to the OFS.
192	Hesselman, Matthew Daniel	Coalfields, Dundee	2.4.01	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg.
193	Boshoff, Thomas Richard	Yarl, Newcastle	4.6.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 8 months in prison	In October 1899 harboured Boers and provided them with food, house and shelter. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Newcastle. In March 1900 moved with his family and belongings to the ZAR.
194	Nel, Jeremiah Jacobus	Yarl, Newcastle	4.6.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Son-in-law of TR Boshoff. Active around Newcastle. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district. In March 1900 moved with his family and belongings to the ZAR.
195	Döhne, John George	Baviaanskloof, Dundee	4.6.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. From December 1899 to March 1900 active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In April or May 1900 he

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
					further 4 months in prison	proceeded to the ZAR and continued to assist the Boers up to February 1901.
196	Botha, Josephus Cornelius	Monteith, Dundee	5.6.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In April or May 1900 he proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Surrendered as a Transvaal refugee.
197	Beckwith, Albert Edward	Charlestown, Newcastle	6.6.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further 18 months in prison	Businesses at Heidelberg and Volksrust. Resided in Charlestown. Married to an Afrikaner women. Joined the Boers in October 1899 near Pretoria. Acted as a policeman. On 13 October 1899 proceeded to Bloemfontein, OFS. Worked as commissariat officer.
198	Kemp, Gerhardus Phillipus	Gowrie, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	4 years imprisonment and a fine of £1000 or a further 2 years in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. From December to February. In April or May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR to continue with the war effort up to February 1901 when he surrendered. Part of the party that attacked the Wasbank Station on 25 October 1900. Member of the local rifle association.
199	Kemp, Jacobus Frederik	Gowrie, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. From December to February. In April or May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR to continue with the war effort up to February 1901 when he surrendered. Carried the flag for the Natal Commando on their way to Helpmekaar.
200	Kemp, Johannes Sigismundis	Gowrie, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In April or May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR to continue with the war effort up to February 1901 when he surrendered.
201	Jordaan, Pieter Johannes	Prestwick, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	16 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Dundee. Assisted the Boers in commandeering horses from loyalists. Retreated with the Boers into the ZAR in May 1900.
202	Jordaan, Izak Johannes Matthys	Prestwick, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Dundee. Assisted the Boers in commandeering horses from loyalists. Retreated with the Boers into the ZAR in May 1900.
203	Jordaan, Hendrik George	Ouklip, Dundee	7.6.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Dundee. Retreated with the Boers into the ZAR in May 1900.
204	Dekker, Nicholas Martinus	Bloemhof, Dundee	8.6.01	High Treason	Fined £25 or 2 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings.
205	Dekker, Jan Carl Peter	Bloemhof, Dundee	8.6.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Active in operations around Helpmekaar from December 1899 to February 1900. Assisted in the commandeering of horses from loyalists. In March 1900 proceeded

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Part of the Commando that attacked the Wasbank Station on 25 October 1900.
206	Vermaak, Andries Cornelius	Paddock, Dundee	8.6.01	High Treason and theft.	3 months imprisonment with hard labour and a fine of £300	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. In November 1899 stole goods from the stores of Handley and Lala. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901. Prison sentence remitted by the governor because of his age.
207	Vermaak, Theodorus Cornelius	Harrietdale, Dundee	8.6.01	High Treason	Fined £25 or 2 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
208	Nel, Pieter Hendrik	Kalverfontein, Dundee	28.6.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	
209	Van den Berg, Adrian Petrus	Brakfontein No. 2, Dundee	28.6.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Took part in operations in January and February 1900 in the Pomeroy area. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
210	Van den Berg, Theunis Christian	Brakfontein No. 2, Dundee	28.6.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Took part in operations in January and February 1900 in the Pomeroy area. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
211	Van den Berg, Hendrik Jacobus	Brakfontein No. 2, Dundee	28.6.01	High Treason	Fined £100 or 6 months imprisonment	Assisted the Boers on the Biggarsberg. In March 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
212	Vermaak, Robert Johannes	Kortbegrip, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	5.8.01	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 9 months in prison	Age 30. In October 1899 crossed from Zululand into the ZAR to join the Boers. Fought at the Battle of Talana. Continued to serve the Boers up to his arrest in 1901.
213	Moolman, Jacobus Phillipus (jnr)	Waterfall, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	5.8.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment	Very young. In October 1899 crossed from Zululand into the ZAR to join the Boers. Fought at the Battle of Talana. Served in operations around Ladysmith. Continued to serve the Boers up to his arrest in 1901.
214	Pretorius, Theunis Petrus	Waterfall, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	7.8.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further year in prison	In October 1899 crossed from Zululand into the ZAR to join the Boers. Fought at the Battle of Talana. Served in operations around Ladysmith. Took part in the attack on Platrand on 6 January 1900. Took part in operations in Klip River county from March to April 1900. On 6 February 1901 took part in a raid into the Melmoth area and assisted in the removal of some cattle. Court uncertain about his citizenship.
215	Döhne, Frederik Watermeyer	Baviaan's Kloof,	19.8.01	High	1 year imprisonment and a	Age 16. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Acted as a cook. Did not know how to

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
		Dundee		Treason	fine of £100 or a further 4 months in prison	use a rifle. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
216	Döhne, Andries Cornelius	Baviaan's Kloof, Dundee	19.8.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Took part in the Battle of Pomeroy on 9 March 1900. In March or April 1900 took his family and belongings and proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
217	Nel, Andries Johannes	Kalverfontein, Dundee	20.8.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Commandeered and took possession of property of loyalists. Assisted the Boers in taking certain loyalists prisoner. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Continued to serve the Boers.
218	Nel, Pieter Hendrik (jnr)	Kalverfontein, Dundee	20.8.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Commandeered and took possession of property of loyalists. Assisted the Boers in taking certain loyalists prisoner. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Continued to serve the Boers.
219	Jordaan, Gert Jacobus	Bergvliet, Dundee	21.8.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 4 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Pomeroy and Tugela Ferry. In March or April 1900 took his family and belongings and proceeded to the ZAR.
220	Jordaan, Pieter William Christian	Bergvliet, Dundee	21.8.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Age 16. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Pomeroy and Tugela Ferry. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family. Arrested at Utrecht. Assisted the British Army after 25 September 1900.
221	Kemp, Jacobus Frederick	Oubemind, Dundee	22.8.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Continued to serve the Boers.
222	Dekker, Gerhardus Marthinus	Droogdaal, Newcastle	22.8.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to February 1901.
223	Swart, Johannes Stephanus	Huddersfield, Dundee	24.8.01	High Treason	16 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Took messages on behalf of the Boers to the loyalists. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Continued to serve the Boers.

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224	Van der Walt, Gerhardus Jacobus	Gowrie, Dundee	26.8.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Commandeered property belonging to loyalists. Stole some mealies from the farm Sheepridge. Worked as a farrier. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to March 1901. Continued to serve the Boers. Claimed to be an OFS citizen.
225	Venter, Willem Jacobus (snr)	Daskrantz, Dundee	27.8.01	High Treason	Fined £20 or 1 month imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Ladysmith and Helpmekaar. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. OFS citizen.
226	Venter, Andries Lucas	Daskrantz, Dundee	27.8.01	High Treason	Fined £10 or 2 weeks imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Ladysmith and Helpmekaar. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. OFS citizen.
227	Venter, Johannes Tobias	Daskrantz, Dundee	27.8.01	High Treason	Fined £10 or 2 weeks imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Ladysmith and Helpmekaar. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. OFS citizen.
228	Venter, Willem Jacobus	Daskrantz, Dundee	27.8.01	High Treason	Fined £10 or 2 weeks imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations on the Biggarsberg, Ladysmith and Helpmekaar. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. OFS citizen.
229	Bentley, Thomas	Bluebank, Dundee	28.8.01	High Treason	8 months imprisonment	Very young. Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. From December 1899 to February 1900 participated in operations on the Biggarsberg. Helpmekaar, Pomeroy and Ladysmith. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. Born in the OFS.
230	Bentley, John Johannes	Bluebank, Dundee	28.8.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Very young. Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. From December 1899 to February 1900 participated in operations on the Biggarsberg, Helpmekaar, Pomeroy and Ladysmith. In March or April 1900 proceeded to the ZAR. Assisted the Boers up to September 1900. Born in the ZAR.
231	Van Rensburg, Nicholas Janse	Uitzicht, Dundee	29.8.01	High Treason	3 years imprisonment and a fine of £300 or a further 1 year in prison	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Performed the duties of field-cornet. Assisted in the removal of goods from the British military camp in Dundee and from the shop of Payn in Glencoe. In November took part in operations around Wasbank and on the Biggarsberg as well as at Pomeroy and Tugela Ferry. Took part in operations around Wasbank, Elandslaagte and Glencoe in March and April 1900. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to April 1901.
232	Van Rensburg, Jacobus Nicholas Janse	Uitzicht, Dundee	29.8.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Age 25. Joined the Boers in October 1899. Assisted in the removal of goods from the British military camp in Dundee and from the shop of Payn in Glencoe. In

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						November took part in operations around Wasbank and on the Biggarsberg as well as at Pomeroy and Tugela Ferry. Took part in operations around Wasbank, Elandslaagte and Glencoe in March and April 1900. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to April 1901.
233	Landman, Izaak Johannes Abraham	Ruigtefontein, Dundee	29.8.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Assisted them in the removal of goods such as furniture from the Dundee district. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. In January and February 1900 took part in operations at Wasbank and Ladysmith. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to May 1901.
234	Landman, Phillipus Jacobus	Ruigtefontein, Dundee	29.8.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Served as bridge guard. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to May 1901.
235	Landman, Johannes Abraham	Ruigtefontein, Dundee	29.8.01	High Treason	10 months imprisonment	Owner of 7 900 acres and ½ ace in Durban. Former justice of the peace. Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Assisted them in the removal of goods such as furniture from the Dundee district. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg. Guard at Wasbank Station. In January and February 1900 took part in operations at Wasbank and Ladysmith. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to May 1901 when he surrendered at Piet Retief.
236	Hattingh, Willem Carel	Welgelegen, Ladysmith	19.10.01	High Treason	Fined £250 or 9 months imprisonment	In November or December 1899 and January and February 1900 provided the Boers with food, house and shelter. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to March 1901. Local justice of the peace.
237	Hattingh, Jacobus Gerhardus	Welgelegen, Ladysmith	19.10.01	High Treason	2 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899 in Johannesburg and took part in military operations, around Ladysmith, up to February 1900. Took part in the act of building a dam across the Klip River. Acted as a policeman. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to March 1901. Came to Natal from Cape Town via Johannesburg prior to the war. Present at the Battle of Lombards Kop.
238	Hattingh, Isaac Johannes	Schaapplaats, Ladysmith	19.10.01	High Treason	3 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Age 18. Joined the Boers in November or December 1899 and took part in military operations around Ladysmith up to February 1900. Took part in the act of building a dam across the Klip River. Acted as a policeman and bridge guard. In May 1900 proceeded to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Assisted the Boers up to March 1901.
239	Kemp, Jacobus Frederick	Sterkstroom, Dundee	23.10.01	High	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations around Helpmekaar, on

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
				Treason	and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	the Biggarsberg and near Pomeroy. In March 1900 proceeded, via Newcastle, to the ZAR with his family and belongings. Remained in the ZAR up to June 1900.
240	Hattingh, Christian Jacobus Stephanus (jnr)	Heidelberg, Newcastle	26.10.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied the Boers into the ZAR to the Vryheid district in January 1900. In February 1900 took part in operations around Nqutu. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to March 1901.
241	Cromhout, Petrus Johannes	Leicester, Newcastle	26.10.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Newcastle and along the Buffalo River. Acted as a policeman and bridge guard. Retreated into the ZAR in March or April 1900. Arrested in April 1901 while on his way to Zimbabwe.
242	Hattingh, Johannes Hendrik	Servitude, Estcourt	28.10.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further year in prison	Joined the Boers in November 1899 and participated in operations in the Weenen area. Assisted the Boers in the removal of goods from the store of Wilson near Frere. Took cattle on the order of General PJ Joubert to Newcastle. Fled north with his family finally into the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to April 1901.
243	Van der Westhuyzen, Johannes Petrus	Anandale, Newcastle	31.10.01	High Treason	Fined £200 or 9 months imprisonment	Served with the Boers in and around Newcastle and Dundee from January 1900. Acted as a policeman. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to February 1901.
244	Dekker, Gerhardus Martinus	Droogdaal, Newcastle	31.10.01	High Treason	1 day imprisonment	Age 17. In April or May 1900 moved with his family into the ZAR and remained up to March 1901.
245	Dekker, Nicholas Martinus	Droogdaal, Newcastle	31.10.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR. Active in operations around Nqutu in February 1900. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to March 1901.
246	Landman, Andries Petrus	Sterkstroom, Dundee	31.10.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. For the next three months took part in operations on the Biggarsberg and around Helpmekaar. Took eggs and milk to the Boer wounded at Glencoe. Delivered notices to loyalists on behalf of the Boers. Assisted in the commandeering of property from loyalists around Dundee. In March 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to June 1901.
247	Van Rooyen, John Albertus	Newcastle	4.11.01	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of a £1000 or a further 18 months in prison	Joined the Boers in October 1899 in the OFS and took part in the invasion of Natal. Elected as a field-cornet in the OFS forces. From October 1899 to February 1900 took part in operations in Klip River county. Took part in the attack on Ladysmith on 9 January 1900. Retreated in March 1900 to the OFS and continued to render support to the Boers. One time member of the volunteer corps. Contested a seat in the 1898 general election in Natal. Came to prominence when the <i>Natal Mercury</i> of

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						17.10.1899, published his threats to shoot certain Natal Volunteers like FS Tatham.
248	Kemp, Petrus Johannes	Carnarvon, Dundee	5.11.01	High Treason	4 months imprisonment and a fine of £200 or a further 8 months in prison	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Assisted in the removal of goods from the British military camp in Dundee and from stores in the town. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg, at Pomeroy and the Tugela River. In May 1900 moved with his family into the ZAR and remained up to July 1901.
249	Kemp, Gerhardus Phillipus	Carnarvon, Dundee	5.11.01	High Treason	15 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg, at Pomeroy and the Tugela River. Assisted in the commandeering of property belonging to a loyalists. Performed the duties of commissariat officer. In May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to July 1901.
250	Joachim Johannes	Bloemhof, Dundee	7.11.01	High Treason	7 years imprisonment	Poor. Age 28. Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Up to February 1900 took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar, on the Biggarsberg and along the Tugela River. Assisted in guarding the prisoners taken at Nqutu. In May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to June 1901. In October 1900 assisted in the burning of wagons and tents at Vant's Drift. In May and June 1901 assisted in several raids into Natal looting cattle and belongings in the process. Captured by Rimingtons Guides near Utrecht.
251	Zietsman, William	Snelster, Estcourt	8.11.01	High Treason	Fined £25 or 2 months imprisonment	On 26 November 1899 after joining the Boers collected his family and belongings and retreated across the Tugela and into the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to April 1901.
252	Hattingh, Christoffel Johannes Petrus	Rama, Estcourt	8.11.01	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	On 26 November 1899 after joining the Boers collected his family and belongings and retreated across the Tugela and into the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to April 1901.
253	Hattingh, Johannes Michael	Rama, Estcourt	8.11.01	High Treason	Fined £25 or 2 months imprisonment	On 26 November 1899 after joining the Boers collected his family and belongings and retreated across the Tugela and into the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to April 1901.
254	Hattingh, Christian Petrus	Doornkop, Estcourt	8.11.01	High Treason	Fined £100 or 4 months imprisonment	Provided the Boers with shelter and food in November 1899. On 26 November 1899 after joining the Boers he collected his family and belongings and retreated across the Tugela and into the ZAR. Remained in the ZAR up to April 1901.
255	Pitzer, Hendrik Johannes	Eendracht, Upper Tugela	14.11.01	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations in Klip River county up to February 1900. Performed police duties at Newcastle. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to April 1901. ZAR citizen.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
256	Pitzer, Andries Marthinus	Eendracht, Upper Tugela	14.11.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations in Klip River county up to February 1900. Performed police duties at Newcastle. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to April 1901. ZAR citizen.
257	Pitzer, Ephraim Matthew	Eendracht, Upper Tugela	14.11.01	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Age 19. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations in Klip River county up to February 1900. Performed police duties at Newcastle. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to April 1901. ZAR citizen.
258	Robbertse, Nicholas Johannes (jun)	Eendracht, Upper Tugela	14.11.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations in Klip River county up to February 1900. Performed police duties at Newcastle. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to April 1901. OFS citizen.
259	Britz, Johannes Frederik	Vrede, Newcastle	14.11.01	High Treason	9 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October or November 1899. Took part in operations from December 1899 to February 1900 on the Biggarsberg. In April or May 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to June 1901. OFS citizen.
260	Van Breda, Carolus Laurens	Quickvlei, Dundee	15.11.01	High Treason	Fined £100 or 6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November or December 1899. Took part in operations in and around Helpmekaar and on the Biggarsberg, as well as at Pomeroy and Tugela Ferry. Assisted in operations around Nqutu in February 1900. In March 1900 moved with his family and belongings into the ZAR and remained up to October 1900. Born in the ZAR.
261	Botha, Christian Stephanus	Drycut, Newcastle	20.2.02	High Treason	10 years imprisonment and a fine of £500 or a further year in prison	Elected Field-Cornet for Newcastle on 29.11.1899. Issued commandeering orders and handed out arms. Commandant of the Natal Commando that attacked Nqutu Magistracy. On 15.5.1900 left with his family for the ZAR. Capture at Hlangape Bush in October 1901. But for the fact that he was an Afrikaner he would have received the death sentence. Well educated, formerly employed by Natal Government as magisterial clerk in Umvoti and Newcastle. Member of the Road Board. Influential in Newcastle. Chairman "Natal Wol Maatschappij."
262	Kritzinger, Louis Jacobus Rudolph (jnr)	Melmoth, Proviso B, Zululand	20.2.02	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment	Left Melmoth for the ZAR with the purpose of joining the Boers in September 1899. Functioned as a member of the Vryheid Commando. Active in Zululand. In 1895 worked as a warden in Johannesburg. His name was on the commandeering lists for Vryheid. In 1898 asked to be placed on Melmoth voters role. Surrendered.
263	Meyer, Lucas Wilhelmus	Eversholt, Estcourt	27.2.02	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899. Assisted the Boers in looting some property around Estcourt. Took part in operations at Colenso, Spioenkop, Ladysmith and on the Biggarsberg. Retreated with Boers into the ZAR. Capture in October 1901. His

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						sons, Izak Johannes and John were charged with treason but acquitted.
264	Van Tonder, Jacob Johannes	Goedekeus, Dundee	28.2.02	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Transport rider to ZAR. Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Acted as corporal and commissariat officer at Helpmekaar. Active duty at Pomeroy, Job's Kop, Paddafontein.. Retreated to the ZAR in March 1900. Captured in October 1901.
265	Van Tonder, Gert Coenraad	Goedekeus, Dundee	28.2.02	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Retreated into the ZAR in March 1899. Militarily inactive in Natal. Captured in October 1901.
266	Hogg, Jan Pieter (Peter)	Driefontein, Dundee	1.3.02	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months imprisonment	Age 14. Son of Piet Hogg. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Involved in action at Pomeroy, Job's Kop, Paddafontein and Tugela Ferry. Not prevented from joining by his father. Evacuated with his mother and family to Greytown where he attended school. Arrested in Greytown.
267	Schalkwyk, Johannes Sigmundis	Kelvin, Dundee	3.3.02	High Treason	18 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Young and poor. Resident in Natal for a brief period prior to the war. Involved in action at Pomeroy, Job's Kop, Paddafontein. Notified the loyal Strydoms and AL Jansen to appear at Helpmekaar Laager. Performed patrol and guard duties. Retreated with the Boers to the ZAR. Capture in late 1901.
268	Slabbert, Jasper Johannes	Goedekeus Dundee	4.3.02	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Age 81. Came to Natal as a Voortrekker aged 18. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Assisted in looting of stores and in the commandeering of property of local residents. Involved in manoeuvres at Pomeroy, Paddafontein, Job's Kop and Tugela Ferry. Controlled Africans at Helpmekaar Laager. Retreated to the ZAR in March 1900.
269	Slabbert, Petrus Cornelius	Goedekeus Dundee	4.3.02	High Treason and theft.	2 year imprisonment the first 9 months with hard labour	Age 19. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Assisted in looting of stores and in the commandeering of property of local residents. Involved in manoeuvres at Pomeroy, Paddafontein, Job's Kop and Tugela Ferry. Retreated to the ZAR in March 1900.
270	Slabbert, Hendrik Lodewyk	Goedekeus Dundee	4.3.02	High Treason	6 months imprisonment the first 3 months with hard labour	Very young. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Involved in manoeuvres at Pomeroy, Paddafontein, Job's Kop and Tugela Ferry. Retreated to the ZAR in March 1900.
271	Van der Westhuizen, Johannes Hendrik Lodewyk	Doornkop, Newcastle	4.3.02	High Treason	9 months imprisonment and a fine of £250 or a further 9 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Participated in operations around Newcastle. Generally inactive. In April/May 1900 retreated to ZAR. Authorities unsure if he was captured or surrendered.
272	Joubert, Joshua (jnr)	Schaapkrantz, Newcastle	5.3.02	High Treason	2½ years imprisonment	Crippled. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Acted as an orderly and commandeering officer. Active around Newcastle. Was a member of the Commando that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy. Operations around Newcastle. In April or May 1900 retreated to Vryheid district. Captured in September 1901.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
273	Bosse, Johannes Frederik	Glenhart, Newcastle	5.4.02	High Treason and theft.	2½ years imprisonment the first 15 months with hard labour	Poor. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Part of the Natal Commando that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy. Active in operations around Newcastle. Stole pillows belonging to GL Fraser. Retreated to the ZAR in early 1900..
274	Ackermann, Stephanus Petrus	Coote Hill, Newcastle	7.3.02	High Treason	15 months imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Part of the Commando that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy. Active in operations around Newcastle. In April or May 1900 he retreated to ZAR. Surrendered on 20 June 1900 and was allowed to return to Natal. Claimed that the Boers captured him and took him back to ZAR. Finally surrendered on 10 November 1901.
275	Ackermann, Adrian Jacob Christoffel	Coote Hill, Newcastle	7.3.02	High Treason	1 year imprisonment and a fine of £50 or a further 3 months in prison	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Part of the Natal Commando that attacked the Nqutu Magistracy. Active in operations around Newcastle. Retreated in April or May 1900 to the ZAR. Surrendered on 20 June 1900. Allowed to return to Natal.
276	Hattingh, Christian Jacobus Stephanus	Heidelberg, Newcastle	14.3.02	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	Age 17. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied the Natal Commando into the ZAR to the Vryheid district on 5 December 1899. Took part in operations around Vryheid at Scheepers Nek and at Steinkol Kop and other places in the ZAR. Continued to support the Boers in the ZAR up to November 1901.

1.PAR, AGO 1/7/1-1/7/38: Judgements and sentences of Natal rebels by the Special Court, pp.1-875. The judgement and sentences as contained in the referenced collection were greatly duplicated in the newspaper reports of the time on the treason trials. The initial appetite for reporting on the treason trials soon waned and lengthy articles quoting every word said by the witnesses were replaced with paragraph long articles. See, the *Natal Witness*, 17.10.1899, 7.8.1900, 28.8.1900, 8.9.1900, 11.9.1900, 12.9.1900, 13.9.1900, 15.9.1900, 17.9.1900, 18.9.1900, 19.9.1900, 21.9.1900, 21.9.1900, 26.9.1900, 27.9.1900, 28.9.1900, 5.10.1900, 6.10.1900, 12.10.1900, 18.10.1900, 19.10.1900, 20.10.1900, 24.10.1900, 25.10.1900, 27.10.1900, 29.10.1900, 30.10.1900, 31.10.1900, 2.11.1900, 15.11.1900, 16.11.1900, 24.11.1900, 26.11.1900, 29.11.1900, 30.11.1900, 4.12.1900, 5.12.1900, 6.12.1900, 11.12.1900, 12.12.1900, 14.12.1900, 18.12.1900, 20.12.1900, 21.12.1900, 22.12.1900, 24.12.1900, 7.1.1901, 9.1.1901, 10.1.1901, 14.1.1901, 16.1.1901, 18.1.1901, 21.1.1901, 22.1.1901, 24.1.1901, 25.1.1901, 1.2.1901, 4.2.1901, 6.2.1901, 7.2.1901, 8.2.1901, 11.2.1901, 15.2.1901, 16.2.1901, 19.2.1901, 21.2.1901, 22.2.1901, 25.2.1901, 26.2.1901, 28.2.1901, 9.3.1901, 12.3.1901, 15.3.1901, 18.3.1901, 19.3.1901, 20.3.1901, 21.3.1901, 22.3.1901, 27.3.1901, 28.3.1901, 29.3.1901, 30.3.1901, 1.4.1901, 4.4.1901, 12.4.1901, 16.4.1901, 17.4.1901, 19.4.1901, 6.6.1901, 7.6.1901, 8.6.1901, 10.6.1901, 11.6.1901, 29.6.1901, 8.8.1901, 9.8.1901, 22.8.1901, 23.8.1901, 30.8.1901, 5.9.1901, 23.9.1901, 26.10.1901, 28.10.1901, 31.10.1901, 1.11.1901, 2.11.1901, 4.11.1901, 6.11.1901, 8.11.1901, 15.11.1901, 16.11.1901, 29.11.1901, 6.2.1902, 7.2.1902, 8.2.1902, 21.2.1902, 22.2.1902, 24.2.1902, 27.2.1902, 28.2.1902, 1.3.1902, 3.3.1902, 4.3.1902, 5.3.1902, 6.3.1902, 8.3.1902, 11.3.1902, 15.3.1902, 17.3.1902, 18.3.1902; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 10.7.1900, 21.8.1900, 4.9.1900, 11.9.1900, 18.9.1900, 25.9.1900, 2.10.1900, 9.10.1900, 20.10.1900, 16.10.1900, 30.10.1900, 6.11.1900, 13.11.1900, 18.11.1900, 27.11.1900, 20.11.1900, 4.12.1900, 25.12.1900, 8.1.1901, 15.1.1901, 22.1.1901, 29.1.1901, 12.2.1901, 19.2.1901, 26.2.1901, 5.3.1901, 12.3.1901, 19.3.1901, 26.3.1901, 2.4.1901, 9.4.1901, 11.6.1901, 18.6.1901, 2.7.1901, 13.8.1901, 27.8.1901, 3.9.1901, 22.10.1901, 5.11.1901, 12.11.1901, 19.11.1901, 25.2.1902, 4.3.1902, 11.3.1902; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/1: Natal rebels note book from November 1900; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/2: Natal rebels note book from 1901-1903; PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by H Vermaak, 15.1.1903.

**DETAILS OF THE NATAL AFRIKANERS CONVICTED OF HIGH TREASON BY THE SUPREME COURT IN PIETERMARITZBURG;
SPECIAL COURT; MAGISTRATES; SPECIAL MAGISTRATES; THE HIGH COURT OF ZULULAND AND MILITARY COURTS:¹
CASES 277-409**

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
277	Boers, Gerhardus Johannes Bernardus	Maria's Heuwel, Ladysmith	13.6.00	Supreme Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	5 years in prison with hard labour and a fine of £250 or a further year in prison	Age 40. Resident between Spioenkop and Thabanyama. Joined the Boers and active in the Klip River and Tugela areas. Assisted in repairing a cannon. Involved in a skirmish on 12 January 1900.
278	Boers, Hendricus Warterus	Alexandria, Ladysmith	13.6.00	Supreme Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	5 years in prison with hard labour and a fine of £250 or a further year in prison	Age 38. Resident between Spioenkop and Thabanyama. Joined the Boers and active in the Klip River and Tugela areas. Assisted in repairing a cannon. Involved in a skirmish on 12 January 1900.
279	Buys, Philip Rudolph (jnr)	Weenen	14.6.00	Supreme Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	3 years in prison with hard labour and a fine of £250 or a further year in prison	Age 33. Owned 377 acres. Joined the Boers on 24 November 1899 and supported them. Provided the Boers with horses taken from loyalists.
280	Van Rooyen, William Marthinus Johannes	Klipnek, Kranskop	21.6.00	Supreme Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	Fined £100 or 1 year imprisonment	Provided food, shelter and information to two Boers.
281	Cheney, William	1, Victoria Road, Pietermaritzburg	8.10.00	Magistrate, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	Fined £3	Formerly a POW in Ceylon.
282	Giezing, Frederick Conrad	Tintwa, Upper Tugela	4.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	
283	Bester, Isaac Johannes	Krantzkop, Upper Tugela	4.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months hard labour	
284	Bester, Frans Abraham	Vaalkop, Upper Tugela	5.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	Fine of £20 or 4 months hard labour	
285	Lombaard, Hermanus Stephanus	Mowthorpe, Upper Tugela	6.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Followed the Boers to the OFS.
286	Schalkwyk, Theuns Gerhardus	Sanddrift, Upper Tugela	7.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
287	Minnaar, Johannes Abraham	Bethel, Upper Tugela	7.12.00	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
288	Potgieter, Johannes Hendrik	Nerwent, Upper Tugela	14.12.02	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Age 50. Joined the Boers and proceeded to the OFS. Surrendered in Harrismith on 15.8.1900. Was allowed to reside on the farm Uitval in the area. Arrested when trying to trek with his cattle elsewhere. Sent to Tin Town in Ladysmith.
289	Robbertse, Nicholas Johannes (snr)	Upper Tugela	18.3.02	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
290	Lombard, Christopher Johannes (snr)	Upper Tugela	18.3.02	Magistrate, Upper Tugela	High Treason	Fined £10 or 3 months imprisonment	
291	Hansmeyer, Louis Charles	Rose Cottage, Greytown	9.1.01	Magistrate, Umvoti (Greytown)	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	
292	Maritz, Johannes Stephanus	Schiet Drift, Estcourt	14.11.00	Magistrate, Estcourt	High Treason	Fined £20 or 2 months imprisonment	Accompanied the Boers to the OFS.
293	Tiegaardt, Petrus Johannes	Schoongezicht, Weenen	22.2.01	Magistrate, Estcourt	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	
294	Hattingh, Wynand Hendrik	Ladysmith	4.11.02	Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	Fined £20 or 2 months imprisonment	
295	Potgieter, Johannes Jurgens	Estcourt	11.11.02	Magistrate, Estcourt	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
296	Moolman, Johannes Zachariah	Lekkerwater, Ladysmith	25.2.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
297	Moolman, Adrian Isaac	Lekkerwater, Ladysmith	25.2.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
298	De Jager, Jacobus Wilhelmus	Kleinfortein, Ladysmith	25.2.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	No land. Followed the Boers to the OFS and into Lesotho. Surrendered at Harrismith.
299	Van Vuuren, Stephanus Johannes	Trekboer, Ladysmith	28.2.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Guilty of joining the Boers under compulsion and for accompanying them to the OFS.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
300	Nbunu Ka Lubobo	Ladysmith	21.5.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	3 months imprisonment	
301	Tshelenika Nombulaza	Ladysmith	21.5.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	Fined £10 or 3 months imprisonment	
302	Van Huisten, Solomon Stephanus	Kleinformtein, Ladysmith	28.5.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	Guilty of joining the Boers under compulsion.
303	Greenfield, Walter	Johannesburg (Ladysmith)	28.5.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Guilty of joining the Boers. Thought of himself as a Transvaal burgher.
304	White, Willem Jacobus	Boschberg, Ladysmith	28.5.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	Fined £10 or 3 months imprisonment	Guilty of rendering services to the Boers.
305	Du Plessis, Pierre Johannes	Ladysmith	17.9.01	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	Guilty of rendering assistance to the Boers. Deported from Harrismith to Ceylon and then back to Tin Town in Ladysmith.
306	Dreyer, Hercules Albertus	Brakfontein, Ladysmith	17.1.02	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	Fine £10 or 3 months imprisonment	Age 20. Accompanied his father into the Transvaal. He was captured near Barberton.
307	Meyer, Barend Gabriel	Ladysmith	21.3.02	Special Magistrate, Ladysmith	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
308	Rall, Cornelius Hendrik	Sleutelpoort, Newcastle	15.12.0 0	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Generally inactive.
309	Van der Westhuysen, Marthinus Jacobus	Lincoln, Newcastle	20.12.0 0	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in late 1900. Acted as a small pox guard along the Buffalo River. Took part in operations around Elandslaagte.
310	Eksteen, Johannes Jurgens	Cardie, Newcastle	14.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Active in operations around Newcastle including the commandeering of goods from the local English.
311	Steyn, Hermann Johannes	Stafford, Newcastle	14.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Performed duties as a policeman.
312	Van Niekerk, Franz Abraham Jurie	Langklip, Newcastle	14.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Accompanied them into the ZAR with the intention of furthering the war.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
313	Matthee, William Johannes	Boschhoek, Newcastle	14.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899 as a policeman. On 5 December 1899 he left with the Newcastle Commando to perform duties on the Zululand border.
314	Moolman, Jacobus Phillipus	Clengpoort, Newcastle	16.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. On 5 December 1899 he left with the Newcastle Commando to perform duties on the Zululand border.
315	Dannhauser, Thomas Richard (snr)	Cecelia Dale, Newcastle	16.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899 and worked, up to February 1900, as a policeman in the Newcastle district.
316	Coetsier, Johannes Jacobus	Newcastle	17.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. On 5 December 1899 he left with the Newcastle Commando to perform duties on the Zululand border.
317	Rall, Adrian Matheys Johannes	Skoolpad Kloof, Newcastle	18.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
318	De Wet, Lewis Hosea	Schuinshoogte, Newcastle	18.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
319	Prinsloo, Paul Frantz Petrus	Ingagane Ford, Newcastle	18.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
320	Badenhorst, Laurens Pieter	Badenkop, Newcastle	19.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
321	Van Rensburg, Renier Nicholas Janse	Ramsgate, Newcastle	19.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
322	Adendorff, Michael Christian	Sandford, Newcastle	19.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
323	Laurence, Hendrik Jacobus	Hugheuden, Newcastle	20.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
324	Potgieter, Johannes Hermanus	Grootegeeluk, Newcastle	20.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
325	Hattingh, Jacobus Christoffel	Appelboord, Newcastle	20.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
326	Hattingh, Johannes Isaak	Schaapdoorns, Newcastle	20.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
327	Hattingh, Johannes Michiel	Rooivaal, Newcastle	20.1.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
328	Hattingh, Frederick Jacobus	Appelboord, Newcastle	20.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
329	Van Rensburg, Josephus Cornelius Janse	Munster, Newcastle	21.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
330	De Wet, Pieter Jacobus	Schuinshoogte, Newcastle	21.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
331	Boshoff, Thomas Richard	Yarl, Newcastle	21.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	
332	Cronjé, Abraham Marthinus	Camelot, Newcastle	22.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
333	Van Niekerk, Albertus Johannes	Elandsklip, Newcastle	22.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	
334	Oosthuizen, Martinus Johannes Jacobus	Ballengeich, Newcastle	22.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
335	Döhne, Pieter Christian Cronjé	Sweet Home, Newcastle	25.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
336	Huyser, Hendrik Wilhelmus	Paddaschool, Newcastle	25.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £10 or 4 months imprisonment	
337	Dangasella	Newcastle	26.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
338	De Wet, Jacobus Ignatius	Schuinshoogte, Newcastle	29.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £10 or 4 months imprisonment	

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
339	Adendorff, Johann Christoffel	Brooklyn, Newcastle	29.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	4 months imprisonment	
340	Eksteen, Hendrik Asterwald	The Border, Newcastle	29.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	Fine £20 or 6 months imprisonment	
341	Emanuel, William	Lennoxton, Newcastle	29.3.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
342	Eicker, Albert	Angora Hill, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
343	Jonker, Adolph	Brooklyn, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
344	De Jager, Lodewyk Petrus	Badenkop, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
345	Van Ede, Lodewyk Johannes	Bothasdal, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
346	De Jager, Albert Petrus	One Tree Hill, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
347	De Jager, Frederick Johannes	Blackwater Vale, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Magistrate, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
348	Maritz, Hendrik Johannes	Lincoln, Newcastle	1.6.01	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £15 or 3 months imprisonment	
349	Dannhauser, Paul Renier	Newcastle	18.4.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £15 or 3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. Assisted them as a clerk at Dannhauser Station.
350	Swamers, Abraham Johannes	Garden, Newcastle	18.4.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Took part in operations around Newcastle. Was part of the commando that attacked the Nqutu magistracy.
351	Uys, Cornelius Janse	Leslie, Newcastle	18.4.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 4 months imprisonment	Surrendered in Utrecht in April 1901. On commando in Natal and on the Zululand border and took part in the attack on Nqutu. District commissioner refused his return to Natal since he was rendering support to the British military. Asked to be tried while in the Merebank

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
							Concentration Camp.
352	Cronjé, Jacobus Loikus	Newcastle	16.5.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £10 or 3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in October 1899. At some stage went to Scheepers Nek to relieve his son. Remained for but a few days. Did not flee Natal.
353	Clements, Charles Martin	Newcastle	16.5.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Acted as a policeman and town guard. Acted as messenger to Chris Botha. Fled to the ZAR.
354	Swart, Petrus Johannes (Piet)	Boschbokkloof, Newcastle	23.5.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Did duty as a policeman up to March 1900.
355	Terblanche, Stephanus Isias	Newcastle	23.5.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £10 or 1 month imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Active in operations around Newcastle. Proceeded in December 1899 to the Zululand border with the Newcastle Commando. Fled to the ZAR.
356	Teichmann, George	Köningsberg, Newcastle	28.10.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £10 or 1 month imprisonment	German. Commissariat officer.
357	Muller, Antonie Michael	Newcastle	13.10.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 3 months imprisonment	Appeared before Magistrate Jackson
358	Meyer, Johannes Jacobus	Newcastle	13.10.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 3 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded with the Newcastle Commando to the Zululand border. Left for the ZAR in May 1900 with his property.
359	Uzimpofu	Newcastle	5.10.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
360	Undaba	Newcastle	5.10.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
361	Swart, Johannes Jacobus (Stephanus?)	Piet's Rust, Newcastle	19.11.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 3 months imprisonment	Arrested in the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp. One of the last three rebels to be convicted. Joined the Boers in December 1899 and did duty as a small pox guard. Assisted the Boers in general operations. Removed agricultural implements from the farm Henley.
362	Brooks, William Henry	Newcastle	19.11.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 3 months imprisonment	Only resident in Natal since mid-1899. Surrendered in May 1900 but deported to Ceylon.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
							as a POW. Surrendered again on 6 September 1902 on his return from Ceylon.
363	Brooks, Joseph Cornelius	Newcastle	19.11.02	Special Court, Newcastle	High Treason	Fined £20 or 3 months imprisonment	Only resident in Natal since mid-1899. Surrendered in May 1900 but deported to Ceylon as a POW. Surrendered again on 6 September on his return from Ceylon.
364	Grove, Jacobus Petrus	Lindesferne, Dundee	5.3.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	5 months imprisonment with hard labour	Pleaded guilty before Magistrate J Forder.
365	Degada	Dundee	5.3.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	
366	Fröhling, Frederick	Glencoe, Dundee	12.4.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Pleaded guilty before Magistrate J Forder. Paid fine the same day.
367	Hattingh, Michael Johannes	Dundee	28.12.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	5 months imprisonment	
368	Kemp, Joachim Phillipus	Stratford, Dundee	18.6.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Pleaded guilty before Magistrate J Forder. Paid fine the same day.
369	Van der Berg, Pieter Hendrik	Brakfontein, Dundee	18.6.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Pleaded guilty before Magistrate J Forder. Paid fine the same day.
370	Dekker, Jan Johannes Hendrik	Paardekop, Dundee	19.6.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Went into the Transvaal with his family. Pleaded guilty before Magistrate J Forder. Paid fine the same day.
371	Van Rooyen, Johannes Marthinus	Cinderford, Dundee	16.7.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	Went into the Transvaal with the Boers.
372	Hattingh, Hendrick Johannes	Dondolo, Dundee	16.7.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	Went into the Transvaal with the Boers.
373	Landman, Willem Johannes	Links of Buffalo, Dundee	12.9.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers and accompanied them into the Transvaal.
374	Dekker, Gerhardus Marthinus	Ndumeni, Dundee	12.9.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Went into the Transvaal with the Boers.
375	Landman, Johannes Abraham (jnr)	Boschfontein, Dundee	12.9.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	Taking up arms under compulsion.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
376	Dekker, Paul Dirk	Domain Spruit, Dundee	28.11.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £20 or 5 months imprisonment	Age 19. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Proceeded with the Newcastle Commando to Vryheid and performed duties in the area. In April or May 1900, he proceeded to the ZAR with his effects. Captured by Rimingtons Guides near Wakkerstroom when he mistook them for members of a commando.
377	Smit, Christian Hendrik	Cotswold, Dundee	20.11.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Moved to the ZAR under the protection of the Boers. Active in the Helpmekaar area during December 1900 and January 1901.
378	Drewes, Frederick Hendrik	Glencoe, Dundee	11.4.01	Magistrate, Dundee	High Treason	Fined £15 or 4 months imprisonment	Paid fine the same day.
379	Kritzinger, Lewis Jacobus Rudolph (Louis)	Osborne, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	5.7.00	High Court , Eshowe, Zululand	High Treason	Fined £100 or 6 months hard labour	
380	Kritzinger, Mathys Andries Stephanus	Osborne, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	5.7.00	High Court ,Eshowe, Zululand	High Treason	Fined £50 or 3 months hard labour	
381	David Movi Kali	Eshowe	12.6.01	Magistrate, Eshowe	High Treason	1 year imprisonment	
382	Lutshaka Ka Sitshabana	Crown Lands, Nqutu	16.8.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	Fined £50 or two years imprisonment	
383	Majumba Ka Mhlangana	Crown Lands, Nqutu	26.11.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	3 months hard labour	
384	Mbaimbai Ka Mpinyana	Crown Lands, Nqutu	12.11.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	3 years hard labour	
385	Morelana Ka Mpinyana	Crown Lands, Nqutu	12.11.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	3 years hard labour	
386	Manqobo Ka Dipimgana	Crown Lands, Nqutu	12.11.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	1 years hard labour	
387	Gwegwana Ka Ralaza	Crown Lands, Nqutu	18.12.00	Magistrate, Nqutu	High Treason	2 years hard labour	

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
388	Moolman, Jacobus Phillipus (snr)	Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	1.8.01	Magistrate, Entonjaneni	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	
389	Pretorius, Dewald Johannes	Waterfall, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	23.8.01	Magistrate, Entonjaneni	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	
390	De Lange, Adrian Burnet	Wonderhoek, Melmoth (Entonjaneni)	31.1.02	Magistrate, Entonjaneni	High Treason	Fined £20 or 6 months imprisonment	Joined the Boers in the Vryheid district. Active around Dundee and in the Vryheid area.
391	De Jager, Marthinus Petrus	Pietermaritzburg	23.6.00	Military Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	6 months imprisonment with hard labour and a fine of £50 or a further six months in prison	Age 31. Arrested by African scouts north of the Tugela River. Breach of Martial Law. Attempted to enlist in the Boer forces. Sentence confirmed by General R Buller.
392	De Jager, Gerhardus Wilhelmus	Durban	23.6.00	Military Court, Pietermaritzburg	High Treason	4 months imprisonment with hard labour	Worked for the ZAR Customs Service in Durban. Arrested by African scouts north of the Tugela River. Breach of Martial Law. Attempting to enlist in the Boer forces. Sentence confirmed by General R Buller.
393	Brodie, David	Eshowe	6.6.02	Military Court, Eshowe	High Treason	Fined £50	Holding communication with the Boers.
394	Bond, Frederick William	Eshowe	30.6.02	Military Court, Eshowe	High Treason	6 months hard labour	
395	Boshoff, Johannes Christoffel	Newcastle	15.1.02	Military Court, Newcastle	High Treason	18 months imprisonment and a fine of £100	Attempted to communicate with the Boers on 5 and 7.12.1901. Contravening Martial Law.
396	Meyer, Philip Jacobus	Belmoth, Dundee	16.5.02	Military Court, Volksrust	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in November 1899. Active around Helpmekaar and Dundee. Commandeered goods from and delivered notices to loyal subjects. Fled to the ZAR at the end of May 1900 and continued to support the Boers up to January 1902.
397	Kok, Jacob	Geduld, Dundee	13.2.02	Military Court, Standerton	High Treason	Originally the death sentence by firing squad for possessing two soft-nosed bullets. Commuted to 6 years imprisonment.	Age 34. Took up arms against the British and in possession of soft nosed bullets.
398	Kok, Ignatius Martinus	Geduld, Dundee	13.2.02	Military Court, Standerton	High Treason	6 years imprisonment	Age 44. Took up arms against the British.
399	Cronjé, Christian	Geduld, Dundee	13.2.02	Military Court,	High Treason	6 years imprisonment	Took up arms against the British.

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
	Jacobus			Standerton			
400	Van der Merwe, Casper Jeremiah	Vaalbank, Estcourt	12.5.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	10 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Retreated into the ZAR. Captured near Harrismith in November 1901. Sentence confirmed by Kitchener 29.5.1902.
401	Oosthuysen, Jacobus Andries (snr)	Bethany, Weenen	14.5.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	4 years imprisonment	Joined the Boers in December 1899. Retreated into the ZAR. Captured near Harrismith in November 1901 while with Lyon's Commando. Sentence confirmed by Kitchener 29.5.1902.
402	Oosthuysen, Jacobus Andries (jnr)	Bethany, Weenen	2.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Age 25. Joined the Boers in December 1899. Retreated into the ZAR. Captured near Harrismith in November 1901 while with Lyon's Commando. Confirmed by Lt-Gen NG Lyttelton.
403	Oosthuysen, Johannes Roelf	Bethany, Weenen	4.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	3 years imprisonment	Age 19. Left Natal for the OFS in December 1899. Took up arms against the British, commandeered H Ferreira and was eventually captured in November 1901. Confirmed by Lt-Gen NG Lyttelton.
404	Zietsman, John Philip	Estcourt	5.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	5 years imprisonment	Age 25. Took up arms against the British in November 1899. Proceeded to the OFS and served with the Boers until February 1902. Confirmed by Lt-Gen NG Lyttelton.
405	Van der Westhuizen, Andries Jacobus	Elizabethdale, Newcastle	19.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	5 years imprisonment.	Left Natal for the OFS in early 1900. Joined the Boers and were eventually captured in February 1902.
406	Truscott, John Thomas	Elandspruit, Ladysmith	6.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	6 months imprisonment	In March 1900 left Natal for the OFS. He continued to serve the Boers up to February 1902 when he was captured.
407	Meyer, Johannes Hendrik Frederick (jnr)	Mauchline, Dundee	20.6.02	Military Court, Harrismith	High Treason	7 years imprisonment. Verdict of guilty confirmed but sentence rejected by Lt-Gen NG Lyttelton.	In November 1899 commandeered loyalists to serve with the Boers. In early 1900 he left for the OFS and joined the Boers. Were eventually captured in February 1902.
408	Torpey, John	Newcastle	29.5.00	Military Court , Newcastle	High Treason	5 years imprisonment and a fine of £100 or a further 1 year	Shop assistant. Traded extensively in mealie meal with the Boers. Sentence confirmed by Maj-Gen

NO	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE	COURT	CRIME	SENTENCE	OFFENCES PROVED BY THE CROWN
						imprisonment.	Wolfe-Murray.
409	Dreyer, NJJ	Ladysmith	9.1.1903	Magistrate, Klip River district	High Treason	£20 or two months imprisonment.	Dreyer was the last rebel to be convicted. He could not pay the fine.

1. PAR, NDR 7/2: Anglo-Boer War rebel register, 1900-1902; PAR, 1/NEW 3/1/2/4: List of persons convicted of high treason by Special Magistrate J Forder, no date; PAR, 1/GTN 3/2/8: Supplementary list of persons, other than Africans, convicted of high treason in Natal up to 25.6.1901; PRO, WO 108/302: Extracts from proceedings of military courts, 1900; PAR, 1/NEW 1/1/2/1: Records court of the magistrate Newcastle, 1900-1902; PAR, PM 87: Sentences imposed by Military Court, 29.6.1900; PAR, AGO I/8/84: Report on the conviction of three Natal rebels, 14.3.1902; PAR, AGO I/7/34: Treason trial of JH Potgieter, 9.8.1901-3.9.1901; NAR, PMO 58: Trial of Natal rebels, 6.5.1902-8.5.1902; PAR, AGO I/7/37: Trials of Natal rebels by Military Court, 1900-1902; NAR, PMO 44: Correspondence regarding Natal rebels convicted by Military Court, 26.1.1902; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/1: Natal rebels notebook, 11.1902; PAR, 1/DUN 1/4/2/2: Natal rebels notebook, 1901-1903; PAR, 1/LDS 1/6/2/2/1: Natal rebels notebook, 1900-1902; *Natal Witness*, 6.5.1900, 11.5.1900, 7.6.1900, 8.6.1900, 9.6.1900, 12.6.1900, 13.6.1900, 14.6.1900, 15.6.1900, 23.6.1900, 29.11.1901, 21.6.1902; *De Natal Afrikaner*, 19.12.1899, 5.6.1900, 12.6.1900, 19.6.1900, 23.6.1900, 26.6.1900, 3.7.1900, 10.7.1900, 17.7.1900, 17.4.1902, 18.4.1902.

APPENDIX B: Proclamation issued by General PJ Joubert
Proclamation¹

Salute!

I, Petrus Jacobus Joubert, Commandant-General, Supreme Commander of the burgher forces and the commandos of the S.A. Republic, having taken cognisance of the proclamation by His Excellency the State President, dated 11th October 1899, by which Martial Law was declared and which I in my capacity of Commandant-General of the S.A. Republic was empowered regarding the measures to be taken during the war forced upon the people of the S.A. Republic by the Government of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland; considering that the success of our united arms has led to the occupation of a part of the Colony of Natal and a part of Bechuanaland, and as it has proved necessary to take measures against the communities and persons in the aforementioned territories occupied by the burghers and troops of the S.A. Republic acting contrary to the customs of war, and also to take measures regarding the requisitions which are deemed necessary for the requirements and maintenance of the burghers and troops of the S.A. Republic at present in the territories named: have determined, and hereby determine, as I do by these same presents according to the power vested in me by the Law and Proclamation circumscribed above, and do make known to all and sundry the following regulations and provisions:

1. In the territories with the inhabitants of the same, extending over all the land occupied by the officers, burghers and troops of the S.A. Republic and the Orange Free State, to wit, in the Colony of Natal the districts or towns of Charlestown, Newcastle, Dundee and a portion of Ladysmith, known as Klip River district, and in Bechuanaland the territory bounded to the north by Gaberone and to the south by Fourteen Streams, or such other further territory as shall later be occupied, Martial Law No.20 of 1899 is hereby declared to extend to every deed which might tend to endanger the safety of the burghers and men, to disadvantage them or to lend aid to the enemy.

1. Various translations exist of the proclamation. None differ significantly. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry 10.3.1900, pp.343-347, Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; PRO, CO 179/218: Report by president of the Special Court, AW Mason containing the Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 10.6.1901; PAR, GH 547: Proclamation by General PJ Joubert, 9.11.1899; *De Volksstem*, 11.11.1899.

2. The Martial Law aforementioned is deemed to come into force for the entire expanse of a ward, district or other administrative division, so soon as it is made known in one of the communities which constitute it, whether by being posted up or announced in public.

3. All persons who do not form part of the British Army and who,

a. Serve the enemy as spies; b. Cause the burghers and troops of the S. A. Republic or the Orange Free State to become lost while serving them as guides;

c. Should kill, wound or plunder persons belonging to the troops of one of the two republics or those forming part of their following and train;

d. Damage bridges, cause damage to the telegraph-lines, heliographic installations or railways, or to any part of the same, by which the republics named might be hindered, or damage might be inflicted on their people or property, or even on those who would otherwise attempt to repair or improve damage caused to property or installations; should burn or cause damage to ammunition, war-stores or the living-quarters and army camps of the troops of either of the aforementioned republics, take up arms against the troops of one of the aforementioned republics, shall at the discretion of the Court Martial be punished with death or with imprisonment not exceeding 16 years. The person responsible (taxed) for their prosecution shall ensure that a court martial be constituted to investigate each case, and pronouncement of sentence. No sentence involving the death penalty shall be carried out before it has been confirmed by the Commandant-General or Assistant General appointed to command a division.

4. All commandants, generals or commanding officers of separate or independently acting troops or divisions, have the right to order the requisition of supplies necessary to the maintenance of the burghers and troops. The requisitioning of other supplies which might be deemed to be of essential importance to the army, may only be ordered by the commandant or general or by an officer acting as commandant. In all cases nothing more than is needful for the maintenance of the troops shall be demanded of the inhabitants, and for all supplies, if not paid for in cash, official receipts shall be given. And I hereby make known further that the lives and property shall be guaranteed of all such persons as place themselves under the protection of the Government of the S.A. Republic and its lawfully appointed officials and officers, whose laws and orders they follow and obey. No person who does not act with hostility towards the Government of the S.A. Republic or its officials, officers, laws or orders, shall suffer any disadvantage. Those who refuse to subject themselves, are hereby given permission to leave the territory occupied by the Armed Forces within seven (7) days.

5. All persons who have been driven from their farms or dwellings, or who have fled from them, and now desire to submit to the conditions contained in this Proclamation, may return to their dwelling-places.

Given and ordered by me, P.J. Joubert, Commandant-General in the Main Laager near Ladysmith, on this 9th day of the month of November 1899.

(signed) P.J. Joubert

Commandant-General

APPENDIX C: Natal Afrikaner loyalists from the area occupied by the Boers¹

SURNAME	NAMES	ADDRESS
Bester	Daniel Roux	Fourieskraal, Ladysmith,
Bester	William Abraham Christoffel	Fourieskraal, Ladysmith
Bester	John Gideon	Spitzkop, Ladysmith
Bester	Lourens Jacobus Johannes Erasmus	Weenen
Boers	Arnoldus Gerhardus Johannes	Marais Heuwel, Ladysmith
Brink	Arend	Springvale, Ladysmith
Buys	Isaac Johannes Matthys	Rietkuil, Ladysmith
Buys	Hendrick Jacobus	Riekuil, Ladysmith
Byloo	Gert	Edison, Ladysmith
Colling	Joseph Lombard	Zuurfontein, Ladysmith
Combrink	John Hendrik	Uithoek, Umsinga
Combrink	Lukas	Uithoek, Umsinga
Combrink	Johannes Stephanus	Uithoek, Umsinga
Cronjé	Pieter Christiaan	Rest, Dundee
Degenaar	Nicholaas Johannes	Ballengeich, Newcastle
De Haas	Gerhard	Blacksmith in Ladysmith town
De Haas	Antonie	Wagonmaker in Ladysmith town
De Jager	Klaas Marthinus	Waterfall, Newcastle
De Jager	Lodewyk Petrus	Serpentine, Newcastle
De Jager	Isaac Johannes	Bakenkop, Dundee
De Jager	Phillipus Jacobus	Waterval, Newcastle
De Jager	Salomon Hercules Francois	Kleinfontein, Ladysmith
De Waal	Franz Ignatuis	Lombards Kop, Ladysmith
Du Plessis	Barend Christoffel	Brakspruit, Ladysmith
Eksteen	Ryno Michiel	Manning, Newcastle
Eksteen	Andries Stephanus	Potterhill, Newcastle
Ferreira	Ignatius Martinus	Driefontein, Melmoth
Ferreira	Thomas	Henley, Newcastle

1. PAR, CSO 2864-2914: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claims, 1900-1903.

Fourie	Gerhardus Daniel	Schoondraai, Ladysmith
Fuhri	Albertus	Tigerhoek, Weenen
Fuhri	Ludwig Paul	Dew Drop, Ladysmith
Gregory	James Jenkins	Cotswold, Dundee
Grove	Hermanus Johannes	Zrana, Dundee
Hattingh	Jacobus Gerhardus	Secret Hoekie, Dundee
Hattingh	Jan Hendrik snr	Hattinghs Dale, Dundee
Hattingh	John Henry	Driefontein, Estcourt
Hattingh	Pieter Wilhelm Johannes Hendrik	Rooival, Newcastle
Jansen	August	Sheepridge, Dundee
Jansen	Arnold Alexander	Halifax, Dundee
Jansen	Johannes Stephanus	Sheepridge, Dundee
Jansen	Gerhard Pieter Albert	Sheepridge Dundee
Jansen	Adrian Louis	Strathearn, Dundee
Kemp	Jurie John	Kelvin, Dundee
Koekemoer	Joachim Martinus	Nooitgedacht, Melmoth
Kruger, (snr)	Frederick	Builder in Dundee town
Kruger, (jnr)	Frederick	Coal sorter in Dundee town
Kruger	Marthinus	Sheepridge, Dundee
Laatz	Herman Hendrik	Goedekeus Dundee
Landman	Johannes Abraham	Boschfontein, Dundee
Landsberg	Eric Johan	Morgenstond, Dundee
Labuschagne	Casper Jeremiah	Haasfontein, Weenen
Labuscghange	Barend Christoffel	Kopje Alleen, Ladysmith
Liebenberg	Barend	Towns foreman of Dundee, Erf 2F
Marais	John Lodewyk	Riet Vlei, Estcourt
Maritz	Jacobus Johannes Stephanus	Aletta, Dundee
Mcduling	Gerhardus Jacobus	Sonderbrookspruit, Ladysmith
Meyer	Cornelius Marthinus	Dundee
Meyer	Cornelius Petrus	Davelsberg, Dundee
Meyer	Andries Jan Gysbert	Uitval, Dundee
Meyer	Andries Johannes Gysbert	Uitval, Dundee
Meyer	Cornelius Martinus	Gladstone, Dundee

Muller	Joseph Jurgens	Eikenhof Newcastle
Muller	Joseph Jurgens	Doornkraal Ladysmith
Naude	John Abraham	Irondale, Dundee
Naude	Willem Sternberg	Irondale, Dundee
Naude	Stephanus Johannes	Doorn Kraal, Ladysmith
Nel	Hendrik Nicholas	Katherine, Ladysmith
Nel	Jacobus Hermanus	Bronkhorts Vlei, Ladysmith
Nienaber	Abraham Jacobus	Overseer, Colliery Dundee
Ortlepp	Frederick Albert	Saxony, Melmoth
Ortlepp	Julius Adolph Frederick	Vlakbult, Melmoth
Ortlepp	Reinhold John	Merino Melmoth
Pieters	Adrian Isak	Goedkeus, Dundee
Pieters	Dirk Cornelius	Zwartwater, Dundee
Pieters	Coenraad Lukas	Stockholm, Dundee
Pieters	Frederick Jacobus	Summervilla, Ladysmith
Pieters	Johannes Lodewyk Jacob	Summervilla, Ladysmith
Potgieter	Andries Johannes	Dwarsberg, Dundee
Potgieter	Marthinus Jacobus	Labuschagne's Kraal, Estcourt
Potgieter	Hermanus Lombard	Brakfontein/Spioenkop, Ladysmith
Potgieter	Henry	Sibindi Valley, Dundee
Potgieter	Benjamin Joseph	Van Reenen, Upper Tugela
Pretorius	Andries Wilhelmus Jacobus	Rustdal, Estcourt
Pretorius	Andre WJ	Ennersdale, Estcourt
Pringle	Daniel Jacobus	Rattle Kloof, Newcastle
Prinsloo	Frederick William	Butcher in Dundee town
Rudolph	Gerhardus Marthinus	Zaailaager, Estcourt
Rudolph, jnr	Gerhardus Marthinus	Zaailaager, Estcourt
Scheepers	Nathaniel Benjamin	Papkuilsfontein, Estcourt
Snyman	Coenraad Frederick Wilhelmus	Uitzicht, Estcourt
Snyman	Ingnatius Michael	Uitzicht, Estcourt
Strydom	Frederick Rudolph	Bergvliet Dundee
Strydom	Gert Conrad	Bonny, Dundee

Strydom	Theunis Jacobus	Geduld, Dundee
Strydom	Paul Daniel	Boven, Umsinga,
Strydom	Johannes Jacobus	Boven, Umsinga
Strydom	Wynand Wilhelm	Orange, Umsinga
Strydom	Jan Hendrik	Uithoek, Umsinga
Swartz	Frederick Jacobus	Rhylovlei, Newcastle
Uys	Johannes Cornelius	Lands End, Newcastle
Uys	Dirk Cornelius	Vergelegen, Melmoth
Van der Merwe	John	Excelsior, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Jan	Vaalbank, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	John	Groenveldt, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Johannes Andries	Noodhulp, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Johannes Francois	Sopia's Rust, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	John Hendrik	Noodhulp, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Jacobus Rudolph	Welgekoose, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Dietloff Jacobus	Noodhulp, Estcourt
Van der Merwe	Gert Jacobus	Vaalbank, Estcourt
Van Niekerk	Andries Daniel Cornelius	Doornpoort, Newcastle
Van Niekerk	Johannes Augustus	Akerman, Upper Tugela
Van Rooyen	Philip Jacobus	Middleberg, Weenen
Van Rooyen,	George Frederick	magistrates clerk, Bulwer
Van Wyk	Johan/John	Ingagane Railway Station
Van Zyl	Marthinus	Groenveldt, Estcourt
Vermaak	Philip Rudolph Nel	Balgownie, Dundee
Vos (snr)	Johannes	Charlestown
Vos	Johannes	Lands End, Newcastle
Wessels	Jacobus Johannes	Newcastle
Zietsman	Paul Hermanus	Frisgewaagd, Weenen
Zietsman	Barend Gabriel	Boschberg, Dundee

APPENDIX D: Natal Afrikaners charged under Martial Law¹

NO	NAME	PLACE & DATE OF TRIAL	OFFENCE	SENTENCE	CONFIRMED BY AND REMARKS
1	Oosthuisen, Daniel	Frere, 11.12.1899	Theft and unlawful possession of property of a loyalist	1 year imprisonment with hard labour	Lt-Gen Clery
2	Oosthuisen, John	Frere, 11.12.1899	Theft and unlawful possession of property of a loyalist	1 year imprisonment with hard labour	Lt-Gen Clery
3	Oosthuisen, Andreas	Frere, 11.12.1899	Theft and unlawful possession of property of a loyalist	1 year imprisonment with hard labour	Lt-Gen Clery
4	Jansen, Martinus	Frere, 11.12.1899	Theft and unlawful possession of property of a loyalist	1 year imprisonment with hard labour	Lt-Gen Clery
5	De Jager, MP	Pietermaritzburg, 23.6.1900	Breach of Martial Law and attempting to join the Boers - high treason	6 months imprisonment, fine of £50 or a further 6 months in prison	Maj-Gen Wolfe-Murray
6	De Jager, GW	Pietermaritzburg, 23.6.1900	Breach of Martial Law and attempting to join the Boers - high treason	4 months imprisonment with hard labour	Maj-Gen Wolfe-Murray
7	Boshoff, IC	Ingagane, 9.12.1901	Contravention of Martial Law		In hospital awaiting trial
8	Rabe, H	Dundee, 14.7.1901	Unpunctual in reporting	Reprimanded	
9	Scheepers, MF	Dundee, 14.7.1901	Unpunctual in reporting	Reprimanded	
10	Badenhorst, BJ	Dundee, 14.7.1901	Unpunctual in reporting	Reprimanded	
11	Boshoff, JC	Newcastle, 16.1.1902	Left his farm without a permit, in possession of revolver and ammunition and communicating with the Boers.	18 months imprisonment with hard labour, fine of £100 or a further 6 months in prison	12 months remitted
12	Labuschagne, JNR	Dundee, 8.3.1902	Obtaining liquor under false pretences and selling it to a soldier. Making a false declaration.	Fined £25 and 1 month imprisonment with hard labour or 1 month in prison in default of fine	
13	Muller, FR	Volkstrust, 23.6.1902	High Treason		Acquitted

1. Cd. 981: Papers related to the administration of Martial Law in South Africa, *passim*.

APPENDIX E: Natal Afrikaner rebels arrested and deported as Boer POWs¹

NO	NAME	ADDRESS	POW CAMP	SHIP	RETURN DATE
1	Adendorff, Michael Christian ^{2*}	Kendal, Newcastle	Ceylon		
2	Adendorff, Harry*	Kilbrachan, Newcastle			
3	Aveling, Gerrit Johannes*	Hampton, Newcastle	Ceylon		
4	Brooks, William H*	Trespass, Newcastle	Ceylon		
5	Brooks, Joseph S*	Trespass, Newcastle	Ceylon		
6	Britz, Hans*	Landman's Farm, Newcastle	Tin Town, Ladysmith		
7	Cronje, Carl*	Dannhauser, Newcastle	Ceylon		
8	Cheney, William ³	1 Victoria Road, Berth Villa, Pietermaritzburg	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
9	Coetzer, Christoffel Johannes	Bezuidenhout, Newcastle	Bellary, India	<i>Montrose/Oratava</i>	15.11.02
10	Coetzer, Gert	Bezuidenhout, Newcastle	Bellary, India	<i>Montrose/Oratava</i>	15.11.02
11	Coetzer, Willem Johannes Jacobus	Bezuidenhout, Newcastle	Bellary, India	<i>Montrose/Oratava</i>	15.11.02

1. PAR, GH 563: Minute paper on the arrest of eight Natal rebels returning from Ceylon onboard the *Templemore*, 22.7.1902; GH 742: Nominal role of Natal rebels compiled by Major SHM Conran, Bellary, India, 15.11.1902; GH 563: CID report on the arrival of rebels onboard the *Ionian* from India, 15-18.11.1902; GH 563: Minute paper on the detainment of ST Potgieter as a suspected Natal rebel, 1-11.12.1902; GH 742: Report by Lt-Col AC Vincent from Ceylon on the rebel MC van Niekerk, 11.12.1902; GH 742: Declarations of allegiance taken by SJ Eksteen and HS van der Craght, 10.7.1902; NAR, SOP 35: Letter SOP Cape Town to DAAG Pow, Umbilo, 26.11.1902; PRO, WO 108/117: Letter Lord H Kitchener to The Viceroy of India, 19.3.1902; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry, 27.8.1900, p.164. JS Ackerman of Coothill, Newcastle, claimed that a son of his died on his way to St Helena. No evidence of this could however be found in, MCE, van Schoor, (and others), *Die bannelinge. A.B.O.-Boerekrygsgevangenis 1899-1902. 'n Gedenkbrosjure, passim.*

2. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who were suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date. The names of those prisoners marked with an *comes from this source. No other confirmation could be found indicating that they were indeed captured and deported.

3. Two of the brothers of Cheney fought in th Natal Carbineers against the Boers.

12	Duminy, Pieter*	Ladysmith	Ceylon		
13	Eksteen, SJ*	Dundee	Ceylon (?)		
14	Fuhri, George*	Mooi Hoek, Ladysmith			
15	Landman, Lukas Wilhelmus ⁴ #	Clifford, Newcastle	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
16	Landman, Isak Johannes	Clifford Newcastle	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
17	Maritz, Solomon*	Driel, Ladysmith	Ceylon		
18	Meyer, Philip Jacobus	Brakwater, Newcastle	India	<i>Ionian</i>	15.11.02
19	Meyer, Pieter Gerhardus	Brakwater, Newcastle	India	<i>Ionian</i>	15.11.02
20	Meyer, Hendrik Abraham	Brakwater, Newcastle	India	<i>Ionian</i>	15.11.02
21	Meyer, Isak Johannes	Brakwater, Newcastle	India	<i>Ionian</i>	15.11.02
22	Meyer, Lukas Johannes Cornelius*	The Ruins, Newcastle	Ceylon		
23	Middle, Pieter J*	Wonderdraai, Newcastle	Ceylon		
24	Muller, Solomon Maritz*	Stanhope, Melmoth	Ceylon		
25	Nienaber, Piet ⁵ *	Weenen	Ceylon		
26	Orchard, John William*	Hartebeestebult, Newcastle	<i>Catalonia</i>		
27	Potgieter, Evert Frederik#	Kromellenboog, Ladysmith	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
28	Potgieter, Solomon Theodoris*	Dannhauser			1.12.02
29	Spies, Joseph*	Kalbaslaagte, Newcastle	Ceylon		
30	Spies, Abraham*	Kalbaslaagte, Newcastle	Ceylon		

4. Those marked with # were locked up in the Durban Prison on 24 July 1902. They were never charged with treason.

5. A former member of the Natal Carbineers.

31	Swart, JI*				
32	Swart, Jacobus Stephanus	Pietersrust, Newcastle	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
33	Smidt, Johannes Frederik	Ladysmith	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
34	Teichmann, George ⁶	Köningsberg, Newcastle	Ceylon		
35	Triegaardt, Johannes Petrus*	Schoongezicht, Estcourt	Ceylon		
36	Van der Craght, Dirk M	Bergvliet, Dundee	Trichinopoly, India		
37	Van der Craght, Franz/Frederick	Dundee	Trichinopoly, India		
38	Van der Craght, Philip	Minton, Dundee	Trichinopoly, India		
39	Van der Craght, Hendrik Stephanus	Minton, Dundee	Tucker's Island, Bermuda	<i>Aurania</i>	10.7.02
40	Van Greuning, Johannes Walton#	Ennersdale/Draaikat, Estcourt	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02
41	Van Niekerk, Michiel Christiaan	Welgeluk, Harrismith	Diyatalawa, Ceylon	<i>Lake Manitoba</i>	24.12.02
42	Van Niekerk, Johannes Wilhelmus#	Clifford, Newcastle	Ceylon	<i>Templemore</i>	19.7.02.
43	Van Niekerk, Gerhardus* Johannes	Pomeroy, Newcastle	Kalikoot, India		
44	Van Wyk, Albertus J	Geelhoutboom, Newcastle	Ceylon	<i>Englishman</i>	

6. PAR, GH 1449: List of Natal rebels still away from their farms, October 1900; OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry 24.7.1900, p.184. Teichmann was sentenced to a fine of £10 or 1 month in prison on 28.10.1902.

APPENDIX F: Natal Afrikaners who died in prison either as convicted rebels or while awaiting trial¹

NAME	ADDRESS	PLACE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE OF DEATH	COMMENTS
Buyts, Johannes Petrus (jnr) ²	Rietkuil, Ladysmith	Removed from Ladysmith Prison and died in the local Roman Catholic sanatorium.	11.9.1900	Enteric fever	Yet to be tried. Buried on the farm Rietkuil.
Byloo, Jacobus Petrus ³	Putini's Spruit, Ladysmith	Removed from the Ladysmith Prison and died in the local hospital. ⁴	14.4.1900	Dysentery	Yet to be tried.
De Wet, Pieter	Rietspruit, Newcastle	Pietermaritzburg Prison	10.11.1900 ⁵		Ds HF Schoon deemed that de Wet died due to negligence. To him this indicated how rebel prisoners were treated, De Wet was apparently dying when he arrived in Pietermaritzburg but no doctor were present to meet him. ⁶
Hogg, Piet (Peter)	Driefontein, Dundee	Pietermaritzburg Prison ⁷	22.8.1902		Age 73.
Huyser, Pieter Willem ⁸	Locksley Glade, Newcastle	Pietermaritzburg Prison	16.7.1900	Inflamation of the bowels	Yet to be tried.
Swamers, Coenraad	Klipbank,	Removed from Ladysmith	1.12.1901		Yet to be tried. confirm

1. PAR, ZA 33: List of names of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty, *circa* 1900.

2. PAR, 1/LDS 3/1/1/16: Letter Magistrate TR Bennett to colonial secretary, 7.9.1900.

3. PAR, CSO 2875: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by BC du Plessis, 6.9.1900.

4. PAR, CSO 1873: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by AF Byloo, 28.9.1900.

5. OE Prozesky private collection, Diary of JJA Prozesky: Diary entry in the Pietermaritzburg Prison, p.447.

6. PAR, HF Schoon collection, A 72: Diary entry 21.11.1900, pp.513-514.

7. According to the estate file of Hogg he died at 205 West Street, Pietermaritzburg. PAR, MSCE, 114/1902: Estate file P Hogg, 1902.

8. PAR, PWD 2/83: Telegram from the governor of the Pietermaritzburg Prison on the death of PW Huyser, 16.7.1900.

Cornelius Johannes	Newcastle	Prison and died in the local hospital.			
Vermaak, Johannes Stefanus ⁹	Vermaakskraal, Dundee	Removed from the Newcastle Prison and died in the house of Ds Bosman in Newcastle.	30.5.1900		Was buried on 31 May 1900 by Jan Adendorff. After the war he was exhumed and reburied on the farm Vermaakskraal, Dundee.
Vermeulen, Jan Adriaan ¹⁰	Rietspruit, Newcastle	Pietermaritzburg Prison	4.2.1901		Yet to be tried.

9. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2554/1: In memoriam. My ma en pa se laaste dae, 30.12.1956.

10. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19980: List of Natal rebels who died in prison, 17.4.1954.

APPENDIX G: Deaths of Natal Afrikaners in concentration camps¹

NO	NAME	AGE	CAUSE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	CAMP	ADDRESS	REMARKS
1	Botha, Maria Catrina	47	Heart failure and goitre	7.12.1901	Merebank	Elandsklip, Newcastle	
2	Botha, Gerhardus Johannes	15		18.1.1902	Merebank	Elandsklip, Newcastle	Surname also given as van Niekerk
3	Bowen, William	20	Pneumonia	9.6.1902	Pietermaritzburg	Sterkwater, Ladysmith	
4	Cairncross, Petronella Hendrina	34		21.12.1901	Heilbron	Weenen	
5	Coetzee, Elizabeth	2	Pneumonia	8.9.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Laings Nek, Newcastle	Surname also given as Coetzer
6	Coetzee, Anna Catharina	7	Pneumonia	22.9.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Laings Nek, Newcastle	Surname also given as Coetzer
7	Duff, Thomas	7m	Measles and pneumonia	2.8.1902	Pietermaritzburg	Melville, Newcastle	Illegitimate child of WJJ and MM Botes. Adopted by TS and SM Duff who were 77 and 61 years old respectively .
8	Huysler, Frederick Johannes	1	Measles	3.12.1901	Merebank	Paddaschool, Newcastle	Surname also given as Heuser.
9	Johnson, John Samuel	10m	Pneumonia	16.8.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Eerstehoek, Newcastle (Uithoek, Helpmekaar)	Johanna (aged 17) later gave birth to another child in the camp. Her husband Henry Johnson, were sentenced to six months imprisonment for the theft of sheep belonging to HJ Strydom.
10	Kidson, Elsie Gertruida	1		12.8.1901	Belfast	Natal	
			Measles and				

1. PAR, AGO 1/8/85: Minute paper regarding the death of Carl Posselt, 3.6.1902-10.6.1902; GH 554: GSBC TK Murray monthly reports 1901-1903; NAR, DBC 110-157 registers for Natal camps; RS 31, deaths lists for Natal camps; NGKA: Doodslyste vir die Merebank en Jacobs Konsentrasiekampe, no date; AU Wohlberg, *The Merebank...*, pp.242-261. The record keeping at both the Pietermaritzburg and Howick and Howick camps were very unreliable, possibly because so many inhabitants were allowed to move into Natal society, either temporarily or permanently. As a result, on the memorial to the Howick camp inhabitants in Pietermaritzburg Road, appears 28 names that could not be found on any of the death lists consulted, while 28 names found in the death registers do not appear on the memorial. Similar serious discrepancies exists between the various death registers for the Pietermaritzburg camp and the memorial erected in the Voortrekker Cemetery.

11	Kunz, Johan Adam	18	pneumonia	16.6.1902	Pietermaritzburg	Jagers Rust, Ladysmith	Possibly a German rather than Afrikaner
12	Lauwrens, Gert Coenraad	1		27.6.1901	Volksrust	Hartskamp, Melmoth	
13	Lezar, MGSS	11	Pneumonia	3.9.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Affgrond, Newcastle	
14	Maritz, Salomina Sisilia Anna ²	11m	Pneumonia	23.6.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Donker , Newcastle	
15	Meyer, Susarra Johanna	11m		8.12.1901	Merebank	Mybouw, Dundee	
16	Oosthuizen, Sara Catharina	76	Senile decay	30.7.1902	Pietermaritzburg	Calpoortje, Estcourt	
17	Posselt, Carl Friedrich	59	Killed by train in the PMB Camp	1.6.1902	Pietermaritzburg	De Waar, Dundee	
18	Rall, Cornelius Hendrik	1	Measles and bronchitis	2.11.1901	Howick	Sleutelpoort, Newcastle	
19	Rentorink, Wilhelmina Hope	20	Exhaustion and acute mania	31.5.1902	Pietermaritzburg	Greytown	
20	Roberts, Petronella Jacoba	19	Pneumonia	11.10.1901	Howick	Eendracht, Ladysmith	Married
21	Shorter, T (J?)	6	Pneumonia	31.12.1900	Pietermaritzburg	Spectacle Spruit, Newcastle	
22	Shorter, GH	1	Enteritis	1.5.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Spectacle Spruit, Newcastle	
23	Smith, Johanna Jacoba	2	Enteritis	9.1.1902	Merebank	Doornpoort, Newcastle	
24	Swart, Cornelius Johannes	3	Pneumonia	12.9.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Huddersfield, Dundee	
25	Van Blerk, JB				Standerton	Vrede, Newcastle	Ordered by the Boers to leave Natal after the Siege of Ladysmith collapsed. ³

2. The mother of this child, Mrs JC Maritz, died in 1967 at the age of 90 and was buried in the Mountain Rise Cemetery in Pietermaritzburg. HP Maritz, her son, managed to secure permission from the authorities to have the remains of his sister and the first born of JC Maritz exhumed from the Voortrekker Cemetery and reburied in their mother's grave. The reburial took place on 1.1.1972. *Natal Witness*, 1.1.1972. Thanks to Louis Eksteen of Fort Amiel Museum who brought this article to my attention.

3. PAR, CSO 2909: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by JB van Blerk, 11.10.1902.

26	Van der Craght, Martha Catharina	29		8.11.1901	Middelburg	Dundee (?)	
27	Van Niekerk, Eva Catrina	36	TB	12.12.1901	Merebank	Elandsklip, Newcastle	Adopted child of MC Botha
28	Van Rooyen, Johanna	1	Debility	10.01.1901	Pietermaritzburg	Oliviershoek, Ladysmith	
29	Venter, Jessie M	22		31.12.1901	Bethulie	Greytown	
30	Vermaak, Jacobus Phillipus	2	Meningitis	30.1.1902	Merebank	Kortbegrip, Melmoth	

APPENDIX H: Natal Afrikaners who died in military operations during the Anglo-Boer War

NAME	ADDRESS	PLACE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH
Bester, Christoffel H (jnr)	Milnedale, Newcastle	Witopjes	27.12.1901. ¹
Bester, Paul		Talana	20.10.1899. ²
Boers, Arnoldus Ludwig	Alexandria, Ladysmith	Near Ladysmith ³	
De Jager, Theunis	Wasbank	Near Nqutu ⁴	
De Jager, S ⁵			
De Villiers, JH (Japie)	Upper Tugela district ⁶		
De Wet, D ⁷			
Döhne, PC ⁸			
Foord, James (snr)	Mooihoek, Ladysmith	Vryheid district ⁹	
Foord, James (jnr)	Mooihoek, Ladysmith	Harrismith district ¹⁰	
Griffin		Platrand, Ladysmith	6.1.1900. ¹¹
Joubert, J	Newcastle	Talana ¹²	
Koekemoer, Piet	Proviso B	Talana ¹³	

1. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Natal Witness*, 9.6.1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

4. As far as could be established De Jager was the only loyalist Natal Afrikaner to lose his life while fighting the Boers. Foy Vermaak private collection: Letter JC Vermaak to CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog, 14.8.1901.

5. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/2609: List of rebel victims of the war, 17.4.1954.

6. PAR, SGO III/1/156: Correspondence regarding the farms Schraalhoek and Langkloof purchased by WA Odendaal, JJ Joubert and JH de Villiers, 6.9.1902-18.9.1902; PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter PL de R to CT van Rooyen, 30.1.1900.

7. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

8. *Ibid.*

9. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

10. *Ibid.*

11. PAR, 1/EPI 3/2/6: Telegram Reuter to Chief Magistrate CJR Saunders, Eshowe, 17.1.1900.

12. PAR, ZA 33: List of Boers reported killed during the war by Africans, *circa* 1899-1900.

13. *Ibid.*

14. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

Labuschagne, CJ ¹⁴			
Labuschagne, TC ¹⁵			
Liversage, George Charles	Zietover, Melmoth	Embezi Kop	Early 1901. ¹⁶
Lotter, WJM	Doornkloof, Weenen	Near Standerton	11.12.1900. ¹⁷
Munro, George	Ellensdale, Newcastle	Tafelkop, OFS ¹⁸	
Nel, Gert Andries	Chitral, Dundee	Spioenkop	24.1.1900. ¹⁹
Nel, Gert Cornelius ²⁰		Talana	
Nel, Johannes Petrus ²¹		Talana	
Nel, Louis Jacobus ²²		Talana	
Pretorius, JG ²³			
Pretorius, Piet	Proviso B	Talana ²⁴	
Pretorius, Theunis	Proviso B	Talana ²⁵	
Strydom, ?	Proviso B	Talana ²⁶	
Triegaardt, Louis	Umvoti ²⁷		
Uys, LP	Natal	Talana ²⁸	

15. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

16. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

17. PAR, GH 1449: Telegram magistrate, Weenen, to Inspector Mardall, 4.12.1901.

18. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

22. PAR, SGO III/I/147: Letter Lyon and Thorold to surveyor-general, 15.1.1902; PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

19. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/14209/1: Family tree of the Vermaaks compiled by JC Vermaak, no date.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

25. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

23. PAR, ZA 33: List of Boers reported killed during the war by Africans, *circa* 1899-1900.

24. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. PAR, CSO 1703: Documents relating to the marriage of Mrs Triegaardt to J Diot, her husband possibly still being alive, 14.4.1902-4.5.1902.

28. PAR, ZA 33: List of Boers reported killed during the war by Africans, *circa* 1899-1900.

29. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

Van der Linde, JH (Jan) ²⁹			
Van Rooyen, JJ	Proviso B	Talana ³⁰	
Vermaak, Cornelius J	Slaaf, Dundee	In custody - captured dangerously wounded ³¹	
Vermaak, Nicholas J (WJ's son)	Knostrope, Dundee	Pongola ³²	
Vermaak, AC ³³			
Vermaak, JS ³⁴			
Vermaak, Nicholas J ³⁵	Knostrope, Dundee	Kambula ³⁶ /Ladysmith ³⁷	6.1.1900.

30. PAR, ZA 33: List of Boers reported killed during the war by Africans, *circa* 1899-1900; VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

31. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

32. *Ibid*

33. VTR, JC Vermaak collection, 03/19022: Program herbegravnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

34. *Ibid*.

35. PAR, CSO 2910: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission: Claim by H Vermaak, 15.1.1903.

36. PAR, CSO 2927: List of British subjects in Natal who are suspected of disloyalty with handwritten notes, no date.

37. PAR, AGO I/7/42: Letter PL de R to CT van Rooyen, 30.1.1900.

SOURCE LIST

1. UNPUBLISHED ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

1.1 DURBAN ARCHIVE REPOSITORY (DAR)

Archives of the Empangeni magistrate (1/EPI)
3/2/6: Letters despatched, 1899-1902.

Archives of the Melmoth (Entonjaneni) magistrate (1/MEL)
III/2/8-III/2/9: Minute papers, 1899-1902.

1.2 FORT AMIEL

Portion of a letter written by Jenkins to his wife, *circa* 1899.

1.3 FORT NONGQAYI MUSEUM - ESHOWE

Framed letter rebel prisoners to Lady Saunders, 2.1.1902.

1.4 FREE STATE ARCHIVE REPOSITORY - BLOEMFONTEIN (FSAR)

Archives of the Colonial Office (CO)
CO 143: Correspondence, 1902.

1.5 LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM, DURBAN

4596/1: Programs of concerts conducted by inhabitants of the Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.

1.6 NATIONAL ARCHIVE REPOSITORY, PRETORIA (NAR)

Accessions

A 116, Volume 4: Memoirs van JC Vermaak.

A 371: SP Engelbrecht collection, Volume 11, Incoming letters to Pres SJ

Kruger.

A 739: J de V Roos collection, Books 1 and 2.

A 1531: FA Truscott diary.

A 2030: J Ploeger collection, Volume 20.

GS Preller collection: Volume 76, Herrinerige van AP Smuts.

Photographs 7163 and 7164: Natal rebels in the Pietermaritzburg Prison.

Archives of the Colonial Secretary (CS)

206: Correspondence files, 1902.

549: Correspondence files, 1905.

Archives of the Director of Burgher Camps (DBC)

95-98: Registers of residents, Standerton Concentration Camp.

105-108: Registers of residents, statistical return register and register of departure, Volksrust Concentration Camp.

110: Register of deaths, Colenso Concentration Camp.

111-117: Registers of residents, register of sick persons, hospital register and register of births and deaths, Howick Concentration Camp.

118-121: Registers of residents, hospital register and register of births and deaths, Jacobs Concentration Camp.

126-133: Registers of residents, register of departure, hospital register, register of deaths and register of births, Merebank Concentration Camp.

134-147: Registers of residents, register of arrival and departure, registers of accounts and registers of birth and deaths, Pietermaritzburg Concentration Camp.

148-150: Registers of residents and register of deaths, Pinetown Concentration Camp.

151-157: Registers of residents, hospital register and register of deaths, Wentworth Concentration Camp.

Archives of the Commandant-General (KG)

818-819; 821: Inkomende korrespondensie, September 1899 - Maart, 1900.

822: Inkomende en uitgaande korrespondensie, 1899-1900.

850; 852: Brieweboek, 25.7.1899-8.3.1900.

885; 886: Korrespondensie Generaal L Meyer, Oktober 1899- April 1900.

Leyds Archive

711: War telegrams, October 1899-August 1900.

Archives of the Provost Marshal's Office (PMO)

2; 5; 9; 22; 35; 38; 44; 52: Correspondence files Anglo-Boer War, 1900-1902.

Archives of the staff officer Prisoners of War (Natal) (SOP)

13, 17, 29, 30, 31, 34-35: Correspondence files, 1900-1903.

Archives of the Staatsekretaris binneland van die ZAR (SSA)

RA 1970/99: Incoming documents, March-June, 1899.

Archives of the Staatsekretaris van die ZAR (SS)

R 4724/99R 4883/99; R9410/99: Incoming documents, March-June, 1899.

Archives of the Transvaal Colonial Publications (TKP)

156-157: Anglo-Boer War lists of Boer POWs, 1899-1903.

1.7 NG KERK VAN NATAL ARGIEF, PIETERMARITZBURG (NGKA)

B 34: Poem, De Dood van Cronjé.

G 30/1: Kerkraadsnotules Greytown, 1899-1902.

G47/1: Kerkraadsnotules, Newcastle, 1899-1902.

G47/14: Kerkraadsnotules, Weenen, 1899-1902.

Doopregister vir die Pietermaritzburg Konsentrasiekamp, *circa* 1900-1902.

Doodslyste vir die Merebank en Jacobs Konsentrasiekampe, *circa* 1900-1903.

1.8 PIETERMARITZBURG ARCHIVE REPOSITORY (PAR)

Accessions

A 72: HF Schoon collection, diary 1899-1902; letters and other documents.

A 204: Colenso collection, Volumes 39 and 74.

A 357, Volume XVIV/1/1: Documents on wars 1900-1918 donated by JMNA Hershensohn.

A 743: Herrinerige van JJ Maré.

A 771, Volume V: VG Fannin documents on the history of the UMR.

C 1482: Photograph of Afrikaner women taken in front of the Newcastle Town Hall.

Archives of the Attorney-General's Office (AGO)

I/1/67: Criminal records, 1879.

I/4/40: Miscellaneous depositions, 1899-1902.

I/7/1-1/7/38: Special Court treason trials during the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902.

I/7/39; I/7/40; I/7/42-I/7/44: Treason correspondence, 1899-1902.

I/7/46: Rules of the Special Court, 1900.

I/8/52: Correspondence, 1896.

I/8/67-I/8/87: Correspondence, 1899-1902.

I/8/89; I/8/91: Correspondence, 1903.

I/8/115: Correspondence, 1907.

I/9/23: Unregistered correspondence and papers, 1902.

Archives of the Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO)

2864-2914: Invasion losses enquiry commission – Europeans.

1501: Minute papers 1001-1200, 1897.

1628-1629: Minute papers 7701-8400, 1899.

1632-1634: Minute papers 9001-9942, 1899.

1637-1640: Minute papers 9-1320, 1900.

1642-1644: Minute papers 1647-1907, 1900.

1648: Minute papers 3721-4049, 1900.

1650: Minute papers 4371-4659, 1900.

1654-1655: Minute papers 5795-6473, 1900.

1657-1659: Minute papers 6889-7188, 1900.

1661-1663: Minute papers 8569-9713, 1900.

1665: Minute papers 10141-10438, 1900.

1666-1669: Minute papers 1-1704, 1901.

1672-1673: Minute papers 2288-2947, 1901.

1675-16840: Minute papers 3327-7656, 1901.

1687-1692: Minute papers 8322-8699, 1901.

1695: Minute papers 1-484, 1902.

1698-1704: Minute papers 1169-3557, 1902.

1706-1708: Minute papers 4397-5740, 1902.

1710: Minute papers 6152-6533, 1902.

1713-1714: Minute papers 7254-7967, 1902.

1717-1719: Minute papers 8842-10197, 1902.

1723-1724: Minute papers 737-1557, 1903.

1726-1727: Minute papers 1894-2700, 1903.

1729-1730: Minute papers 3080-4125, 1903.

1732-1733: Minute papers 4590-5317, 1903.

1738: Minute papers 7029-7272, 1903.

1745: Minute papers 9993-10523, 1903.

1747-1748: Minute papers 10822-11458, 1903.

1777: Minute papers 10903-11151, 1904.

1803: Minute papers 9906-10335, 1905.

1851: Minute papers 861-1357, 1908.

1944: Magistrates annual reports, 1899-1903.

2575: Confidential minute papers 101/1896-80/1897.

1901. 2579-2592: Confidential minute papers 62-64, 1899; 1-470, 1900; 81-265,

2926: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission - associations, companies and churches.

2927: Invasion Losses Enquiry Commission - correspondence and reports.

3037: Derelict Stock Fund - Register of stock claimed, 1904.

Archives of the Executive Council (EC)

26: Original minutes, 1900.

Archives of Government House (GH)

497: Commander-in-Chief - private secretary despatches, 1900-1902.

502: General officer commanding South Africa despatches, 1880-1901.

522: Army head quarters despatches, 1900-1908.

525: Army head quarters despatches and telegrams, 1900-1908.

526: Army head quarters weekly summaries, despatches, telegrams, 1900-

1906.

532-534; 537: Natal command officer commanding despatches, 1900-1903.

544-545: Natal command officer commanding telegrams, 1900-1907.

547; 549: Natal command despatches and telegrams, 1883-1902.

554; 556; 559; 562-563: Durban sub-command despatches, 1899-1903.

742: Military secretary despatches, 1902-1903.

774: Colonial secretary Cape Colony despatches, 1900-1903.

1035: Prime Minister Natal minutes, 1898-1901.

1040: Prime Minister Natal secret minutes, 1895-1909.

1301-1302: Confidential despatches secretary of state for the colonies, 1895-1904.

1304-1305: Annexure's to confidential despatches secretary of state for the colonies, 1902-1904.

1445-1446; 1449-1450; 1452; 1454: Second Anglo-Boer War memoranda, 1899-1904.

1455-1456: Second Anglo-Boer War secret memoranda, 1899-1904.

1680: Royal Commission Martial Law sentences, 1902.

1707: War losses enquiry commission, 1903.

Archives of Indian Immigration Department (II)

1/103: Correspondence 1622-1984, 1901.

Archives of the magistrate of Dundee (1/DUN)

3/1/1; 3/1/8-3/1/10; 3/1/12: Minute papers 1899-1902.

1/4/2/1-1/4/2/2: European rebels criminal notebook, 1900-1903.

Archives of the magistrate of Greytown (1/GTN)

3/2/7-3/2/9: Minute papers 1899-1903.

Archives of the town clerk of Greytown (3/GTN)

1/1/1/2: Minute papers, 1899-1902.

Archives of the magistrate of Kranskop (1/KRK)

3/1/3-3/1/4: Minute papers, 1900-1903.

Archives of the magistrate of Ladysmith (Klip River district) (1/LDS)

G/1/1/1: Clerk of the peace despatches, 1893-1907.

1/7/8; 1/7/9: Depositions, 1898-1903.

3/1/1/16-3/1/1/17: Letters despatched, 1899-1907.

3/3/14-3/3/15; 3/3/17: Minute papers, 1900-1905.

1/6/2/1/1: Criminal notebook high treason, 1900.

1/6/2/2/1: Criminal note book Special Court, 11901-1902.

Archives of the magistrate of Newcastle (1/NEW)

1/1/2/1: Preparatory examinations - proceedings, 1900-1902.

3/1/1/9: Letters received, 1901-1902.

3/1/2/4: Letters received, 1902-1903.

Archives of the magistrate of Nongoma (1/NGA)

3/2/6: Minute papers 1901-1902.

Archives of the magistrate of Pietermaritzburg (1/PMB)

2/3/2/2: Civil judgement book, 1899-1902.

Archives of the magistrate of Umsinga (1/UMS)

28-30: Minute papers, 1899-1902.

38: Letters despatched, 1900-1906.

Archives of the magistrate of Utrecht (1/UTR)

3/3/1: Minute papers, 1902.

Archives of the magistrate of Weenen (1/WEN)

3/1/2-3/1/3: Letters despatched, 1899-1905.

3/2/3-3/2/4: Minute papers, 1898-1902.

Master of the Supreme Court - Estate files (MSCE)

3940/1899: Estate file DC Uys.

114/1902: Estate file Piet (Peter) Hogg.

Archives of the minister of agriculture (AGR)

6: Minute papers 1095-1523, 1899.

Archives of the Minister of Justice and Public Works (MJPW)

65: Minute papers 801-1300, 1899.

67-69: Minute papers 2001-3651, 1899.

71-72: Minute papers 4301-5487, 1899.

74-78: Minute papers 801-4400, 1900.

80: Minute papers 5301-5574, 1900.

82-83: Minute papers 5-1892, 1901.

87-89: Minute papers 4149-6627, 1901.

91: Minute papers 6-1131, 1902.

95-97: Minute papers 3652-6222, 1902.

102: Minute papers 2441-3941, 1903.

116-117: Confidential minute papers, 1901-1904.

130-131: Minute papers minister of justice 7-1919, 1904-1905.

Archives of the Natal Colonial Publications (NCP)

5/3/8: Acts of the Colony of Natal, 1900.

5/3/13: Acts of the Colony of Natal, 1905.

6/1/1/52: *Natal Government Gazettes*, 1899.

6/1/1/53: *Natal Government Gazettes*, 1900.

6/1/1/57: *Natal Government Gazettes*, 1903.

6/1/1/61: *Natal Government Gazettes*, 1905.

7/1/11-7/1/38: Departmental reports, 1868-1888.

7/2/2/1-7/2/2/5: Reports on commercial activities, 1883-1888.

7/2/2/12-7/2/2/14: Departmental reports, 1880-1890.

7/4/1-7/4/7: Departmental reports, 1893-1900.

8/1/11/3/2: Reports by resident magistrates, 1902.

Archives of the Natal Defence Records (NDR)

2/2: Muster roll, corps and rifle associations, 1898-1899.

2/3: Muster roll, corps and rifle associations, 1902.

2/5: Muster roll, corps and rifle associations, 1903.

2/6: Muster rolls and discharges, 1902.

7/2: Anglo-Boer War rebel register.

Archives of the Natal Treasury Department (NT)

93: Minute papers 2354/1904-1996/1904, 1904.

106: Minute papers 3567/1905-3998/1905, 1905.

113: Minute papers 1593/1906-1865/1906, 1906.

148: Minute papers 2008/1909-2736/1909, 1909.

Archives of the Prime Minister (PM)

17-20: Minute papers 1-2100, 1900.

21-25: Minute papers 11-2357, 1901.

26: Minute papers 3-522, 1902.

28-35: Minute papers 754-3912, 1902.

38-39: Minute papers 657-1181, 1903.

42: Minute papers 1734-2230, 1903.

53: Minute papers 248-441, 1905.

75: Minute papers 2-134, 1909.

87: Confidential minute papers, 1899-1900. (no numbers)

88-90: Confidential minute papers, 1-334, 1901.

91-92: Confidential minute papers, 7-272, 1902.

99-100: Confidential minute papers 138-178, 1905.

109: Prime Minister private papers, 1899-1910.

117-118: Letter book, 1902-1903.

Archives of the Postmaster General (PMG)

80: Minute papers 1001-1200, 1899.

84: Minute papers 201-400, 1900.

Archives of the Principal Veterinary Surgeon (PVS)

3: Minute papers 241/1899-600/1899.

5: Minute papers 1-159, 1900.

9: Minute papers 342-550, 1900.

11: Minute papers 761-938, 1900.

12: Minute papers 941-1136, 1900.

Archives of the Public Works Department (PWD)

2/83: Minute paper 3456-362, 1900.

Archives of the Secretary of Native Affairs (SNA)

I/4/6: Confidential papers 1-141, 1899.

I/4/7: Magisterial reports, 1899-1900.

I/4/8: Confidential papers 1-117, 1900.

I/4/9: Confidential reports 1-57, 1901.

I/4/10: Confidential reports 4-109.

I/1/293-I/1/294: Minute papers 1969-3019, 1901.

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I/1/301: Minute papers 1201-1693, 1903.

Archives of the registrar of the Supreme Court (RSC)

1/5/168: Records of proceedings 1-30, 1901.

1/5/172: Records of proceedings 57-71, 1901.

Archives of the Surveyor-General's Office (SGO)

III/1/118: Minute papers 1864-2399, 1897.

III/1/127: Minute papers 1887-2200, 1898.

III/1/136: Minute papers 2297-2960, 1899.

III/1/138: Minute papers 3433-5742, 1899.

III/1/140-III/1/43: Minute papers 734-3448, 1900.

III/1/146-III/1/149: Minute papers 1575-4250, 1901.

III/1/150-III/1/151: Minute papers 3-1498, 1902.

III/1/153-III/1/154: Minute papers 1501-2492, 1902.

III/1/156: Minute papers 2854-3302, 1902.

III/1/159: Minute papers 4043-4058, 1902-1903.

Archives of the Zululand Administration (ZA)

33: Confidential correspondence, 1900-1902.

1.9 PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

OE Prozesky private collection: Anglo-Boer War diary of JJA Prozesky containing the diary of his wife, Caroline.

MP Tarr private collection: Biographical sketch by HC McPeak (formerly Zietsman, born Rheeder) entitled *Vierkleur*.

Foy Vermaak private collection: Letters exchanged between JC Vermaak and CT Vermaak alias Miss C Herzog; Poem entitled "Aan Die Verraaiër" by PRN Vermaak; letter ASM Meyer to C Vermaak.

1.10 PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON (PRO)

Archives of the Colonial Office (CO)

179/205-179/224: Colony of Natal original correspondence with the Colonial Office, 1899-1903.

Archives of the War Office (WO)

32/1767; 32/7863: Buller papers related to the Anglo-Boer War
108/116-108/117; 108/302: Correspondence and papers related to the Anglo-Boer War

1.11 SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL LIBRARY, CAPE TOWN

CF Leipoldt collection: BRN 1/5/3, INIL 3819-3889, Photographs of Natal rebels.

1.12 TALANA MUSEUM, DUNDEE

GC Bailey, Seven months under Boer rule, unpublished diary.
Collection of documents on the De Jager family - the story of Mara, the Indian girl, 1996.

1.13 UMR ARCHIVE, DURBAN

Photo of shield presented to the unit, *circa* 1902.

1.14 VAAL TECHNORAMA, VANDERBIJLPARK (VTR)

03/2553/1: JC Vermaak collection, Memoirs of JC Vermaak, 1941.

03/2554/1: JC Vermaak collection, Document entitled "Besonderhede van die uitgraving van die geld, hoe dit uitgehaal is en hoe ek gevang is." 03/2554/2: JC Vermaak collection, Document entitled "Grappe in die tronk."

03/19022: JC Vermaak collection, Program herbegrafnis van stoflike oorskot van Boere slagoffers van Talana en onthulling van bronsplaat, Dundee, 16.1.1929.

03/2609 JC Vermaak collection, List of rebel victims of the war, 17.4.1954.

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03/19980 JC Vermaak collection, Letter unknown (possibly JC Vermaak) to Professor Uys, 3.11.1955.

1.15 WAR MUSEUM OF THE BOER REPUBLICS, BLOEMFONTEIN (WM)

Dagboek van Johannes Christoffel Buys.

3097: Kwitansies vir 6 sakke meel, 130 sakke mielies, 1 sak sout en 2 kiste vleis.

2056: Memoirs van AL Pretorius.

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11. MAPS

Map number 323: Natal including the Province of Zululand, 1898 (PAR)

12. INTERVIEWS

Interview with Hans Meyer conducted at Ingagane, 10.7.2000.

Interview with Foy Vermaak conducted at Helpmekaar, 10.7.2000.

Interview with Sarie Mehl conducted at Waterkloof, Pretoria, 6.7.2002.

Interview conducted by Ina van Rensburg with PJ Lombaard at Aandrus, Geluksburg, on 10.10.1987

ABSTRACT

The invasion by the Boers of Natal set a process in motion that changed the lives of Natal Afrikaners forever. As a group which shared family, cultural, and other ties with the invaders, but were British subjects by citizenship, they had to make a difficult decision: join the Republican forces or remain loyal to the crown. Factors which influenced this decision, amongst others, were the pre-war suspicion of all Natal Afrikaners by the Natal authorities and the prevalence of a general anti-Republican sentiment.

Despite the above-mentioned, and the sympathy which existed for the plight of the Republics, very few Natal Afrikaners joined the commandos. Doing that would have meant economic annihilation. This the Natal Afrikaners understood and the majority remained neutral. Matters were complicated when the British Army and the colonial authorities withdrew south, leaving especially the Afrikaners of the Klip River county unprotected. When occupation did not convince the Afrikaners of the area to join, a well-thought out strategy based upon fear and misinformation, brought most into the fray. Duty on these commandoes was generally slack, subversive in nature, and as much as one can expect from people forced into military combat. A small group, however, managed, despite the pressures placed upon them, to remain loyal to Britain. For these loyalists the greatest rewards were in terms of economics and power.

In stark contrasts were the economic experiences of the Natal Afrikaners who were somehow, either directly or indirectly, guilty of high treason. All their possessions were systematically looted or destroyed, leaving most of them in an impoverished state. Secondly, through a range of court cases 409 Natal Afrikaners or associated people were convicted of treason, mostly by the purposefully introduced Special Court and special magistrate. The outlined experiences coincided with victimization on socio-political and cultural levels under Martial Law.

Afrikaners resident in the southern part of Natal, and especially in Umvoti county, did not suffer directly because of the war but experienced a different kind of war namely a pseudo war in which they were spied upon, viewed with suspicion and under Martial Law harassed. However, these Afrikaners managed to maintain some political power while economically they carried on as before the war. They attempted to use these assets to assist the Afrikaners who had to endure desertion by their own government and Boer occupation. Natal Afrikaners also experienced other aspects of the war normally associated with the Republics. Some were arrested as POWs, while others were deported to concentration camps within the Colony. Furthermore, as a result of the war, relations between Natal Afrikaners and English colonists and Africans suffered. The collective impact and legacy of the war, as well as the shared experiences of suffering under the British, with their Republican brothers and sisters, eventually helped to bring Natal Afrikaners into the broader Afrikaner fold.

OPSOMMING

Die inval in Natal deur die Boere het `n proses aan die gang gesit wat die lewens van Natalse Afrikaners radikaal verander het. As `n groep wat familie, kultuur, en ander bande met die invallers gedeel het, maar ook Britse onderdane was, moes hulle `n moeilike besluit neem: sluit aan by die Republikeinse magte of bly lojaal aan die Britse Ryk. Die besluit is onder andere beïnvloed deur faktore soos die suspisie waaronder alle Natal Afrikaners gebuk moes gaan en `n algemene anti-Republikeinse sentiment.

Desondanks die bogenoemde, en die simpatie wat bestaan het vir die lot van die Republieke, het bitter min Natal Afrikaners by die kommando's aangesluit. So `n stap sou ekonomiese selfmoord wees en hulle het dit besef. Derhalwe het die meeste neutraal gebly. Sake is bemoeilik toe die Natalse owerhede en die Britse magte teruggeval het na die suide. Dit het die Kliprivier Afrikaners onbeskermd gelaat. Besetting deur die Boere het hulle nie oortuig om aan te sluit nie. Om die rede is `n strategie, gebaseer op vrees en disinformasie, gevolg om aansluiting te bewerkstellig. Diens op kommando was in die algemeen slap en ondermynend van aard, tipies van persone wat gedwing word om die wapen op te neem. `n Klein groepie het egter daarin geslaag om ondanks dreigemente lojaal te bly. Hul latere beloning was ekonomies en polities van aard.

In teenstelling hiermee was die ekonomiese belewenisse van die Natal Afrikaners wat op een of ander wyse skuldig was aan hoogverraad. Hul eiendom is geroof en vernietig wat armoede tot gevolg gehad het. `n Reeks hofsake het gevolg waartydens, grootliks in die Spesiale Hof en deur die spesiale magistraat, 409 Natal Afrikaners skuldig bevind is aan verraad. Die bogenoemde ondervindinge het hand aan hand gegaan met viktimisasie op kulturele en sosio-politieke vlak onder Krygswet.

Afrikaners woonagtig in die suide van die Kolonie, en spesifiek in Umvoti, het nie direk gebuk gegaan onder die oorlog nie maar het eerder `n skynoorlog beleef waartydens op hul gespioeneer is en hulle beskuldig is van dislojaliteit. Die Afrikaners het daarin geslaag om hul politieke mag tot `n mate te behou terwyl hul op ekonomiese gebied gefloreer het. Die voordele het hulle gepoog om aan te wend tot die voordeel van mede-Afrikaners wat in die steek gelaat is deur hul regering, en wat die okkupasie van die Boere moes beleef.

Oorlogstoestande wat gewoonlik met die Republieke geassosieer word is ook ondervind. Sommiges is byvoorbeeld gevangene geneem en na konsentrasiekampe gestuur. Die oorlog het ook die verhouding tussen Natal Afrikaners en Engelse en swart inwoners van Natal geskaad. Die kollektiewe impak en nalatenskap van die oorlog, en die gedeelde gevoel dat hulle saam onder die Britte swaar gekry het, het gehelp om Natal Afrikaners mettertyd in die hoofstroom van Afrikaner nasionalisme op te neem.

Key Words

Africans

Afrikaner

Anglo-Boer War

Boer

Concentration Camps

Dutch Districts

High treason

Imprisonment

Klip River County

Loyalist/s

Martial Law

Military courts

Natal Afrikaner

Natal Afrikaner women

Privy Council

Rebels

Special Court

Special Magistrate

Umvoti County

Weenen County