

**Land, Church, Forced Removals and Community on
Klipfontein Farm in the District of Alexandria, Eastern
Cape c. 1872 – 1979**

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Degree:

Master of Arts

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of how church, land and dispossession of land has influenced identity formation of a coloured community in the Eastern Province, namely the Klipfontein community. Coloured history in the Eastern Province has largely been neglected. This study attempts to rectify such a lack of in-depth enquiry as it may lead to misinterpretations that may influence contemporary politics and identity formation.

Through research based on primary sources, it is evident that the social landscape of Klipfontein Farm and the relationships between that community and surrounding black African and white communities have largely been shaped by the stipulations contained in the joint will of the community's ancestors: Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg. The land devolved into a trust and has been administered by trustees since the death of the first spouse in 1877. By keeping the land in a trust, it enabled the descendants to continue to live on the farm in perpetuity, without the risk of being forced off the land *via* financial restraints or racially-based legislation. But the usufructuaries could also never fully utilise Klipfontein as an agricultural concern due to a combination of a lack of equipment and skill, and the provisions of the will. These complications inevitably led to inter-familial disputes and tension.

Before 1939 there had already been three court cases dealing with the interpretations of the Will. In that same year the Supreme Court ordered that tracts of the land, including a part of Boesmansriviermond village, be sold in order to pay off arrear rates and taxes. Although the responsibility for these sales lay with the trustees, the community has been suspicious of the usufructuaries ever since.

A key element of the Klipfontein identity is their religion. The church legitimises their right to the farm – against those who wish to take that right away. Their claim to occupation is couched in scriptural discourse, viewing Klipfontein as 'their Garden of Eden' that God gave to the *stamvader*, Dirk Janse van Rensburg. This seemed to have been partially successful for the Klipfontein community in staving off harassment by authorities. It also caused friction between the community and the black African residents. Some usufructuaries and family members felt that such right was exclusively given to the coloured community and so they became increasingly annoyed by the black Africans who settled there.

Other usufructuaries did not share this feeling. They allowed evicted black African farm labourers to settle on certain portions of Klipfontein until the late 1970s. The black African population rapidly increased due to misinformation and evictions from neighbouring farms. This only further exacerbated the inter-familial conflict between usufructuaries, flaring tensions between the black Africans and their reluctant hosts as well as animosity from the white community towards Klipfontein.

In 1979, after a series of court cases, a decision was made to remove all the African settlers by force and relocate most of them to the 'homeland' of Ciskei. The rest, who were of 'working-age' were left behind in a 'temporary emergency camp' on the outskirts of Kenton-on-Sea. The effects of these removals still impact the relationships between the different racial groups in the area to this day.

Preface

It is a pleasure to thank the many people who made this thesis possible. I would firstly like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Prof Gary Baines. This work would never have been possible without his sound advice and steadfast guidance.

Financial assistance from the Oppenheimer Trust, through the tireless and selfless work of the Post Grad Funding Office (most notably Liezel Strydom) is hereby gratefully acknowledged. Her as well as Prof Baines' tireless efforts to obtain finance for this research can never be overstated.

I also appreciate the assistance and support I received from my colleagues and other staff of the Rhodes History Department. I wish to thank in particular, Prof Ennocent Msindo, Dr Nomalanga Mkhize, Dr Nicole Ulrich and Dr Alan Kirkaldy for their unwavering support and guidance in the details of thesis-writing. Even just to have people like them to chat to when the walls seemed to close in was highly appreciated. To have allowed me into your circle of knowledge and wisdom is a privilege. Also, I would like to thank the History Department secretary, Ms Annidene Davis, for her warm smile, kind words and invitation for me to abuse the departmental coffee pot and left-over cake when she saw I was down.

I also wish to thank the staff of the Cape Archives and Cory Library for Historical Research, as well as the Rhodes University Library. Their assistance and overall efficiency was remarkable.

I am really grateful for my friends for their continued support and willingness to indulge my sessions where I tend to think out loud and seek some kind of response. Thank you to my colleagues and friends, Craig Paterson, Tarryn Gillit and Jonathan Stein, whose soothing words during our "smoke breaks" saved me from numerous cataclysmic meltdowns. I am particularly indebted to my good friend, Garth Elzermann, who first inspired me to pursue my Masters in History, and continues to stimulate my need for knowledge in the form of lively debate over many glasses of wine. To all my other friends whom I neglected during my self-imposed exile to write this thesis, I humbly ask your forgiveness but also extend my eternal gratitude for understanding and still sticking it out with me.

I am particularly grateful to all the interviewees (listed in the Bibliography) who gave their time without once turning me away. I thank them for sharing their knowledge of Klipfontein with me and encouraging me throughout the process to complete the thesis. I also owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the people of Klipfontein, Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond, for allowing me the opportunity to tell this story. Without their enthusiasm it would have been close to impossible to gain access to the information I needed for this thesis. I thank them for inviting me into their homes and providing me with encouragement and support. I am incredibly thankful for Jenny Vermeulen and Louisa Windvogel who provided me with crate-loads of tangible information when I had nothing to work with but a rumour. I also wish to thank the Klipfonteiners in particular. They invited me into their homes and church with enthusiasm and the warmest hospitality. Sharing their experiences (especially with a white man) could not have been easy, but I value their trust and I hope I have done it justice. I have nothing but respect and love towards these people.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their support, encouragement and unwavering love. My brother, Dawie supported me in his own, brotherly way. My parents, Johan and Marietjie, are the two main reasons why I managed to complete this thesis. From organising family holidays to coincide with my trips to the Cape Archive, to demanding of me “progress reports” and offering advice wherever they could. My dad encouraged me to choose Klipfontein as my research topic after realizing what significance the existence of such a community held in the area. My mom listened to my “progress reports” and was there when I just wanted to chat over a cup of tea. My parents provided me with more love and support than I deserve. I dedicate this thesis to them.

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CHAPTER 1:Introduction

The Setting

Approximately 100 kilometers east of Port Elizabeth lies an area in the Eastern Province of South Africa known to tourists as the "Sunshine Coast". According to travel brochures,¹ this area stretches from Colchester to the west, all along the N2 which turns into the R72, to Port Alfred to the east. Many tourist destinations are scattered along either side of this route: from the vast natural beauty of the Alexandria forest and dune fields of Woody Cape, to the historical centres of Alexandria, Grahamstown and Bathurst. Indeed, the Sunshine Coast has everything to offer for 'everyone'. But it is the two tiny villages separated by the breadth of the Bushman's River which travel brochures and holidaymakers alike consider to be the 'heart' of this Sunshine Coast: Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond or Bushman's River Mouth.

On the eastern bank of the river lies Kenton-on-Sea (Kenton), a holiday resort town where generations upon generations of white settler families spent their holidays. Initially Kenton, or South Gorah as it was known in the late nineteenth century, was a farm bordered by the Indian Ocean to the south, the Bushman's River to the west and the Kariëga River to the east, with its northern boundary approximately five kilometres inland, as the crow flies.² Throughout the late eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth century, the area was near the site of a series of wars and skirmishes between predominantly white British and Boer settlers on the one hand, and various amaXhosa factions on the other. This series of confrontations was popularly known as the Frontier Wars (the more appropriate term used by scholars today is 'the Wars of Dispossession'). In the early nineteenth century, the area fell under the territorial control of Ndlambe, leader of the amaNdlambe, a clan of the amaXhosa.³ Ndlambe was considered to be the most powerful leader of all Xhosa leaders, even though Chungwa was the king of the amaXhosa nation. During the course of the 'wars', the amaXhosa were ruthlessly pushed back hundreds of kilometres by colonial authorities and its black allies, eventually to the territory across the Fish River. The Xhosa people would ultimately be forced into subjugation as a result of these series of wars and skirmishes.

¹ See *Pam Golding Properties Kenton-on-Sea Holiday Guide 2015*, p. 11.

² J. Meiring (Marquard) and Susan Richards (ed), *The Kenton Story* (Kenton-on-Sea, 2008) p. 10; *Pam Golding Properties Kenton-on-Sea Holiday Guide 2015* p. 7.

³ JB Peires, *House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence* (California, 1982); H Crampton, *The Sunburnt Queen: A True Story*, (Johannesburg, 2004).

Since the late 1800s successive owners of South Gorah⁴ permitted certain settler families to camp on allocated sites during the holiday seasons each year. In 1935, an estate agent named AW Pudney and his sons bought the land from Thomas Henry Tilt (who by that time had renamed the property to Kenton-on-Sea).⁵ The Pudneys acknowledged the rights of the holiday-makers by including them in the survey and giving the families first option of purchase at reasonable cost. Plots were offered from £275 and terms of payment were a £10 deposit and instalments of £5 per month.⁶ The Pudneys knew how to advertise the quaint and charming setting for potential buyers, describing it in their brochures as "The finest holiday playground and fisherman's Eldorado in the Union" and "Seaside playground: 'love-at-first-sight' describes one's reaction to Kenton on Sea; every day spent at this lovely spot reveals some added charm."⁷ Kenton quickly became a retreat, not only for the white farmers and their families in the Albany District, but for those white farmers from all over the eastern Cape Province and even beyond. By the 1930s, Kenton was already a small village controlled by a Local Areas Committee.⁸ The 1950s and 1960s saw more properties being sold and the size of Kenton as a village grew significantly. By 1959, a Village Management Board had been established. By 1975 it had attained Municipal status.⁹

Across the Bushmans River from Kenton sits the village of Boesmansriviermond. As its name suggests it is situated at the western jaw of the mouth of Bushman's River. During the turmoil of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Olifantshoek (the area on the western side of the Bushman's) was, like its eastern side, a focal point of 'frontier history'. It held great significance to the amaXhosa people as it was here (near the town of Alexandria) where Ndlambe's Great Place was located. Inevitably then, Olifantshoek and all the other districts between the Sundays River in the west and the Bushman's River to the east was the scene of many skirmishes, especially during the early years of the nineteenth century when the colonial forces were under the command of Colonel John Graham. Despite fierce resistance, the amaNdlambe were driven across the Fish River. The Olifantshoek District would see many more bloody skirmishes and battles in later years, as amaXhosa forces would launch raids on farms near Alexandria from across the

⁴ Before 1868, "South Gorah" was Crown Land. Charles Butt, a wagon and coach builder from Salem leased the title for £400. Ten years later he took final transfer and ownership of the land.

⁵ Meiring (Marquard), *Kenton Story* p. 35.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷ In *Pam Golding Holiday Guide* p. 7.

⁸ Meiring (Marquard), *Kenton Story* p. 52.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Bushman's River, not even twenty kilometres from the mouth. Back-and-forth confrontations would continue here for another forty years.¹⁰

Like Kenton, Boesmansriviermond became a holiday destination for white farmers, but from the Olifantshoek (later Alexandria) District. This village developed along the western bank of the Bushman's River, near its mouth. According to municipal records there were three houses before 1900 and approximately fifteen houses before 1920. It originally consisted of a few camping sites on the seaward side, owned by the Department of Forestry as well as a few camping spots for those who were permitted on the bank itself which was on the farm, Berthaville (Portion of Whitney), owned by Thomas Futter. In 1926, Futter sub-divided this part of the farm and sold the plots in December, 1928 at a public auction.¹¹ On average, the plots cost around £25 each. In 1933 the Department of Forestry sold their plots.¹² As a result, municipal records indicated a rapid increase in the number of houses. On 2 November, 1937, the Local Management Board was proclaimed. More land was acquired in 1939 whereupon the white village could expand inland from the riverbank. In 1941, Proclamation No. 20 of the Cape Province declared Boesmansriviermond a town.¹³

It can be deduced relatively easily from the names of the two towns that the inhabitants and holiday-makers on the Kenton side were predominantly English-speaking, while those on the Boesmansriviermond side were mostly Afrikaans-speaking. The figurative language barrier was spatially accentuated by the vast expanse of the Bushman's River. Before 1958, the access to the one side of the river from the other was limited as there was no coastal road from Port Elizabeth to East London. The only convenient way across was via a ferryboat which operated only at certain times in a month.¹⁴ A long arduous journey by dirt track over a drift approximately thirty kilometres upriver was the alternative. By the 1950s the need for a coastal road was considered a necessity by national government and,

¹⁰ The Bushman's River was the scene of many skirmishes during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is recorded in many narratives on the Wars of Dispossession as a contact point between white settler and amaXhosa. See for example R. Godlonton, *A Narrative of the Irruption of the Kaffir Hordes into the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope: 1834-1835* (Facsimile Reprint) (Cape Town, 1965); FC Metrowich, *Frontier Flames* (Cape Town, 1968); N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York, 1992).

¹¹ EE Malherbe, *Boesmansriviermond 1850-1997* (Kenton-on-Sea, 1997) p. 22.

¹² Malherbe, *Boemansriviermond* p. iv.

¹³ In Malherbe, *Boesmansriviermond* p. iv.

¹⁴ Limited evidence of this ferryboat exists, save for a handful of Kenton, Boesmansriviermond and Klipfontein residents who are still alive today and related their experiences travelling on this ferry to me. Other residents documented their accounts through print in mainly three published works, namely Meiring (Marquard), *Kenton Story*; Malherbe, *Boesmansriviermond* and K van der Riet, *Morning in the Heart: A Memoir* (Port Elizabeth, 2000).

by 1960 bridges had been built across the Bushman's and Kariëga Rivers, formally connecting Boesmansriviermond with Kenton-on-Sea.¹⁵

It stands to reason that when the 'great trek' from inland to the sea took place, a great deal of preparation was needed for a trip by ox-wagon and horses.¹⁶ This required careful planning and study of the seasonal rainfall. The camps at the sea themselves would have had to be readied and prepared for each farmer and his family so that when they arrived, all the initial provisions from the farm would be available immediately. These tasks fell upon the farmer's black and coloured servants and labourers. A large group of servants would accompany the families down to the coast for the holidays, each tasked with their own duties – from ox-wagon drivers and leaders to cooks; from shepherds to domestic staff.¹⁷ Yet, these people lived separately from the families which they served daily. Indeed, they lived on commonages – large fields on the outskirts of the two towns where the oxen out-spanned.¹⁸

This original location of black settlements on the periphery of the dominant white spaces of Kenton and Boesmansriviermond would continue to have a profound effect on future town planning and development. The development would go ahead according to a hierarchy, and those on the periphery would find themselves on the lowest rung of the ladder – auxiliaries to maintain an idyllic lifestyle which Kenton and Boesmansriviermond invited white holidaymakers to enjoy. It is on this periphery that Klipfontein and its people find themselves. Note that I use present tense as this is well and truly still the case.¹⁹

Klipfontein Farm is situated immediately west of Boesmansriviermond. In fact, a portion of the original farm makes up one of the 'newer' sections of the town.²⁰ It borders on the western boundary of Boesmansriviermond and runs parallel with the beach, known as

¹⁵ Meiring, *Kenton Story* p. 42.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-25 and 29-34. See also Kathleen van der Riet's memoir of her experiences travelling to Boesmansriviermond from a farm near Alexandria in the first half of the twentieth century, *Morning in the Heart* pp. 152-153.

¹⁷ Meiring, *Kenton Story* pp. 30-32.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁹ The original commonage of Kenton-on-Sea is now today a 'black' township with over 4000 inhabitants who mostly live in informal housing. They still supply the majority of unskilled labour to the residents of Kenton and Boesmansriviermond. On the Boesmansriviermond side lies the old farm of Marselle which was developed in the mid- 1980s into a 'black' township to also supply the labour needs of Boesmansriviermond and Kenton. Klipfontein also lies on the outskirts of Boesmansriviermond. Inhabitants of working age are employees of the local consumer and building industries. All of these settlements are home to mostly poor to working-class families.

²⁰ A beacon denoting the boundary of Klipfontein Farm is still visible near the centre of the town of Boesmansriviermond.

Kwaaihoek, to its south, which includes the (in)famous Dias Cross, as well as the coastal hamlet of Boknes. Klipfontein is surrounded by Whitney Farm to its west and north-west and the black township of Marselle to its north.²¹ Many of Klipfontein's borders have been blurred due to the usufructuaries²² renting out portions of land along its periphery to neighbouring farmers. During most of the twentieth century, the farm was evenly populated throughout its entire expanse. But since the leasing of land and the establishment of one unified settlement, Harmony Park, during the late 1990s, the whole population of Klipfontein is presently located in the south-eastern section of the farm, all along the R72, at some points straddling the road.

Klipfontein is thus located between white farms and the towns of Boesmansriviermond and Kenton-on-Sea on the one hand, and the black townships of Marselle and Ekuphumleni on the other.

Terminology: Origins and problematic terms

Terminology regarding the classification of groups of people in South Africa, with its long and tragic history of racial discrimination and division, raises some problematic issues. This is especially true with regards to the so-called coloured people. In the South African context, the term 'coloured' is used to refer to people of 'mixed descent'. This includes a varying 'mixture' of Khoekhoe, San, Malay, African and/or European descent. In the 1904 population census the term 'coloured' was defined and subsequently became part of the social construction of race in South Africa.²³ However, not all people labelled as coloured accepted the imposition of a racial identity. Therefore in order to identify the people who are the subject of this thesis, the term coloured will be problematised, rather than reifying any form of racial discrimination.

Throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries, there have been various attempts by writers on coloured identity to resolve the dilemma of terminology.²⁴ Some researchers have tried to do so by using different terminology, such as the Afrikaans name 'bruin mense' (brown people). The association with Afrikaans as mother tongue has led to the popular term

²¹ See Cart and Transport of Klipfontein Farm No. 346, Alexandria District, Cape Colony, 1872 and Map 1.

²² For the meaning and explanation of usufructuaries, see Chapter 2, pp. 45-46.

²³ S Victor, *Segregated Housing and Contested Identities: The Case of the King William's Town Coloured Community, 1895-1946* MA Thesis, Rhodes University (2007) p. 1.

²⁴ See for example Z Erasmus (ed), *Coloured by History, shaped by Place: New Perspectives on coloured Identities in Cape Town*, (Cape Town, 2001) and RH du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'Coloured' People of South Africa - A Political History*, (Cape Town, 1994).

'bruin Afrikaner' (brown Afrikaner). There is also the tendency to add the qualification 'so-called' in front of coloured. Some researchers spell 'coloured' with a lower-case 'c' as opposed to a capital letter in order to indicate that it is a contested term.²⁵ Mohamed Adhikari, noted researcher of coloured identity, published the first systematic study on coloured identity in South Africa. In his seminal work, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*, Adhikari advocates the use of the term 'Coloured' with a capital letter to refer to people who consider themselves as such.²⁶

Ethnic identity and terminology goes hand in hand. This is particularly evident when it comes to the ethnic identity of coloured people. In Stephanie Victor's MA thesis, she remarks that some of her informants were apprehensive to call themselves 'coloured' even though they are classified as such in terms of racial legislation.²⁷ Some resisted this imposition of such an identity while others felt comfortable with it. Similar to Victor's experiences, some of my informants saw themselves as partly descendants of the original Khoekhoe people who lived in the Cape region centuries ago. Most however, stressed their attachment to the land and community and therefore, first and foremost, they should be called 'Klipfonteiners'.

It is clear that ethnic terminology is problematic as it presents difficulties in historical research and remains a contested issue. This author agrees with Victor that as long as an awareness of ethnic group identity exists, ethnic terminology will be used in order to define this group awareness.²⁸ Therefore it is important to state from the outset that this study on identity related to land and religion is not undertaken to perpetuate racial categories. For this reason, but more so in respect of the wishes of those informants who object to the terminology, I will be using the term 'coloured'. More specifically, I will try to use the term given to the people by themselves, namely 'Klipfonteiners', where appropriate. The term, with no reference to any racial category, refers particularly to the land on which they reside and use and therefore is more comfortable to them than any racial categorisation. The term perpetuates a sense of community and therefore implies homogenous interests and

²⁵ See RH du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'Coloured' People of South Africa – A Political History*, (Cape Town, 1994), RH du Pre, *Strangers in their own country: A political history of the 'coloured' people of South Africa 1652-1992 – An Introduction* (East London, 1992) and Z Erasmus (ed), *Coloured by History, shaped by Place: New Perspectives on coloured Identities in Cape Town*, (Cape Town 2001).

²⁶ M. Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Cape Town, 2005) p. xv.

²⁷ Victor, *Segregated Housing*, p. 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

visions for the particular group occupying that land. This however is a problematic presumption to make in Klipfontein's case, as the word 'community' can only be used in its most liberal form. For the most part, the only thing Klipfonteiners have in common with each other is the land they occupy. Therefore it is not by chance that the term they prefer is one that connects them to the land.

The terms 'black' and 'African' are usually used to refer to the Nguni-speaking people of South Africa, especially when speaking of the Eastern Cape. But the category may also include the Tswana, Sotho etc. In this thesis I will refer to this group by these terms but will try to use the term 'Xhosa' as much as accurately possible. Some black Africans resided on Klipfontein as well, but did not adopt the 'Klipfontainer' name as the coloured Klipfonteiners had. Therefore, they will be referred to as the Klipfontein black Africans.

Similarly, I will refer to those traditionally classified as 'white' according to that classification. In the course of this thesis I will also be referring to white Afrikaners, *trekboers* and white English-speakers where it is necessary to make such distinctions so as to avoid confusion.

Coloured identity and community

The history of coloured identity and formation of the *kleurlingvolk* has been the subject of many publications throughout the twentieth century.²⁹ Mohamed Adhikari³⁰ and Roy du Pre³¹ were particularly useful in understanding the debates about coloured identity. Adhikari divides the historiography of coloureds in South Africa into three categories.³² The 'essentialist' school includes almost all the popular sources as well as many of the older and conservative academic writings. The essentialists do not attempt to question the validity of 'colouredness'. They approach the subject as a natural product of miscegenation requiring little or no further analysis. The 'instrumentalists' place coloured identity firmly within the context of an artificially imposed category. This school writes within the 'liberal' paradigm, influenced by a growing rejection of coloured identity dating from the late 1970s.

²⁹ Earlier publications on coloured history include: R van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid: A Study of Political Movements in South Africa, 1880-1985*, (Cape Town, 1986); I Goldin, *Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa*, (Cape Town, 1987); R. H. Du Pre, *Separate but Unequal: the 'coloured' People of South Africa - a Political History*, (Johannesburg, 1994); M. Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*, (Cape Town, 2005); M Adhikari (ed), *Burdened by race: Coloured identities in southern Africa*, (Cape Town, 2009).

³⁰ M Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Cape Town, 2005).

³¹ R du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'coloured' people of South Africa – a political history* (Johannesburg, 1994).

³² M Adhikari (ed), *Burdened by race: Coloured identities in southern Africa*, (Cape Town, 2009) pp. 34-36.

Coloured identity is thus viewed as a result of historical processes of social engineering created as part of a divide-and-rule strategy. The instrumentalists focus then on social injustices and resistance politics, largely ignoring the accommodation of coloured people within the system.

The third approach, referred to Adhikari as 'social constructionism' dates from the late 1980s. It criticises the first two approaches for oversimplifying coloured identity and, in the process, denying coloured people the right to participate in the creation of their own identity.³³

Adhikari, who subscribes to the third school, argues that coloured identity is firstly a product of coloured people grounded in a specific historical milieu.³⁴ Their intermediate status in the racial hierarchy was a result of "assimilationist aspirations" into a dominant culture, negative racial stereotyping and marginality. This intermediate position, according to Adhikari, regulated the way in which 'colouredness' functioned under white rule. In the process, severe limitations were placed on independent social and political action.³⁵

The fact that coloured people draw parentage from more than one "racial group" does not mean that they define themselves only along racial lines. Identity can also consist of other indicators of identity such as language, family, social networks and place of residence. For example, in Klipfontein, due to its close proximity to the black township and relations with amaXhosa people in the area, many of the coloured people are able to converse not only in Afrikaans but also in isiXhosa and English. 'Colouredness' can therefore be described as a meeting place of different cultures, identities and languages. Rather than being a clear-cut category, 'colouredness' is a self-imposed and official grouping in which discrete boundaries overlap and rigid lines of division blur, reducing the whole notion of race from being clear-cut to, at the very least, problematic.³⁶

Identity is not a fixed construction, but develops through the choices of the individual who is socially embedded. Group ties and associations are part of the construction of these individual identities. It is therefore questionable as to what extent identities are holistic. This is equally true of Afrikaners, English and amaXhosa. There are varieties of

³³ Z. Erasmus (ed), *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place*, (Cape Town, 2001); M. Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*, (Cape Town, 2005).

³⁴ Adhikari (ed), *Not White Enough*, pp. xii-xiii, 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii, 11.

³⁶ See Z Erasmus (ed), *Coloured by History* (Cape Town, 2001) for more on creolization theory.

'colouredness' that differ from place to place. Although varieties include certain characteristics in common, no single variety includes them all. Thus 'colouredness' can be described as polymorphous.³⁷

On Klipfontein this is particularly evident. Many of the local people identify with their Khoi origins, wishing that they could trace back their roots, while a few others emphasised their trekboer, Afrikaner or English ancestry to explain the genealogy of their surnames. Generally, the younger generations focused on their Khoesan heritage, embracing the position of their forebears being the original inhabitants of southern Africa – dislocated from their past by black and white settlers and colonialists. 'Colouredness' therefore, is a multi-faceted identity that is constituted and contested from within. Individuals draw on their personal experiences and heritages in order to create an identity for themselves.

It is clear that the concept of 'colouredness' and debates surrounding coloured identity will not just disappear from post-apartheid discourse as long as they retain their relevance in people's lives. 'Colouredness' and its immediate and multi-faceted status however, will continue to draw criticism both from within and without the coloured community itself. It is inevitable then coloured identity will remain a contested issue.

Directly related to identity and, in some ways even shaping it, is the concept of 'community' used in respect of Klipfontein. Belinda Bozzoli postulates that 'community' may refer to a social ideal, where "communal solidarity and sharing are commonplace".³⁸ In a South African setting however, it usually is used of ethnic or racial groups of people, mainly black Africans and coloureds living in South Africa. In some cases it may refer to a group previously called a 'tribe'. In other instances it is used to refer to a group of people experiencing the trauma of dispossession of land and forced removals. The word may also be used to describe the general makeup of a coloured, black African or Indian urban township. It is also often used to distinguish specific groups of people within the township from the "township-dwellers" in general.³⁹ In such cases, it is used as an exclusionary device – to distinguish between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'.

³⁷ Victor, *Segregated Housing*, p. 4.

³⁸ B Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology" in B Bozzoli, (editor), *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives* (Johannesburg, 1987), p. 4.

³⁹ Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology" in Bozzoli (ed), *Class, Community and Conflict* pp. 4-5.

In many, if not all of these cases, 'community' seldom possesses negative attributes. It is mainly used to refer to something perceived as "socially good", constructive and something which needs to be nurtured and sustained.⁴⁰ Part of the reason for this favourable view of 'community' is the romantic connotations attached to it. It was this aspect of it that the apartheid regime wished to exploit when it adopted the term in order to refresh the 'old-style' apartheid 'ethnic' and 'racial' categories with categories such as the "Coloured community".⁴¹ Such authoritative use of the term by the state meant that it ran the risk of attaching to it a negative connotation. This stigma has by and large continued post-1994, but has not caused significant damage to the term in common parlance.

The good connotations of 'community' evoke images of support, and a place of kinship ties as well as of rest and rejuvenation. On the surface it represents a move away from economically-defined class descriptions such as "the working class" or "the petty bourgeoisie". Such categories are assumed by some to be appropriate analytical categories for use in South Africa. But it is problematic, especially given that ordinary South Africans live in small groups, both in rural and urban settings.⁴² Their identities afforded by themselves may not be as members of the large national classes, but as members of some local, specific group. The gap between economic 'class' and reality is too big to employ the term 'community' as an indicator of class or material standing.

However, 'community' is broad enough to cover all situations in which this may be the case. It also moves away from racial categories, as well as a rethinking of the meaning of 'class'. However, some suggest that communities are in fact mere 'inventions' of the petty bourgeoisie.⁴³ Central to this postulation is the notion that communities are entities with strong emotional connotations which pull ordinary people into alliances they might not otherwise support, given their class association.⁴⁴ 'Community' is thus seen as being in a relationship of tension with class.

Another school of analysis seeks to explore different ways in which communities interact with classes.⁴⁵ Community is not only treated as a concrete reality, but also as an entity

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁴ B Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983), p. 15.

⁴⁵ G Stedman-Jones, "Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London 1870-1900: Notes on the Remaking of the Working Class", *Journal of Social History*, 7, 4, 1974; J Foster, *Class, Struggle and the*

which, in certain cases, enhances rather than contradicts the class consciousness of its members. This school is not concerned with 'ethnic' or 'national' communities, but rather with communities composed mainly of working class people and situations which arise where community support for class forms of organisation is of great importance. Some of the most effective forms of class expression have taken place in situations where class and community reinforce one another, while changes in the structure of the community have significant effects on how class consciousness is expressed.⁴⁶ An essential element here is the emphasis placed on the role played by artisans in articulating a powerful and binding community ideology in working class areas. But other dimensions, like the length of time a particular community has existed, the type of cultural institutions it creates, the social networks within the community, and the ideology which prevails within it, are also factored into the analysis.⁴⁷

Bozzoli contends that these two views of 'community' should not be turned into ideal situations.⁴⁸ Real communities consist of variables and they both combine elements of both 'myth' and 'reality'. Furthermore, working-class communities are just as likely to be sources of social attitudes of conformity as 'ethnic' communities. Therefore, both approaches are useful, but in different contexts. In the first, which is suited to the analysis of ethnicity, de-mystifying the idea of a static, functional community is encouraged.⁴⁹ Bozzoli suggests that the idea of an "imagined community" seeks to analyse community not as a "timeless given" but as a conception, myth-like in nature, and then to view it in combination with other forces.⁵⁰ Self-conscious groups may also act to create communities, which forces scholars to make analytical connections between other social groups and those of 'community'. As a result, classes become the driving force behind the myth-making and construction of communities. The second perspective focuses more on the materiality of community. It forces scholars to acknowledge that whatever forces are behind their creation, communities do at certain points in history become clear social entities, with important effects on class and ideological responses.⁵¹

These two approaches to community should not be seen as mutually incompatible with

Industrial Revolution (London, 1974).

⁴⁶ Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology" in Bozzoli (ed), *Class, Community and Conflict* p. 6.

⁴⁷ Stedman-Jones, "Working Class", *Journal of Social History* p. 36.

⁴⁸ Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology" in Bozzoli (ed), *Class, Community and Conflict* p. 7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

each other. Self-conscious “community creators” can still co-exist alongside the development of real interconnections between people.⁵² Both approaches give rise to many questions about our own divided society about whether our ‘communities’ are real or imagined; or whether the forms of consciousness propagated amongst worker groups outside the ‘community’ or other external factors such as the church, have indeed shaped the communities in which they have lived, and what these forms of consciousness are.⁵³

To ascribe ‘community’ or *gemeenskap* to Klipfontein’s people is to use the term liberally. Whilst the group fits perhaps into the broader bracket of the “coloured community” and identifies with that category, the people do not exclusively identify with that category. They rather identify themselves through the land upon which they reside. Therefore, they refer to themselves as Klipfonteiners. However, there is little evidence to suggest functionality within the group. Apart from the church and worker and family groups, there are minimal spaces available for interaction between the people. Added to this, the Klipfonteiners align themselves to the various family factions present on the farm. Tensions between these factions are so severe that there can be no real cohesion between these groups. Often when attempts are made to construct ‘community’ either from an outside force such as church, or from within, they are quashed quite severely through staunch opposition from those factions who do not perceive any benefit in reconciliation.

However, there had been reasonably successful attempts by the church, more specifically the Dutch Reformed, Old Apostolic and New Apostolic churches, to create some sense of community not only within these congregations, but between them as well. This has led to, amongst other developments, an establishment of a representative committee, consisting of the elders from each church. This committee is at the forefront in creating a sense of community in order to consolidate the political capital they have on Klipfontein. Therefore, while the terms ‘community’ or *gemeenskap* is evidently problematic, it cannot be completely excluded from this thesis. It needs to be unpacked systematically and explained, especially as to its origins and why it has become such a problematic term to use for Klipfontein.

Very little work exists which deal with certain pockets of coloured communities and the formation of their own unique identity within a specific milieu. Even less has been written

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

on coloured areas in the Eastern Cape. Aside from a few texts which deal with the subject matter comprehensively,⁵⁴ there is a lacuna in the body of work dealing with coloured people in the region.

According to Victor, the lack of in-depth research, combined with the focus of media representations and public discourse, has led to stereotyping of coloured people in the popular mind.⁵⁵ The very process through which racial terminology and identity have been manipulated and rationalised remains largely unaddressed. There is a false assumption that black South Africans were the only ones affected by discriminatory laws regarding land dispossession and forced removals. In addition, the existing literature marginalises the role which coloured people played in South African history. In the absence of any serious historical re-assessment, it is prudent that a holistic history, including the part played by coloured people, be written. The lack of in-depth enquiry can lead to misinterpretations that influence contemporary politics and identity formation. The problems and scandal surrounding land restitution today is a tragic reminder of this. This must be rectified.

The issue of coloured identity in Klipfontein is complicated further by its close proximity to the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony – a space where contact between white Europeans and Khoesan and amaXhosa people was regular and often times, antagonistic. Miscegenation not only occurred between European master and San or Malay slave, but also with Khoekhoe servants or amaXhosa 'neighbours'. Although not strictly speaking a historical source, Noel Mostert's account of the effect of European settlement on this area provides valuable context as to the relationships between these various groups.⁵⁶ Of particular interest for this thesis is the lifestyle of the burgher or trekboer and his relationship with the inhabitants of the area, namely the amaXhosa and the Khoesan.⁵⁷ It must be noted that while Mostert provides readers with a narrative which offers an adequate platform, one must be aware of the lack of theoretical analysis and thorough use

⁵⁴ S. Victor, *Segregated Housing and Contested Identities: The Case of the King William's Town Coloured Community, 1895-1946* MA Thesis, Rhodes University (2007), J Sales, *Mission Stations and the Coloured Communities of the Eastern Cape: 1800-1852* (Cape Town/ Rotterdam, 1975); A Appel, *Bethelsdorp, 1828-1945: Van Sendingstasie tot Stadsperiferie* (Port Elizabeth, 1994).

⁵⁵ Victor, *Segregated Housing* p. 13.

⁵⁶ N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York, 1992).

⁵⁷ This term is used here collectively to describe the original peoples who already inhabited southern Africa at the time when European and African colonists started settling in the region. It is close to impossible to differentiate between the San and Khoekhoe groups as a result of the widespread decimation of their populations following the arrival of European and African colonists leading to assimilation and subjugation under these groups.

of historical methods of research to attain his conclusions. Therefore, in this thesis Mostert's work will be approached with caution and will only be used to help fill in gaps which exist in the narrative of eastern frontier history.

PJ van der Merwe's work on the trekboer, although quite dated, is also still recognised as an authority on this particular subject matter. Again, the purpose of its inclusion in this research is merely to assist with describing the nature and characteristics of the trekboer. However, it seems that the credibility of Van der Merwe far outweighs that of Mostert with regards to this subject matter. Mostert provides a 'racy' read whereas van der Merwe is the more reliable work of history.

Excellent research has been done on land and land history in South Africa by authors such as Mostert, Martin Legassick, Robert Ross and Edward Cavanagh.⁵⁸ But very little has been written over land and possession of land by coloured people outside the Western Cape. This is a direct result of a lack of historians of coloured history in the Eastern Cape, as well as the minority status which coloured people hold in the province.

No academic research has been done on the history of the Kenton / Boesmansriviermond area, including Klipfontein. In fact, the only critical works to come out of the area are concerned with the forced removals from Klipfontein. Therefore significant gaps exist in the written record. Ben MacLennan wrote an excellent monograph on the forced removals, doing extensive interviews with both those forcefully removed and some of the main role players responsible for the removals.⁵⁹ There is also a chapter in *The surplus people: forced removals in South Africa*.⁶⁰ The Southern African Information Programme of the International University Exchange Fund also commissioned a paper on the forced removals from Klipfontein.⁶¹ Each work seems to have used independent investigations, but only MacLennan's book recounts the removal with comprehensive detail. Apart from these bodies of work, there is no other exposé or historical research written on Klipfontein at all. That is why it is imperative that a history of Klipfontein is written to supplement the

⁵⁸ N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York, 1992); MC Legassick, *The Politics of a South African Frontier: The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana, and the Missionaries, 1780-1840* (Basel, 2010); R Ross, *The Griqua Past and the Limits of South African History, 1902-1994* (Bern, 2011); E Cavanagh, "The History of Dispossession at Orania and the Politics of Land Restitution in South Africa" *Journal of Southern African Studies* June, 2013, 39 2, pp. 391-407; E Cavanagh, "The promise of land: undoing a century of dispossession in South Africa", *Social Dynamics - A Journal of African studies* May 4, 2014, 40 2, pp. 429-432.

⁵⁹ B MacLennan, *Glenmore: The Story of a Forced Removal* (Johannesburg, 1987).

⁶⁰ L Platzky, *The surplus people: forced removals in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1985).

⁶¹ *Glenmore: black pawns in a white game: removal and resettlement in the Eastern Cape* (Geneva, 1980).

history of the area.

The Klipfonteiners

The entire Klipfontein population today is, according to national classification, coloured people. At the end of the nineteenth century, the original usufructuaries and their families were the only occupants on the farm. The usufructuaries and their families were all coloured people. As far as can be ascertained, they worked their own land – growing their own crops and keeping livestock. They earned a living by selling surplus livestock and wood to holidaymakers and neighbouring farmers. By 1910, these people had ceased to work the land and rented parts of it out to the neighbouring farmers. But they were also not the only occupants of the farm.

From about the late 1950s, a steady flow of amaXhosa farm labourers and their families settled on Klipfontein.⁶² It was during this time that farm labourers in the area were being evicted along with their families as a result of an influx of ex-Rhodesian farmers into the area who brought along their own servants and labourers from (then) Rhodesia. By the mid-1970s, a significant number of amaXhosa occupied the land and actually outnumbered the coloured population.⁶³ It was only after the mass eviction of all the black African families in 1979 that the farm was inhabited solely by coloured people.

The Klipfontein coloured people were and still are identified along language and cultural lines. They speak Afrikaans and are culturally closer to white Afrikaners than any other culture. Almost all Klipfonteiners are Christian, and of that number, most belong to the Dutch Reformed Church⁶⁴ – the traditional spiritual home of white Afrikaners. They embrace white middle-class norms and values as goals of 'respectability', although they form part of the labouring 'underclasses' of the local economy. They have always been largely lower-income or working-class people.

Today, most Klipfonteiners are employed in the local consumer industry. Others have found employment in the building sector with a few Klipfonteiners owning small-time

⁶² By all accounts it seems that there were already amaXhosa families staying on the land since the early 20th Century.

⁶³ A second, more significant flow of black African families occurred in the mid-1970s, following false reports in the media that a black African township would be developed on the farm. Settlement was also encouraged by some usufructuaries, who asked those families to pay rent in return for a place to settle.

⁶⁴ These people are members of the United Reformed Church (VGK), formerly known as the Dutch Reformed Missionary Church (NGSK). The Old and the New Apostolic churches make up the rest of the denominations on Klipfontein.

building businesses themselves. Even fewer have professional qualifications that enable them to work as teachers, pastors and branch managers etc. They have prominent positions within the community and are regarded as *ouderlinge* or elders, not only in their respective churches but also within the community itself. As an 'elite' they are not only recognised by their relative affluence but also because of their further education. A general consciousness of their superior status within Klipfontein sets them apart from the rest of the working class. But this elite status only exists within the social structures of Klipfontein. Outside of those structures, namely in the eyes of the more affluent white communities, they form part of a 'respectable' working class rather than an emerging bourgeois.

The original usufructuaries were illiterate. Needless to say, this had a significant impact on how the farm was administered as well as the degree of influence the usufructuaries had over such administration. Literacy only started developing on the farm from about the 1950s with the introduction of a church school and the occasional 'visit' by white students and *dominees* to the school during their holidays.

Being children of a farmer, the original usufructuaries were well acquainted with farming, but this soon became a non-viable enterprise. Each succeeding usufructuary has, since then, rented large tracts of the land to neighbouring farmers.⁶⁵ This has been their main source of income since the early 1900s up to the present. The rest of the families would cut wood on the farm itself and sell it to those in Boesmansriviermond or Alexandria or farmers. Livestock was also kept but on a small scale, barely enough to sustain the families themselves.

When the amaXhosa came to occupy portions of the land on Klipfontein, there was no formal lease agreement that existed between usufructuary and occupier.⁶⁶ The agreement was never legally binding, causing some usufructuaries to become nervous of possible detrimental legal implications.⁶⁷ For these black African families, they lived almost entirely off the land. They brought along their own livestock and planted their own crops to feed their families. Some also worked as domestic staff and labourers in the homes of white

⁶⁵ Silberbauers Attorneys, *Report on the Farm Klipfontein No. 346, Portion 1 Alexandria* dated 7 October, 1993.

⁶⁶ For example, the amaXhosa settlers would pay the usufructuaries in the form of a bottle of whiskey or meat.

⁶⁷ M van Rensburg: personal interview, 11/05/2014. This anxiety arose out of fears that Klipfontein would attract unnecessary attention from the white farmers leasing the land from them, which may lead to legal action against them.

holidaymakers in Boesmansriviermond and Kenton-on-Sea.⁶⁸ The subsequent forced removal of these families not only physically separated communities on Klipfontein, but it has also had a lasting effect on the relations between the affected communities. For example, the relationships between the Klipfontein coloured community and the neighbouring black African communities in the area are still strained to this day.

Moreover, continuous in-fighting between the usufructuaries themselves has been prevalent since the early twentieth century. The situation deteriorated rapidly and by the 1930s, in an attempt to resolve the tension, the land was divided into four separate portions, each portion representing a usufructuary. This was an informal agreement (as most agreements pertaining to Klipfontein were) made between the four usufructuaries. However, tensions between the usufructuaries were exacerbated later by legal proceedings as well as by the eventual forced removals of black African families by government authorities in 1979. The in-fighting continued throughout the 1980s with each usufructuary faction accusing the other of betrayal. Eventually, the usufructuaries came to an agreement and dissolved the divisions which separated each usufructuary's portion, thereby eliminating the sub-division of the land. In an attempt to reconcile the various factions, the usufructuaries and community elders agreed to designate a portion of land on the south-easternmost part of the farm to develop into a township. Despite numerous pleas to the local municipality, the community elders found little support for the development such a township. It was only in the early 2000s that the local municipality acted upon the pleas of the Klipfontein elders. The action came in the form of temporarily renting out the land designated for the township to the municipality, that in turn developed that land before returning it to the usufructuaries.

Given that Klipfontein is private land that borders an established town, having a populace which requires an infrastructure of a town/village is made even more complex by the peculiar provisions of the will that governs the administration of that land. A detailed discussion of this will and its effects on Klipfontein will follow in the next chapter.

Klipfontein Land and Church and 'Community'

The only place where Klipfonteiners feel at home is on the land upon which they live. It is actually true for all of us. That which makes us who we are – our identity – is always inextricably linked with the places we live on and call our own. As Victor explains, such

⁶⁸ B MacLennan, *Glenmore: The Story of a Forced Removal* (Johannesburg, 1987) pp. 2-4

“concrete connection between person and place has moulded people's outlooks and still mediates their everyday experience.”⁶⁹ Identity can therefore not develop and form without place. Kinship and social networks are resources from which individuals draw on in the process of constructing their identities. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the *habitus*, or place of belonging of an individual, exists only inside the “head of its actors.”⁷⁰ It encapsulates the practices of individuals and informs their interaction with one another and their environment. The *habitus* fashions the individual's behaviour, forming a concrete connection between individual people's subjective worlds and the material world they occupy and share with others. A place of residence should then serve as a common denominator. Under specific conditions, a common place of residence can forge solidarities on the basis of material and political interests. The *habitus* then, is also the connection between individual identity and supra-individual structures (like community and church).⁷¹ This was and continues to be the case on Klipfontein Farm as it continues to foster and sustain coloured identity within an Eastern Cape milieu.

However, land has been both a unifying and dividing factor in Klipfontein. As will be illustrated in the following chapters, land has always been at the heart of Klipfontein group identity. It is what defines residents as Klipfonteiners to each other and to outsiders. Within Klipfontein, the people in general feel that they suffer from a 'collective amnesia'. They are aware that they have a historically privileged position in the area, but they do not fully know what that position is. This is due to a combination of misinformation, lack of education and apathy – not because they feel indifferent to their heritage, but because they are surrounded by everyday problems encountered by people in dire poverty, for example, alcoholism, unemployment and general tension with neighbouring communities. The land has been their one constant. So when it is threatened, the people fragment into various factions according to their views on how such a threat should be handled. Each faction believed that its standpoint was in the best interests of Klipfonteiners overall. They wanted to protect the one possession which provided them with an existence – the *habitus* they could call their own. This has been the case since ownership of Klipfontein passed to the original *stamvader*, Dirk Janse van Rensburg. With such a tradition of factionalism within Klipfontein, it is not difficult to imagine the antagonistic views which those of the neighbouring communities would have towards the Klipfonteiners.

⁶⁹ Victor, *Segregated Housing* p. 7.

⁷⁰ Pierre Bourdieu as quoted in R Jenkins, “Practice, Habitus and Field” in *Pierre Bourdieu* (London and New York, 1992) pp. 74-75.

⁷¹ Victor, *Segregated Housing* p. 7.

From the perspectives of the white communities in Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond, Klipfontein is usually linked with violence associated with alcohol abuse. Such perceptions, when combined with phenotypical and language similarities which the Klipfonteiners have with white people, results in a pervasive sense of paternalism towards Klipfontein. As a result, however intentional or unintentional it may be, rhetoric associated with Klipfontein is almost always of a patronising nature. The main form of access which white people have to the farm is through church. There are various formal and informal projects from the Methodist as well as the Dutch Reformed churches in collaboration with the three main Christian denominations on Klipfontein. This seems to be the only tangible connection which Klipfonteiners have with the white communities, other than language and work.

The general feeling of Klipfontein's amaXhosa neighbours is one of tolerance, but bordering on hostility. They share the same sense of marginalisation as that of the Klipfonteiners and for a long time there was a sense of solidarity between some Klipfonteiners and the black African families who were invited to stay on the farm. But since the mass forced removal of those families, distrust between the two groups has developed, resulting in an uneasy relationship that finds expression in as little contact as possible.

The main source of this general unease within and without Klipfontein may be the land, but a strong accessory to their formation of a 'Klipfonteiner' identity is the role of church. It originates from a strong desire on their part to legitimise their physical position in the area, to assert that they belong there. It is common for church to be closely associated with political aspirations or the promotion of political ideologies. Richard Elphick, in the introductory chapter of *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History*, explains the significant influence of Christian ideas and institutions becoming prominent in the political history of South Africa, before Christians became an overwhelming majority.⁷² Christian doctrine, language and sentiment are also interwoven in the social and cultural history of South Africa due to the political influence of the church. In the nineteenth century Christian missionaries ventured into the southern African interior, becoming embroiled within the power politics of the region. In the twentieth century South Africans have used

⁷² R Elphick, "Introduction: Christianity in South African History" in R Elphick and R Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Cape Town, 1997) p. 1.

Christian doctrine to justify and oppose doctrines of racial segregation.⁷³ Some of the most intimate matters of white and black culture in South Africa, namely initiation, divorce, sexuality, association with people of other races and even dress and drinking patterns have been debated at length, largely in Christian terms.

On Klipfontein, the church provides legitimacy to the claim that those who live on the land were granted it by divine ordination. The implication therefore, was that no government regime, group of people or even the Klipfonteiners themselves had the right to evict those Klipfonteiners who live there from the land. The rhetoric seemed to change slightly in the mid-twentieth century when one group of usufructuaries let the amaXhosa families settle on their portion on the basis that they were 'brothers' in God's eyes and therefore were just as entitled to live on this land as any coloured, no matter what the laws of the country stated.⁷⁴ Such use of religious discourse to legitimise and, by implication, politicise Klipfontein's position in the area will be dealt with in more detail in the following chapters.

Methodology

Due to the overall shortage of secondary literature on Klipfontein and the immediate surrounding area, primary materials comprise the major source of information for this thesis.

My point of departure for my research was the popular story of Klipfontein's origins: that the land had been granted to their ancestors by some English sovereign in the early twentieth century for services rendered on behalf of the Crown. This led me on an extensive search through Cory Library at Rhodes University. The Cory Library is the single largest archive storage facility in the Eastern Province. Most archival documents from the area as well as books dealing with 'Frontier History' are to be found there. I was able to access old maps of the area and surveys done of farms that abutted Klipfontein. Apart from this, there were no other archival documents relating to Klipfontein in Cory. The next step was using the newspaper archives also stored at this facility.

The *Graham's Town Journal* (1862-1910) was extensively examined to see if anything about the early days of Klipfontein might have been reported on. But apart from articles found in *The Daily Despatch* on the forced removals in of Africans from Klipfontein in 1979,

⁷³ J Kinghorn, "Modernization and Apartheid: The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport, *Christianity in South Africa* pp. 135-144 and 151-154.

⁷⁴ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg, 31 March, 2014.

the newspaper search produced no evidence to affirm – or contradict – the story.

However, at the same time, I conducted another search for anything on Klipfontein on the premise that the original story would render no results. This proved to be true. Eventually, with the help of the Master of the High Court in Grahamstown, the local Ndlambe Municipality as well as an attorney firm in Alexandria, a copy of the original Cart and Transport was located. This sequence of events led me to contact one of the usufructuaries who provided me with a copy of the original joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg. This was a pivotal moment. Not only did it change the whole dynamic of my research, but it also paved the way to finding more Klipfonteiners who were able to tell their own stories as well as those of their forebears. Apart from containing valuable information themselves, these two documents served to verify the stories related by the interviewees pertaining to ownership of the land.

Having grown up in the area and having contacts with the community, it was relatively easy to communicate with the Klipfonteiners and the residents of Boesmansriviermond and Kenton about this research. It allowed me access to personal files of families as well as memoirs written by those who settled in the area in the time period covered by this research. These files and memoirs include photographs as well as letters and documents relating to Klipfontein farm and its inhabitants. Copies of rental agreements between the usufructuaries and neighbouring farmers were used to ascertain when the renting of portions of Klipfontein came into operation. Also, due to the constant fear of legal proceedings arising once more, some of the Klipfonteiners had taken upon it themselves to keep minutes of meetings with relation to the division of Klipfontein, what to do with the amaXhosa 'squatters' and pleas for the demarcation of a township on Klipfontein to the Boesmansriviermond municipalities.

The next step was garnering more information on the *stam-ouers* (original forebears) of Klipfontein, Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg. This was done through various online searches on the internet, looking specifically at local genealogical sites. This proved to be all but fruitless. The creator of one of these sites put me in touch with the *Genealogiese Instituut vir Suid-Afrika* (GISA). They in turn provided me with an updated version of the (Janse) van Rensburg family tree for the entire South Africa. Additional information on the origins of Klipfontein was collected at the Cape Archives in Cape Town, including the Notice of Death of Sarah Janse van Rensburg.

To supplement these documentary sources, I also conducted interviews with various Klipfonteiners who were willing to share their experiences of living on the farm as well as what was told to them by their parents and grandparents. I also conducted interviews with those people of Kenton-on-Sea/ Boesmansriviermond who had lived in the area for at least the past fifty years. These interviews provided insight as to the characters of individuals, both officials and prominent figures of the community. It is only through the willingness of all participants who shared their experiences either through written testimony or oral interviews, that I was able to conduct this study of Klipfontein.

Unfortunately, I was not able to conduct interviews with any of the black Africans who were evicted from Klipfontein in 1979. They were either unreachable or had passed away. Many of their children or grandchildren remembered the stories of the removal, but almost always, they could not offer an account which was substantial enough to use for this research. Instead, I returned to the Cory Library where I found a wealth of transcripts of interviews, letters and photographs donated to the library by Ben MacLennan, Priscilla Hall and Professor Michael Whisson.

Scope of Study

This thesis examines the history of the Klipfontein 'community' and the formation of group identity through possession of rural land in a specific historical milieu, namely Klipfontein Farm (c.1872-1979). It aims to analyse the link of 'community' with land and church, by focusing on the development of coloured settlement on the farm and its relationship with neighbouring communities. It identifies the origins of this settlement and aims to understand the rationale of local and national government during the period in question in its tolerance of the development and settlement of the Klipfontein people in the area. This period saw the rise of white racial attitudes and the rationalisation thereof through the imperatives of sanitation, civilisation, segregation and ultimately municipal tenancy and forced removal. In response to the white supremacist idea of racial hierarchy, and in order to retain possession of land, the coloured people of Klipfontein acted within the narrow boundaries allotted to them, even crossing those boundaries at their own peril. They therefore exploited their position of colouredness within this hierarchy to establish and retain their foothold in the area.

The study will commence with a background describing the circumstances and context of how the Klipfontein community originated. I will explain how Dirk Janse van Rensburg and

his wife gained possession and eventual ownership of the farm. I will also explain the joint will into which they entered and the legal significance this document had on the subsequent development of settlement and agriculture in the area. An explanation of the legal rights and duties of the usufructuaries of Klipfontein will also be provided as well as the role of the trustee in relation to the wishes of the joint will.

Chapter 3 will address the role of church in legitimising the Klipfonteiners' claim to the farm. Here the 'promised land' and 'chosen people' rhetoric will be explored and analysed in order to understand to what extent it was used as a political tool against those who threatened their possession. Secondly I will look at whether or not this had any effect on the local authorities' decision not to dispossess coloured people living on Klipfontein, bearing in mind the legal significance of the joint will dealt with in Chapter 2. Finally, the role of church in the formation of a Klipfontein identity will be discussed. Practices and customs seemingly long abandoned by the rest of the Dutch Reformed Church are still in existence on Klipfontein today as well as traditions unique only to the Dutch Reformed Church of Klipfontein. Their significance for the Klipfontein story will be explored.

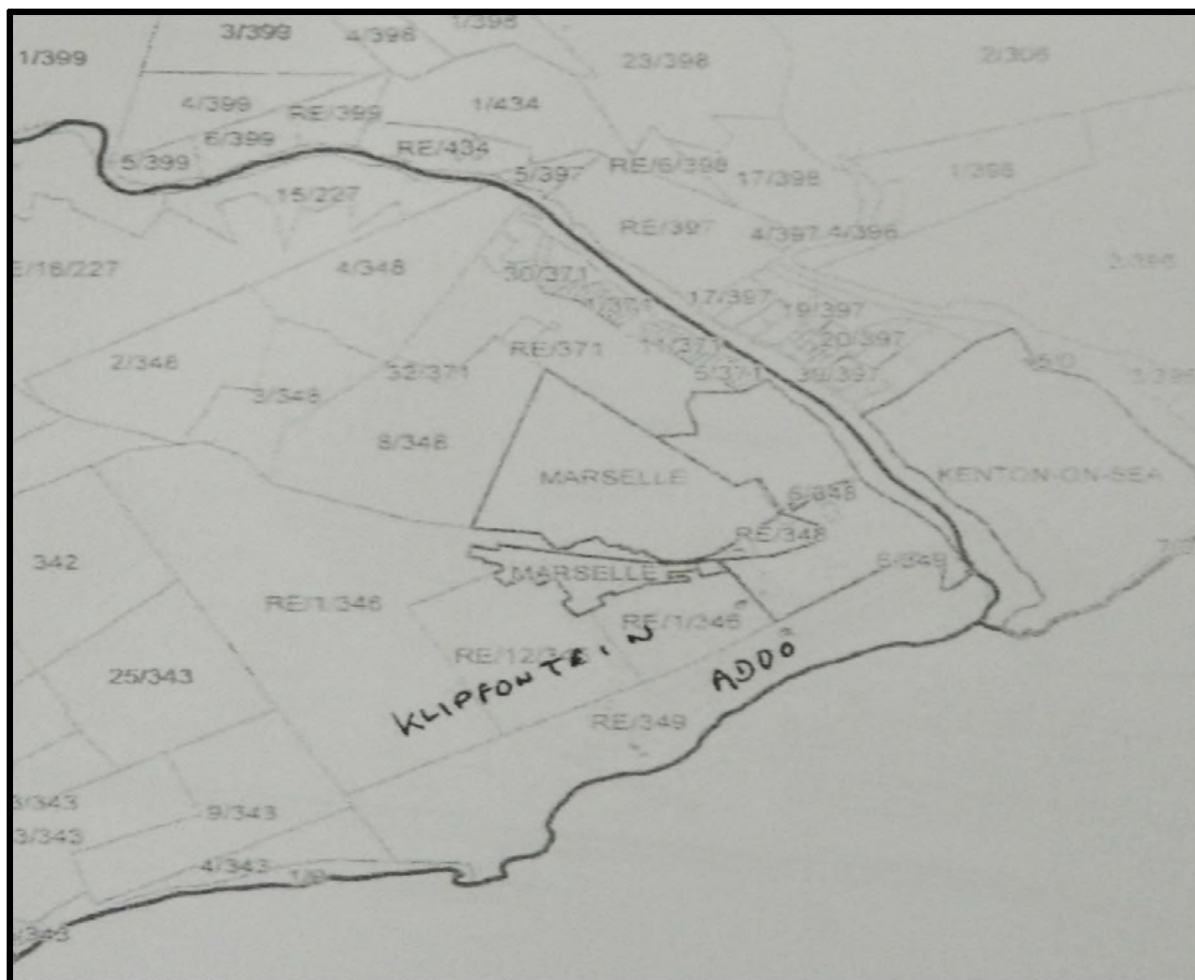
Chapter 4 will tackle the incredibly complicated issue of an identity inextricably tied to the land with which the people of Klipfontein identify themselves. To this day, there are contestations with regards to land which the usufructuaries claim were unfairly taken from the community during the 1930s. Additionally, expropriation of Klipfontein land for the building of a national road as well as a water-pipe was conducted by government authorities. This chapter will discuss these controversial events as well as the various responses and narratives which were constructed by the different factions as a result. Family feuds on the farm as well as conflict between Klipfonteiners and black Africans arose as a result of this firm attachment to the land on which they lived. This will be meticulously discussed in an attempt to explain the significance of land and land possession in the Eastern Cape milieu.

The fifth and sixth chapters will deal with the removals of black Africans from Klipfontein to the former Ciskei in 1979. The fifth chapter will briefly trace the origins of how the black Africans came to occupy portions of the farm and established a bustling community within a relatively short space of time up until their forced removal and relocation to Glenmore. The concerns of the local town councils of Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond combined with the sinister ambitions of the provincial Bantu Affairs Administration Board

created the perfect solution for the white community, destroying an entire community in the process.

In the concluding chapter I will reflect on the Klipfontein saga, focusing on the legacy it left on the area today. This chapter aims to contribute to an understanding of influence of land and church on current identity and social relations, specifically in the context of a coloured community, as well as the issue of land restitution in the area between the Sundays and Fish rivers.

Map 1: Klipfontein Farm in relation to Kenton-on-Sea



Map 2: Sattelite image showing original boundaries of Klipfontein Farm (in orange)



CHAPTER 2: Place and nature of the Klipfontein community

The genealogies of Klipfontein 'colouredness'

During the winter of 1877, in the small town of Alexandria in the Cape Colony, an old Boer man made a mark at the bottom of a piece of paper which he, ordinarily, would not care for in his hard, devoted life as a farmer. As an illiterate person he was told to make a cross at the bottom of the document. Although he possibly could not understand it at the time, this paper would mean everything to him. It was the Death Notice of his wife, Sarah Janse van Rensburg (nee Carelse), and though he would marry again a few years later, the death of his first wife would be a significant moment in Dirk Janse van Rensburg's life.

The married couple had entered into a joint will (the Will) before Sarah's death.⁷⁵ It stipulated that upon the death of the first dying spouse, their farm, Klipfontein No. 346 would be held by a special trust for the benefit of the survivor and then the children and their grandchildren *ad infinitum*. This meant that when Sarah died on 31 May, 1877,⁷⁶ one of the largest farms in the Alexandria District⁷⁷ devolved into a trust and Dirk could continue to use the farm as he wished. However, as stipulated by the Will, he and his descendants would no longer have alienation rights to the farm in any way. From that day on, the farm would legally stay within Dirk's immediate family forever. Apart from his apparent love and concern for the security of his descendants, his and Sarah's foresight to implement such a clause was vested in a truth that would shape the future of the Alexandria District. This truth was that Sarah, his wife, was presumably either of Khoekhoe or Cape Malay descent.⁷⁸

It is unknown when and where they were married. To date, there have been no records found with regard to this. Similarly there is no evidence as to the dates of birth for both Dirk and Sarah. But it can be deduced, by looking at Sarah's Death Notice as well as the birth dates of their children, that both were born in the first decade of the 19th Century.

⁷⁵ Certified copy of the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg, Alexandria, 11 July 1877, obtained with permission from Louisa Windvogel; *Andrew David Wilkins, NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported).

⁷⁶ Cape Archives DN 4257 Death Notice of Sarah Janse van Rensburg (Filed 16 July, 1877).

⁷⁷ The farm measured over 1065 morgen at the time of Sarah's death in 1877.

⁷⁸ According to her Death Notice Sarah was born near Cape Town to Robert and Anna Carelse. Although one cannot be sure exactly, it was custom of the time in the Cape Colony for a slave to adopt the surname of the slave-owner for official purposes. It stands then to reason that Sarah may have been born into a family of slaves, yet this has not been proven. For the purposes of this research this is mostly irrelevant, but this would be an interesting avenue to explore as the implications may be potentially significant for future research.

As we do not know much about Dirk and his character from the evidence available to us, it may prove insightful to see what kind of character the Boer on the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony might have been. Perhaps this could give an idea of Dirk's character and the adverse conditions facing him and Sarah, whether these adversities were social or environmental. This narrative is based on numerous accounts from travellers and missionaries which interweave with each other to portray a larger picture of life on the frontier during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hopefully this will provide some insight in an attempt to unpack the nature and humanity of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg.

The Cape Colony in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries offered few incentives for those willing to remain within its boundaries and cultivate there. Freebooting, whether for ivory or cattle, represented one of the very few means of raising capital or even of earning a living.⁷⁹ The Cape produced more wheat and agricultural produce than what the Colony could consume. The Dutch East India Company (DEIC) gave nothing away to its colonists. There was no export market for the Cape produce and no free trade within the settlement, where the DEIC maintained a strict monopoly.⁸⁰ All produce was sold to it at artificially imposed prices, and by auctioning monopolies in specific commodities to wealthier farmers, the DEIC further undermined the poorer farmers. Then in 1700 it decided to relinquish control over the cattle-owning business and allowed colonists to enter the cattle trade.⁸¹ The colonists were still compelled to keep their stock within a day's journey of their homesteads, most of them being within one hundred kilometres of Cape Town. In 1703 this restriction was removed and the colonists could go wherever they liked.⁸²

By moving out beyond the limits of the Cape any settler could claim pasture and acquire land without capital. If he did not own cattle and sheep, he set out to barter for livestock or purchase on credit from other farmers. For those without resources and no desire to do 'slave work' for an increasing population of land-hungry colonists, the grazing permits extended beyond the outer limits of the Colony until they went into the interior.⁸³

⁷⁹ N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York, 1992) p. 161.

⁸⁰ C Crais, *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865* (Johannesburg, 1992) pp. 31-32.

⁸¹ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 161.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 162 and Crais, *Making of the Colonial Order* p. 31.

Even when their fathers were prosperous, the younger sons of *boers* or farmers would venture from the homestead hoping to strike it off on their own. OF Mentzel observed:

Those sons who can find no...opportunity for their maintenance and yet wish to marry and set up their own homes, are soon compelled to travel about the country looking for a decent place to settle, if possible next to a Hottentot kraal, and to build themselves a house which is little more than a big hut... Though there is no lack of women, not all of them would care to go with a man to the most distant wilderness...⁸⁴

Keeping in mind where Sarah was born, it is not impossible that Dirk met her in the colony near Cape Town and headed eastwards, presumably after making her his common law wife. Alternatively, Sarah could have migrated eastwards with her own family and met Dirk in the Olifantshoek area.

The proximity of a 'Hottentot' kraal ensured cattle through barter and, if there was no wife, there were always Khoekhoe women with whom to cohabit.⁸⁵ As herds swelled, the need for pastures grew. These cattle farmers became accustomed to moving their herds seasonally from one grazing area to another, as the Khoekhoe did.⁸⁶ This meant they had to live in their wagons for much of the time.

When the Dutch founded their trading station at the Cape, they were at the zenith of their golden age. They were the “most energetic, prosperous and commercially astute nation in Europe”.⁸⁷ However, by the mid-eighteenth century, the settlers on the outer frontiers of the Cape Colony had all but lost their European heritage. In no other European colony established overseas did colonists more irrevocably sever themselves from the culture, civilisation, habits of thought and expression, institutional obedience and industry of their Dutch ancestors.⁸⁸ As Mostert puts it, “there was no room in the imaginations of the generations born on hinterland African soil for inherited nostalgia”.⁸⁹ The ways and

⁸⁴ OF Mentzel, *Description of the Cape of Good Hope 1787*, Vol. 3 (Cape Town, 1944), p. 111 .

⁸⁵ Mostert *Frontiers* p. 174-175, Crais, *Making of the Colonial Order* p. 36-38 and MC Legassick *The Politics of a South African Frontier: The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana, and the Missionaries, 1780-1840* (Basel, 2010) pp. 14-18 and FC Metrowich, *Frontier Flames* (Cape Town, 1968) pp. 11-14.

⁸⁶ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 163.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸⁸ S Newton-King, *The Enemy Within: The Struggle for ascendancy on the Cape Eastern Frontier 1760-1800* PhD Thesis (London, 1992) pp. 24-29 and 31.

⁸⁹ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 163.

customs of the past had no relevance whatsoever. They were different people, in an environment so completely different and isolated. They turned from the agricultural skills perfected in Europe and embraced a remoter experience by becoming semi-nomadic hunters and herdsmen, moving steadily away from authority and the effective reach of the law.⁹⁰

The movement away from the Cape took place along two roughly parallel courses eastwards. The one route was along the north-eastern fringes of the Great Karoo and the other one was more or less along the coast. The colonists at the Cape called themselves 'boeren' (Boers). The prefix 'trek' was to be added to denote the special character of those who moved eastwards towards the outer reaches of the colony.

The 'trekboers' were tough, unruly, untutored and ruthless and 'educated' their sons in the same habits.⁹¹ They trekked through the wilderness without any particular sense of time and direction. It was this continual movement, as well as the nature of the country they had to cope with, that forged their character. Their hunting made the trekboers and their descendants conceivably the best marksmen overall in the world. Yet it was not a violent life. It was rather slow and lazy. They lived by the pace of the ox and in tented wagons most of the time.

For a long time the trekboers would make periodic trips to the Colony, to sell the products of their limited industry, which was essential for paying the quitrent and for buying gunpowder.⁹² They would also go to the Cape to perform whatever civil acts were necessary in their lives such as marriage and baptisms. But as the distance between themselves and the Cape increased and the return journey became more strenuous to their lifestyle, they became reluctant to make it due to the expense, fear of leaving their families alone, and because it began to seem irrelevant. The stock that they had at their disposal would be sold to traders travelling from the Cape, and those civil obligations that once appeared important did not seem so important any more as their lifestyle changed. Rents would not be paid for years, whole generations would grow up without any real schooling or knowledge of a church, and life became wholly attuned to the wilderness

⁹⁰ PJ van der Merwe, *Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842)* (Cape Town, 1938), p. 183.

⁹¹ Mostert, *Frontiers* pp. 164-166.

⁹² Crais, *Making of the Colonial Order* pp. 38-40.

which surrounded them.⁹³

The wandering nature of trekboer existence made building a permanent homestead virtually redundant. When houses were built, they were more often than not just one room structures, built of earth and dung, floors of the same mixture and no glass in the window openings. Some were satisfied with large reed huts, in the 'native' tradition.⁹⁴ For many, their tented wagons would be their homes. A restlessness was instilled, encouraged by the assumption that "limitless lands lay always ahead".⁹⁵ To diminish the risk of being exposed to lions and other wild animals, the trekboers moved principally at night. The explorer Lichtenstein described it: "The common practice was to set off late in the evening...to arrive at the outspan place about sun-rise."⁹⁶ The women would build up a 'hut' under the shade of the wagon and began cooking either salted meat, a sheep killed the day before, or game killed along the way.

Self-sufficiency and the self-contained nature of their existence developed extreme individualism. Each trekboer family unit formed an independent patriarchy. A young trekboer and his family breaking away from a patriarchal unit to move out on their own required very little in the way of basic equipment. They merely needed a wagon, a span of oxen, three horses, fifty cattle and 500 sheep.⁹⁷ These were usually paid through loan arrangements with their own families. For personal use they needed a gun and ammunition, and a large iron pot for cooking and making soap. Their clothes were home-made, with the men wearing hides of their own beasts or from wild animals. The 'karosses' or blankets were sewn from pelts of jackals or other small and furry animals.⁹⁸

The trekboers were their own law and beholden to no one but themselves and their God. Nevertheless, they still remained dependent on the Cape for the most vital item in their existence, namely ammunition.⁹⁹ Without it they could not hunt nor could they protect themselves from ever increasing attacks from local indigenous people, and of course, to launch attacks against these people as well. In other words, their survival would be undermined without it. This dependence would become the one means whereby the

⁹³ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 165.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 165.

⁹⁶ H Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, Vol. 2 (Cape Town, 1930), p. 83.

⁹⁷ Mostert, *Frontiers*, p. 168.

⁹⁸ Van der Merwe, *Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842)* (Cape Town, 1938) p. 247.

⁹⁹ Mostert, *Frontiers*, p. 168.

authority could finally try to impose its wishes upon them.

The trekboers' literal belief in the Bible was their last link with the civilisation they left behind.¹⁰⁰ It was the source of all knowledge and belief. For most trekboers it was the only book they knew about, even though fewer and fewer were able to read it at all.¹⁰¹ Many travellers who first began writing about the southern African interior of the eighteenth century were aghast at certain aspects of trekboer religion and some even doubted whether they had any religion at all. There was a peculiar tension between their absorption of the natural world that surrounded them, and the scriptural limits that provided the one strong bond they retained with the 'civilisation' from which they had grown so remote. Scriptural reading and psalm singing were daily rituals in many households and "helped impose a stern moral discipline and forbearance upon many aspects of social behaviour".¹⁰² The trekboers quarrelled ferociously among themselves, but they were rarely seen to come to blows and blood feuds were non-existent.¹⁰³

The Old Testament concept of patriarchal dependability, where the head of the house became God's appointed elder and thus his word was law within his domain, was imposed in the trekboer household.¹⁰⁴ He expected absolute obedience, especially from his sons, Khoekhoe servants or slaves if he owned any. Although they were seldom seen being violent in a quarrel, they were infamous for their iron resolve when it came to punishing their servants or their sons if necessary.¹⁰⁵

Trekboers may have found themselves isolated from any actual church and contact with preachers, but it was the trekboer patriarch who read the Bible (if it was possible) by candlelight to his family and servants.¹⁰⁶ They were for the most part, a hundred miles or more from the nearest church or school, and this separation increased year by year. OF Mentzel lamented the fact that in the rural areas, "the Sabbath is celebrated by laziness... Seldom is a book of sermons...opened at some farmer's place on Sunday, and very rarely does one find a Bible among them...they generally forget everything about the Christian

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168 and R Elphick and R Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Cape Town, 1997) pp. 22-26.

¹⁰¹ Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 25 and van der Merwe, *Die Trekboer* p. 247.

¹⁰² Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 168.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁰⁴ Van der Merwe, *Die Trekboer* p. 249-250 and Mostert, *Frontiers* pp. 168-170.

¹⁰⁵ Van der Merwe, *Die Trekboer* pp. 188-193.

¹⁰⁶ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 170 and JN Gerstner, "A Chrisitan Monopoly: The Reform Church and Colonial Society under Dutch Rule" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 26.

religion..."¹⁰⁷ He qualified his statement by saying he only referred to those "who prefer to live in the most distant wildernesses among the Hottentots...[those] who have had a bad education, and are giving their children a still worse one". These, however, were the men who were the principal shapers of the character and dispositions of the trekboer vanguard, as well as of the outlook within the frontier zones.¹⁰⁸

The only education that really interested them was the one they received from the wilderness in which they lived. The French naturalist F Le Valiant wrote: "Born among the rocks and forests, a hardy, or other savage, education, renders them amazingly robust and strong, accustomed from their early youth to lay wait for the dangerous animals of Africa."¹⁰⁹ Willem Paravicini describes a visit to a frontier farm in the early nineteenth century, indicating just how early this type of education began and the hazards involved with its implementation.¹¹⁰ He writes of his dinner with the Boer and how the Boer boasted that not only had his nine year-old son shot the eland they were eating, he had also saved the father from a lion attack three years before.¹¹¹

The tough surroundings and challenges which trekboers faced coupled with a strong Calvinist-based belief structure gave way to bigotry. As Mostert puts it:

It was the surrounding wilderness, the cynicism and low cunning, the ruthlessness and easy acceptance of hardship and mean circumstances as much as a sense of predestination and the gift of verbal decorum, which manifested itself in trekboer life in the bushveld and on the plains. The freedom of the landscape, its vigour and its liberated sexual norms could not be ignored, however 'morbid' the trekboer's Calvinism.¹¹²

The trekboer was not only a bigot, but an opportunist as well. His opportunism was territorial and racial. In 1813 John Campbell, a missionary, described how this piracy had been utilised against some Khoekhoe he came across.¹¹³ He recounts that they told him they were to move away from the kraal in the morning on account of "a boor having asked

¹⁰⁷ Mentzel, *Description* p. 119.

¹⁰⁸ Van der Merwe, *Trekboer* pp. 191-193.

¹⁰⁹ F le Vaillant, *Travels into the Interior Parts of Africa* Vol. 1 (London, 1790), p. 363.

¹¹⁰ WJ de Kock (editor), WBE Paravicini di Capelli, *Reize in de Binnen-Landen van Zuid-Afrika 1803* (Cape Town, 1965).

¹¹¹ Paravicini, *Reize*.

¹¹² Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 169.

¹¹³ J Campbell, *Travels in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1974), p. 285.

permission first to sow a little corn, then to erect a mill, they allowed it; after which he applied to government for a grant to the place...not knowing that it was in possession of these Hottentots, of course they were driven from it.”¹¹⁴ Such acquisitiveness could be sexual as well. A DEIC commandant reported an incident where a Khoekhoe servant complained to him that his wife had been 'taken' by a trekboer and asked that she might be returned to him. The commandant ordered the trekboer to return the wife to her husband and release her from his service not before paying her the cattle and wages she had earned.¹¹⁵

A trekboer, as Mostert so eloquently puts it, was a “sexual freebooter”.¹¹⁶ He made free use of Khoekhoe women when he had no wife or even when he had one. These kinds of sexual relations were rare in the Cape Colony because of the “physical repugnance” most people there felt for them.¹¹⁷ Instead, African and slave women were preferred.¹¹⁸

Every colonial society created its populations as a result of miscegenation. But as in these parts of the world, sexual relations across the colour line in the Cape were constant but contained within the brutal conventions of a slave-owning society.¹¹⁹ Some of the original colonists who settled close to Jan van Riebeeck's fort married black slave women, who in turn gained some sort of 'status' through the marriages which made them 'Christian'. Their children would be among the first true forebears of the future Afrikaner nation.

Apart from occasional 'mixed' marriages, it was “common sport” for the sons of slave-owning households to have their first sexual encounter with any slave-girl in the establishment. OF Mentzel remarked that 'their own flesh and blood' which were born from slave women would 'bear the chain of slavery in their parents' house, and sometimes even in their own house, if the father takes over the child as a slave on the death of his parents.’¹²⁰ Due to the fact that their fathers were invariably Christian, many of the children of mixed marriages and extramarital unions were absorbed into white society. Thus large numbers of coloured children “became white”, accounting for the fact that very few

¹¹⁴ Campbell, *Travels* p. 285.

¹¹⁵ D Moodie, *The Record or a Series of Official Papers Relative to the Conditions and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa* (Balkema Reprint, 1959), p. 42.

¹¹⁶ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 174. Dirk Janse van Rensburg presumably fell into this category.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹¹⁸ Van der Merwe, *Trekboer* pp. 255-257.

¹¹⁹ Crais, *Making of the Colonial Order* p. 32; EA Eldredge and F Morton (eds), *Slavery in South Africa: Captive Labor on the Dutch Frontier* Pietermaritzburg, 1994) and Newton-King, *The Enemy Within* p. 25 and pp. 74-76.

¹²⁰ Mentzel, *Description* p.119.

Afrikaners today are in fact “pure white”.¹²¹

The origins of coloured people in South Africa then can be traced to Europeans (predominantly Dutch, French, German and English), slaves (mainly Malay, Indian and Negro) and the indigenous San and Khoekhoe.

The San were regarded by white colonists as predators or vermin. They were hunted down ruthlessly by both white and black pastoralists. A few became servants of the white settlers and there was some sexual mixing between the San and other 'non-whites'.¹²² The Khoekhoe were the indigenous herders and hunters of the Cape and used and shared the land according to understandings not readily grasped by the Europeans. Their communal and nomadic systems lacked the attributes of tenure familiar to European colonists. They were dispossessed of their ancestral lands by white settlers, and as a direct result, lost their identity, language, religion, culture and nomadic pastoral way of life. As VC Malherbe puts it, “their landlessness persisted as a grievance and a fact.”¹²³ They became the unskilled servants of European settlers, “bound to the land by poverty and wretchedness.”¹²⁴ Although they were legally free, they were nevertheless serfs in the land of their birth. The burgher slave-owner thus also became the master of a new underclass, the Hottentots – derogatory term given to the Khoekhoe. LC Duly remarks in his study of early nineteenth century land policy: “In order to have land within the colony, the non-European had to be a squatter or a member of a mission station.”¹²⁵

By the 1820s most colonial Khoesan (those born within the Cape Colony) had been exposed to Christianity but even at the mission institutions not all were admitted into the Christian church.¹²⁶ There were, however, several hundred Christian Khoesan in the eastern districts at the time. An incident reported in 1820 by the London Missionary Society missionary, George Barker, who was then at the Bethelsdorp mission station near Port Elizabeth shows that the withholding of burgher rights from Christian Khoesan was a contested issue: “A number of people came and complained that I withheld from them their

¹²¹ R du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'coloured' people of South Africa – a political history* (Johannesburg, 1994), pp. 35-36.

¹²² The surviving groups of San people were driven towards the Kalahari desert where remnants still live today.

¹²³ VC Malherbe, “Testing the 'Burgher Right' to the Land: Khoesan, Colonist and Government in the Eastern Cape after Ordinance 50 of 1828” *South African Historical Journal* 40 (May, 1999), 1-20 p. 1.

¹²⁴ Du Pre, *Separate but Unequal* p. 37.

¹²⁵ LC Duly, *British Land Policy at the Cape 1795-1844* (Durham, 1968) pp. 186-187.

¹²⁶ J Sales, *Mission Stations and the Coloured Communities of the Eastern Cape: 1800-1852* (Cape Town / Rotterdam, 1975) pp. 8-10.

baptismal certificates...by that means prevented them from claiming their Burgher right, or Citizenship, when nevertheless they were obliged to pay the Govt taxes.”¹²⁷ Barker's note gives the impression that these mission converts were almost certainly concerned that failure to establish burgher status prejudiced their claims upon colonial land.

In 1822 the governor, Lord Charles Somerset, denied that the Khoesan “are precluded from being proprietors of their own native soil”.¹²⁸ But he only supplied a short list of Khoesan 'proprietors' to 2-30 morgen land grants in three western districts to three 'Hottentots' and three “Bastard Hottentots”. Furthermore, the option available to white burghers of becoming tenants (bywoners) as a step towards future independence was virtually closed to the Khoesan.¹²⁹

Not only did the Khoesan lack kinship links with the landowners, they were deemed to be ineligible to own land on legal grounds. Thomas Pringle, a British settler, related how he found even a 'humane' magistrate to be convinced that the existing law permitted persons of colour to reside as tenants only after “indenturing them in every case as our servants”.¹³⁰ Trekboers also made use of Khoesan for labour, driving wagons and shepherding, as they were almost always too poor to own slaves.¹³¹ However, the biblical justifications of the trekboer's racial attitudes (the “Chosen People in the Promised Land” and the “cursed children of Ham”) was used to impose, to a large extent, the slave-owning habits of service upon the Khoesan they took into service.¹³²

Trekboers not only turned to Khoekhoe women for cohabiting partners, but also raised large families with them. They were able to adapt to Khoekhoe society and could therefore easily shift between societies if circumstances required it, which was often the case on the frontier. Miscegenation on the frontier created a group entirely different from the 'mixed bloods' of the Cape. They became known as the 'Bastaards' – a term that in its day meant mixed parentage rather than illegitimacy.¹³³

¹²⁷ In Malherbe, “Testing the 'Burgher' Right” p. 2.

¹²⁸ In Malherbe, “Testing the 'Burgher' Right” p. 3.

¹²⁹ H Gilomee, “The Eastern Frontier, 1770-1812”, in R Elphick and H Gilomee (eds), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Cape Town, 1989) p. 424. *Bywoners* usually worked on the farm and paid rent to the owner by way of cash or labour services.

¹³⁰ In Malherbe, “Testing the 'Burgher' Right” p. 3.

¹³¹ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 174 and Crais, *Making of a Colonial Order* pp. 41-42.

¹³² Van der Merwe, *Trekboer* p. 257.

¹³³ AJ Venter, *Coloured: A Profile of Two Million South Africans* (Cape Town, 1974); RH du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'coloured' people of South Africa – a political history* (Johannesburg, 1994) p. 38 and Sales, *Mission Stations* pp. 103-104.

No matter how blurred the distinctions between the trekboer and the Khoekhoe way of life seemed, he still retained the Calvinist conviction of his own predestined superior human worth. The Khoesan were deemed '*schepselen*' or 'creatures', as opposed to the word that the trekboer used for himself, namely 'Christian'.¹³⁴ Therefore, the children resulting from miscegenation would be somewhere in between – not quite *schepselen* but definitely not Christian. The trekboer reconciled his own actions with this sense of scriptural predestination, but was unwilling to do so with his own children born from miscegenation.

It is difficult to know precisely to what one might ascribe the rejection of the blood ties between Khoekhoe and trekboer. Biblical teaching has always provided a ready justification for the injunction to preserve racial 'purity'. But we have seen that religion on the outer frontier was not as strong as has been assumed. As Mostert observes, the "raw spirit and rough energies" of those actually living in "a miserable hut among the Hottentots" blurred the rigid lines of 'Christian' and "*Bastaard schepselen*" between themselves and those with whom they cohabited.¹³⁵ Bigotry and harsh discrimination were much too engrained in Boer society for belief in predestined superiority to be wholly cast off, although some did do just that. Whilst travelling near the Orange River in 1813, the missionary John Campbell found "a boor from the colony...who had fallen deeply in love with a black woman, and who on account of the opposition of friends to his marrying her, and likewise of the minister's refusing to perform his office, had left the colony and wandered thither."¹³⁶ The power of the "stable, settled community, always close and catching up", kept the notion of predestination alive.¹³⁷

As their Khoekhoe servants took care of the flocks and herds and because they seldom cultivated much, the trekboer had little to do.¹³⁸ Campbell commented that they would, in addition to their night's rest, also "sleep during the heat of the day, so that in fact they are dead except in the mornings and evenings. The value of nothing is so little known as that of time."¹³⁹ Lichtenstein remarked that "complete indolence" was the prevailing feature of the trekboer character:

That character must have been peculiarly framed, which could abandon all those

¹³⁴ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 175.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹³⁶ Campbell, *Travels in South Africa* p. 285.

¹³⁷ Van der Merwe, *Trekboer* p. 257.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

¹³⁹ Campbell, *Travels in South Africa* p. 285.

enjoyments the mind receives from social intercourse, all the delights and advantages of friendship for a situation where really nothing was to be found but what was requisite to satisfy our first physical necessities...they grow constantly...more indifferent to the higher enjoyments of the mind and heart, and sink gradually into a sort of demi-savage...¹⁴⁰

It is from these kinds of circumstances which Dirk Janse van Rensburg would have most likely originated. Not much is known about him, let alone his forebears. What is known is that his family moved further east, away from the Cape Colony at some point in time – most likely the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁴¹ Thus, even if he was not a trekboer himself, it can be safely assumed that his forebears were and that he grew up and spent his formative years in much the same conditions as described above.

The records are extremely limited the farther one goes back into Dirk's and Sarah's lives. According to Sarah's Death Notice, she was born near Cape Town. Nothing is known about Dirk's place of birth. It is also not clear how she and Dirk crossed paths and ended up in the eastern Cape Colony. What is clear is that they settled on Klipfontein, working for a man named Johannes Abraham Scheepers.¹⁴² According to the original survey undertaken in 1818, the farm measured 2027 morgen 498 square roods.¹⁴³ It was bordered by the farms Witte Plaats and Jammers Fontein to the north and west respectively; its southern border extended all along the sand dunes of Kwaaihoek and to the east lay the Bushman's River. The farm's first official owner was Johannes Booysen.¹⁴⁴ Transfer of the farm then went to Scheepers.

By the early 1860s, Scheepers was very frail and old. He decided to subdivide his farm into at least two pieces of land. Under the perpetual quitrent principle, Scheepers decided to transfer the piece of land bordering the sea and measuring 875 morgen and 240 square roods to Janse van Rensburg.¹⁴⁵ Initial transfer of this portion of land was made on 2 May 1862 to the name of Dirk Janse van Rensburg. In 1872, the Deed of Grant was amended

¹⁴⁰ Lichtenstein, *Travels* Vol. 1, pp. 446-447.

¹⁴¹ According to GISA records, Janse(n) van Rensburg family members were living in the Uitenhage District (which included Olifantshoek, Klipfontein and Boesmansriviermond) by the early 1800s. No records of Dirk Janse(n) van Rensburg is ever shown in these records, despite numerous searches under various names.

¹⁴² Surveyor General Diagram No. 542/1818; Deed of Transfer, Registered Folio No. 736, 5 January 1872.

¹⁴³ Surveyor General Diagram No. 542/1818.

¹⁴⁴ Deed of Transfer.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

and the size of Dirk's portion was extended to 1065 morgen and 19 square roods.¹⁴⁶

Perpetual quitrent was introduced to the Cape Colony in 1813 by Sir John Cradock.¹⁴⁷ It applied to the pastoral interior lands which were remote from the seat of government in Cape Town. These lands were also incapable, with the existing technology, of being profitable in production of crops and products needed in the western parts of the Cape Colony. Transport costs precluded any major agricultural development. Prior to this, a workable system therefore quickly evolved in the early 18th Century to provide some measure of control over the rapidly expanding pastoral frontier. Land was offered subject to a nominal quitrent for periods of fifteen years to settlers in the interior.¹⁴⁸ No survey was involved, so the settler himself, subject to official inspection, marked his farm by riding his horse at walking pace for half an hour in several directions from the midpoint of his intended farm. Many frontier farmers did not even bother to present their petition for a farm to the government by the end of the 18th Century. Squatting on government ground became a recognised form of tenure in the remote parts of the Colony. This confusion lasted under the Dutch East India Company's administration until 1795, when it became a British colony.

The perpetual quitrent system introduced by Cradock intended to provide greater security of tenure and order. The maximum size of a farm under this system was 3000 morgen and the annual fee was not to exceed 250 riksdollars.¹⁴⁹ But this could be increased at a later date. The annual nominal fee for van Rensburg in 1872 was £1. 5s. 6d.¹⁵⁰

Exactly what was farmed on Klipfontein during van Rensburg's time remains unknown, but judging from Sarah's Death Notice, there seemed to have been livestock and some form of crops grown there.¹⁵¹ Some Klipfonteiners recalled their forebears telling them of the days when "herds of cattle and flocks of sheep grazed the rolling hills while the fertile stretches were cultivated with maize, pineapples and chicory."¹⁵² No matter the scale of their farming

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ AJ Christopher, *The Crown Lands of British South Africa: 1853-1914* (Ontario, 1984), p. 10. Free quitrent grants had evolved in the Cape Colony since around 1700.

¹⁴⁸ Christopher, *Crown Lands* p. 10.

¹⁴⁹ Christopher, *Crown Lands* p. 9, D Nell, "Treating People as Men': Bastaard land ownership and occupancy in the Clanwilliam District of the Cape Colony in the Nineteenth Century", *South African Historical Journal*, 53 (2005), 123-145, pp. 124-126.

¹⁵⁰ Deed of Transfer, Registered Folio No. 736, 5 January 1872 obtained with permission from Mageniz Janse van Rensburg.

¹⁵¹ Cape Archives DN 4257 Death Notice of Sarah Janse van Rensburg (Filed 16 July, 1877).

¹⁵² Transcripts of Interviews between Ben MacLennan and Nicholas Thomas Fischat as well as Dirk van

activities, Dirk and Sarah were determined to hold onto the land for as long as they could. The couple was also determined to provide some form of security, not only to their children, but also to the descendants of their children, in perpetuity. This is why they, with the help of their attorney, drew up a joint will which would do just that. They stipulated that once the first spouse died, the land would devolve into a trust administered by a Mr Benjamin Booth Attwell in his capacity as the Secretary of the Eastern Province Guardian Loan and Investment Company of Grahamstown.¹⁵³ As the trust would administer the land *ad infinitum*, successors would be appointed as trustees. For seven years Dirk, as surviving spouse, had the unrestricted right to use and enjoy the land and the profits which derived from it and to remain in the undisturbed possession of the farm and anything produced from it.

Dirk and Sarah had five children: Klaas, Carel, Jantje, Kaatje and Anna.¹⁵⁴ At the time, they would have been branded '*Bastaards*' or '*Basters*' – a derogatory name for any child born to 'mixed' parents who were European and African or Khoesan etc . Upon the death of Dirk, the rights enjoyed by him would be passed on to these five descendants.

On 12 May, 1884, Dirk Janse van Rensburg died.¹⁵⁵ He was buried next to his wife on a prominent kopje, not far from the original farmhouse near the northern boundary of Klipfontein. They could hardly have foreseen the impact which their Will would have on the socio-political dynamics of the area.

Where there's a Will, there's a way: Provisions of the 1877 Will

A last will and testament, commonly called a will, is legally defined as a document executed in the manner prescribed by law by a person, called the testator, concerning the disposition of property and other matters within his/her control. A joint will is where two or more testators set out their respective wills in the same document.¹⁵⁶

According to Oxford's *Law of Succession in South Africa*, a usufruct can be defined as a

Rensburg and Jack Jacobs, 27 July, 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 34.

¹⁵³ Mr Attwell was appointed on 26 July, 1880 as executor – see certified Certificate of Appointment of Executor, dated 24 January, 1933 and certified copy of the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg, Alexandria, 11 July 1877, (both obtained with permission from Louisa Windvogel).

¹⁵⁴ CA DN 4257 Death Notice of Sarah Janse van Rensburg.

¹⁵⁵ *Andrew David Wilkins, NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported).

¹⁵⁶ J Jamneck and C Rautenbach (eds), *The Law of Succession in South Africa* (2 ed) (Cape Town, 2012) p. 44 and p. 50.

personal servitude giving the beneficiary (usufructuary) a limited real right to use and enjoy another person's property.¹⁵⁷ The usufructuary must eventually return the property to the owner having preserved its substantial quality. A usufruct right usually lasts for the duration of the usufructuary's lifetime. A usufruct is created when ownership is bequeathed to one person, but the right to use and take the fruits of the property is bequeathed to another.¹⁵⁸ The latter is called the usufructuary and the owner is called the *dominus*, remainderman or 'nude owner'.

On 11 July, 1877, just over a month after Sarah's death, the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg was executed. What will be discussed below will be the specific stipulations included in the Will as well as the legal definitions and distinctions of various terms which are mentioned therein.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Will stipulated that upon the death of the first spouse, the farm of Klipfontein would be administered by a trust, giving the second spouse unrestricted use and enjoyment rights and remaining in undisturbed possession of the farm. The couple foresaw the possibility of a remarriage by the surviving spouse because the Will makes provision that if that spouse were to enter into another marriage, then the "several devices hereby made and the trusts and conditions hereby created shall not in any manner be prejudiced or destroyed nor shall any other wife or children be allowed to have and possess any share right or interest whatever in the said farm..." Note that the Will expressly refers to only "any other wife" and not "any other husband" as well. This presumably means that Sarah was on her deathbed when the Will was being drafted.

The very next provision stipulated that upon Dirk's death, their five children would have the right to:

...use, occupy and enjoy the said farm and the usufruct profits and produce thereof in a way and manner that is fair and equitable between and among them for and during the term of their respective lives so that our children shall...have and possess a home and means of livelihood for the support of themselves and their families.¹⁵⁹

Added to the stipulation giving usufruct rights to their children was the further provision that

¹⁵⁷ Jamneck and Rautenbach, *Succession* p. 167.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

¹⁵⁹ This can only be described as an act of love and care for one's children who faced an uncertain future as children of a 'mixed-blood marriage'.

when the children die, “the said rights shall respectively descend to and devolve upon their eldest surviving sons for ever, so that the rights of our five children...shall always be possessed by the eldest male child representing the five stocks”. It also provided that in the event of failure in any one of the direct male issue, then the “heir or representative of any one or other stock or line shall be taken for the next collateral line, in order to secure due and legitimate representation of the rights of our said children by their eldest male representative forever”. In other words, if a usufructuary does not have a male heir or is childless at his/her death, his/her rights will either be assumed by one of the other usufructuaries or passed on to his eldest nephew or grandson. It was also made very clear in the Will that none of the usufructuaries

...shall at any time...have the right of power to sell, alienate, mortgage, encumber, let, lease or dispose of his/her or their rights, shares or inheritance nor shall any act, matter or thing done by them by which the same ...may be seized, attached or taken in execution be legal or of effect.

If any of the descendant usufructuaries were to object to this arrangement and proceeded to claim or demand anything that was inconsistent from that which was stipulated in the Will, they would each be “entitled respectively to the sum of twenty-five Pounds and no more...” After such entitlement an heir would no longer have any claim or demand upon the Estate or property in any manner whatsoever.

The Will also included a peculiar provision which is both surprising and intriguing. This is an “express wish and desire” of both Dirk and Sarah that Klipfontein “shall at all times be and continue to be a home for our heirs without being in any way liable to sale or encumbrance – and in respect thereof we also declare our desire to be that our heirs shall at all times as far as possible furnish an asylum or home upon the said farm to any of our descendants who may unfortunately be in poor or destitute circumstances.” In other words, any descendant or relative and/or the family of that descendant or relative who found themselves in trying economic conditions would have an unimpeded right to stay on the farm for an unlimited period of time. This 'asylum' clause will, due to its nature and significance, be discussed in detail later on in the chapter.

Furthermore the Will stipulates that in the event of “any question or dispute” arising between any of the usufructuaries “on any matter or thing relating to these presents our

said Estate that then and in that case the Executor and Trustee of these presents shall have the right and power to settle and decide the same and immediately upon receipt of notice that such dispute or question exists he shall proceed to decide the same in the fairest way practicable without right of appeal or review.” Thus, if any dispute whatsoever regarding any matter of the Estate arose between the usufructuaries, the executor and trustee of the estate (Mr Attwell and his successors) would have to resolve the matter in their capacity as executor and trustee of the Estate.

A usufruct differs fundamentally from another concept found in wills, namely, a fideicommissum, in that the usufructuary never obtains ownership but only a limited real right (*ius in re aliena*) which ultimately falls away once the *dominus* (person appointed by the testator/s to be intended owner) obtains ownership. In the case of a fideicommissum, the fiduciary (beneficiary) obtains a real right in the fiduciary property which will pass to a fideicommissary (the real beneficiary) when the time comes or on the occurrence of a future event.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, a fiduciary can become a full owner (where the fideicommissary dies before the fiduciary). A usufructuary can never become a full owner as ownership lies with the *dominus*. If the *dominus* were to die, then the benefit or asset will pass to his/her beneficiaries in term of the will or the laws of intestate succession.¹⁶¹

The *dominus* of Klipfontein became the trust created by Dirk and Sarah with Attwell as trustee. A testamentary trust (a trust *mortis causa*) is a trust used by the testator to provide for the needs of the dependants on his/her death without their having ownership and/or control in or over the property.¹⁶² A trust is also often used by spouses in a joint will as in Dirk and Sarah's case, to make provision for the disposition of assets in the event that they die simultaneously or if the survivor dies within a specified time after the first dying. In this case, it was agreed that the trust would come into being directly after the death of the first dying spouse.¹⁶³

It is important to distinguish between a trust in the wide and narrow senses of the word. In the wide sense, testamentary trusts can be explained as a comprehensive concept to indicate any legal relationship where one person controls and administers property for another or an impersonal subject. Trustees are not owners of property but act in an official

¹⁶⁰ Jamneck and Rautenbach, *Succession* p. 160 and p.169.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 175.

¹⁶³ Certified copy of the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg, Alexandria, 11 July 1877, (obtained with permission from Louisa Windvogel).

capacity, for example as executor.¹⁶⁴ Therefore they only have fiduciary duties. There is a clear separation between control over the property and the benefit which derives from it.¹⁶⁵ In other words, the trustees may control and administer the Estate while the beneficiaries (the usufructuaries) derive the benefits thereof. In its narrow sense, a testamentary trust means that ownership and/or control in or over property is handed over to a trustee for the benefit of another.

Testamentary trusts (in the narrow sense) can be divided into ownership and *bewind* trusts.¹⁶⁶ In the case of an ownership trust, the trustee becomes the owner of the trust assets but for the benefit of the beneficiary (as in the case of a usufruct). Ownership trusts can be discretionary or non-discretionary. The term 'non-discretionary' is used for a trust arrangement in terms of which the beneficiaries and their respective benefits are predetermined and fixed in the trust instrument and where the trustees have no discretion in this regard.¹⁶⁷

When a person wants to provide for the care of dependants and at the same time, wants to protect the assets after his/her/their death(s), or keep them in the family for future generations, he/she/they can use the fideicommissum, the usufruct or the testamentary trust (in the narrow sense). A special feature of the testamentary trust is its flexibility and adaptability. A testamentary trust is, as a general rule, better equipped to provide for changing circumstances, including changes in the financial position, health and education needs of the beneficiaries.¹⁶⁸ In terms of a testamentary (in the narrow sense), income may be awarded to the beneficiary according to his/her needs and the rest retained for contingencies. With a usufruct the usufructuary is entitled to the entire income and provision is not made for unseen circumstances when large amounts may be required. Usufructs also impose limitations on the economic use of the property concerned.¹⁶⁹ Property subject to a usufruct or fideicommissum will not be readily accepted as security for raising a loan to continue farming operations, for example. It is for these reasons that there is a tendency in modern wills to use a trust rather than a fideicommissum.

However, the testamentary trust is not an easy solution to the limitations of the usufruct or

¹⁶⁴ Jamneck and Rautenbach, *Succession* p. 176-177.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.177.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

fideicommissum. A trust involves work and a high degree of responsibility on the part of the trustee in his fiduciary duty towards the beneficiary. A testamentary trust also costs more to administer than a usufruct or a fideicommissum. Trustees are entitled to remuneration which may be fixed in the will. The cost of running a testamentary trust may mean that there is little left over for the beneficiary.¹⁷⁰

From the discussion above, it is quite obvious that all three instruments have their own advantages and disadvantages. But they do not have to be mutually exclusive. In Dirk and Sarah's Will, a trust had been set up to control and administer the property whilst their descendants derived the benefit from the land. But it is also clear that the five descendants and their first-born sons in perpetuity would have a usufruct right to Klipfontein. This means that while the usufructuaries have rights to use and enjoy the farm as they wish, the trustee administers the property for the benefit of the trust and its beneficiaries (the usufructuaries). Thus, it can be said that the trust was and continues to be to the usufructuaries' benefit and their detriment.

The rise of the usufructuaries

Dirk and Sarah had five children. Klaas was the eldest, having been born in and around 1835. The Will stipulated that Klaas was entitled joint occupation and usage rights of the farmhouse along with his sister, Anna. Jantjie (married Jacobs) was the eldest daughter and was born in 1839. She died in 1882, two years before Dirk, making her the first beneficiary to pass away. But because she already had children and an eldest son, her usufruct rights were unaffected and passed on to her son, Dirk John Jacobs. Kaatje (married name, Fischat) was born in 1843 and Carel, the youngest child, was born in 1845.

Anna Janse van Rensburg (married name France) was born in 1841. In addition to the joint occupation and usage rights to the farmhouse she shared with her brother, Klaas, Anna was also the sole beneficiary of a special legacy provided for in the Will to the amount of £200. This was apparently given in consideration of her "exemplary devotion" to Dirk and Sarah during sickness and "our present enfeebled state..." Anna died in 1886 without any children. Therefore her usufruct rights, according to the stipulation in the Will, were absorbed by the other four usufructuaries. This meant that from 1886 onwards, there would only be four lines of usufructuaries.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

The children and the further descendants of Dirk and Sarah seemed at all times to have been in indigent circumstances and had never farmed the property with any profitability. In fact, as early as 1910, certain usufructuaries began to let portions of the property to neighbouring farmers contrary to the limitation mentioned in the Will, in an attempt to derive some form of steady income for themselves.¹⁷¹

Klaas died in 1912, upon which his eldest son, Dirk (1864-1939) took over his rights. When Dirk died, his eldest son, Pieter (1887-1957) inherited the rights. This applied to all the usufructuaries and their eldest sons, except in the case of Kaatje Fischat's eldest son Nichlolas James Henry Fischat (1875-1949). He was unmarried and by the 1930s he knew that he was too old to have any children. So he delegated his rights, within the terms of the Will, to his younger brother, Robert James Fischat. Robert died in the early to mid-1930s. His successor was his eldest son, Nicolaas Thomas Fischat (born 1930). This meant that Nicholas Thomas would have been only a few years old when the rights as usufructuary were passed down to him.

By 1935, tensions had developed between the usufructuaries.¹⁷² It was alleged by all of them that the use of the land in joint and undivided shares had become unworkable. The usufructuaries could not come to agreement as to how it would be partitioned. The tensions became so bad that the usufructuaries applied to court for the removal of the restrictive conditions in terms of the Removal or Modification of Restrictions on Immovable Property Act 2 of 1916 (the 1916 Act) and its amendment of 1924 and for the land to be divided up. Section 1(b) of the 1916 Act stated that a restriction may be removed if "no beneficial use can be made of such property...owing to there being a prohibition in the Will...against the subdivision of the property".¹⁷³ In the subsequent court judgement in November 1936, *Van Rensburg v Van Rensburg*,¹⁷⁴ the Court held that in Klipfontein's case, it could not be certain that no beneficial use was being exercised over the property, due to the provisions of the Will. Therefore it was not able to assist those wishing to divide and sell parts of Klipfontein.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Andrew David Wilkins, *NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported) and B MacLennan, *Gelnmore: The story of a forced removal* (Cape Town, 1987) p. 1.

¹⁷² *Van Rensburg v Van Rensburg* 1937 EDL 59.

¹⁷³ Act 2 of 1916.

¹⁷⁴ 1937 EDL 59.

¹⁷⁵ Subsequently, the 1916 Act and its amendment were repealed and replaced by the Immovable Property (Removal or Modification of Restriction) Act 94 of 1965 (the 1965 Act). Section 2 of the 1965 Act provides that a restriction imposed a will may be removed if such removal was to the advantage of the persons born or unborn, who are or will be entitled to such property or the income thereof.

Following this case the four usufructuaries entered into an informal agreement in or around 1939 in terms of which they divided the farm into four parts so that each could exercise authority over a specific portion of Klipfontein, ultimately enabling each of them to let parts of their portions to outsiders.¹⁷⁶ What is interesting is that despite the court order prohibiting the partitioning of land, the usufructuaries were so determined to do so they risked a contempt of court charge in the process. This is how desperate their situation had become.

On 18th December 1941, a letter was written to the Master of the Supreme Court by the solicitors firm, Syfret, Godlonton and Low, requesting that the Master threaten three of the four usufructuaries with legal action for not paying their rates for the Divisional Council of Boesmansriviermond, Alexandria.¹⁷⁷ The rates for 1941 amounted to £11. 13. 4. Only one usufructuary, the eleven year-old Nicolaas Thomas Fischat, had paid his share, leaving a balance of £8. 15. 9. Subsequent letters, dated 30th December 1941, were sent to the three usufructuaries who were in default with their payment of rates. These letters were identical in subject matter, each one making it clear to the usufructuary that they failed to pay their proportionate share of the rates to a Mr Mathieson of the Eastern Province Guardian Company, in his capacity as Administrator and Trustee of Klipfontein. Also added in the letter was a threat to each usufructuary that if the default payments were not paid to Mathieson, the Master was to advise him to “take [legal] action against you (usufructuary) and the two other beneficiaries (usufructuaries) who are in default with their payment of the rates”. The purpose of mentioning the “two other beneficiaries” was to ensure payment from at least one of the three usufructuaries. If one were to pay, then the usufructuaries who already paid could pressure the remaining two default usufructuaries. The individual amount for each usufructuary was £2. 18. 7.

The letter from Syfret, Godlonton and Low also raised the concerns of Mathieson, fearing that “unless something is done matters will once more go from bad to worse, and in a few years time it may be necessary to go to Court again for relief”. The letter refers not only to the 1937 case already discussed, but also *van Rensburg v Fischat*¹⁷⁸ wherein the interest of the trustee was defined subsequent to a claim made by the trustee to the Fischat family with regard to arrear payments.

¹⁷⁶ Andrew David Wilkins, *NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported).

¹⁷⁷ Letter RE: *Estate DJJ and SJ van Rensburg – No 65/91* (Cape Archives).

¹⁷⁸ 1938 EDL 65.

In 1977 the trustee applied to court to have the Will interpreted to establish whether they were in fact entitled to lease the land.¹⁷⁹ The Court acknowledged the fact that the usufructuaries did not farm the land with any profitability and they had reverted to letting out portions of the property to the neighbouring farmers in an attempt to derive a steady income. The application was partially successful. The Court ordered the removal of the restrictions that prohibited the usufructuaries from selling, alienating, mortgaging, encumbering, letting, leasing or disposing of their usufructuary rights. But the removal of the restrictions only applied to the usufructuary rights. The trust owns the land subject to the rights of the four usufructuaries and their successors. In other words, the usufructuaries were still not entitled to transfer the land either in subdivided portions or in equal and undivided shares. But they were lawfully entitled to lease the land, if they acted jointly.¹⁸⁰

What can be seen from above is a simple but tragic formula which plays itself out in a contemporary South African context. The usufructuaries, through no fault of their own, could not utilise the land due to lack of skills, modern farming equipment and the necessary capital to acquire these things. Without these, the usufructuaries had no chance of reaping commercial benefits from the land in the first place because the trust prohibited them from putting the land up as security against a loan to acquire this equipment. Similarly, up-and-coming black farmers who reclaim their alienated land face a similar daunting prospect before even starting to farm. Furthermore, government places limitations on these farmers by failing to implement widespread mentor-apprentice programmes which offer attractive incentives for both apprentice and mentor. It is self-evident that socio-economic problems such as greed, nepotism and community division will inevitably result in the breakdown of the social fabric as it has on Klipfontein.

¹⁷⁹ *Andrew David Wilkins, NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported).

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Figure 1: Diagram showing the different lines of usufructuaries

Dirk Janse van Rensburg (Date of birth unknown) - 1884			Sarah Janse van Rensburg (Date of birth unknown) – 1877	
Klaas Janse van Rensburg 1835 - 1912	Jantjie Jacobs 1839 - 1882	Anna France 1841 - 1886	Katje Fischat 1843 – 1925	Carel Janse van Rensburg 1845 - 1928
Dirk Janse van Rensburg 1864 - 1939	Dirk John Jacobs 1863 - 1907		Nicholas James Henry Fischat 1875 - 1949	Willem Janse van Rensburg 1887 - 1966
Pieter Janse van Rensburg 1887 - 1957	Andrew Wilfred Jacobs 1886 - 1948		Robert James Fischat (Date of birth unknown) - 1931	Johannes Janse van Rensburg 1910 – 1970
Nicolaas Magenis Janse van Rensburg 1928 – (Date of death unknown)	John Martin Jacobs 1922 - 1998		Nicolaas Thomas Fischat 1930 – 2010	Dirk Janse van Rensburg 1919 – (Date of death unknown)
Casper Festus Magenis van Rensburg 1968 -	Daniel John Jacobs 1953 - 1993		Julius James Fischat 1952 – (Date of death unknown)	Karel van Rensburg 1946 -
	Andrew Jacobs		Helgard John Fischat 1975 -	Granwelle Franscoise van Rensburg 1975 -
	Gavin Tommy Jacobs 1957 -			

The ‘asylum’ clause

...our heirs shall at all times as far as possible furnish an asylum or home upon the said farm to any of our descendants who may unfortunately be in poor or destitute circumstances.

The asylum provision has to be dealt with in a separate discussion because of its unique nature as a provision to a will. In order to value the significance of such a clause, one must look at the context and history of South Africa and the racialised socio-economic

discourses at the time of its drafting.

Prior to 1828, a Christian profession, burgher status (citizenship) and property rights had been linked as the three elements required for a non-European to own land in the Cape Colony.¹⁸¹ In 1825, the fiscal (or public prosecutor) defined a “native burgher” as “every free person who is born in the Colony, has remained in it, and professes the Christian Religion”.¹⁸² Although “Christian profession” was an 'essential' condition of free Burghership, it was not sufficient. For Bastards, even if they were Christians, they could not perform the duties of a burgher. In other words, even if they were baptised, these people found it hard to become fully-fledged burghers. For the Khoesan, this definition was absurd.

Ordinance 50 of 1828 was worded to address the means by which the old discrimination worked. The Khoesan's right to land was clarified by Article 3 which read:

Be it therefore enacted and declared, That all grants, purchases and transfers of land or other property, whatsoever, heretofore made to, or by any Hottentot or other free person of colour, are, and shall be, and the same are hereby declared to be, of full force and effect, and that is, and shall, and may be, lawful for any Hottentot or other free person of colour, born, or having obtained Deeds of Burghership, in this Colony, to obtain and possess by grant, purchase, or other lawful means, any land or property therein – any law, custom, or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.¹⁸³

Mere birth as a free person in the colony to form a basis for citizenship was not a precondition readily accepted by the public or the authorities for that matter. It took four years after Ordinance 50 for the commissioner-general of the eastern districts Andries Stockenstrom to point out that the “Hottentots being natives of the colony, and consequently in my opinion born to the right of citizenship, and entitled to hold land...stand naturally on a level with the Burgers [sic].”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Malherbe, “Testing the 'Burgher Right'” pp. 2 and 4-8.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁸³ In Malherbe, “Testing the Burgher Right” p. 3.

¹⁸⁴ In Malherbe, “Testing the Burgher Right” p. 3.

As an asset at government's disposal, however, land was to be allocated only to those who had the means to service. JB Peires asserts that: "It was not government policy to make land grants to undercapitalised applicants, and government awards always went to the richer claimant."¹⁸⁵ The appointment of a surveyor-general and land board in 1828 aimed to bolster this attitude of government in its policy towards disposal of land.

As stated earlier, the quitrent system of land tenure was implemented in 1813. Where land had previously been surveyed, prospective owners had to deposit in advance "the probable expense of the inspection and measurement".¹⁸⁶ When privately held land changed hands, a transfer duty equal to 4% of the purchase price was levied and the purchaser was fined if the payment was not rendered when due.¹⁸⁷ Requirements such as these deterred the Khoesan as well as others who were poor from acquiring land.

However, the Khoesan's land claims were to be met (partially) by the granting of land in the Kat River Valley. In May 1829, Stockenstrom directed the expulsion of the Ngqika chief Maqoma and his people from the area. He then approached mission stations to explain the scheme whereby selected 'Hottentots' and 'Bastaards' could acquire Kat River land "on the same terms as other land possessed by the Colonists".¹⁸⁸ However, the settlement was in fact conceived as a defensive buffer to protect the frontier. In other words, those elected to form this settlement had the 'choice' to acquire land in a region "purged of Xhosa" whom they must prevent from filtering back, or to accept the status quo which effectively rendered them landless.

By 1850, the Khoesan of the eastern Cape Colony lived on mission stations or white farms that employed them as labourers, or urban areas such as Grahamstown where they worked primarily as domestic servants attached to white households, or at the Kat River settlement, or on the margins of white properties where they were defined by the state as 'squatters'. Former slaves, released from apprenticeship in 1838, often had few other places to go than to farms or mission stations. Those of mixed ancestry (the 'Bastaards') would continue to live on the periphery of white society, though they would be the wealthier class out of the coloured groups. Thus they could become successful in spaces where they were granted settlement by the authorities.

¹⁸⁵ JB Peires, 'The British and the Cape, 1814-1834' in R Elphick and H Gilomee (eds), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Cape Town, 1989) p. 504.

¹⁸⁶ In Christopher, *Crown Lands* p. 10.

¹⁸⁷ Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ In Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 5.

The Kat River settlement became successful, transforming the Kat River Valley from a wasteland to fertile farmland. None of the Khoesan settlers became rich by the standards of the Colony at the time, but many achieved a degree of comfort. It was this success which the British colonial rulers and the settler population - especially those who identified themselves as English, could not accept. This assumption was born of racism, but as Robert Ross explains, it was “a racism that, paradoxically, was fed, not by being confirmed by experience, but precisely by being denied”.¹⁸⁹ It was the Khoesan's achievements at Kat River and elsewhere along with amaXhosa resistance of the colonial advance which accentuated white racism. If a Khoesan settlement such as Kat River was allowed to succeed, then the ideological justification for colonialism – bringing 'civilisation' to a land where inhabitants were incapable of 'being civilised' - would cease to be relevant.¹⁹⁰

It is not the purpose of this thesis to explain how the Kat River settlement met its premature demise. Rather, this particular discussion is more concerned with establishing a context into which a “mixed-race” married couple and their children were forced to subsist in the first half of the nineteenth century in the eastern Cape Colony with these developments happening around them. It provides important insight as to why the Will would be drawn up the way it was, especially the inclusion of the asylum clause.

There have been a number of explanations offered for the development of racism in South Africa. These arguments can be grouped into two categories. The first has been the claim that white racial attitudes became sharper and more vehement in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in the 1830s.¹⁹¹ It is clear that the attempts to maintain control over a labour force when the legal basis for exploitation had disappeared entailed a major shift in the establishment of a racial, as opposed to legal, stratification. The second grouping of arguments has centred on the eastern Cape Colony and the confrontation between the Cape Colony and the amaXhosa.¹⁹²

These arguments were not limited to the eastern frontier or indeed to South Africa. An entrenched justification of Empire was the idea that Europeans, specifically Englishmen,

¹⁸⁹ R Ross, *The Borders of Race in Colonial South Africa: The Kat River Settlement, 1829-1856* (New York, 2014) p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ Ross, *Borders of Race* p. 4.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* p.4

¹⁹² A Lester, “The Margins of Order: Strategies of Segregation on the Eastern Cape Frontier, 1806-c. 1850”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23, 4, December 1997, 635-652, pp. 639-651.

could claim land that was not put into full use by the people living on it.¹⁹³ Land could be owned only if it was improved. But with the introduction of Ordinance 50, race could no longer have any bearing on legal status. The possession of land and any other legal right was equally open to all free British subjects. Even prior to this, the British justified their possession of the Cape Colony by conquest from the Dutch, rather than by the nature of their relationship with the Khoesan. Ideologically the main use of the idea of 'Vacant Land' was a claim that the Bantu-speakers arrived in South Africa only at about the same time as whites and were thus just as much conquerors and intruders as they were.¹⁹⁴

Those for whom such justification was needed were primarily the British immigrants who settled in the eastern Cape Colony, more commonly known as the 1820 Settlers. They were brought there by the British government in order to make the region safe, by once again creating a buffer between the Cape Colony and the amaXhosa.¹⁹⁵ They were brought in to speed up the region's economic development, but also alleviate social conflict in post-Napoleonic War England.¹⁹⁶ It was expected that they would farm in concentrated settlements. But within a short time, the majority had come to live in the towns, particularly Grahamstown, or had set up wool farms and trading businesses. They were convinced of their right to land, partly because of the opinion that the Khoekhoe could make no transformation in the landscape so as to deserve to own it.¹⁹⁷

By the mid-nineteenth century, war between the Colony and the amaXhosa had ravaged the region for more than half a century. At the same time there were those who were attempting to build up the racial order of colonial society, and those opposing those measures clashing vehemently and repeatedly. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century there had been a long debate on whether citizenship was to be racially exclusive or not. In 1828, with the promulgation of Ordinance 50 it was determined that colour could not limit civil rights. With the Cape Constitution of 1853, a broad level of access to full citizenship was ensured. Ordinance 50 may have become entrenched in the Cape Colony, but there were continuous attempts to undermine the gains made by these pieces of legislation. An example of the adverse conditions which coloured/Khoekhoe people faced in the eastern Cape Colony is the story of the Khoekhoe sawyer, Paul Keteldas.

¹⁹³ Ross, *Borders of Race* pp. 4-5.

¹⁹⁴ S Marks, "South Africa: 'The myth of the empty land'", *History Today* January 1980, pp. 7-12, p. 8.

¹⁹⁵ FC Metrowich, *Frontier Flames* (Cape Town, 1968); J Milton, *The Edges of War: A History of Frontier Wars (1702-1878)* (Cape Town, 1983).

¹⁹⁶ Ross, *Borders of Race* p. 6.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Keteldas was the first Khoekhoe to petition on the same basis as the colonists for a farm in the eastern districts.¹⁹⁸ Incidentally, the farm was situated in the same district as Klipfontein (Olifantshoek, later Alexandria District).¹⁹⁹ In April 1828 Keteldas had moved from Bethelsdorp to Uitenhage's Under Bushman's River ward where he engaged in building, planting, maintaining a small herd in addition to cutting wood. Shortly before he petitioned for land, the official, Donald Moodie, had found him well established there.²⁰⁰ Relations with Boer neighbours were however very strained. Moodie relates one such violent incident and again in 1832, certain "Bush Sawyers" complained about the "Dutch inhabitants who are extremely disagreeable and contrary", alleging they had ploughed the road into the forests, relocated survey beacons, stole livestock, and laid claim to the grazing needed by the woodcutters.²⁰¹

A colonist, Marthinus Esaias Scheepers, applied for the same 1 250 morgen farm ('Lange Vlake') for which Keteldas had petitioned.²⁰² He complained about the fact that Keteldas resided on the land. In his letter to the Civil Commissioner, Scheepers referred to Keteldas as "de baster" who had made wide use of his land to plough and sow. He even built a structure for 'habitation' of twenty feet long and twelve feet wide and three others of twenty feet long and ten feet wide that had not been completed yet.²⁰³

Keteldas was warned of his so-called 'indiscretion' by the civil commissioner, but the commissioner went on to inform the Land Board "that he is an industrious person...bearing good character..."²⁰⁴ Scheepers withdrew his deposit towards survey expenses and, in 1836, the land was granted to Keteldas at an annual rental of £1. Keteldas secured his title with eight years' rental paid in advance.²⁰⁵ Paul Keteldas is the only Khoekoe applicant for a farm in the eastern districts whose success was actually confirmed. However his success would be short lived. On 2 October 1845, Lange Vlake was transferred to Carel Godlieb Holl, presumably due to continued harassment from neighbouring white farmers.

Added to the struggles related to the procurement of land, the Khoekhoe also faced racial

¹⁹⁸ Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 8.

¹⁹⁹ Surveyor General Diagram No. 542/1818.

²⁰⁰ Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 8.

²⁰¹ In Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 8.

²⁰² In Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 7.

²⁰³ Scheepers' letter to the Civil Commissioner, 14 July 1832, CA LBD 47 in Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 9.

²⁰⁴ In Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 8.

²⁰⁵ Malherbe, "Testing the 'Burgher' Right" p. 9.

stereotyping with regards to the way they were seen by whites. British humanitarians had, since their first expeditions to the eastern frontier, been appalled at the idleness of the Khoekhoe which they saw as an inevitable result of the slave economy of the Cape. Zine Magubane attributes this to the unhealthy relationship between Dutch settlers and the Khoekhoe that “induced sloth and idleness in both black and white”.²⁰⁶ In John Barrow's *Travels to the Interior of Southern Africa*, he represents them as being “the most wretched of the human race”.²⁰⁷ He described them as living in “extreme poverty” with a scarcity in food provisions and being continually demoralised, “arising from an inhuman and unfeeling peasantry (Dutch settlers) who have hitherto exercised, in the most wanton and barbarous manner, an absolute power over these poor wretches whom they had reduced to the necessity of depending upon them for a morsel of bread.”²⁰⁸

It can be surmised that these were the circumstances in which Dirk and Sarah found themselves. Dirk may not have been a slave or Khoe, but Sarah and their children were almost certainly either one or the other. As joint owners to a farm in the Alexandria district, Dirk and Sarah were acutely aware of the disadvantaged position that former slave/Khoesan people found themselves in regarding the procurement of land in the Cape Colony. They must also have been aware of the antagonistic feelings towards former slave/Khoesan ownership of land by the surrounding white communities. They did not want to leave their children and their families unprotected from the continuous white-constructed obstacles which stood in the way of coloured people acquiring land and hence security.

Given the discussion of perpetual quitrent in the previous section, it should be apparent that while quitrent seems to have been significantly more secure than its predecessor, it was not entirely without risk. The pressures of paying the annual quitrent and providing subsistence for the families proved to be an overwhelming challenge for some freed slave/Khoekhoe owners. In an article on Bastaard land ownership and occupancy in the nineteenth century, Dawn Nell highlights how the economic status of Bastards in the Clanwilliam District, by default, negatively affected a Bastard landowner's descendant's right to the land.²⁰⁹ One such landowner, Fytjie Zwart, went to considerable lengths to

²⁰⁶ Z Magubane, “Labour Laws and Stereotypes: Images of the Khoikhoi in the Cape in the Age of Abolition” *South African Historical Journal* 35 (November, 1996), 115-134 p. 118.

²⁰⁷ J Barrow, *Travels to the Interior of Southern Africa* Vol. 2 (London, 1822), p. 110.

²⁰⁸ Barrow, *Travels* p. 93. These descriptions of the Khoekhoe are not unlike those made of the trekboer by travellers exploring the interior – see p. 37 of this thesis.

²⁰⁹ D Nell, “‘Treating People as Men’: Bastaard Land Ownership and Occupancy in the Clanwilliam District of

ensure that her descendants would have equitable access to the farm she owned, Heuningvlei, and that their ownership of the farm would be protected.²¹⁰ Similarly to the van Rensburgs, she also drew up a will stipulating that the farm would be transferred to her eight children upon her death which eventually came to pass in 1856. However, her children were unable to meet the annual quitrent payments and in 1868 the farm was ultimately transferred from the insolvent surviving children to the Trustees of the Rhenish Mission Society of Wupperthal.²¹¹ Similarly, the farm Achtersfontein was granted to David and Jan Koopman in 1832 at an annual quitrent of 15 shillings.²¹² In 1869 the Rhenish Mission Society began paying the quitrent for the farm. By 1904 the farm was under the ownership of the Rhenish Mission Society. It appears though that many of the individuals who transferred their land to the Rhenish Mission Society continued to reside thereon. It can be seen then that the system was never intended to be advantageous to anyone who was on the verge of being indigent. This must have been the reason or at least part of the reason why Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg decided to create their own trust to protect the legal rights of their children and their children's families. As explained before, the trust would own the land, but the descendants would continue to have usage rights in perpetuity. They were probably quite aware of the failures of coloured/Khoesan landowners in the Cape Colony acquiring and keeping their land. It is in the light of these considerations and dilemmas that Dirk and Sarah included the so-called 'asylum' clause.

The clause makes it clear that the usufructuaries are to provide land to any relative who was impoverished and seeking a place to settle. But further than this, the clause stipulated that the usufructuaries must also furnish an "asylum or home" for these indigent relatives.²¹³ This could be interpreted to mean that the usufructuaries should help with the building of the physical home as well. It could also have intended to include all relatives who found themselves destitute, no matter how distant the relation may be.

As the usufructuaries did not derive any profitability from the land itself, other than leasing it out to neighbouring farmers, their income was scant. They were by no means 'made men'. Klipfontein was their home and a place which provided an income. Apart from leasing out the land, there is also evidence that they gathered wood or engaged in

the Cape Colony in the Nineteenth Century" *South African Historical Journal*, 53 (2005), 123-145.

²¹⁰ Nell, "Treating People as Men" p. 131.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

²¹² In Nell, "Treating People as Men" pp. 131-132.

²¹³ Certified copy of the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg, Alexandria, 11 July 1877, obtained with permission from Louisa Windvogel.

woodcutting activities on Klipfontein and either sold it as firewood or used it in a subsistence capacity.²¹⁴ Without the necessary skills to sustain the farming activities or to increase it to compete with neighbouring farms, the usufructuaries were indigent on their own land. Added to this, they also had outstanding rates to pay with regard to the Van Rensburg Estate.²¹⁵ Thus when distant relatives came to Klipfontein claiming to be indigent and seeking asylum, it exacerbated the situation for the usufructuaries. The provision dictated that the usufructuaries were obligated to provide a place of settlement for such people, regardless of how many relatives there would eventually be. By 1980 the number of indigent relatives would reach 467.²¹⁶

Conclusion

Arguably, an influential element in the continuous oppression of coloured people was the negative stereotyping which followed them everywhere. Whether it be in towns, where established [white] townsmen could monopolise resources and keep “the coloured groups” on the fringe or in the rural areas with emphasis on tenancy, new settlements and private ownership of farms, the prospects for success for coloured people within the Cape Colony remained bleak. Obviously the situation would get even worse during the twentieth century with the commencement of the so-called “Land Acts”. The Black Land Act introduced on 19 June 1913 would make provision for “scheduled areas” which only black people could occupy. The successor to that Act was the South African Development Trust and Land Act No 18 of 1936, in which “released areas” were provided for, also exclusively for the black population. Later, the Group Areas Act, its successors and administrative territories legislation would also be promulgated, leading to the realisation of four farcical national states and six “self-governing” territories.²¹⁷ In order to achieve land control on the basis of race, extensive use would be made of forced removals and evictions. This was yet to come.

Race, law and economics in the nineteenth century could already be used interchangeably to deny land to coloureds, whether Bastaard or Khoesan. As long as they were from the underclass, they could never earn enough to acquire land or keep ownership thereof. Even with Ordinance 50 giving hope to all coloured people that the socio-economic climate could

²¹⁴ Interview with Sarah Plaatjies, 15 July, 2014.

²¹⁵ *Andrew David Wilkins, NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* 1991 ECD case no: M 586/78 (unreported); Letter RE: *Estate DJJ and SJ van Rensburg – No 65/91* (Cape Archives).

²¹⁶ B MacLennan, *Glenmore: The Story of a Forced Removal* (Johannesburg, 1987) pp. 1-2.

²¹⁷ R du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'coloured' people of South Africa – a political history* (Johannesburg, 1994) p. 82.

change significantly, the change was painfully slow and hardly effective. In law the Khoesan were granted legal equality and formally the right to buy land. The opposition to Ordinance 50 was widespread among the white settler population.²¹⁸ In May, 1834, in the wake of the Emancipation Act, this general discontent became embodied in the form of a draft ordinance to reinstate vagrancy legislation.²¹⁹ This ordinance, fortunately, never became law.

Dutch and English settlers, as well as the first three governors of the Cape, the Earl of Caledon, Sir John Cradock and Lord Charles Somerset, were vehemently opposed to Khoesan emancipation, the abolition of slavery and humanitarian reform brought about by the missionaries. They were committed to upholding the hierarchical society of the Cape Colony, and saw the missionaries as advocating a form of society that was dangerously fluid. In the aftermath of Ordinance 50 and the Emancipation Act, the settlers became even more outspoken in their characterisation of the Khoesan as being 'idle' and unable to cope with being independent. Just as the missionaries attempted to demonstrate that freedom and free labour led naturally to "moral upliftment", the white settlers would go to great lengths to prove the opposite.

Ordinance 50 and the emancipation of slaves provided the foundation for political equality which eventually became the hallmark of the "liberal tradition" of the Cape Colony. From then on, coloured people would technically be on an equal political footing with whites until their removal from the voters' roll in 1956. However, the coloured-class system was so deeply embedded in Cape colonial society that white society was neither ready nor willing to accept equal status for non-whites. Even though Ordinance 50 made all persons of colour equal before the law, coloured people continued to be subjected to discrimination on all fronts throughout the nineteenth century. While they were free to sell their labour on the open market in the Cape Colony, this freedom was circumscribed when the settlers used cheaper black labour, predominantly Fingo labour.²²⁰ Coloured people subsequently went into economic decline. The granting of land could have solved much of the problems faced by them, but apart from the failed Kat River settlement, little was done to ensure security of tenure for coloureds elsewhere in the Colony.

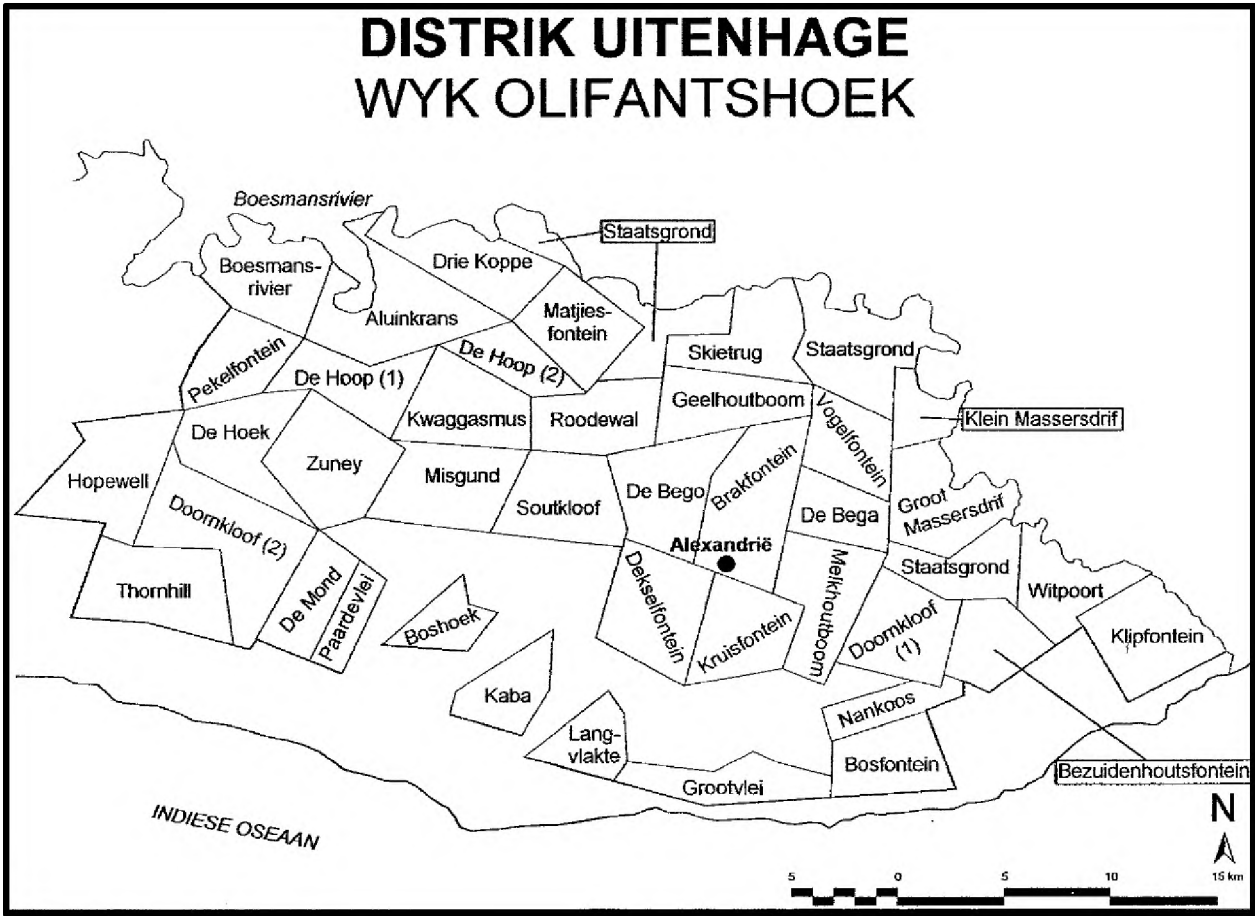
²¹⁸ Magubane, "Images", pp. 120-121.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

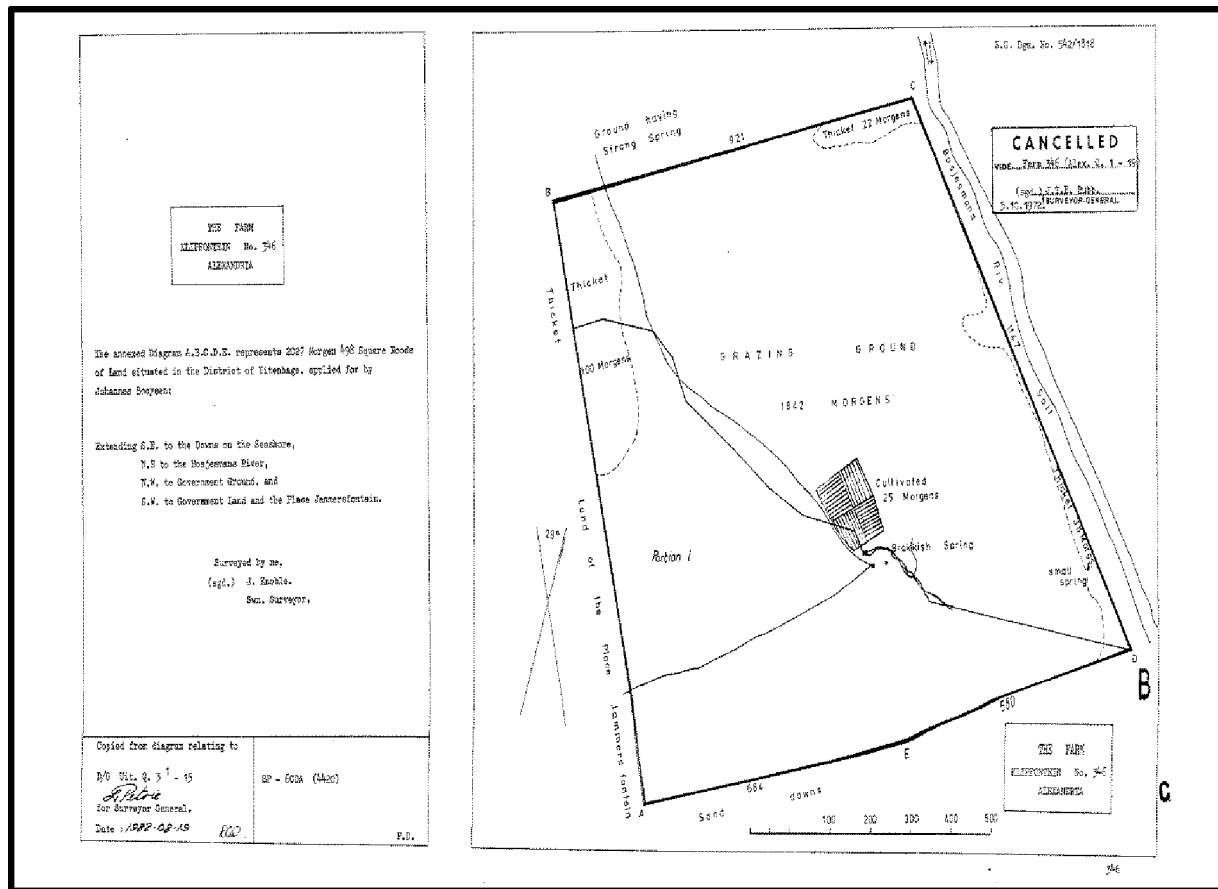
²²⁰ R Ross, *The Borders of Race in Colonial South Africa: The Kat River Settlement, 1829-1836* (New York, 2014) pp. 8-11.

It was therefore essential for the van Rensburgs to conjure up a legal mechanism which would protect the rights of their children and their relatives. The trust became that mechanism. It would own the land but at least there would be absolutely no risk to their descendants of being dispossessed of the land, no matter how indigent they were. Speculation aside, one cannot help but feel that the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg was a true act of love and compassion. A lot of careful planning and foresight went into the formulation of the various clauses, demonstrating the fact that both Dirk and Sarah recognised the importance of the existence of those provisions for the care and well-being for their family. As was discussed earlier, the Will as a legal instrument, cannot be touched by any government authority. The legal rights of the usufructuaries could not be extinguished unless the trust was to be destroyed. Under the liberal tradition of the Cape Colony in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the tendency was that more and more rights were afforded to coloured people, no matter how arduous it was to retain them. But through clever framing of the Will, Dirk and Sarah had succeeded in their goal. As long as the trust existed, their relatives and their descendants would have a piece of land on which to settle forever, though at the same time creating hardship and tension between the usufructuaries.

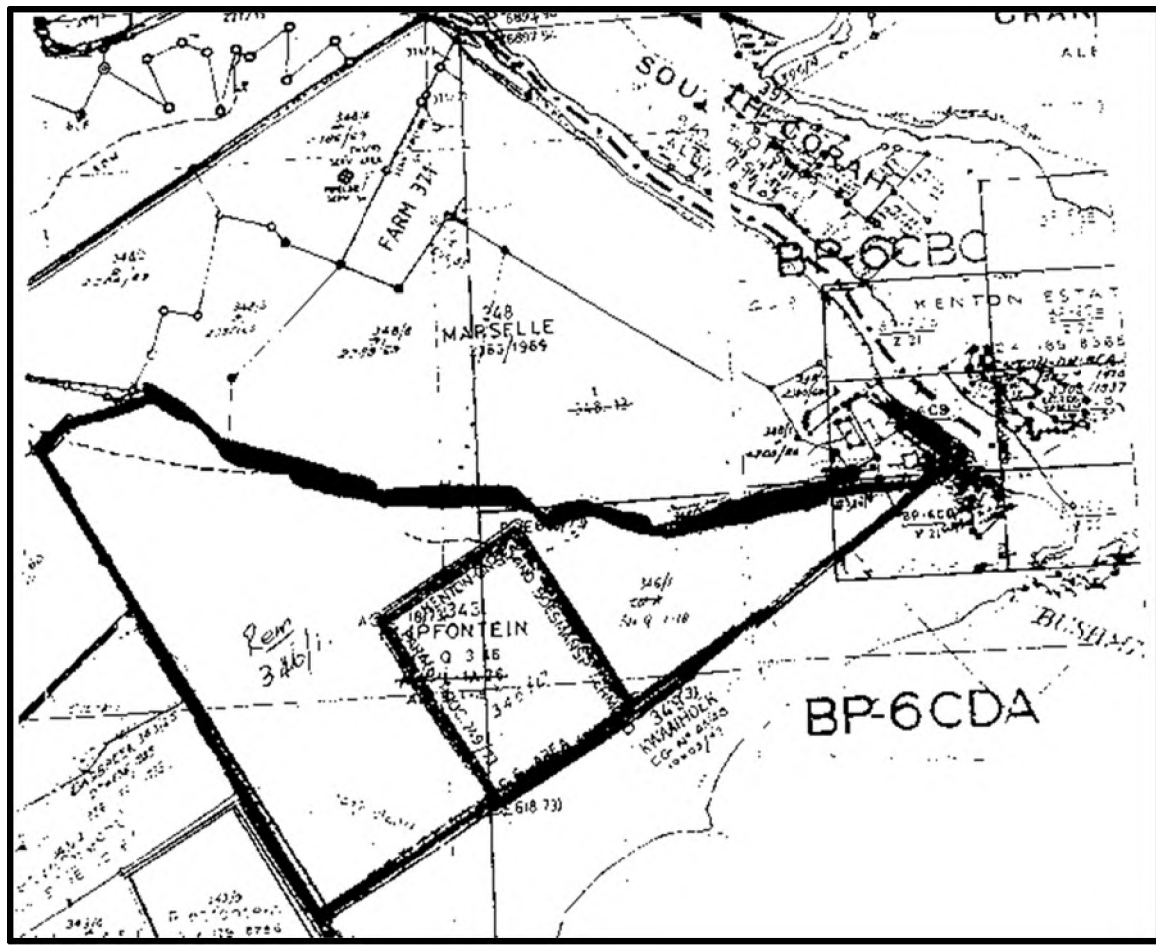
Map 3: Olifantshoek – Klipfontein and neighbouring farms c. 1850



Map 4: Original boundaries of Klipfontein, 1818



Map 5: Copy of map showing the amended boundaries of Klipfontein after transfer to Dirk Janse van Rensburg



*The bold lines show the portion of Klipfontein transferred to Dirk Janse van Rensburg.

Figure 2.1: Addendum to Cart and Transport showing amended demarcation of boundaries to the farm, Klipfontein

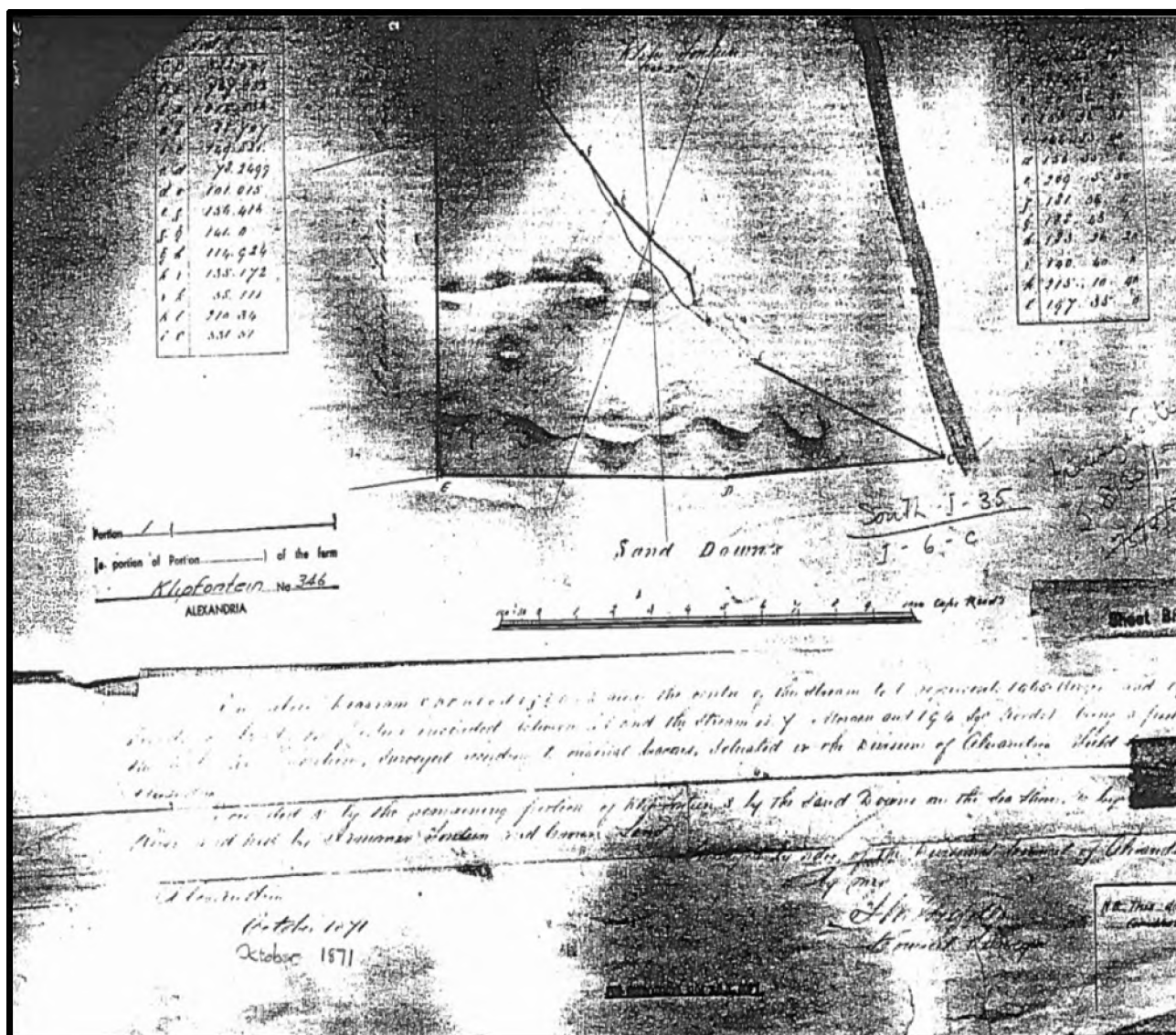


Figure 3: Certificate of Appointment of Executor

D.M.P.

M.H.G. 17--M.S.C. 17.
Artikel 31 (1) - Section 31 (1).
Artikel 32; Artikel 39 (1) - Section 32; Section 39 (1).

131/51
No. 561/49

**SERTIFIKAAT VAN AANSTELLING VAN EKSEKUTEUR.
CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTOR.**

No. 65/91: 39/598.

EK SERTIFISEER HIERDEUR dat
I HEREBY CERTIFY that Benjamin Booth Attwell, in his capacity
as Secretary of the Eastern Province Guardian Loan and Investment
Company of Grahamstown
behoort te
has been
have
aangesteld is tot Eksekut. of Testamentary
duly appointed the Executor of Testamentary
Administrasie as sodanig ontvang het, gedateer die 26th
of Administration as such, bearing date the 26th
van July 1880
of July 1880
192
magtigende om
authorizing him
die Boedel te beheer van wyle
to administer the Estate of the late Sarah Janse van Rensburg, (born Carelse)
who died at Klipfontein, Alexandria, on the 31st May 1877.

Meester van die Hooggereghshof
Master of the Supreme Court.

Kantoor van die Meester van die Hooggereghshof van Suidafrika
Office of the Master of the Supreme Court of South Africa

(Cape of Good Hope Provinciale Afdeling)
Provinciale Afdeling
CAPE TOWN

Cape Town, hier 24 JAN 1933 dag van 24 January, 1933.
this day of

Figure 4: Death Notice of Sarah Janse van Rensburg

Filed 16 July 1897

DEATH NOTICE.

Pursuant to the Provisions contained in Section 9, Ordinance 104.

(43)
4257

- 1.—Name of the Deceased. *Sarah Janse van Rensburg*
- 2.—Birth-place of the Deceased. *near Capetown*
- 3.—Names of the Parents of the Deceased. *Robert Carlse*
Anna Carlse
- 4.—Age of the Deceased. *about 70 years*
- 5.—Condition in life. —
- 6.—Married or unmarried, Widower or Widow. *married*
- 7.—The day of the Decease. *31st May 1877*
- 8.—At what House, or where the Person died: *At her residence Klipfontein*
- 9.—Names of the Children of Deceased, and whether Minors or Majors.

<i>all Majors</i>	{	<i>Carel Rensburg</i> <i>Klaas — do —</i> <i>Anna — do —</i> <i>Jannetje Jacobs</i> <i>Kaatje Fiechat</i>
-------------------	---	---
- 10.—Whether Deceased has left any Property, and of what kind.

Farm Klipfontein
Stock, farming implements &c

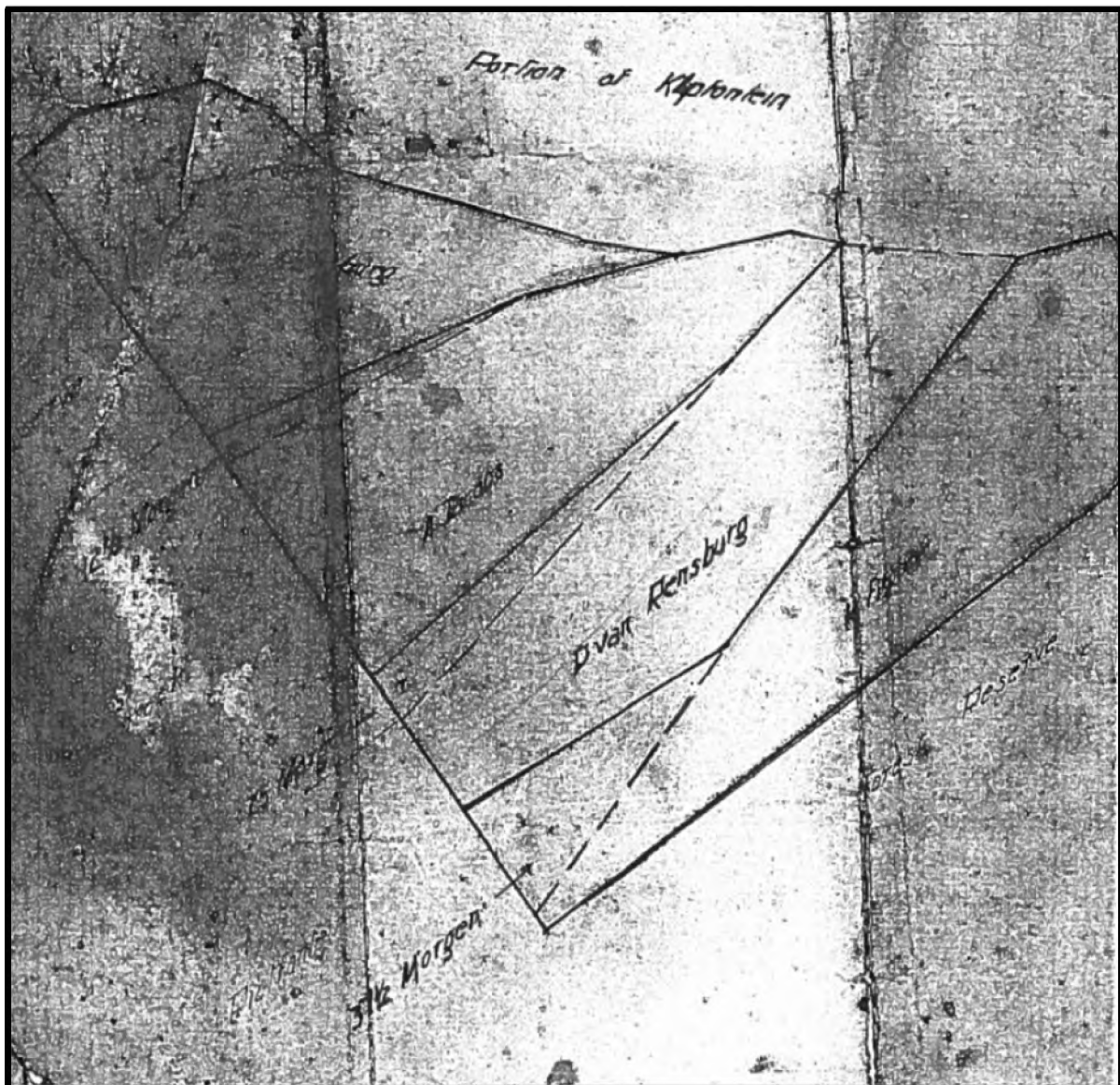
If the Deceased is not a married Person, or not married in community of Goods, or has left no Will,—this Notice must be made within *Six Days* after the Death.
If otherwise, it must be made within *Six Weeks*.

•• It must be filled up and signed by the nearest Relative or Connection of the Deceased who shall at the time be at or near the place of death,—or in the absence of such near Relative or Connection, by the person who shall have the chief charge of the House in or the Place on which the death shall occur; and must be sent either to the Master in Cape Town or to the Resident Magistrate of the District, if *within Six Hours' distance*; if at a greater distance, it must be forwarded to the Field-cornet of the District.

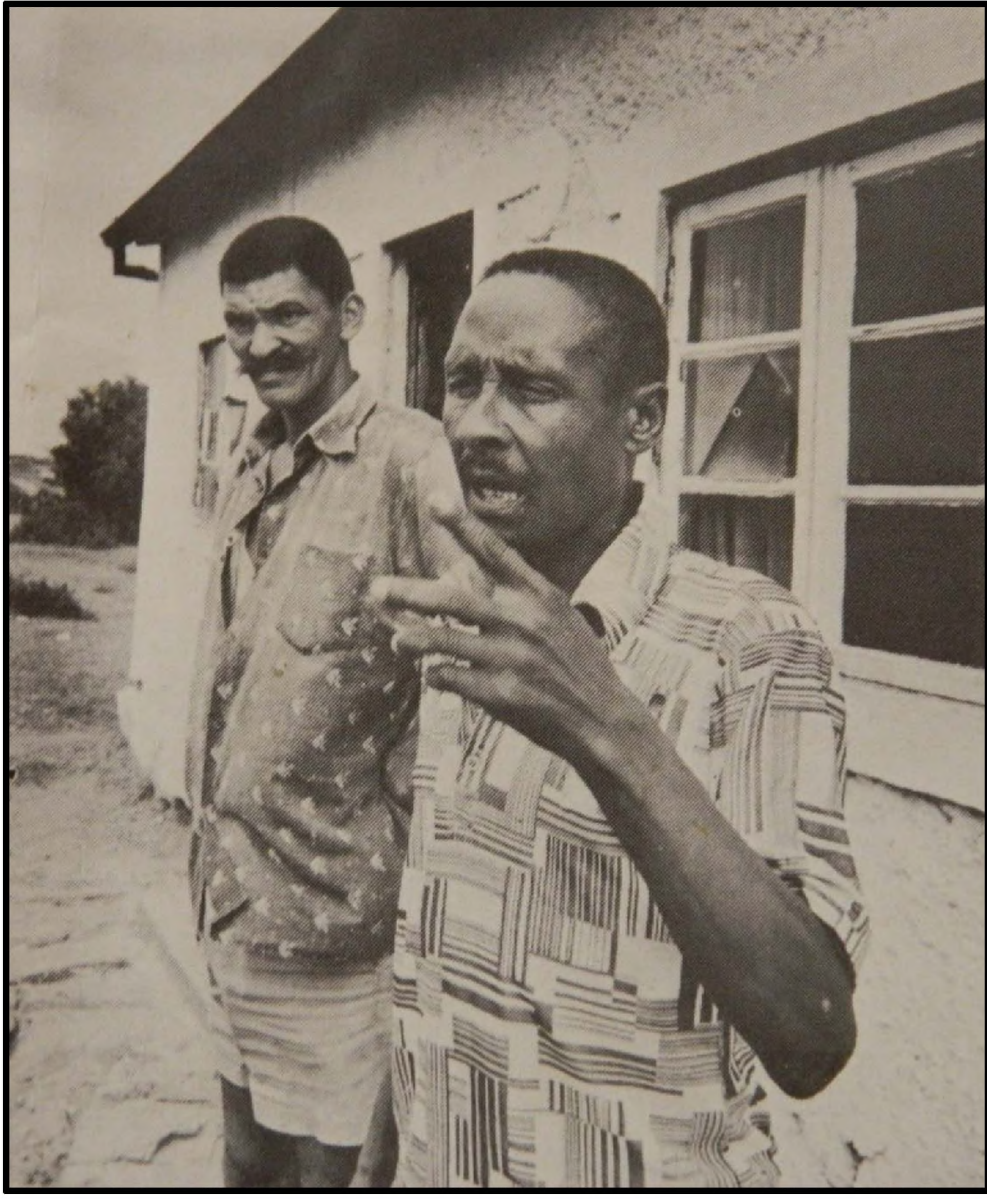
Witness
W. J. J. J. J.

his
Birk Janse van Rensburg
mark

Map 6: Sub-division of Klipfontein - 1939



Nicolas Magenis van Rensburg (right) c. 1980



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Nicholas Thomas ('Klasie') Fischat c. 1980



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

CHAPTER 3: “Hierdie is onse Kanaan”: Church and identity formation in Klipfontein

During much of the twentieth century South Africa was swept up in social revolution.²²¹ The century began with war between the two Boer republics and the forces of British imperialism. Johann Kinghorn suggests that since the discoveries of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886, Transvaal and all of South Africa for that matter was transformed from being a remote outback to becoming a crucial player in the international politics of Europe.²²² Mostly illiterate white and black farmers who were rural in their lifestyle and feudal in mentality, were “compelled to deal with industrialisation, urbanisation, pluralisation of society, the intrusion of international politics into the region, and the clash of competing ideologies”.²²³ From this followed over forty years of social engineering on a massive scale instituted by white Afrikaner Nationalists.

Political, ideological, or economic perspectives cannot alone explain and unpack the core of white Afrikaner nationalism. Only by taking religion into account as well, can one attempt to understand those value judgements which led to Afrikaners mobilising themselves so as to capture the state. Kinghorn describes such a process as “Afrikanerdom's slow and agonizing adaptation to modernity”.²²⁴ Afrikaner churches joined other institutions at the centre of the Afrikaner dynamic, legitimating white Afrikaner nationalist ideals. The strong connection between Church and the nationalist government meant that the Dutch Reformed Church²²⁵ was the spiritual link to the National Party for most Afrikaners, justifying the racially-based policies and actions of the government.²²⁶

Paradoxically, it was this same Church and its teachings which became a bastion for white Afrikaner nationalism that would also be adopted by coloured or ‘brown’ Afrikaners to help establish their own group identity. It developed into a mechanism which helped Klipfonteiners in establishing an identity which they could assert against the (white) authorities and neighbours when their right to occupation of Klipfontein was threatened. Thus, a spiritual connection with the land was formed and developed through biblical teachings and ritual. In order to understand this identity it is essential to understand the

²²¹ J Kinghorn, “Modernization and Apartheid: The Afrikaner Churches” in R Elphick and R Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History* (Cape Town, 1997) p. 135.

²²² Kinghorn, “The Afrikaner Churches” in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 135.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

²²⁵ Or the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-137 and pp. 141-145.

Dutch Reformed Church and its complex relationship with the nationalist government as well as its relationship with coloured people, specifically Klipfonteiners.²²⁷

The churches involved here are: the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK), the Hervormde Kerk (NHK), the Reformed Church (GK), the Dutch Reformed Missionary Church (NGSK) and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (NGKA).²²⁸ The last two were founded by the NGK for coloureds and black Africans, respectively. By far the most powerful church in the cultural and political history of South Africa has been the all-white Afrikaner NGK.²²⁹ Despite cultural differences among these different churches, they share two important features. Firstly, they distinguish themselves from other churches by their historical roots in continental European traditions of Protestant theology, particularly Dutch and German Calvinism.²³⁰ Secondly, their histories are bound up with the history of the white Afrikaners who were the dominant political force for almost three-quarters of the 20th Century in South Africa.²³¹

During the first half of the nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for worship in the NGK to be 'mixed'.²³² As was discussed in the previous chapter, travellers would find the boers' *kleurlingvolk* often participating in the routines of family worship although conversions were rare.²³³ Thus the NGK synod's decision in 1857 to legitimise the custom of separate churches for the races had a more decisive impact than it would have had in other denominations.²³⁴ It had arisen out of widespread discomfort within white congregations at the presence of black and coloured worshippers. The decision was not based on language differences or on inconveniences caused by residential segregation.²³⁵ Davenport submits

²²⁷ The role of the other two churches, namely the Old and the New Apostolic churches are not negated here. But the Dutch Reformed Church is the oldest and most influential institution on Klipfontein and therefore requires further discussion.

²²⁸ The NGKA and the NGSK united in 1994 to form the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa (VGK). It sees itself as the kernel of a united Reformed church in southern Africa into which all Reformed churches are invited.

²²⁹ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds) *Christianity in South Africa* p. 136.

²³⁰ JN Gerstner, "A Christian Monopoly: The Reformed Church and Colonial Society under Dutch Rule" in Elphick and Davenport (eds) *Christianity in South Africa* pp. 16-24.

²³¹ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 136.

²³² R Davenport, "Settlement, Conquest, and Theological Controversy: The Churches of Nineteenth-century European Immigrants" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 66 and N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York, 1992) pp. 168.

²³³ Mostert, *Frontiers* p. 170; JN Gerstner, "A Christian Monopoly: The Reform Church and Colonial Society under Dutch Rule" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 26 and Davenport, "Churches of European Immigrants" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 66.

²³⁴ Davenport, "Churches of European Immigrants" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 66.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

that in the “Dutch Reformed tradition of 'internal holiness', infant baptism was considered to bestow 'covenantal holiness' only on children of believers. Therefore Christian and non-Christian communities were regarded as 'two static groups between which no movement was likely, if even possible.’”²³⁶ An additional rationale, which the NGK shared with English-language churches, argued that coloured and African people would feel more at home in their own churches than as subordinates in white churches.²³⁷ The decision of 1857 was followed by another in 1881 to set up the separate Nederduitse Gerefomeerde Sendingkerk (NGSK), thereby giving institutional shape to the previously informal relationship of separate church structures, with the 'mother' NGK in a controlling position over the NGSK – a role it was to maintain for more than a century.²³⁸

The “Promised Land” rhetoric

Klipfontein has three main church congregations representing different denominations. The reason why I focus on the NGK and NGSK is because of its influence over the majority of Klipfontein's population. According to a status quo report by URCON (Pty) Ltd in 1994,²³⁹ the largest denomination on Klipfontein (52%) comprised those adhering to the doctrines of the NGK.²⁴⁰ The second largest were those adhering to the Old Apostolic Church (26%) and the New Apostolic Church comprising 15%. Only 7% indicated that they did not adhere to any religion at all.²⁴¹

It is uncertain in which year (formal) church services began on Klipfontein.²⁴² There had been church services held on the nearby farm of Brakfontein (later to become the town of Alexandria) since about 1830 to serve the white farmers of Olifantshoek District (later Alexandria District).²⁴³ The elderly Klipfonteiners are not certain when church services started on Klipfontein, but all of them can remember going to church whilst growing up in the 1940s.²⁴⁴

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 66 and A Appel, *Bethelsdorp, 1828-1945: van Sendingstasie tot Stadsperiferie* (Port Elizabeth, 1994) pp. 2-5.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66 and Kinghorn, “The Afrikaner Churches” in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 136.

²³⁹ A Status Quo Report on the Remainder of Portion 1 of the Farm Klipfontein Number 346 Alexandria, November 1994, prepared for Algoa Regional Services Council. Unfortunately this is the only known survey conducted on Klipfontein with regards to religious denominations. Since then, there has only been unofficial estimates done by residents themselves as well as this researcher.

²⁴⁰ Status Quo Report, p 4.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p 4.

²⁴² Some Klipfonteiners maintain that the NGK built a church building on the farm during Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg's lifetimes (c.1872). But this is pure speculation as no actual evidence for this exists.

²⁴³ Author unknown, *Ned. Geref. Kerkgebou Alexandria 1896-1996* (Port Elizabeth, 1996) p. 3.

²⁴⁴ Interviews with Sara Plaatjies, Louisa Windvogel and Emma Pullen

The church played and continues to play a significant role in the lives of the Klipfontein community. It has strong sanctioning powers and its influential position is further cemented by the fact that the only school on Klipfontein was built, owned and controlled by the NGK.²⁴⁵ By about the early 1950s, the school was in operation, doubling up as a place where NGSK services could be held.²⁴⁶ It was here where white Dutch Reformed ministers (*dominees*) from Alexandria would periodically travel to Klipfontein as part of the NGSK mandate and would facilitate Sunday services (*buitedienste*), baptisms, funerals and *nagmaal* (communion).²⁴⁷ According to various accounts, the services were almost always well attended by the congregation.²⁴⁸ It was at church where community members were able to formally congregate and interact with one another. It was also here where they periodically engaged with so-called white Afrikaner intellectuals (*dominees*). The church provided a platform whereby young congregation members were exposed to Christian ideas and values such as brotherly love, fraternity and ordainment.²⁴⁹ It also became a central meeting place for Klipfonteiners when matters relating to the community arose. Usufructuaries, the trustees or church elders would arrange community meetings to be held in the school.²⁵⁰ For example, when disputes arose regarding the renting out of land to neighbouring white farmers, the trustee arranged through the usufructuaries that all Klipfonteiners attend the meeting so that they could be aware of what was happening around them.²⁵¹ Thus, the church school would become a politicised space where Klipfonteiners voiced their grievances and concerns.

Church also acted as a conduit for many Klipfonteiners on their “road to redemption” following long spells of alcohol abuse. It is no secret that most crimes committed on Klipfontein are alcohol-related.²⁵² From disturbing the peace to violence within the family, even house break-ins, alcohol was inevitably a catalyst.²⁵³ The church then took on the mantle of ‘rehabilitator’.²⁵⁴ With this sort of capacity it had significant authority over its congregation. The *dominee* was deemed to be the channel between members that went astray and God, the “Supreme Being”. In this way, the church wielded power over the

²⁴⁵ Interviews with Magenis Janse van Rensburg and Ds. Mike Smuts.

²⁴⁶ Interviews with Sara Plaatjies and Ds Mike Smuts.

²⁴⁷ Interview with Sara Plaatjies.

²⁴⁸ Interviews with Joyce Peters, Sarah Plaatjies, Leon Rijgrok, Magenis Janse van Rensburg, George Kleynhans and Ds. Mike Smuts.

²⁴⁹ Interview with George Kleynhans.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² Interview with Leon Rijgrok

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Klipfonteiners, shaping and forming values and ideas which were previously neglected.

An example of this power is found in the experiences of many of the usufructuaries. For them, the influx of people onto the farm was a large burden for them to bear. Apart from providing for those indigent relatives who settled on Klipfontein, they also looked to renting land to white farmers, placing extra strain on the land.²⁵⁵ The rent paid by the neighbouring farmers to each usufructuary was enough to sustain that household but hardly adequate to support an entire community. Alcohol soon became an escape for many of the usufructuaries from the pressures of providing land for these people.²⁵⁶ In many instances, they turned to the church for their 'salvation'. For example, one usufructuary and his wife were taken to the Kenton police station by its station commander after many episodes of alcohol-related domestic violence.²⁵⁷ After being threatened with arrest, this said usufructuary became involved in church activities, later becoming a church elder and playing a prominent leadership role in Klipfontein.²⁵⁸

Reading the Will in conjunction with scriptures caused Klipfonteiners to interpret its provisions as a form of divine protection against the loss of their land. They would have been aware of the various removals taking place elsewhere in the country; many people forced off from land during those removals came to settle on Klipfontein. For them, the land came to be regarded as a symbol of God's providence, embodying the power of God's law over the law of humankind, namely the racially-based laws of apartheid.²⁵⁹

The NGK, which was the "spiritual home" of white Afrikaners, also, paradoxically, provided Klipfonteiners with a rationale for laying a claim to a physical home. It would provide the religious justification for apartheid, constructing a moral value system based on racial segregation and separate development. The NGK became an established religious authority through its firm ties with the National Party government. And yet the NGK came to wield such significant influence through the NP's capture of political power which, in turn, affected the situation of the Klipfontein community.

²⁵⁵ See p. 55. In the early 1970s, the land would shrink even more with the rapid influx of black Africans onto the farm.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Leon Rijgrok and Joyce Peters. Some usufructuaries even asked some black African families to pay them in liquor as a form of rent.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg, Willie Peters and Joyce Peters.

From 1935 to 1941 a three volume series edited by FJM Potgieter (professor at the seminary at Stellenbosch), HG Stoker (philosopher at Potchefstroom) and JD Vorster (NGK pastor in Cape Town) titled "*Koers in die Krisis*", was published.²⁶⁰ These volumes reflected Calvinist solutions to the human condition and a conviction that this 'crisis' was total and threatening the foundations of the Afrikaners' value system.²⁶¹ It also reflected a resolve to deal with the threat by taking total control of the South African state and reinforcing racial stratification that privileged white people, especially the integrity of the Afrikaner *volk*. The threat had three distinct but related facets: the pluralisation of society (politics), poverty (economics), and a breakdown in what were deemed Afrikaner values (social theory).²⁶²

A 1932 report funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York documented the depth of social transformation under way in South Africa.²⁶³ After the Anglo-Boer War the white Afrikaner community had become increasingly impoverished, particularly after the Great Depression of 1929, followed by severe drought. Most white Afrikaners were compelled to migrate to the cities in search of work, abandoning the rural way of life. Within a few decades the social profile of the Afrikaner community changed, as Afrikaners, many of them *bywoners*, lost their foothold in the countryside, along with their self-image of independence.²⁶⁴ They also suffered a drastic decline in class status, as landowners became labourers. Job opportunities in the cities became scarce, especially because rural Afrikaners were only capable of manual labour.²⁶⁵ The Carnegie Commission classified 300 000 South Africans as "poor whites" who were living below subsistence level.²⁶⁶ The majority of these were Afrikaners. The NGK responded with practical steps to support and develop the Afrikaner community but more importantly, it became involved in public policy. It was comprehensive in its views that white poverty stemmed from mental and material causes that had to be identified and remedied.²⁶⁷ The NGK quickly identified the root causes. They were: the city, the British *geldmag* (money power) and the *swart gevaar* (black peril).²⁶⁸

²⁶⁰ In Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 143.

²⁶¹ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 143.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²⁶³ J Kinghorn, "The Theology of Separate Equality: A Critical Outline of the DRC's Proposition on Apartheid" in M Prozesky, (editor) *Christianity in South Africa* (Bergville, 1990), p. 61.

²⁶⁴ Kinghorn, "Theology of Separate Equality" in Prozesky *Christianity in South Africa* p.61.

²⁶⁵ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 145.

²⁶⁶ In Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 146.

²⁶⁷ Kinghorn, "Theology of Separate Equality" in Prozesky *Christianity in South Africa* p.62.

²⁶⁸ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 146.

But the role of Afrikaner churches went deeper than just political activism. They nurtured the underlying values, the very 'soul' of what Afrikanerdom was supposed to be. Two core values – the family and hierarchical authority - were stressed.²⁶⁹ These values, in the white Afrikaner case, were constructed through religious traditions enshrined as doctrine. Therefore, any situation in which the church was perceived to be under threat was to be interpreted as a threat to the church as well. This connection between religion and social values later made it possible to elevate secular apartheid policies to the status of faith, promoting conformity and regulating dissension among white Afrikaners.²⁷⁰

The keystone of the Afrikaner value system was the religious presuppositions of a cosmological hierarchy headed by God, the ultimate source of all being.²⁷¹ Modernity and natural science fundamentally challenged these presuppositions. Human rights and democracy also later become the benchmark for social manifestations of this challenge.²⁷² A model of a society based on the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity – and driven by the profit motive – is in most respects contrary to a society modelled on the premise of hierarchical authority because it calls for a profound redefinition of values, authority and status. Thus the NGK clerics and NP politicians shared a common concern to preserve the authoritarian and God-given values against the supposed 'evils' of modernisation and urbanisation.

Except for vague feelings and intentions, neither the NGK clergy nor Afrikaner politicians had any clear 'solutions'. A conceptual framework with definite policies was needed. These eventually emerged from the fusion of the core Afrikaner values with three different ideologies: nationalism, the neo-Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper, and racism.²⁷³ Nationalism redefined the concept of family to denote a "shared language" community among "genetically related" people.²⁷⁴ 'Nation' was taken as the outer manifestation of such a relationship. The fusion of nationalism with the family was a powerful means of policy formulation.²⁷⁵ The traditional assumption that the primary unit of human existence was the family could now be applied to the question of human social order.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

²⁷⁴ Kinghorn, "Theology of Separate Equality" in Prozesky *Christianity in South Africa* p.62.

²⁷⁵ Kinghorn, "The Afrikaner Churches" in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 147.

Neo-Calvinism provided the rationalisation for the nationalist paradigm with which the impending collapse of the moral and social order could be understood as a consequence of modernity's rejection of a religious hierarchy of authority.²⁷⁶ In this Kuyperian tradition, the fundamental error of European history was consistent erosion of the sovereignty of God in favour of the autonomy of the individual.²⁷⁷ The neo-Calvinist movement in South Africa built on this conclusion, arguing that to maintain the hierarchical structure of authority and order in society was a God-ordained duty.

When resistance to exclusive white power escalated among blacks after the National Party's electoral victory of 1948, and the South African Communist Party struck at the ideological roots of apartheid, communism became public enemy number one for Christian nationalists. It was apparent to them that apartheid was the only social order consistent with the hierarchical structure of authority. Anything else could only be evil.²⁷⁸

By the early 1950s all of this had already been fused into a complex theory on society and social order. A 1951 report to the synod of the NGK of Transvaal embodied this theory when it stated: "The humanist claim to equality is unscriptural because it does not take into account the fact that God has decreed structures of authority within every society. As the child cannot be equated with the parent, the labourer cannot be equated with the employer nor the subject with the authorities..."²⁷⁹ Subjection of any non-whites through scriptural discourses attempted to vindicate Nationalist policies to those sceptics within the NGK. Its rationale continues:

According to the Word of God the idea that Christianity ought to diminish differences in race, nation and status is most certainly wrong... There is a just, God-pleasing hierarchy of power in the family and the state and between nations, as well as God-ordained obedience to authority. According to God's Word, therefore, social justice does not mean the equal treatment of all people but rather that everyone receives what God had ordained for him according to his own status level."²⁸⁰

How this would be implemented depended on two possibilities which existed at the time

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-147.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-147.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

which were consistent with the core Afrikaner values. The two possibilities would either be the nationalist or a racist approach. In the end a racially defined nationalism – “separate development” or apartheid was implicitly affirmed.²⁸¹ Both nationalism and racism are models of societal hierarchies, the latter defining hierarchy according to assumed biological differences between groups of people. These differences are deemed to be fixed and sanctioned. Nationalism stressed the same differences which racism projects but did not see them as immutable but as the outcome of varied stages of the development of nations.²⁸² Therefore, for the nationalist, all nations/races are potentially equal, and could reach the same level in time. Paternalism, or 'guardianship' by those “more developed” people who had the task or 'calling' to educate the “lesser developed” became the embodiment of the ethical norm of justice.²⁸³ By contrast, racism assigns no responsibility to 'higher' nations/races regarding the needs of 'lower' ones. Justice is not an issue for racism. The difference between nations/races was not a moral issue but simply a “generic fact”.²⁸⁴

Until 1948 the nationalists and racists seemed to pursue the same goals. According to both, the initial step had to be the physical and geographical separation of races. But with practical policy formulation, the differences became evident. Slowly the nationalist group grew in strength and began to assert its position more emphatically, finding the NGK as a support base. The decisive moment came in 1950 when a people's congress on the “native question” was held in Bloemfontein.²⁸⁵ The agenda was a blueprint for the entire restructuring of South African society. It was here that the concept of 'race' was replaced by “separate development”.²⁸⁶ South Africa was described as a “cosmos of nations”, each with a unique character and culture but at different stages of development.²⁸⁷ The only Christian way to safeguard every culture and avoid friction was to separate the 'nations', thus providing room for the “organic development of each according to its special needs”.²⁸⁸ The concept of a South African community of autonomous states was born at this congress. Soon afterwards, the term 'apartheid' ceased to be used, being regarded as negative and racist. HF Verwoerd, who in 1958 became prime minister, began implementing those resolutions of the Bloemfontein congress which appeared to him to be

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 148

²⁸⁵ In Kinghorn, “Theology of Separate Equality” in Prozesky *Christianity in South Africa* pp. 64-69.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

²⁸⁷ Kinghorn, “The Afrikaner Churches” in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 148.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

practical politics.²⁸⁹ As for the church, the NGK, HK and GK carried forward the ideal of separate development until the late 1980s, as it was to them the embodiment of true biblical justice under South African conditions.²⁹⁰

Meanwhile, the proportion of black membership of the Afrikaner churches was increasing as missions sanctioned by the NGK were beginning to bear fruit. In 1951 the NGK Bantu Church of SA was established in East London – ironically presided over by an all-white moderature.²⁹¹ It was a mirror image of the (white) NGK. When a distinctive character did emerge it was entirely for political reasons.²⁹²

Compared to the NGKA, the NGSK had a distinctive character. It was closely linked to the coloured community and represented most of the values of that community, namely strict puritan rules for the lives of individuals – made even stricter by the constant transgressions of these rules and the severe censure by the church – in conjunction with a semi-charismatic but not entirely pentecostal pietism.²⁹³ The NGSK became an anchor of the coloured community in the Cape Province in the decades of apartheid, providing social cohesion to the community, or at least attempting to do so. Things began to change gradually in the mid-1970s as a result of the complex relationships between Reformed blacks and whites and their growing tensions.²⁹⁴

The first challenge to the NGK authority came from the NGSK, led principally by Allan Boesak. Boesak realised early on that international interest in South Africa could be an important leverage in the national debate.²⁹⁵ In 1982 the synod of the NGSK adopted a confession preceded by these words: “Because the secular gospel of apartheid fundamentally threatens the reconciliation in Christ as well as the unity of the church of Jesus Christ a *status confessionis*²⁹⁶ exists.”²⁹⁷ Four years later the synod ratified the

²⁸⁹ Kinghorn, “Theology of Separate Equality” in Prozesky *Christianity in South Africa* p. 65.

²⁹⁰ Kinghorn, “The Afrikaner Churches” in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 148.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 156. In other words, the NGSK did not necessarily practise the use of “spiritual gifts” such as speaking in tongues and divine healing, as is prevalent in Pentecostalism. But it adhered to the inerrancy of scripture and the necessity of accepting Christ as personal Lord and Saviour, as is custom in Pentecostalism. The NGSK also believed in the baptism with the Holy Spirit that enables a Christian to live a life empowered by the Holy Spirit.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁹⁶ A state or condition of the church, society and the world in which the church needs to stand accountable and profess the faith.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

confession known as the Belhar Confession.²⁹⁸

The Belhar Confession dealt with three themes. First, the unity of the Christian church was affirmed. Secondly, the essence of the Christian message was interpreted as reconciliation (as opposed to sovereignty), with any form of enforced separation of people rejected. Thirdly, the principles of justice and peace were declared to be rooted in a God who reveals himself in a “world full of injustice, [as] in a special way the God of the suffering, the poor and the aggrieved...”²⁹⁹ Belhar rejected any ideology which legitimises “any form of injustice and any teaching which refuses to resist an ideology in the light of the Gospel.”³⁰⁰ By the time of the Belhar Confession, South Africa was under a state of emergency and State President PW Botha was combating the so-called “total onslaught” on South Africa. So Nationalist ideologues interpreted the third part of Belhar as liberation theology, which they considered a “religious veneer” of communist indoctrination.³⁰¹ Nonetheless, Belhar was taken seriously in white church circles as it struck a sensitive nerve in the official apartheid theology. The theme of justice had been integral to the theological legitimisation of apartheid. Belhar had now taken up the same theme, drawing conclusions which were opposed to apartheid.³⁰² In the 1950s “grand apartheid” was still not much more than an experiment but by the mid-1980s it had become a reality and, to many, particularly black and coloured people, a grim reality.³⁰³ Belhar reinforced the already considerable doubt in many white Afrikaner minds about the theological legitimacy of apartheid.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Belhar Confession influenced the church milieu of Klipfontein before the late 1980s. It is fairly probable that Klipfonteiners would have been aware of Confessions, but they did not immediately attune themselves to the politics occurring outside their realm of experience. Rather, they continued to use the NGK rhetoric to legitimise their authority over the land. Notions such as “ordained by God” and “obedience to the law of God” were manipulated and reformed by the usufructuaries to construct an identity based on divine allotment of land by God, which superseded all other “laws of man”. For example, during the evictions of African settlers in 1979 (to be detailed in chapters five and six of this thesis), Nicholas “Klaasie” Fischat, one of two

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

usufructuaries opposing the African occupation would hold regular prayer meetings in his home, where he would reaffirm the idea that the Lord had given them this land and no one but them (the coloured Klipfonteiners) had the right to live on it or had the right to take it away from them.³⁰⁴ Very often, he would draw upon selective texts out of the Bible to support his claims:

Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, the Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.³⁰⁵

Fischat's daughter relates how they would allegedly be threatened by some of the Africans for his role in condoning the removals, but throughout the process they prayed and held the belief that the Lord would protect them, because the "land was bestowed unto them by Him".³⁰⁶ Thus, this exercise of faith by Klipfonteiners not only became a way of everyday life, but also a tool to entrenching a right of sovereignty and security.

Christopher Bader and Ashley Palmer write that sociologists of religion recognise religiosity as a multi-dimensional construct that can be expressed in a variety of ways.³⁰⁷ These different 'dimensions' focus on the cognitive, behavioural and associative by assessing religiosity according to belief, behaviour and belonging.³⁰⁸ Considered collectively, these three dimensions can have a "substantive impact" on various social outcomes. For example, affiliation and behaviour can contribute collectively to influence attitudes Klipfonteiners might have towards the neighbouring black African communities. The strict adherence of traditional apartheid NGK rhetoric flowing from Calvinist doctrine played a big role in determining whether or not acceptance of people based on their racial make-up should be tolerated as neighbours.

But these feelings of racial intolerance are not necessarily shared by Klipfonteiners who grew up in a NGK milieu but did not frequently attend service. For example, two usufructuaries allowed the black African families to stay on the land apparently out of

³⁰⁴ Interviews with Leon Rijgrok, Sarah Plaatjies and Joyce Peters.

³⁰⁵ *The Holy Bible, Joshua 1: 13.*

³⁰⁶ Interview with Joyce Peters.

³⁰⁷ CD Bader and A Palmer, "Scared into Church? Conceptions of God, Exclusivity, and Religious Practice in the United States" in G Giordan and WH Swatos Jr (eds), *Religion, Spirituality and Everyday Practice* (New York, 2011), p. 109.

³⁰⁸ Bader and Palmer, "Scared into Church" in Giordan and Swatos, *Religion* pp. 110-111.

compassion for those who were homeless and poor. By all accounts these two men were not as frequent churchgoers as the other two usufructuaries.³⁰⁹ Therefore, as Bader and Palmer submit, it is not simply affiliation with the religious tradition or denomination that is important, but the combined effect of belonging to the faith and the frequency of exposure to its doctrines, thereby influencing the essential component in shaping a way of life according to religious teachings.³¹⁰

In other instances these three aspects of religiosity bear independent and sometimes even opposing effects on social outcomes. For example, perhaps the most commonly used indicators of religiosity, namely denomination, biblical literalism and church attendance produce countervailing effects with respect to attitudes towards tolerance between usufructuaries and other Klipfonteiners and tolerance or intolerance from the Klipfontein community as a whole towards black African squatters. Certain usufructuaries believed that the right thing to do in the eyes of the Lord were not just to welcome *inkomer* indigents onto Klipfontein, but also black African indigents, regardless of whether racially-based laws and provisions in the Will stipulated otherwise. Contrarily, other usufructuaries as well as those who stayed on the farm under the 'asylum' provision believed the land to be the Canaan of a select few coloured family members and therefore only they should have an exclusive right to it. On many occasions, the *inkomers* would evoke similarities between their own plight and those of the Jews of Egypt, as per the Exodus story:

And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land and unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey...³¹¹

This sort of rhetoric did not ignore the Will and its significance. To the contrary, the usufructuaries and the rest of the Klipfonteiners utilised the Will and the title deed as instruments of their divine right to the land. These documents supplemented the belief that the right to the land was theirs and no earthly authority could deprive them of that. The former South African Police station commander of Kenton-on-Sea admits that even if he

³⁰⁹ Interviews with Magen van Rensburg and Joyce Peters.

³¹⁰ Bader and Palmer, "Scared into Church" in Giordan and Swatos, *Religion* p. 109.

³¹¹ *The Holy Bible*, Exodus 3: 7-8 and interviews with Sarah Plaatjies, Louisa Windvogel and Joyce Peters.

had been given orders to remove the usufructuaries and their relatives from the land, the eviction would be viewed by the courts as an illegal act, because of the enormous weight that the Will had as legal document.³¹² In the letters of various law firms representing the trustees, concern over how the Will should be interpreted was expressed because of the inability of any authority to remove them due to its strict stipulations.³¹³ The usufructuaries were convinced that nobody could touch them, because “the Lord gave us this land. Black, white, even our own skins cannot take Klipfontein away from us.”³¹⁴

The *vakansie-sendelinge*³¹⁵ (“holiday-missionaries”)

It can be surmised from the above that selective readings of scriptures enabled the construction of an identity in which religious rhetoric was used to provide justification for claims to land that had sound legal foundations. It happened to be white Afrikaner NG *dominees* who infused (whether intentionally or unintentionally) such thoughts and ideals which would eventually generate feelings of sovereignty and self-worth among Klipfonteiners. But due to the relative remoteness of Klipfontein, especially given that the national road running through the farm would only be constructed in the 1960s, church services performed by Alexandria's *dominees* were hardly regular occurrences. This led to long periods of time where no services (except for *huiskerk*³¹⁶) would be held on Klipfontein.³¹⁷ However, during the holiday seasons of Christmas and Easter, many white holidaymakers and their families would make their way to Boesmansriviermond³¹⁸ – some of these would be *dominees* of other communities in South Africa, or theology students.³¹⁹

Before 1950, Boesmansriviermond village did not have its own NGK church building.³²⁰ Yet, when the Department of Forestries in the late 1800s rented a few plots out to holidaymakers, three NG *dominees* were among the first to build holiday homes for

³¹² Interview with Leon Rijgrod.

³¹³ Letter RE: *Estate DJJ and SJ van Rensburg – No 65/91* (Cape Archives); Letter RE: Estates DJ and SJ van Rensburg Claim: SJ Fischat – to Messrs Wheeldon, Rushmere and Cole from Dold and Stone Attorneys, (Grahamstown, 7 November 1977); Letter RE: Estates DJ and SJ van Rensburg – to The Manager, Syfrets Trust from Dold and Stone (Grahamstown, 7 November 1977); Letter RE: Investigation into Demarcation of Areas of Jurisdiction of Various Forums – to The Secretary, Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape (Boesmansriviermond, 19 September 1994).

³¹⁴ Interviews with Joyce Peters and Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

³¹⁵ Term given by the Klipfontein NGSK congregation to those white *dominees* and theology students who would preach to the Klipfonteiners over the holidays.

³¹⁶ See pp. 31-32 of this thesis.

³¹⁷ Interviews with Sarah Plaatjies, George Kleynhans and Dr Mike Smuts.

³¹⁸ See Chapter 1.

³¹⁹ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg, Sarah Plaatjies and Dr Mike Smuts.

³²⁰ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

themselves and their families.³²¹ When they were in Boesmansriviermond, services would be held on Sundays for the (presumably all white) Afrikaner holidaymakers.³²² The services were held under milkwood trees in what was called Scheeperskraal – an enclosure surrounded by houses close to the footpath that led down to the Bushman's River.³²³ According to Dr Mike Smuts, a retired NGK minister himself and regular visitor to Boesmansriviermond since he was a child, the dominee would stand on the verandah of one of the houses (Scheepershuis) and the churchgoers sat on camping chairs under the milkwood trees. In 1926, with the auctioning off of plots by Tom Futter³²⁴ and the establishment of town perimeters, many holidaymakers who already claimed usage rights on their plots had to bid again in order to attain ownership.³²⁵ It is said that everyone at the auction agreed not to bid against the three *dominees* as they would then lose their homes and Boesmansriviermond residents would lose their regular holiday church services.³²⁶

In later years holidaymakers and permanent residents began to raise funds for a more permanent place of worship.³²⁷ Eventually, a hall with the specific purpose of holding NGK services was completed in 1950.³²⁸ Church services were always held during the day as there was no provision for electricity. However, midnight services were always held on New Year's Eve with power provided by a generator stationed behind the church hall.³²⁹

By 1934, Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond were cut off from the NGK community of Grahamstown and was absorbed into the Alexandria community.³³⁰ As a result of relatively urgent demand from the permanent residents of Boemansriviermond, the church council or *kerkraad* of Alexandria decided to organise services in Boesmansrivermond on an itinerant basis.³³¹ As a result, it was very often the case that the same *dominee* who would deliver his sermon to the Klipfonteiners would hold church services for the white Boesmansriviermond residents, often on the same day.

Apparently the Alexandria *kerkraad* also assumed responsibility for organising services

³²¹ J Meiring (Marquard), *The Kenton Story* (Kenton-on-Sea, 2008) p. 72.

³²² Meiring (Marquard), *The Kenton Story* p. 73.

³²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

³²⁴ See Chapter 1.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³²⁹ This generator was only strong enough to power one lamp, so nocturnal church services were avoided.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³³¹ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

during the December and Easter holidays. As the two communities were relatively close together, the *dominees* and students would usually walk over from the white Boesmansriviermond over to the Klipfontein school where services were held. According to Dr Smuts, the visiting *dominees*, of which his father was one, would go over to preside mostly over *nagmaal*, baptisms and funerals.³³² The *dominee* was seen by Klipfonteiners as a symbol of religious authority and accordingly enjoyed considerable respect.³³³ Dr Smuts himself, as a young theology student would facilitate *eredienste* and *nagmaal* on Klipfontein. In later years, he would return as a visiting *dominee* himself, being requested by the Klipfonteiners to preside over many baptisms and funerals as well as normal *eredienste*.³³⁴ He offers an account from the perspective of a white Afrikaner outsider coming in and respecting the practices and customs of the Klipfonteiners. They, in turn, have respected and continue to respect his authority.

His relationship with the Klipfontein community began in 1958 when he was in Standard 9 (Grade 11). He assisted his father, who was a NG *dominee*, with the sermons. He even conducted a few sermons on his own at such a tender age and developed a relationship with the Klipfontein NG congregation. This relationship would continue throughout his career as a NG *dominee*. He relates quite a strange encounter in the early 1960s which would define his involvement with the Klipfontein community.³³⁵ According to Dr Smuts, he was busy enjoying the hot summer's sun with his family on the Boesmansriviermond beach when he was called by another holidaymaker who said that he had four coloured men who wanted to speak with him. The beach was reserved for white people only according to the Separate Amenities Act,³³⁶ so the men waited for him at the slipway right next to the beach. Dr Smuts recounts how hot it was that day, yet these men were dressed in black suits and white ties. They were appointed elders of the NGSK church of Klipfontein, nominated by the church community.³³⁷ They had come to request him to serve as *dominee* on a temporary basis during the holidays as they were 'desperately' looking for one to serve Klipfontein.³³⁸ After consultation with the Alexandria *kerkraad* he accepted the temporary post.³³⁹ Dr Smuts' account demonstrates to some extent, the agency on the part of the Klipfontein NGK congregation that did not want to wait for

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ *Ibid.*

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ Act 49 of 1953

³³⁷ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ *Ibid.*

outside help (from Alexandria NGK) to assist them in finding a *dominee*. Only after the elders had bypassed the formal channels by approaching a *dominee* directly did the Alexandria NGK give its consent to the appointment of a transient *dominee*. Though such assertive action is by no means overwhelming evidence of any sort of unity within the community, it displays confidence on the part of church elders to find a solution to an apparent problem, namely shortage of “spiritual leadership”³⁴⁰ in Klipfontein.

Many of these *vakansie-sendelinge* were not 'trained' to preach to the congregations of the NGSK. Tenets of NGK theology were not necessarily included in the NGSK.³⁴¹ Furthermore, Klipfontein was also on the periphery of the NGSK sphere of influence, as its intellectual centre and seminary was based at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town.³⁴² This meant that it was relatively detached from the changes happening from within the NGSK structures and so were then not necessarily exposed to the 'radical' philosophies to which other mission churches closer to the centre were exposed. But this did not necessarily mean stagnation in radical resistance to traditional NG theology. It is also not to say that the teachings of white dominees to the coloured congregation followed an interpretation which was more attuned to liberation theology. But the Klipfontein church did become a meeting place of coloured congregation members and white *dominees*, deemed to be 'intellectuals'.

The holiday missionaries studied theology so that they would be able to pursue a career in all-white NGK churches. This meant that their sermon material was based on the model reserved for an all-white Afrikaner congregation.³⁴³ Ideas of a “cosmological hierarchy”, a people “ordained by God” and “sovereignty of a people” were refurbished and modified and preached to the community of Klipfontein on a regular basis.³⁴⁴

These outside ideas, presented by a recognised and later respected authority (the *dominee*) would most certainly have influenced how the Klipfonteiners organised themselves. No longer did they see themselves as asylum seekers who were there at the mercy of the usufructuaries. Those who were not directly related to the usufructuaries felt that they had as much a right to get involved in the affairs of the land itself. For example, in the late 1970s, a group of Klipfonteiners accompanied the usufructuaries to the

³⁴⁰ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

³⁴¹ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

³⁴² Kinghorn, “The Afrikaner Churches” in Elphick and Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa* p. 155.

³⁴³ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

³⁴⁴ Interviews with Magenis van Rensburg, Joyce Peters and Dr Mike Smuts.

Grahamstown High Court during the forced removals of African squatters from Klipfontein.³⁴⁵ Some were in solidarity with those usufructuaries who wished to see the squatters stay, while others supported Nicolaas (Klaasie) Fischat wishing to have them removed.³⁴⁶ Even though they were regarded as *inkomers* ("those coming in, onto the land), they believed that they had just as much right to the land as any of the usufructuaries.

In no way does this imply that the sermons directly caused congregation members to challenge the *status quo*. But as explained earlier, the church, namely the NGK, was the only institution on Klipfontein with any overt signs of authority. Therefore, it should be assumed that the sermons and teachings at least influenced Klipfonteiners to reinforce prevailing ideas as to how they perceived themselves and their role in the Klipfontein community. However, the authority of the NGK did not always sit too well with some Klipfonteiners, who later became disillusioned with its overbearing attitudes towards the Klipfontein community. These members would later fragment from the NGSK, and establish the Old and the New Apostolic Churches on Klipfontein during the late 1980s.³⁴⁷

The *vakansie sendelinge* were tasked with sustaining the authority that the NGK had over the Klipfontein congregation during a period when the regular *dominees* were absent. Instead, their teachings inspired many Klipfonteiners to resist against encroaching African squatters, the racial attitudes of neighbouring white farmers and, what they perceived to be, the 'greed' of the usufructuaries. Added to this, the *sendelinge* also influenced the usufructuaries. As their already diminutive power was threatened by the *inkomers*, they reacted broadly in two radically different ways.

The one was to openly align themselves with the *inkomers* and work towards the interests of every coloured person coming into and staying on Klipfontein. These usufructuaries would be praised by Klipfonteiners as well as white outsiders for their efforts in "community building". However, the white authorities were more concerned with preventing tensions from rising further than 'building a community' because a happy labour force now was an

³⁴⁵ Interview with Sarah Plaatjies and Joyce Peters.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁷ These churches have grown significantly in congregation size since their inception. However, because both were established long after the period of this study, their origins and influence on the community will not be discussed further, except in relation to their roles in establishing a committee on behalf of all Klipfonteiners.

effective labour force.³⁴⁸ There was also the issue of an increasing number of African squatters on Klipfontein, mainly pensioners and children, so close to quaint holiday resorts such as Kenton-on-Sea and Boesmansriviermond. Therefore, they wholeheartedly supported any endeavour of a usufructuary promoting the narrow interests of coloured Klipfonteiners against black African intruders.³⁴⁹

The other reaction to the missionaries' teachings was the skewed view that they had absolute rights to the land and could make decisions regarding the land without consulting the community. This came from a belief that they had absolute sovereignty over the land, a belief that was encouraged by sermons based on themes such as "respect for authority" and the "power of ordainment".³⁵⁰ Thus, they felt they were entitled to allow anyone they chose to settle or use the land there, on the basis of an informal rental agreement. This meant that they welcomed African squatters who were desperate for a place to stay, to squat on the farm. They argued that they were doing the right thing in "the eyes of the Lord" by letting these people settle there.³⁵¹ This view would perpetuate a misinformed perception that it was in fact legal for black Africans to settle on the farm. This was accepted very quickly by these black Africans, as after many years of being evicted from nearby farms in the area, they had nowhere else to stay. It would have dire consequences for them in the years to come.

The role of the *vakansie sendelinge* was by no means engineered by the white NGK alone. In fact, the arrangement was initiated almost entirely by the Klipfonteiners themselves. The NGK congregation of Klipfontein acted independently of the Alexandria *kerkraad* in an effort to get regular services to be held at Klipfontein. Whether or not this bid was just another aspect of Klipfontein's perpetual dependence on its white neighbours is a subject for conjecture. But the point is that the assertiveness shown by the Klipfontein elders exemplified their agency; their ability to act in such a way as to achieve their own wishes.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Leon Rijgrok and Letter RE: Investigation into Demarcation of Areas of Jurisdiction of Various Forums – to The Secretary, Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape (Boesmansriviermond, 19 September 1994).

³⁴⁹ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

³⁵⁰ See pp. 64-65 of this thesis.

³⁵¹ Interview with Mageniz van Rensburg.

Customs and rituals

The sociologist, Massimo Rosati, points out that 'rituals and the sacred' are or ought to be, in secular and religious contexts, the most important thread in uniting the social fabric, and "the mainstream frame of our experience".³⁵² He adds that we regularly and unwittingly use them to share a meaningful social life which are necessary though not sufficient conditions to have healthy and meaningful individual identities. In other words, they are the building blocks of individual and social life. Ritual and custom have long been part of the social fabric on Klipfontein. In fact, such practices are inextricably linked thereto. They have been shaped and moulded not only reflecting the geographical location of the farm but also the effects of the relationships with neighbouring communities discussed earlier. Suspicion driven by the fear of dispossession and distrust due to what happened in the past has resulted in a self-imposed isolation, which has led to Klipfontein rituals developing with virtually no outside influence from neighbouring white or black communities. Not surprisingly, at the centre of ritual development and formation on Klipfontein is the NGK. Many of the rituals are inspired by religious Calvinist doctrine based on a conservative patriarchal system embedded within the social framework of Klipfontein. But these practices do not merely play a religiously aesthetic role in Klipfontein. They also have an impact on Klipfonteiners' everyday lives. What must be borne in mind is that some of these customs and rituals are not traditionally linked to religious practices but the Klipfonteiners perceive them as such. Therefore these practices will be closely scrutinised.

Fishing has long since been not just a favourite pastime to Klipfonteiners but also a necessary form of subsistence for each household.³⁵³ The easy access to the Indian Ocean and Bushmans River makes fishing an ideally economical practice for many Klipfonteiners. There were traditionally mainly two access points to the sea and river. Prior to the turn of the century, Klipfonteiners had unimpeded access to the dunes leading to the ocean.³⁵⁴ From here they could walk along the coastline to the river mouth or to angling sites all along the beach known as *Kwaaihoek*. But since the early 2000s, SAN Parks had rented a strip of land from the state all along the coast, including the Klipfontein land bordering with the beach, incorporating it as part of the Addo National Park.³⁵⁵ The beach is still accessible *via* a servitude road which runs along the eastern boundary of Klipfontein nearer to Boesmansriviermond village, but there is no longer unrestricted access to the

³⁵² M Rosati, *Ritual and the Sacred: A Neo-Durkheimian Analysis of Politics, Religion and the Self* (Surrey, 2009), p. 41.

³⁵³ Interview with Sarah Plaatjes.

³⁵⁴ *Pam Golding Properties Kenton-on-Sea Holiday Guide 2015* p. 7.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

dunes. The second access point is along the main R72 road to the bridge which, in turn, leads to the prawn banks of the river. The bridge also provides a route to Kenton, giving Klipfonteiners direct access to the angling sites of the *eiland* (island), "Sidney's Hope", "Mermaid's Pool", "Shelly Beach" and "Carriage Rock".³⁵⁶

The existence of a natural estuary in the form of the Bushmans River mouth and the rocky coastline presents perfect breeding and feeding grounds for an abundance of different species of fish, including large predatory fish. The river is usually stocked with various kinds of fish traditionally caught for human consumption. These range from large kob species, spotted grunter and variants of bream species to smaller fisheries such as leerie and shad.³⁵⁷ More abundant fishing is found off the rocky bluffs and gullies stretching out into the sea. Desired catch in the gullies include rockcod, musselcracker, *galjoen*, *geelbek* and *steenbras* just to mention a few.³⁵⁸

The type of fishing on Klipfontein is strictly subsistence. The water source provides sustenance for the household so it is effective in saving costs in groceries.³⁵⁹ The coastline has always been renowned for its richness in fisheries. In fact, one of Kenton-on-Sea's advertising brochures in the 1950s described Kenton's offshore fishing as being the "El Dorado" of fishermen.³⁶⁰ The Klipfonteiners would have known this fact and, according to elderly Klipfonteiners who have been told by their parents, have been fishing since the days of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg.³⁶¹ Fishing on Klipfontein has been a practice inherited by the youngest generation from the previous generation, with the various fishing methods of the different families being passed down from parent to child. From being a practical necessity for sustenance, it has additionally been transformed into a spiritual ritual, intertwined not necessarily with church or religion, but a practise which provides the individual with the opportunity of being close to God and "His work", procuring sustenance from "God's food-basket", the sea.³⁶² It is what Robert Bellah³⁶³ calls "the religious symbol system at the primitive level", characterised by what Lucien Levy-Bruhl called "*le monde mythique*", a stage in which "virtually every mountain, rock and tree is

³⁵⁶ Interview with Sarah Plaatjies.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁹ *Ibid* and interviews with Joyce Peters and Mageniz van Rensburg.

³⁶⁰ Meiring (Marquard), *The Kenton Story* p. 37.

³⁶¹ Interviews with Mageniz van Rensburg, Joyce Peters, Willie Peters, Louisa Windvogel and Sarah Plaatjies.

³⁶² Interview with Sarah Plaatjies.

³⁶³ R Bellah and SM Tipton, *The Robert Bellah Reader* (London, 2006), p. 24.

explained in terms of actions of mythical beings” which would include God and biblical characters as well as ancestors.³⁶⁴ In this context, religious action is not yet worship, sacrifice, prayer, but rather, communing with nature. As Bellah puts it:

In the ritual the participants become identified with the mythical beings they represent. The mythical beings are not addressed or propitiated or beseeched. The distance between man and mythical being, which was at the best slight, disappears altogether in the moment of ritual when every when becomes now.³⁶⁵

The ritual reminds the participant of the importance of God as *voorsiener* or 'provider' for his people and in no other instance is this more important than providing food to a household. In this regard, fishing reminds Klipfonteiners that they are placed in a position to be custodians not only of the land on which they live, but the surrounding area as well. They feel that they are tasked with the God-ordained duty to not only enjoy the fruits borne from the sea, but also to care for it and act responsibly so that the symbiotic relationship between the people and the ocean can be sustained. As a result, they feel that it provides them with a direct line of communication between the earthly and the spiritual. Klipfonteiners therefore view this activity as the most sacred one outside of church.³⁶⁶

The direct link between the earthly and the spiritual manifests itself primarily however, within the structures and the religious doctrines of the church, namely the NGK. It is the institution which has most influence on Klipfontein and therefore it is understandable that the rituals and customs practised by the Klipfonteiners have a strong traditional connection to the NGK. The religious rituals eventually weave themselves into the Klipfontein social fabric in which the people live their lives. One of the most important of these church rituals is the role of church *ouderlinge* or elders as leaders on behalf of Klipfonteiners.

Klipfonteiner NGK elders were and still are elected by the Klipfontein NGK congregation.³⁶⁷ Initially they served the interests of the entire community but, after the other two churches (the Old and New Apostolic churches) were established on Klipfontein, it was agreed at some point that the duties of the elders would be split up proportionally between the three denominations. The elders are elected democratically within their

³⁶⁴ In Rosati, *Ritual and the Sacred* p. 51.

³⁶⁵ Bellah and Tipton, *Robellah Reader* p. 32.

³⁶⁶ Interviews with Magenis van Rensburg, Joyce Peters, Willie Peters, Louisa Windvogel and Sarah Plaatjies.

³⁶⁷ Interviews with George Kleynhans, Leon Rijgrok and Dr Mike Smuts

respective denominations.³⁶⁸ These elders have strong sanctioning powers as a result of the significant authority the church has in the Klipfontein community. Not only do these elders have the usual obligations and powers in deciding matters directly related to the church and its community, they also are viewed as community leaders in every other aspect of Klipfontein life. Such strong interaction between religious institutions and social leadership positions is by no means unique to Klipfontein, but what is noteworthy is that the community view those elders as the 'real' leaders of Klipfontein as opposed to the usufructuaries whom they view with suspicion and distrust. Klipfonteiners feel that because the usufructuaries have not always acted in the best interests of the community, they should not be the ones acting on their behalf. Therefore, elders are elected as channels through which Klipfonteiners can voice their concerns and opinions regarding the land. For the most part this amounts to tokenism as Klipfonteiners only have rights to occupy the land due to their prior indigent status, as was pointed out in Chapter 2. But sometimes, the elders would negotiate an initiative with the usufructuaries that would benefit the entire community. For example, in 1988, usufructuaries and elders approached the Algoa Regional Services Council to assist them in providing basic municipal services. It must be noted that Nicolaas Fischat³⁶⁹ was one of the elders as well as one of the usufructuaries. But because of his community engagement activities, he was highly revered by most Klipfonteiners. It would be on "his portion" of land that a township would eventually be built for the Klipfonteiners at their insistence.³⁷⁰ Traditionally only men were elected as elders. This may have been an intentional mirroring of the neighbouring white NGK congregations where a strict patriarchal hierarchy has dictated elections of elders in the community. But in the last couple of years, Klipfontein elders have comprised of women as well as men.³⁷¹

Customs associated with the church perform an important function in community-building. It acts as unifier but also, more significantly, as equaliser. No matter how impoverished they may be, a community member has a right to run for the position of elder of the community. Within the church, each community member has equal power and equal rights.³⁷² The implication of this is that no matter one's social status within or without the Klipfontein milieu, one has a power to elect his/her leaders, even become one him/herself. This approach is overtly evident in the uniform dress code of Klipfontein elders.

³⁶⁸ Interviews with George Kleynhans and Dr Mike Smuts

³⁶⁹ See p. 48.

³⁷⁰ The township, today known as "Harmony Park" was part of an agreement made between the usufructuaries and the Boesmansriviermond Municipality during the late 1990s.

³⁷¹ Interview with George Kleynhans.

³⁷² Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

It has long been a forgotten custom for elders in a NGK to wear black suits and white ties. This practice embodies the Calvinist puritan belief that the dissuasion of material and earthly desires will assist one to be spiritually cleansed.³⁷³ It therefore symbolises a purity which the elder has acquired through many years in the service of God and his/her community. The attire represents the purity of God and thus the wearer represents God and His church on earth. In Klipfontein, this custom also serves as a measure of egalitarianism. It is submitted that by wearing the same attire, the elders see themselves as equals, not only to God, but to each other as well, no matter their socio-economic situation at home. This implies that their leaders could include the most impoverished church members on Klipfontein. Given Klipfontein's turbulent history with leadership positions, this is not surprising.

Due to the significant influence which the NGK has on the Klipfontein people, it is easy to understand why the elders have the 'authority' that they have and why their church attire has remained unchanged despite influences from other Christian denominations. But on top of this doctrinal foundation, are a few religious customs that are foreign to NGK doctrine and have been incorporated into the Klipfontein NGK framework.

Besighting or 'viewing' entails observing a body lying in state at a funeral. The purpose of this ritual is to give mourners the opportunity to view the deceased in his/her earthly state before he/she is buried.³⁷⁴ The process provides a means of coming to terms with the death of that person rather than serving as a sign of respect to the deceased, though it is carried out in a manner which is respectful to the deceased and the deceased's family. In South Africa, this custom is seldom practised in Calvinist traditions.³⁷⁵ It is certainly not a commonly exercised ritual in NG churches.³⁷⁶ Yet, *besighting* is the rule rather than the exception in the Klipfontein NGK congregation. Families make it an explicit request to have the top of their torso and face made visible at the funeral so that family and friends can pay their respects 'directly'.³⁷⁷ The body is strictly displayed for viewing purposes only and no touching should take place, for fear of damaging the body prior to burial.³⁷⁸

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Dr Mike Smuts recalls his experiences in carrying out numerous funerals on Klipfontein over the years he acted as *dominee* on behalf of the NG church.³⁷⁹ He recounts the feeling of surprise when he was approached for the first time by an elderly lady from Klipfontein at a funeral of one of her relatives. The lady requested that he lift the upper half of the coffin so that the relatives could walk past the open casket and view the deceased relative.³⁸⁰ He cannot recall how many *besigtings* were requested of him over the years but it became an accepted practice for the undertaker to commence the funeral service by lifting the top half of the coffin as it had become commonplace in Klipfontein burial custom. It is unclear when this custom started on Klipfontein or how it was introduced, as the area was heavily influenced by the customs and doctrines of the NG church in Alexandria. But it is probable that the custom found its way onto Klipfontein *via* the *inkomer* indigent relatives who came to settle on Klipfontein made possible by the 'asylum clause' discussed earlier in Chapter 2. As a result, *besigting* has become an integral part of Klipfontein burial custom, meshing relatively harmoniously with NG doctrine.³⁸¹ Despite a strong resolve to maintain traditions which has existed there for decades, Klipfontein has adopted and adapted outside customs thereby constructing a hybridised rituals between those 'born-and-bred' Klipfonteiners and the *inkomers*.

Another custom which sticks religiously to its historical roots on Klipfontein, is the observance by the community when a person turns sixteen and sixty years of age. Traditionally in contemporary Eurocentric custom, a person attains adulthood at twenty-one years of age. However, sixteen is also seen as a watershed year because this is when the child first comes of age. In other words, it is the first year after puberty where the child begins to acquire responsibilities of an adult. The tradition of celebrating the significance of this year has long since fallen away in neighbouring communities, but in Klipfontein it retains its value.

Along with weddings and sixtieth birthday celebrations, the festivities of a child coming of age on Klipfontein are shared by the entire community and are not exclusive to the NGK.³⁸² The whole community is notified and invited to the gathering, usually held at the school or the church.³⁸³ A time for prayer is usually observed for the child before the festivities can begin, and those friends and family who wish to pray may do so with the

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ Interview with George Kleynhans.

³⁸² Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

³⁸³ Interview with Mageniz van Rensburg.

permission of the child. An elder, usually head of a contingent of the elders, will also pray for a life full of prosperity for the child.³⁸⁴ After the prayers, a speech by the parents (usually the father) is given followed by a feast prepared by the women of the child's family. The rest of the community is invited to bring along their own refreshments to the celebration.

Traditionally, the sixtieth year of a person's life is also celebrated with lots of fervour due to the rarity of someone reaching such an age, especially in a time when illness was difficult to treat and medical science had not reached the advanced state it is in today, and prolonging a person's life is a whole lot easier. Again, the religious discourse in the celebrating of such a milestone is evident. The celebration is similar to a thanksgiving, whereby the individual and his/her family give thanks to God for not only the years he/she has lived, but also praising God for the sparing of this person's life and for the many years to be spared in the future.³⁸⁵ Similarly to the custom at sixteenth birthday celebrations, all the Klipfonteiners are invited and a contingent of elders also wish the individual well with prayer and blessing.

It can be seen, then, that the rituals and customs on Klipfontein are not merely adopted practices from different religious influences outside of Klipfontein which have lost all significance. To the contrary, some of these rituals have been retained and refashioned to suit the individual and collective needs of the Klipfonteiners. Others, formerly only pastimes, have evolved into rituals from continuing practise over the decades. All of them, as suggested by the examples given in this section, have a strong religious connotation attached to them. If they are not already part of any religious doctrine already, they are definitely heavily influenced thereby. They have contributed to the shaping and forming of an identity which adheres firmly to Christian doctrines, more specifically, Calvinist conservatism. But although this purist conservatism overrides everything else, influences from other families moving onto Klipfontein over the years have resulted in an overlay and interweaving of 'new' customs and rituals to those already a tradition on Klipfontein. The result is a rich blend of multi-denominational practises superimposed on the firm bedrock of NGK ritual.

But inevitably, this also leads to disagreement and tension. Some Klipfonteiners feel

³⁸⁴ Interviews with Dr Mike Smuts and George Kleynhans.

³⁸⁵ Interview with Dr Mike Smuts.

comfortable with the rituals they grew up with and do not wish to see them modified in any manner. Others feel that all Klipfonteiners have a right to refashion their own identity and therefore also have a right to help shape the rituals and customs so as to make themselves feel comfortable on the land they live. Thus, although these traditions have the potential to be the pillars in building a steadfast community based on shared spiritual values, conflicting views prevent this from actually materialising.

Conclusion

The influence of church and religion on Klipfontein stems not only from a desperate attempt to keep the land, but also from a determination to hold on to the only religion they have ever known. It can be seen in Chapter 2 that legally, the joint will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg made it unambiguously clear that those descendants and indigent relatives staying on the farm cannot be removed from it under any circumstances. Therefore it was unnecessary for them to invoke Christianity as a tool of resistance against dispossession. To understand why they felt they had to reaffirm this fact through religion is to understand the history of the marginalisation of Klipfonteiners, as well as the animosity shown towards them by neighbouring communities and that which arose amongst themselves.³⁸⁶

Christianity and scriptural references would be invoked by the usufructuaries to further their own agenda of exclusivity as direct descendants of the original owners of the land, whilst the *inkomers* would do the same to legitimise their occupation of the land, not as owners or custodians of Klipfontein, but as an indigent people ordained by God to settle the land.³⁸⁷

The racially based laws coupled with the history of discrimination against Klipfonteiners and their ancestors created racial awareness amongst Klipfonteiners as well as an awareness of the significance of occupying an enclave within a predominantly white-owned area. By substantiating their claim to the land by invoking not only Christianity, but the tenets of the most influential denomination in South Africa at the time, Klipfonteiners withstood any pressures from government or white citizens alike to remove them from the land by force as well. The NGK gave Klipfonteiners the platform to elect leaders who cared for the interests of most of Klipfontein and not only the usufructuaries. It also introduced to

³⁸⁶ See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

³⁸⁷ See pp. 70-71 of this thesis

them a doctrine which did not necessarily perpetuate subjugation of coloured people, but rather ideas of sovereignty and custodianship. This would appear to support Adhikari's argument that ruling groups do not create identities among subject peoples.³⁸⁸ While they may reinforce, constrain or manipulate such identities with varying degree of success, those oppressed create and negotiate their own social identities.³⁸⁹

Through the NGK, Klipfonteiners were able to mould and shape an identity which was couched in the same religious doctrine which openly supported the system that aimed to oppress them. Though it formed the foundations of a social dynamic, it can be seen that the influences of *inkomers* as well as the geographical location of Klipfontein was superimposed to create an identity based on counteracting threats from outside as well as from within Klipfontein.

This does not mean that the NGK or any denomination on Klipfontein for that matter is exclusively used as a political tool by the Klipfonteiners. The NGK doctrine and practices are taken very seriously by those Klipfontein NGK members. But the theology of the Christian faith was used to legitimise their geographical and social position in the area. Not only were they coloured people with a legal basis to continue to occupy and live within the midst of white landowners, but they also had a spiritual justification by appealing to the same deity worshipped by the ruling white authority. At the same time, this spirituality would assist Klipfonteiners in discovering a connection to the land on which they live.

³⁸⁸ M. Adhikari (editor), *Burdened by Race: Coloured identities in southern Africa* (Cape Town, 2009), p. x.

³⁸⁹ Adhikari (editor), *Burdened by Race* p. x.

The NG (VGK) Church building, Klipfontein



(Photo: John Muirhead and Associates)

CHAPTER 4: “Ons is hier om te bly” - Land and identity formation on Klipfontein

Henry Trotter, argues in his article on the trauma and memory of forcibly removed coloured people in Cape Town, that measuring the ‘resonance’ of identity – its “depth, power and relevance” – involves understanding it beyond its explicit manifestations.³⁹⁰ It is submitted that most studies of coloured identity deal with the predilection of labelling others as being ‘different’, such as the apartheid regime’s categorisation of people as coloured, or of white society’s external identification of people perceived as being of “mixed-race” as coloured people. These analyses are crucial to understanding coloured identity in its more explicit forms, but their focus in categorisation and identification do not cover the interior dimensions of the concept.³⁹¹ They do not reveal much about the significance of coloured identity for the people who have identified or have been identified as such. Essentially these studies do not probe coloured self-understanding.³⁹²

The previous chapters of this study show how the provisions of the Will of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg has affected relationships between Klipfonteiners and neighbouring black and white communities as well as between Klipfonteiners themselves and how attempts at communal identity and legitimation had been made through church and ritual. This chapter will delve deeper into identity formation by illustrating the strong connection which Klipfonteiners have to the farm specifically, a sense of place; of belonging to the land.

Furthermore, this chapter will also discuss the various reconstructions of identity which the black Africans underwent prior to their eviction in 1979. From tenant to Klipfontein resident to a dispossessed people, the narrative of black Africans changed continuously. Their presence would mould and influence the routes of identity formation which the various groups on Klipfontein would take. Whilst the Klipfontein coloureds had some form of security that enabled them to stay on the farm and so construct an identity around that fact, black Africans on Klipfontein knew how vulnerable their position was. They were under constant threat of being evicted from the farm, either by the authorities or the usufructuaries for lack of a formal lease agreement. Their presence would also cause a rift within the coloured community as discussed in the previous chapter. In response to this, various Klipfontein identities would be fashioned through the church or the strength of

³⁹⁰ H Trotter, “Trauma and memory: the impact of apartheid-era forced removals on coloured identity in Cape Town”, in M Adhikari, *Burdened by Race: Coloured identity in southern Africa* (Cape Town, 2009), p. 50.

³⁹¹ M Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough* (Cape Town, 2005), pp. 131-132.

³⁹² Adhikari, *Not White Enough* pp. 35-36.

each faction's tie to the land, either in support or in opposition to the black African settlement. Their story is also vital to understanding their forced removal in 1979.

Klipfonteiner Identity: *Taal* and storytelling

The idea of land serving as a foundation of identity formation is by no means new. But given the integral role that land has played in shaping the history in South Africa, it is easy to understand why people are quick to link it to their 'roots'.³⁹³ So when their right to the land is questioned, people often evoke past stories or experiences on that land to show 'authenticity' in their claims. For example, in the wake mass social trauma caused by forced removals of coloured people from designated 'white' areas, coloured 'removees' coped with their pain by reminiscing with one another about the "good old days" in their destroyed communities.³⁹⁴ Their removal to racially defined townships ensured that they shared their memories almost exclusively with other coloured people, and only infrequently with Africans, Indians or white people.³⁹⁵ Therefore, Trotter submits, apartheid social engineering determined the spatial limits within which coloured memories could 'circulate', creating a mutually reinforcing "pattern of narrative traffic".³⁹⁶ But this constant circulation of nostalgic stories has fashioned a mnemonic community among coloured 'removees' in the townships.³⁹⁷

This type of narrative development is also visible in Klipfontein discourses. The only difference is that not all the Klipfontein residents embrace a narrative of dispossession because not all of them were evicted. To the contrary, they found 'asylum' on the land after losing their previous homes. Thus, they construct narratives of belonging rather than loss – although nostalgia almost always has both components.³⁹⁸

Stories and experiences were not only ways of social interaction between Klipfonteiners but also a way for one generation to persuade the next to remain enthusiastic about their role as future leaders of Klipfontein. For example, this applied to some families who were

³⁹³ See Duncan Brown, *To Speak of This Land: Identity and Belonging in South Africa and Beyond* (Scottsville, 2006), pp. 7-35.

³⁹⁴ Trotter, "Trauma and memory", in Adhikari, *Burdened by Race* pp. 49-50.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

³⁹⁸ See S Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York, 2001), C Caruth (editor), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore, 1995), S Field (editor), *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town* (Cape Town, 2001), JR Gillis (editor), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, 1994), D Rubin (editor), *Remembering Our Past: Studies in Autobiographical Memory* (Cambridge, 1996).

not directly related to the usufructuaries and therefore were either not aware of the history of Klipfontein or were opposed to the authority of the usufructuaries. Thus they adopted a narrative which was true for other tracts of land in the immediate area, namely the granting of Crown land to Khoesan or other coloured people by Colonial authorities.³⁹⁹ A lot of land was granted in this manner in the Alexandria District or neighbouring districts.⁴⁰⁰ As this was perceived to be the most common method to procure land in the area as a coloured person at the time, some Klipfonteiners thought that this was true in their case as well.⁴⁰¹ Therefore many of them grew up with stories about Queen Victoria giving their ancestor land in gratitude for some or other military exploit.⁴⁰² Whilst some families who were not directly related to the usufructuaries did not embrace this narrative, other families did and each generation reinforced this rhetoric through stories which may have been imported to Klipfontein *via* the *inkomers*. It is unclear why the usufructuaries did not quash this myth or, if they did try to quash it, why they failed to do so. Attempting to understand the rationale of the usufructuaries, one must keep in mind that the usufructuaries only had usage rights and never owned the land. The Victorian myth must have implied that the community owned Klipfontein in perpetuity. Had the story been grounded in fact then, the usufructuaries would be able to claim more rights within the Klipfontein community than what they were entitled to. However it came to be, it can be seen how a myth took hold in the dominant narrative of Klipfontein's origins and became reinforced as a result of generations of *inkomers* settling on the farm.

Klipfonteiners entrenched their position in local folklore not only through the stories which originated from it but also as a result of how these stories were told. A favourite amongst the Klipfonteiner elderly is the adventures of a particular Klipfonteiner, Pepertol and how a sandbank in the Bushman's River was named after him.⁴⁰³ The story has, over time, assumed many versions. This version comes from a small compilation of short stories out of the Alexandria/Albany districts written by Bill Deacon.⁴⁰⁴ He was told this story by Klipfonteiners and has claimed to have written it down exactly as they told it.⁴⁰⁵ The gist of

³⁹⁹ As was discussed in Chapter 2, not all of these grants were given in return for military deeds in the name of the Crown.

⁴⁰⁰ For example, there is a farm, approximately five kilometres to the southwest of Alexandria called the Kaba. This land was granted to a Khoekhoe family, whose descendants, by all accounts are still living there to this day. Another farm near Colchester was given to coloured war veterans after the First World War by the Crown for services rendered during that conflict. Also see Chapter 2, pp. 52-53 on the story of Paul Keteldas.

⁴⁰¹ Interviews with Sarah Plaatjies and Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁰² Interview with Willie Peters.

⁴⁰³ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁰⁴ B Deacon, *Kort verhale uit die Oos-Kaap* (Boesmansriviermond, 1996), p. 23.

⁴⁰⁵ Deacon, *Kort verhale* p. 1.

the story goes like this:

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Pepertol was a fisherman from Klipfontein who worked for a fishing boat captain by the name of Anderson. When the sea got too rough for the fishing party, Pepertol would take thick fishing line to the Bushman's River and spend the night in a cave on the western bank.⁴⁰⁶ He supposedly had the habit of tying one end of the thick fishing line to his big toe and throwing the other with a piece of octopus bait attached thereto into the river before indulging in home-made *Kierie* (honey-beer) in a calabash before he would go to sleep. One night Pepertol repeated this practice, but was never seen or heard of again. The next day, when fellow anglers arrived on the scene, all they found was his old jacket, the calabash and marks in the ground which showed signs of some sort of struggle. Everyone in Klipfontein accepted *met spyt* (with grief) that Pepertol must have been caught by something or swept off by the rising tide while he was sleeping.⁴⁰⁷

Almost a year after Pepertol's mysterious disappearance, two Klipfonteiners, Petjies and Rooikat were busy one evening looking for bait on the sandbank across from the cave. Petjies was walking ahead of Rooikat who was following with a lantern to attract the bait. While they walked, Petjies stood on something and suddenly a *geraamte* (skeleton) appeared from underneath the marsh. The two fishermen made a quick retreat: "*Die twee gil daar soos nog nooit gehoor nie, gooi hul lamp en pyl net daar weg en hol deur die water boot se kant toe.*" Convinced that it was Pepertol's ghost, the two told the Klipfonteiners the following morning:

*Petjies en Rooikat het Pepertol se spook gesien en almal wou weet waar?
Die helder daglig is nooit so spokerig as wat 'n donker aand is nie en
uiteindelik het die twee ingewillig om presies te gaan wys waar hulle die
spook gesien het.*⁴⁰⁸

Many curious individuals including neighbouring white farmers as well as Anderson joined the party in search of the 'spook'.⁴⁰⁹ Not long into the investigation, Anderson found the remains of a corpse which still lay in the shallow water of the sandbank. After establishing

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24 and interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26 and interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

that the remains indeed belonged to Pepertol, Anderson traced the length of the fishing line and found the remains of a giant kob on the other end. The search party concluded that Pepertol lost his balance (the *kierie* did not help matters) and was dragged to the river by the large fish on the other end of the fishing line and drowned. The dead weight of Pepertol's body meant that the fish could not free itself and so it died as well. It is then told that the search party decided there and then that the two sets of remains of Pepertol and the giant kob should be buried next to each other. Since that day, the sandbank is supposedly known to locals as "*Pepertol se plaat*".⁴¹⁰

The story of *Pepertol en die groot vis* is part of the folklore of the Boesmansriviermond area and refers to geographical locations as well as names of historical characters who inhabited the area.⁴¹¹ But it is in the manner in which it is told, evoking images and descriptions that brings it to life for the listener/reader. The summary above does not do justice to the story, as the essence actually lies in the language and the descriptions of the 'events'. Also, the distinct use of Afrikaans as used by the Klipfonteiners gives an authentic feel to it.

Certain descriptions are ascribed words which would not be used ordinarily to describe the process in formal Afrikaans. For example, when describing the getaway of Rooikat and Petjies:

*Toe hulle die boot kry, roei hulle hom dat die branders staan na die...paadjie by die grot. Toe hol hulle eers na Petjies se huis...*⁴¹²

In formal Afrikaans, the verb '*hol*' is never used to describe a person running. But this is how Klipfonteiners speak of someone running away in a particular hurry.⁴¹³ It is monosyllabic and is easier to say quickly than the preferred word in formal Afrikaans of '*hardloop*'. Thus it functions as a type of onomatopoeia in this instance, creating a greater sense of urgency on the part of the listener through the use of short, crude words.

Also, colloquial language specific to Klipfontein is used frequently in their folklore stories.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴¹¹ Names of real-life people, such as Anderson and Kaaljan Scheepers, are referred to throughout the story.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴¹³ Interview with Mageniz Janse van Rensburg.

When describing the bait, the narrator uses the term *bobaas-aas* (first-class bait).⁴¹⁴ The story employs expressions frequently used by Klipfonteiners. Whilst in dialogue with Petjies after their gruesome discovery, Rooikat proclaims: “*Petjies, dit was seker Pepertol se spook wat ons gesien het*”, to which Petjies replies: “*God bewaar my, jy’s seker reg my neef.*”⁴¹⁵ “*God bewaar my*” is a common expression on Klipfontein said only in times of severe distress or tragedy and implores God to protect the individual.⁴¹⁶ Given Klipfontein's history that is suffused with church and scriptural discourses, this reference to faith in their vocabulary is not surprising. The second part of Petjies' sentence is also interesting, because the use of 'neef' need not necessarily mean that Rooikat is literally Petjies' cousin. It is rather a colloquialism used by Klipfonteiners to denote a friend or acquaintance, borrowed from Afrikaner farmers. The Klipfonteiners did not merely adopt it because it was an expression used commonly around the district, but also because virtually all the Klipfonteiners were actually related to each other, in some way or another.⁴¹⁷

Another very interesting aspect of this story is the difference in tone between the Klipfontein narrator and the white narrator. Deacon claims that he had written the story as was told to him by the Klipfonteiners. While his use of language in his descriptions captures the way in which the Klipfonteiners speak, his tone is patronising, describing Pepertol right at the beginning as “*glo n opregte Hotnot*”.⁴¹⁸ This sort of description prejudices the dignity of the character, relegating him and the other coloured characters to comical spectacles, caricatures of incompetence and silliness. Hein Willemse, commenting on early Afrikaans literature portraying coloured characters, states that usually the *baas* expects the subjugated coloured to play the joker.⁴¹⁹ He/she is either the comic relief to the “more serious” problems faced by the white lead characters, or he/she is the lead character him/herself. Thus when the story is told, it is to be narrated in such a way which patronises that lead character in order to reaffirm the power relationship between *baas* and servant.⁴²⁰ This 'celebrated' “coloured-humour” is described by GJ Gerwel as an image of silliness, which very often is regarded by the dominant white voice, as ‘coloured’.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁵ Deacon, *Kort verhale* p. 26 and interview with Magemis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴¹⁶ Interviews with Magemis Janse van Rensburg, Willie Peters, Sarah Plaatjies, Louisa Windvogel.

⁴¹⁷ Interview with Magemis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴¹⁸ Deacon, *Kort verhale* p. 23.

⁴¹⁹ H Willemse, “Ik is onbekend, ma ik is een van de ras so moet my nie veracht nie”: Die beeldvorming van Piet Uithaler”, in M Adhikari (ed), *Straat-praatjies: Language, politics and popular culture in Cape Town, 1909-1922* (Cape Town, 1996) p. 166.

⁴²⁰ Willemse, “Ik is Onbekend”, in Adhikari, *Straat-praatjies* p. 166.

⁴²¹ GJ Gerwel, *Literatuur en apartheid* (Kasselsvlei, 1993), p. 34.

To the contrary, the Klipfonteiners treat the characters with respect and dignity, underplaying Pepertol's dangerous behaviour. Whilst they do not condone his habitual drinking, the storytellers speak with zealous pride when they mention Pepertol's *plaat* (sandbank). It suggests a close connection to the land.⁴²²

It can be seen from the above examples that narrative development and formation on Klipfontein is complex and constantly changing and contested either in discourses existing on Klipfontein or in the neighbouring white communities. The narratives are not hierarchical, but rather an intricate web which interweave with one another. Therefore, there is no dominant narrative to be asserted by one dominant group. Instead, Klipfonteiners each adopt a narrative which would help them legitimise their claim to the farm.

What follows in the rest of the chapter is a discussion about the formation of the three broad groups on Klipfontein pre-1979 and to what extent they fashioned an identity which legitimated their claim to the land.

“Ons is arm maar die land maak ons ryk” (We are poor but the land makes us rich): Usufructuary identity

The usufructuaries developed a distinctive identity in which they sought to embed their connection to the land in order to legitimise their position as true custodians of Klipfontein. Their rationale was that they were the direct descendants of the original *stamouers*. They viewed themselves as the custodians of the land, appointed by God through a bloodline that ran directly from Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg and their children, to them. Thus they felt that only they and direct family were entitled to benefit from the land and its fruits.

Some usufructuaries had grown up on Klipfontein, whilst others would inherit the usufruct right whilst living in another part of the Eastern Province. Magen is van Rensburg relates how he was nominated by his uncle Magen is van Rensburg (Sr), to take over his usufruct rights as the latter became too ill to manage his affairs.⁴²³ At the time of his nomination, Magen is was not quite thirteen years of age and living near Cradock. He was sent by his mother to meet with the other usufructuaries and his uncle, in order to discuss 'his portion' of the land. By the time he took over from his uncle, his portion was already being leased

⁴²² Interviews with Sarah Plaatjies and Magen is Janse van Rensburg.

⁴²³ Interview with Magen is Janse van Rensburg.

to neighbouring white farmers. He relates how he was very excited to inherit his own farm, but was bitterly disappointed when he did not find any agricultural equipment present on Klipfontein. His rights to the land were quickly explained to him by the other usufructuaries. He was also told this land was part of his and his ancestors' heritage and thus had to take these rights seriously. He was taken into the home of relatives staying on Klipfontein and was groomed in the practices of a usufructuary. He admits he was never told the full history behind the farm, but he was told how significant the land would be to him and his family and his future children: "*Ons is arm maar die land maak ons ryk. Om ons eie grond te hê, is 'n seën van God*" ("We are poor but the land makes us rich. To have our own land is a blessing from God").⁴²⁴ For him the land means a place to call home and an opportunity to prosper. So in order for his and his people's survival, he was told by his elder family members that it was necessary that land be rented out to the farmers as this was a substantial income and was the only income they could derive from the land.⁴²⁵ In other words, the usufructuaries had long surrendered to the fact that they would never be able to properly work the land themselves and so had to be content with earning an income through the land by renting it out. At the same time they could not legally rent out the land to derive such an income. At the time, a court case determining the legality of leasing the land to farmers in terms of the Will was still pending.⁴²⁶ Thus, such lease agreements were, in effect, still illegal. But Magenis says that he was unaware of the pending court case and accepted the practices of the farm to be legally binding.⁴²⁷

By way of contrast, Nicolaas Thomas ('Klasie') Fischat was born and raised on Klipfontein.⁴²⁸ He was described by Ben MacLennan as a "parody of an Afrikaner" – a coloured man who strove towards values and ideas which he associated with being a white Afrikaner man.⁴²⁹ He was deeply religious, patriotic and 'mistrustful' of everything outside the "confines of his rural existence".⁴³⁰ He was "keenly aware" of his role as "keeper (custodian) of the van Rensburg heritage".⁴³¹ According to him Klipfontein was "our garden given to the usufructuaries as Eden was to Adam and Eve".⁴³² He was aware of his heritage but also aware that in order for Klipfonteiners to survive, they would have to

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁶ *Wilkens v Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴²⁷ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴²⁸ Interview with Joyce Peters.

⁴²⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 10.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

somehow generate an income for themselves.

But Fischat was not the only member of the van Rensburg *stam* to consider himself “proud and jealous” of the *stamouers'* legacy.⁴³³ Fischat's eldest son, James, was concerned about what was happening to the land he would inherit one day.⁴³⁴ He argued that the farm was being overgrazed and depleted by being let to white farmers. Added to this was the fact that the land was “filled to capacity” with “Bantu squatters” which was a “serious contravention of the law”.⁴³⁵ So in September 1977 he initiated legal action to have all usufructuaries, including his father, stripped of their rights of occupation on the grounds that they had been contravening the terms of the Will by hiring out the land.⁴³⁶ He failed, but the threat of court action was enough to spur Nicolaas Fischat to start his own campaign to restore the *stam's* heritage.⁴³⁷ He took steps to terminate the occupation of one of the white farmers, Nico Bessinger from “his land”.⁴³⁸ He also quarrelled with the other three usufructuaries over their unwillingness to cancel their own agreements and uttered “biblical warnings of the doom that would follow” if they refused.⁴³⁹ His final step was then to approach government officials to have the black African squatters on the farm evicted. However, he was eventually forced to concede that their only income from the farm was to lease out land to the neighbouring farmers.

In an affidavit made by the usufructuaries in a court application in 1980, Fischat and his co-usufructuaries⁴⁴⁰ admitted that they had never been in a position to farm any of the 'portions' which they unofficially divided up amongst themselves.⁴⁴¹ They lacked any of the capital which would enable them to beneficially farm it in a proper manner or according to 'normal farming standards.'⁴⁴² A substantial amount of capital would have been needed to acquire stock, feed, fertiliser, fencing and other necessities – capital that was readily available to the white farmers. None of them had or currently have any experience or training in proper farming methods.⁴⁴³ Therefore, Fischat, along with his co-usufructuaries

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴³⁶ *Wilkins v Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴³⁷ Interview with Joyce Peters.

⁴³⁸ Interview with Joyce Peters and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 10.

⁴³⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 10.

⁴⁴⁰ The other usufructuaries were: Johannes Janse van Rensburg, John Martin Jacobs and Nicolaas Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁴¹ First and Second Respondents' Counter Application re: *Andrew David Wilkins NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 4 and interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

disregarded the provisions of the Will and continued to hire out portions of the farm. Fischat himself was – in his own words – a 'destitute'.⁴⁴⁴ In 1980 he was receiving R900 a year – the highest rental paid to any usufructuary.⁴⁴⁵ Jack Jacobs received the lowest, approximately R350.⁴⁴⁶ Jacobs also agreed that he lacked the capital and skill to use his 'portion'. Farming was 'impossible' for him.⁴⁴⁷ Without other income he and his family relied entirely on this rental.⁴⁴⁸

This preceding account portrays the usufructuary as a man struggling to hold on to the authority he has inherited whilst trying to balance his own financial stability with the well-being of the people for whom he is obligated to provide land. The so-called power he has been entrusted with is limited by the very law (or at least the legal interpretation of the Will) which provides him with the rights to retain it. Thus, any shortcoming perceived by the Klipfonteiners as incompetence or act of poor leadership is defended as being the best they could do with the little resources they had.

Klipfonteiner Identity: the status of the *inkomers*

If there was one law that embodied the cruelty and absurdity of apartheid, it was the Group Areas Act No 41 of 1950 (Group Areas Act). Du Pre calls it the 'great land robbery' which coloured people 'today still talk with hatred and bitterness'.⁴⁴⁹ After the National Party came to power, it moved quickly to implement its vision of a 'segregated racial utopia'.⁴⁵⁰ After passing the Population Registration Act of 1950, the government sought to segregate the officially designated races, restricting each group to defined places as far as ownership, occupancy and trading was concerned.⁴⁵¹ Because the status of the coloured 'race' was ambiguous in terms of the binary logic of the time, details of their separation was up for debate.⁴⁵² In the end officials decided that the western Cape would become a "coloured labour preference area".⁴⁵³ The aim was to remove all Africans from the region and to promote a stronger sense of colouredness by privileging coloureds economically, relative

⁴⁴⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 2.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁷ First and Second Respondents' Counter Application re: *Andrew David Wilkens NO v Johannes Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴⁴⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 2.

⁴⁴⁹ R du Pre, *Separate but unequal: The 'coloured' people of South Africa – a political history* (Johannesburg, 1994) p. 82.

⁴⁵⁰ Trotter, "Trauma and memory", in Adhikari, *Burdened by race* p. 50.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

to black Africans.⁴⁵⁴ Coloured people would ultimately be forced from rural and urban areas and relocated to “racially homogeneous townships”.⁴⁵⁵ Smaller coloured neighbourhoods were summarily relocated as was generally the case with black Africans.

Similarly, coloured communities in the eastern Cape were also relocated to such townships or ‘areas’. But in the case of Klipfontein, the *inkomers* were never specifically forcefully removed to the farm, as it was never properly designated as a “coloured area”.⁴⁵⁶ Many of these people were evicted from rural properties from various areas throughout the Eastern Cape or had already been placed in urban townships near Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown.⁴⁵⁷ But they were allowed to settle on Klipfontein due to their being poor and destitute, as well as distant relatives⁴⁵⁸ of the usufructuaries, thus qualifying as “asylum-seekers” according to the Will. Though forced economically from their previous homes, as a result of retrenchment or inability to continue paying rent, the *inkomers* came of their own accord. *Inkomer* relatives had settled on the land since the early twentieth century.⁴⁵⁹ Some had moved off to the larger cities and towns in search of employment as there were very few job opportunities in the area. Once these relatives found themselves being evicted or redundant, they would take their families to the one place they could find a place to settle and eke out an existence.

Over the course of time, the *inkomers* adopted the “chosen people” narrative through church attendance and/or scriptural discourse with the intention not only of legitimising their settling on Klipfontein, but making the usufructuaries aware of their increasing significance thereon.⁴⁶⁰ Many *inkomers* felt that there was not any real difference between the usufructuaries and themselves. According to them the only thing which separated them was a hereditary right endowed to the eldest son of the four original families.⁴⁶¹ They were

⁴⁵⁴ Du Pre, *Separate but unequal* p. 83.

⁴⁵⁵ Trotter, “Trauma and memory”, in Adhikari, *Burdened by race* p. 51.

⁴⁵⁶ Whilst local government never officially proclaimed it as a “coloured area”, Klipfontein is mentioned in all documentation pre-1993 as the “kleurlingsgebied” of Boesmansriviermond.

⁴⁵⁷ Interviews with Magenis Janse van Rensburg, Sarah Plaatjies, Louisa Windvogel, Willie Peters, Joyce Peters and George Kleynhans.

⁴⁵⁸ It is not clear whether there was any kind of process in determining whether the *inkomers* were ever related to the usufructuaries. However, today those wishing to settle on Klipfontein are properly screened by the community elders and usufructuaries alike. They utilise familial backchannels as well as official channels to ascertain whether new *inkomers* are relatives at all.

⁴⁵⁹ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg and Letter re: *Investigation in to demarcation of areas of jurisdiction of various forums* by the Klipfontein Bestuursraad to the Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape, 19 September 1994.

⁴⁶⁰ See Chapter 3, pp. 69-71.

⁴⁶¹ Joyce Peters, Willie Peters and Letter re: *Investigation in to demarcation of areas of jurisdiction of various forums* by Klipfontein Bestuursraad to Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape, 19 September 1994.

also convinced that the usufructuaries did not have their best interests at heart. Land which could have been used for more settlements was being rented out to neighbouring farmers or black Africans.⁴⁶² Moreover, only the usufructuaries were paid for the renting of the land. The *inkomers* felt that they were co-beneficiaries to the usufructuaries and therefore they were also entitled to any income received from the land.

There was never a racially homogeneous community on Klipfontein. The *inkomers* viewed the black Africans as “squatters on our land” and perceived the increasing encroachment of them as a threat to their survival.⁴⁶³ Many *inkomers* were not aware of the special rights afforded to them as per the Will. They were afraid that the authorities might regard anyone other than the usufructuaries and their families as ‘squatters’ and evict them along with the black Africans. Thus they felt obligated to distinguish themselves from the black Africans. As each usufructuary had a divided ‘portion’ of the land, the *inkomers* made sure that their properties were quite a distance from the boundary fences as this was the area allocated to the black Africans. Apart from the threat of forced removal, the *inkomers* were also concerned by the decline in sanitation as a result of overpopulation caused by the rapid influx of black Africans settling on the farm.⁴⁶⁴ They also attributed many of the crimes of theft on the farm or the neighbouring white farms, to the black Africans. Sergeant Rijgrok remarked that crime increased rapidly at about the same time when the influx of black Africans was at its apex.⁴⁶⁵ He received many complaints from white farmers as well as from Nicolaas Fischat, one of the usufructuaries, who complained that his people were too afraid to live on the farm any more.⁴⁶⁶ Thus the *inkomers* wanted the black Africans removed from the land

“Die ou mensies is uit hulle land verneuk”⁴⁶⁷: Expropriation and dispossession of land

As mentioned earlier, various types of narrative development are in circulation on Klipfontein. One of these is the narrative of dispossession, one which was adopted by usufructuaries and *inkomers* alike, in response to controversial expropriations and sales of portions of the farm during the mid-twentieth century.

⁴⁶² Interview with Willie Peters and Sarah Plaaitjies.

⁴⁶³ Interview with Willie Peters, Joyce Peters, Sarah Plaaitjies, B MacLennan, *Glenmore: The story of a forced removal* (Cape Town, 1987), p. 10

⁴⁶⁴ Interview with Joyce Peters and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 5.

⁴⁶⁵ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

⁴⁶⁶ Interviews with Joyce Peters and Leon Rijgrok.

⁴⁶⁷ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

In the late 1960s, the South African government decided to build a coastal road (R72) that would connect the two major centres of the Eastern Cape, Port Elizabeth and East London.⁴⁶⁸ A section of the R72 was to connect Alexandria with Kenton-on-Sea. The authorities approached the trustee in order to ascertain whether the road could slice through the entire breadth of the farm.⁴⁶⁹ There is no evidence to suggest that the trustees ever consulted with the usufructuaries beforehand about the intended project. The usufructuaries received R413.44 in compensation to be divided between themselves.⁴⁷⁰ It is unclear whether this amount was the actual value of the land expropriated or whether it is below par value. The fact remains, the usufructuaries were the only ones on Klipfontein that benefited from the expropriation.

Unfortunately this was not the only case where land was literally sold from under the Klipfonteiners' feet. Since the death of Dirk Janse van Rensburg, the usufructuaries were obliged to pay an annual fee to settle the rates and taxes pertaining to Klipfontein.⁴⁷¹ The trustee was to administer the financial affairs of the usufructuaries. By 1939, the trustees claimed that the estate of Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg could not cover these costs any more. The trustee thus applied to the Supreme Court to have portions of the farm 'unlocked' for purposes of being sold in order to settle them.⁴⁷² The Supreme Court granted the order on 26 May, 1939.⁴⁷³

The trustees sold both portions (closest to the Bushman's River) to one white farmer and one white developer. Portion 1 measured 8.5055 morgen and was sold to Carel Ignatius Scheepers.⁴⁷⁴ Portion 2 measured 56.5259 morgen and was sold to Nico Bessinger.⁴⁷⁵ Apart from the questionable legality of the court order, the other puzzling thing was the cost price of the respective properties. Portion 1 was sold for a total of £725, while Portion

⁴⁶⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 1.

⁴⁶⁹ *Wilkens v Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴⁷⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 1 and interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁷¹ Letter re: *Estate DJJ and SJ van Rensburg – No. 65/91* from Syfret, Godlonton and Low to The Master of the Supreme Court (18 December, 1941).

⁴⁷² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 1, Letter re: *Report on the Farm Klipfontein No. 346, Portion 1 Alexandria* from Silberbauers Attorneys to Messrs Oosthuizen, Hazell and Wilmot (7 October, 1993) and *Wilkens v Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴⁷³ *Wilkens v Janse van Rensburg and Others* (Unreported) Case no: M386/78.

⁴⁷⁴ *First and final account of the administration and distribution of the Estate of the late Sarah Janse van Rensburg (born Carelse) and subsequently deceased spouse Dirk Janse van Rensburg of Klipfontein District Alexandria* No. 65/91: 39/598.

⁴⁷⁵ *First and final account of the administration and distribution of the Estate of the late Sarah Janse van Rensburg (born Carelse) and subsequently deceased spouse Dirk Janse van Rensburg of Klipfontein District Alexandria* No. 65/91: 39/598.

2 was only sold for £750 according to the Deed of sale.⁴⁷⁶ Such a disparity between the price and size of Portion 2 when compared with Portion 1 was grossly disproportionate to say the least. The reasons for such a gross disparity are unclear. The trustees would most probably have argued that the net market value of Portion 2 as agricultural land was such that it was worth very little as most of it was on hilly land. The fact that it later became a residential area shortly thereafter was insignificant.⁴⁷⁷

The usufructuaries maintained that their forefathers were not aware of what they were agreeing to when they put their mark at the end of that contract of sale. Magenis van Rensburg Jr claims that the “*ou mensies*” (the usufructuaries in 1939) were coerced into signing the transfer documents without even knowing what they signed.⁴⁷⁸ The usufructuaries were illiterate and, according to Van Rensburg, the trustees took full advantage in order to quickly settle the payments with little regard to the financial gain of the Klipfonteiners themselves.⁴⁷⁹ The usufructuaries felt that they had been betrayed by the trustees. They also felt a strong sense of guilt for allowing such a large portion of their ancestral land be sold from under them so easily.

The rest of the Klipfonteiners blamed the usufructuaries for selling off more valuable living space.⁴⁸⁰ As a result they grew more distrustful and felt that the usufructuaries did not have their interests at heart. Thus they mobilised and created a 'community' group that claimed to include all Klipfonteiners. They elected their leaders through the various churches and it was the duty of these leaders to advance the needs of all Klipfonteiners and not only that of the usufructuaries and their direct descendants.

“You're my people and I can't refuse you”⁴⁸¹: The black Africans on Klipfontein

The white farmers were not the only tenants of Klipfontein. By the beginning of 1977 there were some sixty-five amaXhosa families.⁴⁸² A few of these families may have been descendants of people who had lived and worked on the farm since the days of the

⁴⁷⁶ *First and final account of the administration and distribution of the Estate of the late Sarah Janse van Rensburg (born Carelse) and subsequently deceased spouse Dirk Janse van Rensburg of Klipfontein District Alexandria* No. 65/91: 39/598.

⁴⁷⁷ Portion 1 would later be developed be subdivided by Scheepers and sold off as residential plots to white holidaymakers. It was amalgamated into the 'old' residential area which used to be Thomas Futter's land (See Chapter 1).

⁴⁷⁸ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ Interview with Willie Peters and Joyce Peters.

⁴⁸¹ Magenis van Janse Rensburg Sr's words to Witvoet Mapapu, an amaXhosa tenant on Klipfontein.

⁴⁸² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 8

stamouers.⁴⁸³ Some of the adults at the time of the forced removals in 1979 said that they were born on Klipfontein.⁴⁸⁴ Others had lived on Klipfontein long enough to raise their own children there. But, by far the greater part of Klipfontein's black African population consisted of families that had moved there in the early 1970s.⁴⁸⁵

Farmworkers in the 1970s in the Eastern Province worked long hours in harsh and sometimes dangerous conditions. Wages were, on average barely R10 per month with rations and other benefits adding another R30 to R40 in value.⁴⁸⁶ They received no overtime pay, had no right to public holidays, sick pay or leave pay. If they were disobedient or neglectful, they could face criminal charges and possible imprisonment.⁴⁸⁷ What made this exploitation possible were laws and regulations designed to supply the farmer with a constant supply of cheap and subservient labour. The laws made it difficult for the worker to seek better paid jobs in the cities, even difficult to move from one farmer to another. These laws ensured that once someone had the words "farm labourer" stamped in their reference book, they would remain farm labourers for the rest of their working lives.⁴⁸⁸ Once his usefulness as a labourer had passed, another set of rules came into force to effectively 'dispose' of him.⁴⁸⁹ By law, no person other than the one who was 'registered and employed full-time as a bona fide Bantu employee' and his 'immediate family' were allowed to live on the farmer's land.⁴⁹⁰ Government policy also dictated that 'the Bantu' were only 'temporarily resident in the European areas of the Republic, for as long as they offer their labour there.'⁴⁹¹ As soon as they became unfit for work or were no longer needed they were required to return to "their country of origin or the territory of the national unit where they fit in ethnically if they were not born and bred in the homeland".⁴⁹² For an Eastern Cape farmworker who might have been born on white farmland, a 'return' to a place he had never seen before must have been a frightening prospect. The Ciskei – one of two homelands closest to the Eastern Cape – had a population far greater than

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 2 and interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁸⁵ Letter: *Removal of Klipfontein Squatters* from WHD Deacon (Town Clerk) Boesmansriviermond Municipality, 16 August, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 12.

⁴⁸⁶ A wage of R5 or less was not uncommon.

⁴⁸⁷ This was so until 1973, when the Masters and Servants Act was repealed.

⁴⁸⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 2.

⁴⁸⁹ C Desmond, *The Discarded People* (Victoria, 1972), p.76.

⁴⁹⁰ Desmond, *Discarded People* (Victoria, 1972), pp. 79-80.

⁴⁹¹ General Circular No. 25, Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, (12 December, 1967), quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 2.

⁴⁹² General Circular No. 25, Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, (12 December, 1967), quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 2.

what it could support.⁴⁹³ Poverty was endemic, large tracts of land were rapidly turned into unworkable semi-desert through overgrazing. It is therefore understandable that evicted farmworkers in the Alexandria District preferred to settle and make their new homes on Klipfontein.

Old age and inability to work due to disability were common reasons for the evictions of farm workers.⁴⁹⁴ In the early 1970s an increasing number of workers also lost their jobs and homes through redundancy.⁴⁹⁵ Throughout South Africa agriculture was under pressure from rising costs in fuel, fertiliser and machinery. In the Alexandria district, where farming was labour intensive, the monthly wage bill was also a factor.⁴⁹⁶ Farmers therefore sought new methods which were more efficient and required fewer workers. Alexandria's dairy farmers ceased growing fodder which had to be cut, transported and fed to animals. Instead they developed pasture systems which demanded very little labour. When Eskom power came to the area in 1971, it meant milking machines could also be utilised.⁴⁹⁷ Chicory farmers began fertilising scientifically so they could plant smaller areas and obtain better yields. They investigated improved weed-spraying programmes and devices such as mechanical planters.⁴⁹⁸ Some of them abandoned the crop altogether and adopted beef or wheat farming. Another reason was that since the late 1960s, the scale of farming in the area changed. Farmers described as 'Rhodesian suckers' by local farmers bought farms at grossly inflated prices.⁴⁹⁹ The result was a shift from so-called 'three-generation' farms whose owners grew up with the amaXhosa families on the farms and had very paternalistic attitudes towards their labourers but were also hesitant to expel them, towards these new farmers from Rhodesia who did not share such 'loyalties' towards those families.⁵⁰⁰ They imported their own labour force, which was thought to be cheaper than the local labour. These farmers apparently also felt some sort of 'loyalty' or 'sentimentality' towards their labourers which aided in their choice of preference.⁵⁰¹

In 1965 there had been 4,050 full-time employees on farms in the Alexandria district.⁵⁰² By

⁴⁹³ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 3.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3 and Desmond, *The Discarded People* pp. 79.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3 and Desmond, *The Discarded People* pp. 79-80.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3 and interview with Marselle Marais.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁹⁹ *Surplus People's Project questionnaires* (Johannesburg, 1985), pp. 142-143.

⁵⁰⁰ *SPP questionnaires* p. 143.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁵⁰² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 3.

August 1976, that number decreased to 3,053.⁵⁰³ A quarter of the labour force was made redundant, meaning that many people sought refuge in such a short space of time and thought they found it on Klipfontein. In fact, according to a letter written by William Deacon, the town clerk of Boesmansriviermond, both municipalities of Kenton and Boesmansriviermond initially planned to establish a permanent black African township on the farm. 'Premature' press statements and Radio Bantu broadcasts in the early 1970s apparently spread false rumours that if black Africans squatted there, they would have "rights in the new township".⁵⁰⁴ This perception seemed to have been encouraged by Magenis van Rensburg Sr through his invitations extended to evicted black African farm workers to settle on Klipfontein.⁵⁰⁵

Dirk van Rensburg, brother of one of the usufructuaries, Hans, relates how "the black people would come here and give a gift, and we would give them a piece of land."⁵⁰⁶ This 'gift' amounted to rent and would range from a bottle of brandy to 'a goat, a pig or some other slaughter animal'.⁵⁰⁷ Most of the newer arrivals settled on Jack Jacobs' or Magenis van Rensburg (Sr) 'portions'. Witvoet Mapapu, a disability pensioner, was one of the 'new' arrivals and met with Magenis van Rensburg through an interpreter.⁵⁰⁸ Speaking to MacLennan in 1983, Mapapu said that Van Rensburg agreed to give him a place to stay and asked him whether he had material to build a house.⁵⁰⁹ Mapapu said he did indeed have some material. Van Rensburg then said "I'll show you a place to build. You're my people and I can't refuse you."⁵¹⁰ Mapapu relates that he was surprised and uncertain why Magenis van Rensburg said this to him. Apparently Mapapu was not the only Xhosa settler to whom Van Rensburg made this remark.⁵¹¹ Mapapu said that Van Rensburg and his interpreter were drinking while they were negotiating his stay on Klipfontein.⁵¹² Mapapu was unsure how to remunerate Van Rensburg but the usufructuary told him that a bottle of brandy would suffice.⁵¹³ Mapapu said he had no money in hand to purchase a bottle so Van Rensburg told Mapapu that he could give it to him at a later stage. Mapapu

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵⁰⁴ Letter *RE: Removal of Klipfontein Squatters* from WH Deacon, town clerk, Municipality of Boesmansriviermond, to Ben MacLennan 16 August, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 12.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 3.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3 and interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

⁵⁰⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.* and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 4.

⁵¹¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 4-5.

⁵¹² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

subsequently forgot about it and never gave it to him. By all accounts Van Rensburg never made a point of collecting this 'payment' from Mapapu either.⁵¹⁴

Van Rensburg would later claim that his own motivation for allowing black Africans on his 'portion' was 'out of the goodness of my heart.'⁵¹⁵ This was disputed by other Klipfonteiners who said that he 'made [a] business' of encouraging people to come to Klipfontein.⁵¹⁶ Some *inkomers* as well as Nicolaas Fischat accused them "farming with people" ("*boer met mense*").⁵¹⁷ However, there seems to be no documented evidence that either Van Rensburg or Jacobs obtained any long-term benefits such as regular rentals from allotting land to the amaXhosa. Dirk van Rensburg said: "They (the amaXhosa labourers) came to rest here, a free home. They could go and work anywhere and their home was free."⁵¹⁸ Many others were not even asked for a 'gift'. One of these was another pensioner Gungutu Zake who arrived Klipfontein in 1976. He asked to settle on Jack Jacobs' 'portion'. Jacobs told him "I'm glad to have you here Mr Zake. You can stay here until you die. There is enough place for you here."⁵¹⁹

Clearly, Jacobs and Van Rensburg, whether deliberately or not, misinterpreted the 'asylum' clause to include any person who was destitute and needed a place to stay. This may explain why Van Rensburg referred to the amaXhosa squatters as 'his people'. It may also go a long way to explain Van Rensburg's and Jacobs' attachment to Klipfontein. Contrary to Nicolaas Fischat, Van Rensburg and Jacobs did not necessarily see the farm as an enclave of coloured people in the area. They were of the opinion that the land could never be worked by any of them, but they had a duty as usufructuaries to their people as well as their ancestors. The land that was not leased to farmers or occupied by the *inkomers*, was free and would go unused. Thus it becomes easier to understand the motives behind the two men's decision to host the farm labourers without any return. Bribes were asked for and accepted but only on an *ad hoc* basis and seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. The two usufructuaries were aware of the injustices of evictions taking place on the farms around them and saw these evictees as the destitute people referred to in the Will. Thus they chose to act accordingly as opposed to Fischat who chose to attract as little

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.* and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 4

⁵¹⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 4

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10 and interviews with Willie Peters, Joyce Peters, Sarah Plaatjies and Magen van Rensburg.

⁵¹⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Dirk van Rensburg, 27 July 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 34.

⁵¹⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 4.

unwanted attention to Klipfontein as possible in order to, as he saw it, 'preserve' his heritage. However it came about, whether on account of instant material gain or open defiance towards apartheid laws, the amaXhosa were told by the two usufructuaries, erroneously, that they were allowed to stay.⁵²⁰

Most of amaXhosa squatters were employed on neighbouring farms as casual labour, working in the chicory fields. Mapapu remembered he, his wife and two of his children would take on casual work on farms in the area:

We worked in the chicory fields, Monday to Friday. The lorry came at 7am to collect us and we left at 5pm to go home... I had a knife and I would go along behind the tractor as it uprooted the chicory. I would cut the leaves off the plant and leave the root for the people behind me to put into bags. The work was hard for me because I couldn't be as fast as the other people because of my aching feet. We got no rations, no midday meal or tea from the farmers. We had to bring our own food. Everybody was paid R5 a week.⁵²¹ I was never satisfied with the money, but I had no option – I had to support the family.⁵²²

Chicory farming provided most of the jobs for those amaXhosa on Klipfontein, but many of them were also employed as labourers, gardeners or domestic workers⁵²³ in Kenton and Boesmansriviermond. Some even used the farm as a base from which to seek migrant work. Zoli Tokwe was employed by Escom on a project quite a distance away and returned only on weekends to see his family.⁵²⁴ Other men travelled in search of employment on the gold mines of the (then) Transvaal and Orange Free State.⁵²⁵

Most families supplemented their cash income by growing vegetables and, in good years, selling what they were not able to eat themselves. Some even kept livestock. In one

⁵²⁰ These amaXhosa people were later labelled as 'squatters' by the other two usufructuaries, most of the Klipfonteiners and government authorities. A 'squatter' was normally defined as a person who settles on land, especially public land, without title, or who takes unauthorised possession of unoccupied premises. The apartheid authorities tended to use the term to describe any person whose presence on a particular piece of land they disapprove, regardless of any agreement between the squatter and landowner.

⁵²¹ A more common weekly wage at the time for work in the chicory fields was R3.

⁵²² MacLennan, "Mr Mapapu: A life history", *Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in southern Africa*, Carnegie Conference Paper No. 76, Cape Town, 13 – 19 April 1984, p. 4.

⁵²³ Domestic work was seasonal only and depended on the influx of white holidaymakers.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

exceptional case, a widow, Nowanisa Mbele, had cattle, goats, a horse and chickens as well as maize, potatoes, sweet potatoes and beans.⁵²⁶ This type of farming was limited to feed at least one household. Therefore the black Africans did not require large-scale farming techniques or tools to be successful.

There was a shortage of schools for the amaXhosa children of Klipfontein. The only school on the farm was the NG church school, which was an Afrikaans-medium school.⁵²⁷ During the 1960s the Methodist Church of Kenton started a primary school on the farm.⁵²⁸ But control of this school would be taken over by the Department of Bantu Education.⁵²⁹ As far as can be ascertained, these children were mostly kept apart from the rest of the Klipfonteiners' children – through schooling as well as socially.⁵³⁰ The Klipfonteiners were, for the most part, not inclined to mix with the amaXhosa as this might be perceived as being in solidarity with the amaXhosa.⁵³¹ The dominant discourse on Klipfontein at the time was that racial mixing “bred conflict” – one that was most certainly perpetuated by Nicolaas Fischat. This provided the justification of the apartheid government's introduction of laws perpetuating racial segregation, such as the Group Areas Act or the more subtle Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (PISA) of 1951.⁵³² The Klipfonteiners, or at least the *inkomers* and Fischat were, for the most part uncertain of their legal position and thus feared that if a sense of community between the Klipfonteiners and the black African squatters was perceived by their white neighbours, their future on Klipfontein would be jeopardised.⁵³³ Whatever the reason, mixing was kept at a minimum and the Klipfonteiners stayed in their allotted areas whilst the amaXhosa were confined to their own area bordering the areas rented out to neighbouring white farmers. By all accounts the allotment of land was mutually agreed upon between usufructuary and amaXhosa family head.⁵³⁴

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵²⁷ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵²⁹ It is not clear when this school was started. But from all accounts it must have started relatively late because many of the children who attended it were only second generation pupils before it closed down as a result of the forced removals.

⁵³⁰ Interviews with Joyce Peters and Magenis van Janse Rensburg.

⁵³¹ While Magenis van Rensburg Sr encouraged mixing with the amaXhosa, Fischat vehemently opposed it. As Fischat was more involved with the Klipfontein community through the church, he became a revered figure within the community. Therefore, many Klipfonteiners were influenced by his views.

⁵³² Trotter, “Trauma and memory”, in Adhikari, *Burdened by race* pp. 50-51, MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 7-11 and *SPP questionnaire* p. 140.

⁵³³ Interviews with Joyce Peters, Willie Peters and Sarah Plaaitjies.

⁵³⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Dirk van Rensburg, 27 July 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 34, Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39, L Platzky, *The Surplus People: forced removals in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1985), p. 221 and interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

One thing which the Klipfonteiners and amaXhosa had in common was the scarcity of drinking water on the farm. Although parts of Klipfontein become marsh during the rainy season, the stream running through it dwindles to little more than a series of stagnant pools during the dry season. One amaXhosa man said that he would not mind resettling elsewhere “because there’s no wood and no water.”⁵³⁵ But this was not altogether true.

On 15 June, 1974 an official notice was published in the Public Press by the Kenton-on-Sea Village Management Board (the Village Management Board) which approved a proposed water-scheme which would feed Kenton and Boesmansriviermond villages.⁵³⁶ The scheme included a pipeline to be laid from the freshwater boreholes near the township of Cannon Rocks. It would then be piped to a pumping installation at Bakanas. From there, the pipeline would run alongside the public road and across the bridge over the Bushman’s River and into Kenton.⁵³⁷ The Village Management Board obtained permission from the trustee at the time to lay a section of the pipeline through the entire breadth of Klipfontein, traversing it completely.⁵³⁸ In a letter to the trustee, Andrew Wilkens, the Village Management Board assured him and the usufructuaries that the pipeline would be laid deep enough so that “it will not interfere with any farming activities over it.”⁵³⁹ The trustee subsequently accepted this proposal and notified the usufructuaries. The Klipfonteiners were later also told that this water scheme would benefit them as it would provide water for them as well. Thus the usufructuaries and the rest of the Klipfonteiners were quite supportive of the initiative. However, they soon learned that the water scheme was never meant to benefit them. As Klipfontein was private property, the Village Management Board felt that it was not obliged to supply it with water as well. It sought permission to lay the pipeline only and was able to obtain it from the trustee. Due to some of the records having been lost, it is uncertain how much compensation the usufructuaries received. But what is clear is that the pipeline did more harm than good. Except for portions of land rented out to white farmers and to a lesser degree, black Africans, “any farming activities” had ceased on Klipfontein since the beginning of the 20th Century. They were desperate for water supplies but the failure to provide such, coupled with the rapid increase of the farm’s

⁵³⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 5.

⁵³⁶ Notice: *Voorgestelde aanbou van waterskema Kenton-on-Sea Dorpsbestuur*, No: 984/934/AvH/RK, 15 June, 1974.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁸ Letter re: *Estate late DJ and SJ van Rensburg – Kenton-on-Sea Water Scheme* from AD Wilkins (Manager, Syfrets Trust and Executor Company, Grahamstown), 22 August, 1974.

⁵³⁹ Letter: *Kenton-on-Sea: Water Scheme. Route of Pipeline* from Bowler, van Heerden and Partners on behalf of the Kenton-on-Sea Village Management Board, to Syfrets Trust and Executive Company (Grahamstown), 1 August, 1974.

population in the mid-1970s, did not help matters.

As a result of the water shortage, health problems started to arise. In 1978 it was reported that many people (mostly children) were arriving at the clinic with illnesses caused by drinking 'dirty water' from the stream.⁵⁴⁰ Witvoet Mapapu described his experiences having to "go over the fence and steal water from the dams of neighbouring chicory farms."⁵⁴¹ He said that that they would sometimes go during the day but most of their raids for water were conducted at night-time when it was safer.⁵⁴² This was a common practice, not only among the amaXhosa but also the Klipfonteiners. Magenis van Rensburg Jr reminisces how he and his friends would jump over the fence to steal water during the nights: "We were scared. Sometimes the farmers would chase us and we were scared that we would get shot. But it was always good sports." [My translation]⁵⁴³ He says that this was one thing which the amaXhosa people and the Klipfonteiners had in common.⁵⁴⁴ Access to water was the common struggle on Klipfontein for the Klipfonteiners as well as the amaXhosa residents, so it is not surprising that something even resembling a common struggle emanated from procuring water off the farms of white neighbours.

Unsurprisingly, the white farmers instituted legal action against trespassers stealing water from their dams. One farmer who leased land from Hans van Rensburg built two dams there to water his stock. He complained that one of the dams had been emptied "within three weeks" despite the fact that the water was "not fit" for human consumption due to contamination by cattle.⁵⁴⁵ Another farmer, Theo Crouse, who hired a portion of Magenis van Rensburg Sr's land for three years under a verbal agreement felt equally peeved. With all the theft and encroachment of people onto his property he came to the conclusion that the "African families did not have my interests at heart."⁵⁴⁶ On 18 February 1977, he gave written notice to eight amaXhosa families to leave Klipfontein within 14 days.⁵⁴⁷ When they did not depart, he laid a charge of trespassing against them. Nico Bessinger, who had been renting a different portion of the farm, also gave 14 days notice at the same time to

⁵⁴⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 5.

⁵⁴¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁵⁴² Less risky, but more costly, was paying a truck-driver R1 to fetch water from Boknes.

⁵⁴³ Interview with Magenis Janse van Rensburg.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 9.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

nineteen families and also laid a charge of trespassing against them.⁵⁴⁸ The farmers claimed that the amaXhosa were a threat to their livelihoods due to their swelling numbers. But there were other possible motives for the farmers' actions:

Gungutu Zake relates that "there was supposed to be a fence dividing off the land he (Bessinger) was renting from the rest of Magen's land, but [he] never built it up because he wanted all the land. The people weren't staying on Bessinger's land."⁵⁴⁹ Therefore, Zake was convinced that Bessinger wanted all of Van Rensburg's land for grazing. The presence of the black Africans threatened to derail Bessinger's plans and therefore, he felt they needed to be removed.

But the black Africans did not receive the notice meekly. Zake took the notice with him to Port Elizabeth where he showed it to AZ Lamani, a member of the local Bantu Advisory Board, a forerunner to what would become black "town councils".⁵⁵⁰ Lamani advised Zake to find someone who had received the notice and who could head a committee to fight the evictions. He convinced Tutu Gqokani, who had come to Klipfontein after being evicted by the farmer for whom he had worked. He headed the committee and together with Zake, gathered a few other squatters who were served notice. There was no election to form the committee, but Gqokani became chairman and Zake vice-chairman by popular 'agreement'.⁵⁵¹

The committee called a meeting at Gqokani's house late one afternoon so that those committee members who had jobs in the area could attend.⁵⁵² According to Zake over a hundred amaXhosa Klipfontein squatters attended the meeting.⁵⁵³ There were so many people present that the meeting had to be held outside Zake's house. The meeting was soon interrupted by the arrival of Sergeant Leon Rijgrok,⁵⁵⁴ police station commander of Kenton-on-Sea, and Constable James Khani. Sergeant Rijgrok allegedly demanded of the people present to know why no permission had been sought to hold the meeting.⁵⁵⁵ Zake says that he told the two policemen that they did not know that they had to get permission.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁴⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.* and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 6.

⁵⁵¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 6.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁵³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

⁵⁵⁴ Many of the amaXhosa found it difficult to pronounce his name, so he was known to them simply as "the sergeant".

⁵⁵⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

“They asked for the chairman and we said we were all chairmen at this meeting. Then they wanted the owner of the house and they told Mr Gqukani that they were going to arrest him. It was a threat.”⁵⁵⁶ According to Sergeant Rijgros, he had reacted to a complaint made by an anonymous source that an illegal gathering of people were taking place on the farm.⁵⁵⁷ Klipfontein was private property and as such, the amaXhosa were perceived to be on the farm illegally.⁵⁵⁸ Rijgros then ordered that no more meetings take place between the squatters.⁵⁵⁹ Zake said that the rapid arrival of the policemen prevented the major issues from being discussed.⁵⁶⁰

A delegation from the committee then went to Port Elizabeth to consult Lamani once more. He suggested that they make use of the services of a young lawyer he knew, Herbert Fischat.⁵⁶¹ Fischat was a relative by marriage of Nicolaas Fischat. In fact, Herbert was the son of his estranged brother. It is believed by many Klipfonteiners that Herbert agreed to take on the case of the amaXhosa in response to a feud which erupted between his uncle and his father.⁵⁶² This kind of speculation was very often taken at face value on Klipfontein and helped to inflame an already volatile situation. But Herbert Fischat did not take on the case for free and there was a problem in paying his legal fees. Fortunately for the amaXhosa, there were a number of people from the Alexandria District who lived and worked in Port Elizabeth, many of whom were relatives of the amaXhosa on Klipfontein.⁵⁶³ They agreed to pay a first instalment of his fees.

Fischat appeared for the accused amaXhosa family heads when the case of trespassing came to court before an assistant magistrate in Boesmansriviermond on 6 April 1977.⁵⁶⁴ All twenty-seven family heads were found guilty and sentenced to pay a R20 fine (or 20 days in jail). The sentence was suspended on the condition that they leave Klipfontein before 19 April 1977.⁵⁶⁵ Fischat then intended taking the case on appeal to the Supreme Court, arguing that the twenty-seven household heads had been convicted despite evidence from some usufructuaries that the families had their consent to be on the farm. Other evidence showed one of the men charged had lived on Klipfontein for the past thirty

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁷ Interview with Leon Rijgros.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 7.

⁵⁶⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

⁵⁶¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 7.

⁵⁶² Interviews with Joyce Peters and Leon Rijgros.

⁵⁶³ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 7.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁶⁵ *State v Posiwa and seven others* (unreported) and *State v Shorty Myali and eighteen others* (unreported).

years and was employed by the father of one of the usufructuaries.⁵⁶⁶ But the case was never taken on appeal.

The chief magistrate at Alexandria forwarded the record of the proceedings to the Supreme Court in Grahamstown. In a covering letter, the chief magistrate said the formal notice of appeal had not yet been served, but that Fischat had informed him that they were “on the way”.⁵⁶⁷ The chief magistrate himself had doubts as to whether “the accused should in fact have been convicted”. It was for this reason that he put the matter forward for review himself.⁵⁶⁸ The review was carried out by Justice Jan Eksteen who delivered his judgment on 28 April 1977.⁵⁶⁹ He noted that the people who had been convicted were men and women between the ages of 40 and 60, all of whom had lived for several years on Klipfontein. One of the accused said he had been on the farm for “the last 39 years”.⁵⁷⁰ Another said that he could not remember for how long he had lived on Klipfontein, only that he had originally obtained permission to stay from Mageniz van Rensburg Sr's father. In Justice Eksteen's opinion, the attitude towards the families appeared to be “exceptionally unfeeling”.⁵⁷¹ The judge conceded that Crouse and Bessinger had entered into contractual agreements with the usufructuaries, but then so too had the amaXhosa families, and perhaps at an earlier date than the farmers. Eksteen continued: “For the assistant magistrate to label them as 'squatters' appears to me to be totally unjust.”⁵⁷² Even if the farmers had the right to evict the families, the fourteen days given to them to get off the land seemed to be “hopelessly inadequate” and could not be regarded as legal notice.⁵⁷³ Justice Eksteen did not, however, consider it necessary to make any finding on these aspects as he found that “criminal procedure cannot be dragged in to resolve essentially a civil dispute.”⁵⁷⁴ He found that was no evidence that the accused had the intention of committing an offence by staying on the land. He further dismissed the notice as being 'inadequate' and 'illegal'.⁵⁷⁵ He accordingly set aside the convictions and sentences of all the accused in both cases.

⁵⁶⁶ *MacLennan, Glenmore* p. 7.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁶⁹ Review Judgment 243 of 1977 *State v Posiwa and seven others* (unreported) and *State v Shorty Myali and eighteen others* (unreported).

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

The attempts of white farmers and authorities to get rid of the amaXhosa on Klipfontein were so desperate that they were prepared to disregard the law themselves by using it to harass and coerce those living on the tracts of land which the white farmers claimed they had leased from the usufructuaries. What these events did instead was to mobilise the amaXhosa families into a committee whose sole aim was to resist the evictions. Later, the rest of the amaXhosa would have family heads represent them in the committee. Also, this success would encourage the amaXhosa to use the committee to represent them when they were faced with eviction. They also realised for the first time that the law afforded some protection from the authorities.

After the judgment was handed down, Lamani called all family heads to Alexandria.⁵⁷⁶ He informed them that the ruling was that they would not have to relocate from Klipfontein. He told them that the reason was that “no people were allowed to evict anybody from the land that was not their own.”⁵⁷⁷ But as it turned out, the families could be evicted. The Supreme Court judgment would only be a temporary reprieve.

Conclusion

The social engineering effected through the Group Areas Act and other racially-based legislation that would lead to forced removals did not impact the coloured population of Klipfontein as it did so many other coloured communities around South Africa. In fact there would be no dispossession of coloured people on the farm whatsoever. Those who came to Klipfontein were not located there by government authorities to be left to their own devices. They moved to Klipfontein because they could. Therefore, instead of a narrative that reminisced on the “good old days” before being removed, the coloured population on Klipfontein celebrate their connection to the land, rather than commemorate their loss of it. They do this through the telling of stories of their ancestors or through stories that they adopt to establish a claim which they feel cannot be contested. But the narratives are not singular. In fact, they are fractured as the various factions on Klipfontein vie for control of the dominant narrative in order to legitimise and advance their own agendas. At least three broad narratives relating to the land and reflecting the three main factions on Klipfontein prior to 1979 exist: The usufructuaries, the *inkomers* and the amaXhosa labourers.

The narrative of the usufructuaries is similar when it comes to describing their attachment

⁵⁷⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 7.

⁵⁷⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

to the land. It can be seen from this chapter that they have assumed the role of custodians over the land and as such, have a responsibility to their family to safeguard the heritage of the *stamouers*, whilst being faced with overwhelming financial constraints and dispossession of various tracts of land, both through private sale and expropriation by the state. Without real start-up and agricultural capital and with an increasing number of *inkomers* seeking land in terms of the “asylum clause”, the usufructuaries could never be financially secure. Therefore, renting out land to neighbouring white farmers is regarded as the only viable option open to the usufructuaries. Without it the usufructuaries claim that having the land would serve no purpose. They would be as indigent as the relatives they could not refuse access to the land. Therefore this narrative aims to justify the actions of the usufructuaries, such as why the proceeds derived from the lease agreements and expropriations were never distributed among all Klipfonteiners. Additionally, it also seeks to explain why they have remained poor in spite of claiming rights to lease the land.

The *inkomers*, on the other hand, were never entitled to a percentage of the income derived from the lease agreements. No matter how significant their contribution to the development of the farm, they would be dependent on the generosity of the usufructuary whose portion they were allotted. This did not sit well with the *inkomers* so they formed a community group to challenge and monitor the actions of the usufructuaries if they felt that it was contrary to the interests of all Klipfonteiners. The narrative of the *inkomers* group entails narrative of struggle; from being destitute and unsure of their futures, to finding sanctuary to eke out an existence. To them, the natural progression would inevitably be the inclusion of *inkomers* as participants to all affairs regarding Klipfontein and a sharing of all proceeds proportionally and fairly without bias. When this did not materialise, the *inkomers* took it upon themselves and, under the auspices of the church, formed a committee comprising of the different elders (discussed in Chapter 3). They in turn, raised issues which concerned all Klipfonteiners and not just the usufructuaries. Most of these issues related to the administration of the farm. The Klipfonteinier committee at least, was aware of the involvement of the trustees in the affairs of the usufructuaries. But they felt that the usufructuaries had the relative authority to influence the decisions of the trustees or at least make the trustees aware of plight of the *inkomers*. This, they felt, was not happening. One of these issues was the leasing of land to white farmers and black African farmworkers on land that was originally intended by Dirk and Sarah Janse van Rensburg for the use of their people exclusively.

The increasing encroachment of these two 'entities' onto Klipfontein meant the inevitable rise in tensions not only between the *inkomers* and the usufructuaries, but also between the *inkomers*, including some usufructuaries and those 'entities', especially the amaXhosa squatters.

These squatters, it can be seen, had no real legal rights to Klipfontein other than the word of some usufructuaries which permitted them to remain on the land. As they were black farmworkers, they were at the bottom rung in terms of the groups afforded rights on Klipfontein. They or their forebears had already endured dispossession of land or eviction due to redundancy. Given the utter lack of foresight and planning on the part of the local authorities to adequately house them, they were left to their own devices. As they started to establish some sort of community on Klipfontein, concern was raised from within and outside Klipfontein about their unwanted presence in the area. They were viewed as 'squatters', bottom-feeders who intruded on private property and threatened the precious resources of the Klipfonteiners and the white tenants as well as the neighbouring white communities. But for these people, Klipfontein was the only place that afforded them some form of respite from the dependency they had on government authorities. For many of them, they had come to Klipfontein desperately seeking a place to eke out an existence. They had heard that there was place for them after many of them were retrenched for being too old to work efficiently. By being so close to white resorts, it meant that their younger family members could get work relatively close to home. Others used Klipfontein as a base for their families while they sought employment on the various mines on the Highveld. The amaXhosa also did not occupy lots on the farm without obtaining permission from (certain) usufructuaries. Therefore, it would be incorrect to call these families 'squatters'.

It can be seen from above that informal agreements were reached between at least two usufructuaries for them to settle on allotted lands which were used by those usufructuaries. There is no evidence to suggest that the amaXhosa moved outside of their allotted areas to other usufructuary 'portions' or encroached on the white tenants' land. Neither is there any proof to show any kind of open threats or acts of violence against the Klipfonteiners by the amaXhosa prior to the actual forced removals, as claimed by the *inkomers* and some usufructuaries.

Thus there arose a split in the usufructuary narrative. The problem posed by the

amaXhosa settling on Klipfontein was twofold: Firstly, the usufructuaries faced a moral dilemma of refusing the amaXhosa people. It has been ascertained that the Will never intended the “asylum clause” to be extended to include any destitute person, no matter their race. The two usufructuaries who indeed allowed them may have misinterpreted this provision and thus gave the erroneous impression to the amaXhosa that they were entitled to settle. Whether their misinterpretation was based on a moral standpoint of defying the law to provide for their fellow humans can only be speculated as to their true motive, as they accepted very little from these people. Secondly, the amount of space for settlement had declined. Rapidly rising numbers in population meant that less land was available for renting out to white farmers. It can be seen from above that it was the intention of the white tenants to rent more and more land as it was cheaper than to buy land in order to accommodate expanding operations. The usufructuaries needed the money and, though reluctantly, agreed to more space to be allotted to the white farmers. Added to this were the needs and wants of the *inkomers* who felt that their land and heritage were being undermined by the intruding white farmers and black African squatters. It can be seen that some usufructuaries tried to appease other Klipfonteiners by getting involved with them and their affairs, trying to retain the mantle of custodian of “Klipfontein heritage” by looking out for the interests of Klipfonteiners as envisaged in the Will.

The result was competing narratives. On the one hand there was a fractious struggle to keep and repossess land. On the other, was the banal bureaucracy involved in forcibly removing a group of people from an area based on their ethnicity. The clouds of distrust, tension and greed would accumulate over the group of people who had the least protection of the parties involved in this saga: the black Africans of Klipfontein. What follows is an account of their forced removal.

Figure 5: 65/91 Letter RE: *Estate DJJ and SJ van Rensburg* from The Master of the High Court, Cape Town to Mr Willem van Rensburg (30 December, 1941).

HGB-R/IdP. 65/91.

Cape

330. Cape Town, 30th December, 1941, ~~xxxx~~

the late D.A.J. van Rensburg and S.J. van Rensburg.

Sir,

It has been reported to me that you have failed to pay your proportionate share of the Divisional Council rates on the property "Klipfontein" for the year 1941. The amount due by you is £2. 18.7, and unless payment is made immediately to Mr. Mathieson of the Eastern Province Guardian Company, Grahamstown, I shall have to consider the question of advising him in his capacity as Administrator to take action against you and the two other beneficiaries who are in default with their payment of the rates.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MASTER OF THE SUPREME COURT.

Mr. Willem van Rensburg,
"Klipfontein",
near Bushman's River Mouth,
ALEXANDRIA,
C.P.

Map 7: Klipfontein after Expropriation

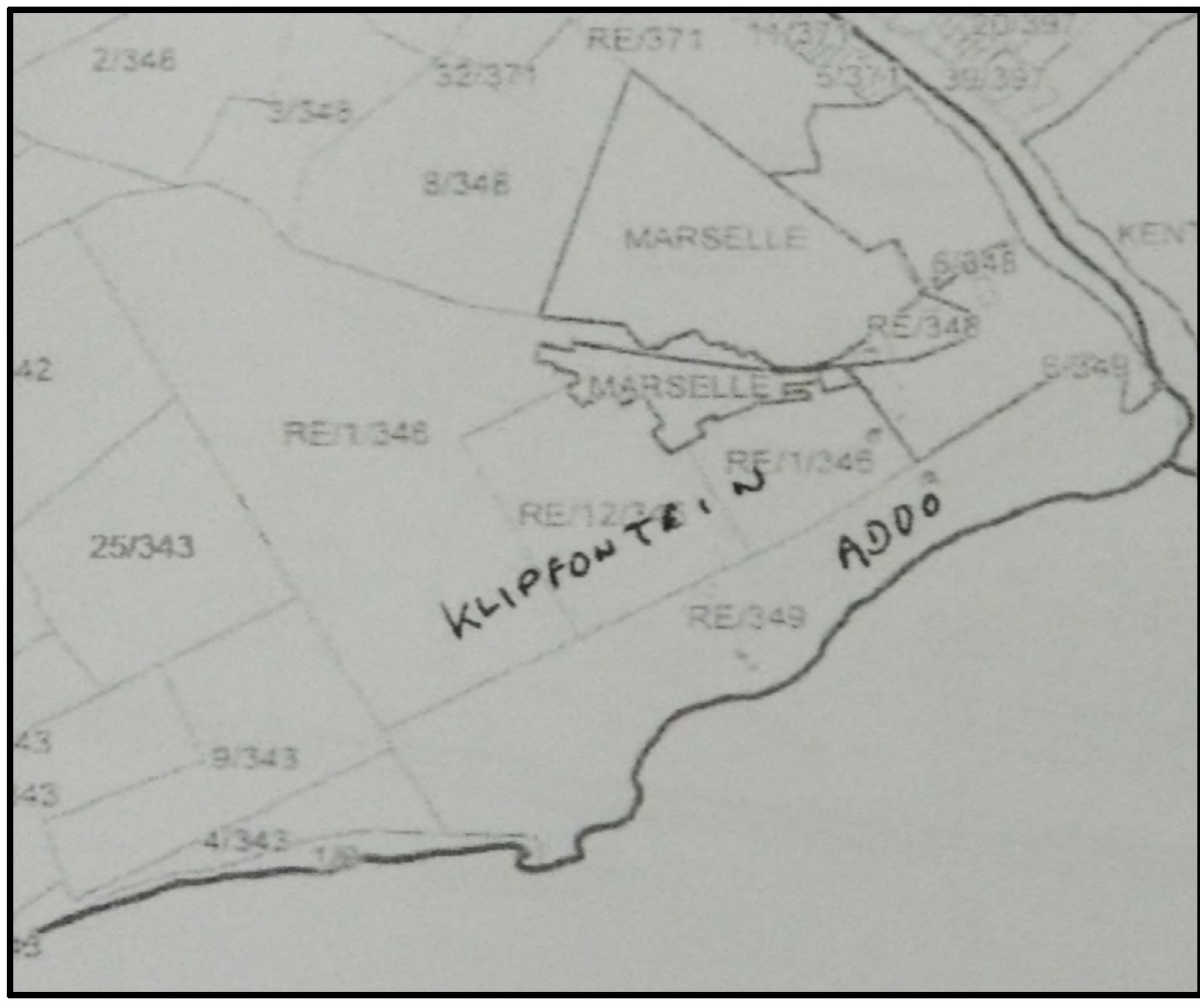


Figure 6: Notice: Voorgestelde aanbou van waterskema Kenton-on-Sea
Dorpsbestuur, No: 984/934/AvH/RK, 15 June, 1974.

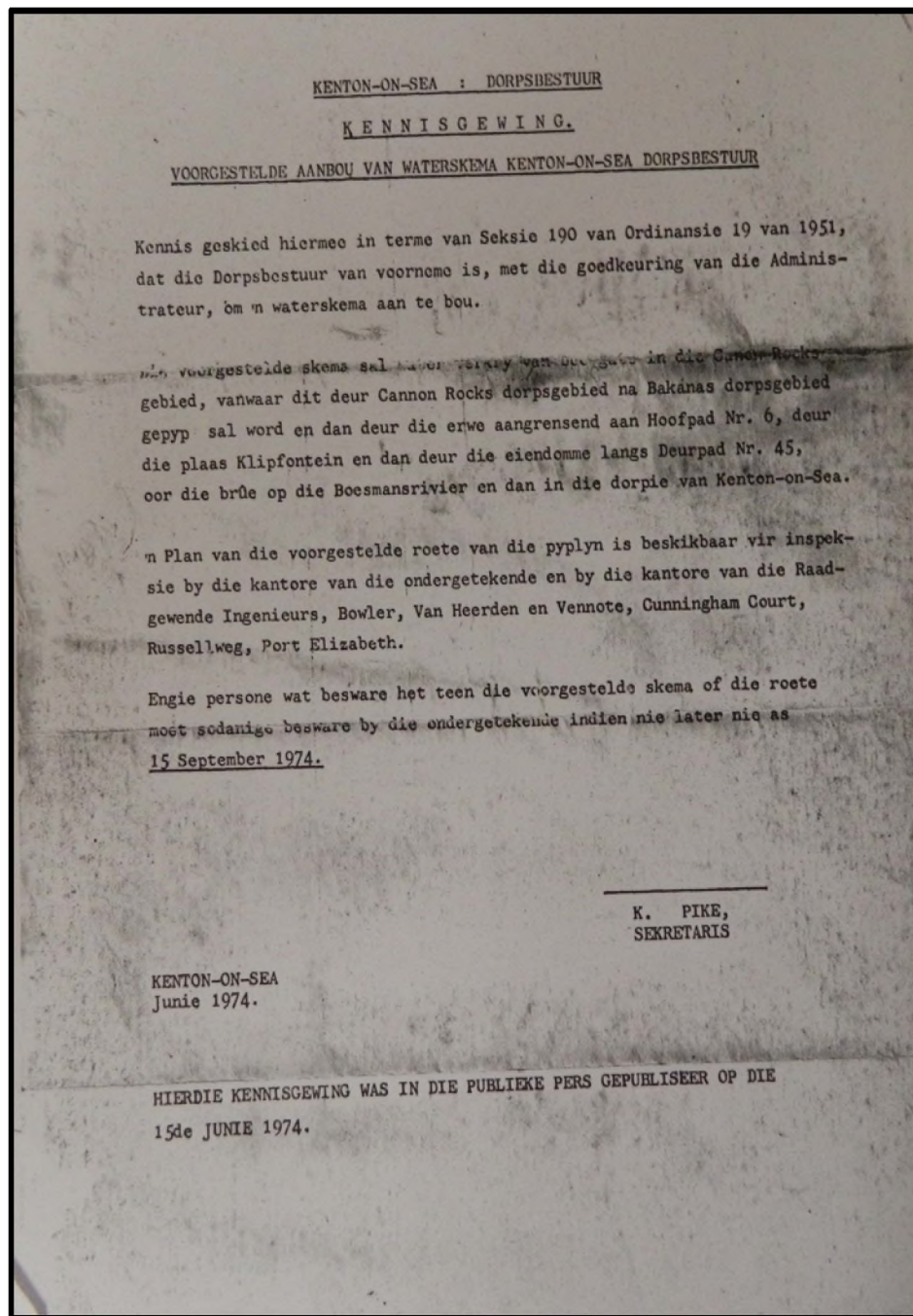


Figure 7: Letter: *Kenton-on-Sea: Water Scheme. Route of Pipeline* from Bowler, van Heerden and Partners on behalf of the Kenton-on-Sea Village Management Board, to Syfrets Trust and Executive Company (Grahamstown), 1 August, 1974.

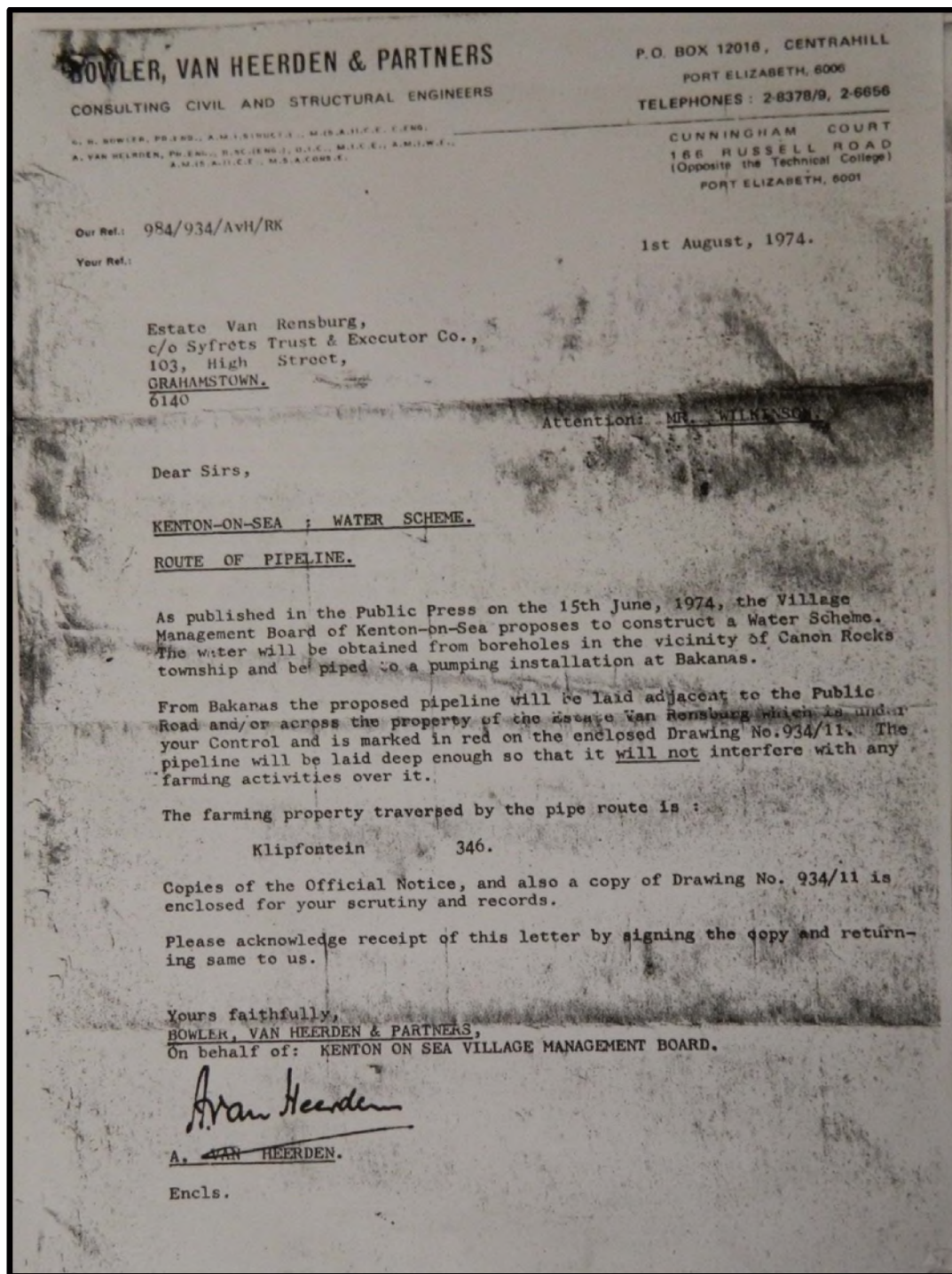
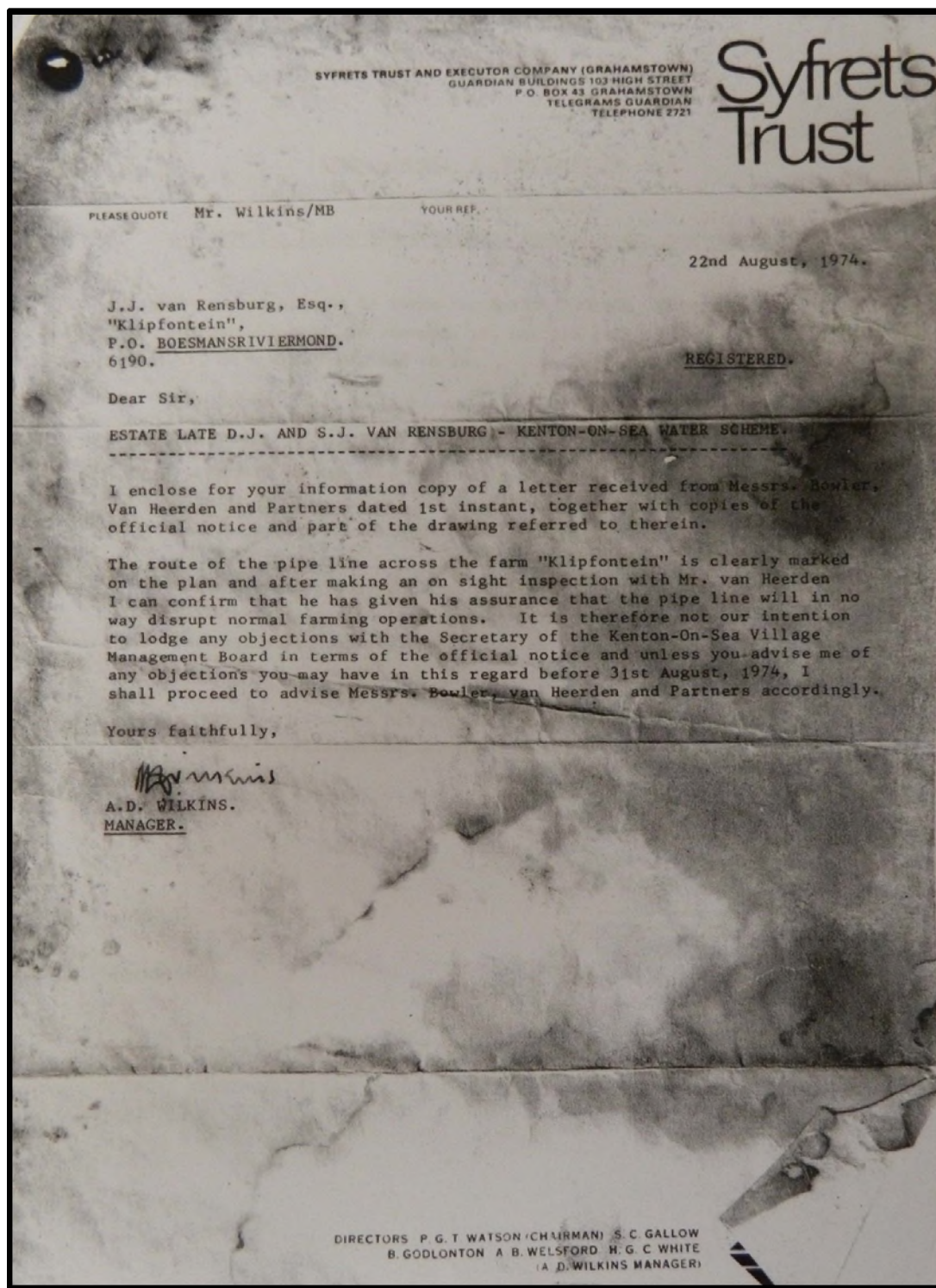


Figure 8: Letter re: Estate late DJ and SJ van Rensburg – Kenton-on-Sea Water Scheme from AD Wilkins (Manager, Syfrets Trust and Executor Company, Grahamstown), 22 August, 1974.



Klipfontein: chicory fields c. 1979



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

CHAPTER 5: Black Africans on Klipfontein: Prelude to a Forced Removal

The authorities had considered for a long time establishing a black African township to serve Boesmansriviermond and Kenton. Despite their heavy reliance on black labour, neither village had any permanent housing for their workers. Previously, the respective town councils had attempted to rectify this situation. One of the earliest attempts was that of Kenton workers themselves who, in the early 1950s, began to erect their own homes without official sanction on the commonage to the north of the town.⁵⁷⁸ In 1963 the authorities gave recognition of sorts when they declared the area an emergency camp in terms of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (PISA). It empowered authorities to establish such camp for “the purpose of accommodation of homeless persons” and to issue regulations for their control.⁵⁷⁹ They could also disestablish a camp at a month's notice according to the Act, by publishing a notice in the Government Gazette with a declaration of intent to do so.⁵⁸⁰

The Kenton emergency camp was, according to Leon Rijgrok, no more than a “straggling collection of wattle and daub houses”.⁵⁸¹ Because it was a 'temporary' settlement, the residents were not permitted to erect brick structures divided from one another by dirt roads and footpaths. The residents did what they could to make it liveable by planting fruit trees and vegetable garden, but facilities were, understandably, rudimentary.⁵⁸² There was no running water for what were then approximately 100 households. People would have to walk one to three kilometres to the white area to get drinking water or relied on a slimy dam for washing.⁵⁸³

The reason why the camp was never given recognition as a permanent black African residential area was that Kenton was bounded on three sides by rivers and sea, and the camp lay squarely across the path of the town's northward development. The white people of Kenton wanted their labour, but they also did not want their servants in the immediate vicinity. As early as 1974 the Cape Midlands Bantu Affairs Administration Board (CMBAAB) had decided that the camp's residents should be rehoused.⁵⁸⁴ It first proposed that they be

⁵⁷⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 8.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁸¹ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

⁵⁸² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 8.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

shifted *en masse* to a central township near Port Alfred, thirty kilometres away.⁵⁸⁵ But this was abandoned in the face of strong public opposition. It was then learned that the Alexandria Divisional Council was negotiating for land on Klipfontein to establish a coloured township, so the board proposed that a black African township be set up alongside it, thus “sharing services with the coloured township in the interests of better town planning.”⁵⁸⁶ In late 1977, several objections were made to the plan. These came from the Boesmansriviermond Ratepayers' Association, the Alexandria Farmers' Association and the department of forestry, as it was concerned about the potential for stripping of the flora located on the adjoining coastal nature reserve to the south-west.⁵⁸⁷ The member of the provincial council for the area at the time, Jannie van der Vyfer, said that the farmers and ratepayers had objected to the plan because “It had already been decided to establish a coloured township on part of the farm, and an African township nearby could lead to conflict because there were not enough jobs to warrant an African township.”⁵⁸⁸ As a result of these objections the deputy minister of Bantu Administration, Dr Wilhelm Vosloo, visited the area and in March 1978 he “agreed to reconsider” the site for the black African township. The official explanation was that the lack of water in the area would make it difficult to have two townships.⁵⁸⁹

However, many black Africans were still of the firm belief that the project would go ahead and therefore moved to Klipfontein.⁵⁹⁰ Misled by premature press and radio reports and drawn by rumours that they would be entitled to a new house if they were living on Klipfontein when the township was built, they flocked in from the surrounding areas.⁵⁹¹ In January 1977 there were 392 Africans (65 families) on Klipfontein. By August 1977 there were 541 people.⁵⁹² By January 1978 the figure rose to 1 046.⁵⁹³ By March, at the time of Dr Vosloo's announcement, a total of 1 310 people (179 families) had set up their homes on the farm.⁵⁹⁴ Most of the new arrivals came from farms, but not all of them were victims

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9 and letter re: *Investigation into demarcation of areas of jurisdiction of various forums* from the Klipfontein Bestuursraad to the Secretary, Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape, 19 September 1994.

⁵⁸⁷ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 9.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁵⁹¹ Letter *RE: Removal of Klipfontein Squatters* from WH Deacon, town clerk, Municipality of Boesmansriviermond, to Ben MacLennan 16 August, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 12.

⁵⁹² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 9.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

of eviction. Chris Hattingh, a local farmer, said one of his full-time employees moved his home to Klipfontein and still reported for work every morning.⁵⁹⁵

As numbers on the farm increased rapidly, so did the complaints from the neighbouring white farmers. Not only were the squatters raiding neighbouring farm dams for water, the farmers also complained that they were stripping the forest on the coastal nature reserve for firewood. Hattingh complained that they were not even useful as casual labour. He said: "I tried to bring the women in to work on my lands... I paid in line with what all the other farmers were paying. I used to send my lorry to Klipfontein and I got twenty, thirty some days."⁵⁹⁶ But he claimed it was not worth his while. "By employing them I was just wasting my money. They would disappear after lunch and go collecting firewood, and when they went back they would also take cans of water. They didn't have any facilities on Klipfontein."⁵⁹⁷ Theo Crouse would later give up his three-year lease because "valuable grazing" was "being destroyed" by the squatters' own animals. Nico Bessinger was considering doing the same "if the problem is not resolved soon."⁵⁹⁸

The white farmers and authorities also insisted that the 'squatters' were using 'primitive' pit latrines which posed health concerns for not only the Klipfonteiners but also the white people in Boesmansriviermond and those on neighbouring farms. The recently established Boesmansriviermond municipality was also demanding action on what it called the "totally uncontrolled squatter situation".⁵⁹⁹ The town clerk reportedly said that as Klipfontein was in the town's catchment area, it constituted a "health hazard to its occupants and to whites in the vicinity."⁶⁰⁰

Early in 1978, Hattingh visited Klipfontein on a "tour of inspection" accompanied by Sergeant Rijgrok. Hattingh then compiled a report on that visit and sent it to the National Party MP for the area, Jaap Olckers, so that he could have an "objective view of the situation".⁶⁰¹ The CMBAAB was also conducting periodic surveys of the farm to monitor the number of black Africans thereon. In its survey of January 1978, it rated the condition of individual dwellings, most of which it classed as 'poor' or 'bad'. In February 1978 the

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

board's regional manager forwarded the surveys to his superiors in Port Elizabeth and asked for "directions to any further action we should take".⁶⁰² He also wrote to the Bantu Affairs commissioner at Alexandria, "drawing his attention to the influx of squatters".⁶⁰³ On 10 March 1978 the *Eastern Province Herald* (the *Herald*) ran an article headlined "Squatters at Bushmans River big headache" in which it detailed the complaints of Hattingh and Bessinger and stated that white people in the area were "surprised that there had not yet been an outbreak of typhoid".⁶⁰⁴ However, it never provided the views of the 'squatters'. The *Herald* declared that the authorities, farmers and the residents of both coastal resorts wanted Klipfontein's black Africans resettled. "But the problem" it added, "is where?"⁶⁰⁵

Meanwhile, Nicolaas Fischat had taken it upon himself to clear Klipfontein (or at least his 'portion' of it) of all white and amaXhosa tenants. After the termination of Bessinger's lease and his quarrel with the other three usufructuaries, Fischat approached the local police commissioner, Van der Vyfer to have the black Africans evicted.⁶⁰⁶ Van der Vyfer agreed to meet Fischat and was concerned with Fischat's report. "Crime flourished" he was told. "Neighbouring farmers were plagued by theft, boundary fencing poles were removed and used as firewood."⁶⁰⁷ Fischat also told him that the whole Klipfontein "coloured community" were terrorised.⁶⁰⁸ It seems that Fischat evoked the sense of community when appealing to the authorities to show solidarity amongst all Klipfonteiners regarding this issue. It was a successful tactical move to garner support from the authorities. Van der Vyfer lamented: "Their very existence became unsafe in their own place of birth. In this distress, the coloured leaders of Klipfontein approached me."⁶⁰⁹ Fischat asked if there was anything that could be done. Van der Vyfer told him that he must notify the squatters that they can be taken to court. Van der Vyfer also consulted Sergeant Rijgrok on the matter. On 16 February 1978 the police served handwritten notices on 173 black Africans on Klipfontein, signed by all four usufructuaries.⁶¹⁰ The notice read (in English):

Take notice hereby that you vacate the farm Klipfontein, in the district

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁰⁴ "Squatters at Bushmans River Big Headache", *The Eastern Province Herald*, 10 March, 1978.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 10-11.

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Alexandria, within 21 (twenty-one) days of this date – February 16th 1978.

Magenis Sr's was the first signatory of the notice. But it seemed that some coercion had taken place in order for him to sign. His nephew, Magenis Jr, relates that his uncle was very unhappy about what went on. "If Van der Vyfer was approached by more than one coloured leaders as he claims, then Magenis (Sr) would not have been among them."⁶¹¹ Van der Vyfer later said that there had actually been two sets of eviction notices. The first one was apparently scrapped because it did not have van Rensburg's signature on it. "Magenis signed the second one because he was afraid they were going to lock him up", said Van der Vyfer.⁶¹²

When Zake received his 'notice', he went to Jacobs and asked him what was going on. "I said 'What do you say now?' Jack Jacobs was against my leaving, but the sergeant said he would arrest him. He told me personally that the sergeant said he would arrest him if he didn't chase the people off. The coloured people didn't want to sign those pieces of paper, but they were forced."⁶¹³ It was also disputed whether the Klipfonteinners were terrorised as was claimed. Dirk van Rensburg told Ben MacLennan in an interview year later that "there was no trouble between us and the blacks... Only when the white men came and said they must leave, were they hostile towards us... They said it was we who wanted them to go."⁶¹⁴ The eviction notices were not well received. Most of the people threw them away or burned them. Some went to Magenis and asked him what to do. He advised them that they should stay.⁶¹⁵

On March 15 1978, a spokesperson for the Alexandria police announced that more than 150 family heads who had "allegedly ignored" the notices, together with all four of the usufructuaries, had been summonsed to appear in court to face charges under Chapter 4 of the Bantu Development Trust and Land Act of 1936.⁶¹⁶ Chapter 4 dealt with what was known back then as "kaffir farming" - the practice of some farmers of making a living not from agricultural activities but from the rents of Africans whom they allowed to settle on their land in large numbers.⁶¹⁷ This Act stipulated that no black African could live on

⁶¹¹ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

⁶¹² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 11.

⁶¹³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983.

⁶¹⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Dirk van Rensburg, 27 July 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 34.

⁶¹⁵ Interview with Magenis van Rensburg.

⁶¹⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 11.

⁶¹⁷ Section 4 of Bantu Development Trust and Land Act, No 18 of 1936.

farmland in white South Africa unless he was “registered and employed full-time as a bona fide Bantu employee of the owner of such land.”⁶¹⁸ However, there were exceptions. The elderly, chronically ill, or destitute people for example could be granted permission to stay on, but this was subject to the approval of the local commissioner for Bantu affairs. This approval could also be withdrawn at any time. In a case where Chapter 4 was infringed, the black African as well as the landowner could be prosecuted. The owner could not use the defence that the black African was on his land without his permission unless he could prove that he had “instituted and is actively pursuing an action for the ejectment of such Bantu from the land.”⁶¹⁹

The convicted black African would then, along with his family, be evicted from the land and could then be ordered by the court to be removed to “his home or his last place of residence or the rural village, settlement, rehabilitation scheme, institution or other place outside a prescribed area, indicated by the secretary of the department of Bantu administration, either generally or specially.”⁶²⁰ Finally, he could both be imprisoned pending this removal and additionally be forced to pay the costs of the removal.

According to Van der Vyfer, when the case came to court two of the usufructuaries (it is presumed the two were Hans van Rensburg and Nicolaas Fischat), were found not guilty by the court on the Section 4 charge and released.⁶²¹ The other two were convicted and were given a suspended sentence on condition that they assisted the police in “controlling the squatters”.⁶²² The amaXhosa family heads were merely charged and then released without being asked to plead and without evidence being led. The reason for this was not clear to them until 24 April 1978, when the CMBAAB announced that it had finally decided to scrap the plans to develop the black African township on Klipfontein.⁶²³ Instead, the CMBAAB and the police planned for all the squatters from the farm and 'unemployed' people from the Kenton emergency camp to be removed. If they refused to leave, the charges would be reinstituted against the family heads.⁶²⁴ They did not know it yet, but their new destination would be Glenmore, a resettlement camp near the Fish River.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶²¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 12.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Glenmore: the “finest African township in the Republic”

In stark contrast to the gentle, undulating landscape of the Alexandria District, the Fish River valley is barren and arid; boiling hot in summer and frosty in winter. Vegetation consists of scrub; much of it is thorn or cactus plants. Rainfall is irregular and the brackish-brown water of the river is also too saline to be of much use to farmers except when in flood. But in the 1970s it did hold some sort of political significance as it formed part of the boundary between South Africa and the farcical independent ‘homeland’ of Ciskei. In the early 1970s the Ciskei still consisted of nineteen separate fragments of land and thus the divide was not that clear. At Committees Drift, the land to the north of the road crossing the river on the Ciskei side still belonged to white farmers and was still “South African territory”. South of the road lay Tyefu, one of the most impoverished and eroded areas of the Ciskei. During the early 1970s, a firm of agricultural consultants, RF Loxton, Hunting and Associates, commissioned by the homeland to investigate the possibility of starting up a farming scheme declared that some of the drier parts were virtually beyond rehabilitation. Their report stated the area “is densely populated”, as well as “so drought-prone that the people are unable to subsist off the land.”⁶²⁵

In December 1971, the South African government announced that it would build “the finest African township in the Republic”, a settlement which would house 100 000 to 200 000 people.⁶²⁶ Dr Piet Koornhof, deputy minister of Bantu Administration announced to the press: “There will be no half measures... As deputy minister I am not prepared to have inhumane treatment on my conscience.”⁶²⁷

This plan was allegedly inspired by the same policy that dictated that redundant farmworkers ‘return’ to their ‘homelands’.⁶²⁸ There were several reasons for this policy. One reason was economic: black Africans forced to live in conditions of extreme hardship would be forced into accepting any work that came their way, at any wage offered.⁶²⁹ Another was ideological: the obsession of the Nationalist government with ensuring that South Africa remained the “white man’s land”.⁶³⁰ Linked to all of this was the aim of political dispossession. By shifting black Africans to their own homelands, they were

⁶²⁵ RF Loxton, Hunting and Associates, “Notes on the Tyefu Irrigation Scheme” (Compiled as press release), May 1, 1981, Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 87 p. 3.

⁶²⁶ B MacLennan, *Glenmore: The Story of a Forced Removal* (Johannesburg, 1987), p. 13.

⁶²⁷ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald*, 8 December, 1971 and cited in MacLennan, p. 13.

⁶²⁸ C Desmond, *The Discarded People* (Middlesex, 1971), pp. 2-3.

⁶²⁹ Desmond, *Discarded People* pp. 23-27.

⁶³⁰ For a deeper understanding of Afrikaner nationalist politics during the former half of the 20th century, see L Koorts, *DF Malan and the Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism* (Cape Town, 2014), particularly chapter 11.

subject to their own 'ethnic' governments. The South African authorities could justify denying them any say in the running of South Africa as a whole. It is for this reason that the Nationalist government had engaged in a programme of mass removals under which it hoped to relocate more than 500 000 people to the homelands from the Eastern Cape alone between 1970 and 1980.⁶³¹ So-called "black spots" could be removed and relocated from the rural areas, meaning all 'redundant' black Africans were to be 'repatriated'.⁶³² In cases where a town was conveniently situated close to the homeland, the entire black African population would be 'reestablished' in a settlement just across the border inside the 'homeland'.⁶³³

The Department of Bantu Administration originally saw Grahamstown as a 'convenient' town.⁶³⁴ It envisaged that eventually the only black Africans in Grahamstown would be migrant workers housed in single-sex hostels or daily commuters from Committees Drift, which was less than 50 kilometres away.⁶³⁵ In February 1974 the South African Bantu Trust, the land-owning entity of the Department of Bantu Administration, appointed the Cape Midlands Administration Board (CMBAAB) to develop Committees Drift on its behalf.⁶³⁶ This board had been formed in 1973 to take over control of the black African administrations of thirteen towns in the area including Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown from the white municipalities which had previously run them.⁶³⁷

The motive for this takeover was the government's desire to tighten up the control of the influx of black Africans, restrict the ability of black Africans to achieve residence rights in white towns and encourage migrant labour.⁶³⁸ One of its most important functions was to update the resettlement programme to make it more efficient. Therefore, the CMBAAB's chief director, Louis Koch announced on 25 February, 1974, that it would accept its appointment of the Committees Drift project.⁶³⁹ He said that the township would take three years to develop, but would not be the size originally planned for. The three year delay

⁶³¹ L Platzky, *The surplus people: forced removals in southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1985), pp. 218-219 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 13-15.

⁶³² Desmond, *Discarded People* pp. 77-78.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, p. 34 and p. 91.

⁶³⁴ In other words, it was close enough to the Ciskei border to attract black African labour from the area, and in turn, the town would be supplied by cheap black African labour that would not burden the infrastructure of the town.

⁶³⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 14.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶³⁷ RG Humphries, "An examination of the finances of the Cape Midlands Administration Board, 1973-1979" *Development studies working paper: Issue 8* (Rhodes University, 1982), pp. 4-5 Cory Library, Pamphlet Box 18.

⁶³⁸ Humphries, "Examination of finances of CMAD", *Development studies* p. 3.

⁶³⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p.14.

before the first houses were ready was so that services such as schools, hospitals, shopping areas and proper toilet, refuse collection and sanitation facilities could be installed first.

Koch defended these projects by claiming that Grahamstown had reached “saturation point” in black African housing. He said that it was better to re-establish townships in new areas where officials could plan “with confidence for the next 50 years.”⁶⁴⁰ When he was questioned by reporters on the viability of the scheme in 1971, Koch did not comment on the grounds that he had supposedly not seen it. But he did state that his office would “not be party to anything which will do the African people an injustice or deprive them of their dignity.”⁶⁴¹ Koch often claimed that he was very close to “these people”. He would refer to black Africans as “my people”.⁶⁴² This is difficult to believe when one considers his role in the formation of an Eastern Cape committee to consider the resettlement of black Africans in the ‘Bantu homelands’. It could be that Koch really believed that it was better for black Africans to be removed to ‘homelands’ where they could “enjoy their last days free from city worries.”⁶⁴³ But even he had difficulty accepting blindly what the department proposed to do near Committees Drift. The CMBAAB was expected to carry out department policy even though, at the same time, they were supposedly granted some autonomy. Yet, according to MacLennan, it is doubtful whether the board could have refused to carry out the project; it could only voice its “careful dissent” towards it.⁶⁴⁴

In June 1974, the CMBAAB’s director for housing and labour declared that although the population to be installed in the housing project at Committees Drift had been cut from 200 000 to 11 000, members on the CMBAAB were still unhappy.⁶⁴⁵ Some of the problems raised were the lack of topsoil after recent rains, the long distance from Grahamstown,⁶⁴⁶ the absence of roads at the location and the need for workers to have to commute to other centres. The CMBAAB’s housing and labour director assured the press that although the board would continue to act as an agent for the state, it would not move anyone to Committees Drift until basic services including water and electricity had been provided and

⁶⁴⁰ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 25 February, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 14-15.

⁶⁴¹ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 25 February, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 14.

⁶⁴² As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 15 October, 1975 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 14.

⁶⁴³ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 6 June, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 15.

⁶⁴⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 14-16.

⁶⁴⁵ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 6 June, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 15.

⁶⁴⁶ It was 45 kilometres from Grahamstown via a near non-negotiable pass known as Pluto’s Vale and 27 kilometres of dirt road.

the houses and a school had been built.⁶⁴⁷

Tensions between the CMBAAB and the department only heightened when, on 5 August, 1974, the board decided to unilaterally appoint its chairman, Boet Erasmus,⁶⁴⁸ as chairman of the newly formed Committees Drift control committee instead of the department's chief commissioner for the Eastern Cape, TRH Gafney.⁶⁴⁹ Koch then announced to the press immediately after the meeting that there was "some doubt" whether the township would be established specifically at Committees Drift.⁶⁵⁰

There was immediate opposition to the project the very next day from the chief minister of the Ciskei, Lennox Sebe. Sebe had flown to Cape Town for discussions with then Prime Minister BJ Vorster, and the minister of Bantu Administration, MC Botha, regarding the proposed township.⁶⁵¹ He maintained that to site it at Committees Drift would only create "another Dimbaza".⁶⁵² After the talks, Sebe announced that he had obtained Vorster's assurance that the planning of the project could be halted until the Ciskeian government had been consulted about the siting.⁶⁵³

In March 1976, the secretary for Bantu Administration, IP van Onselen, announced to a gathering of Fingo title-holders as well as members of the Grahamstown Urban Bantu Council that the site of the project was no longer Committees Drift, but the farm "immediately across the bridge to the left of the road."⁶⁵⁴ Van Onselen appealed to those present at his announcement to go back to "their people" and put forward a case for moving. He said that there was R80 000 available immediately and work could begin as soon as he was given a mandate.⁶⁵⁵ The farm in question, Glenmore, was chosen because of its potential for the development of irrigable land. It was purportedly the largest and best area of irrigable land of any property in what was then the Victoria East district.⁶⁵⁶ The De Jager family had lived on the farm for three generations and had, at a time,

⁶⁴⁷ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 6 June, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 15.

⁶⁴⁸ Although Erasmus was the nominal head of the board, it was Koch, as chief executive officer, who ran it.

⁶⁴⁹ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 6 August, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 15.

⁶⁵⁰ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 6 August, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 15.

⁶⁵¹ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 2 September, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 16.

⁶⁵² He was referring to the resettlement camp of Dimbaza (formerly Mnxesha), described by Cosmas Desmond in *Surplus People* as being "as bad as any of the horror pictures from Biafra".

⁶⁵³ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 2 September, 1974 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 16 and p. 17.

⁶⁵⁴ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 221.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁶⁵⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 17.

cultivated 5 000 orange trees and a number of grapevines.⁶⁵⁷

In 1972 the De Jagers put up Glenmore for sale, supposedly due to financial difficulties, but there is little doubt that this move was prompted by the passing of the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act (National States Constitutional Act) No 21 of 1971.⁶⁵⁸ The purpose of this Act was to give so-called autonomy to the homelands, providing them with their own legislature, police forces, prisons and their own citizenship. Until 1971, the only “self-governing” homeland was the Transkei. However, the National States Constitution Act made it possible for self-governing status to be given to any of the other homelands. The Ciskei consisted of nineteen separate ‘pockets’ of land,⁶⁵⁹ and it was obvious to lawmakers that there would have to be some form of territorial consolidation before it could even be considered as a political and economic entity. Although Victoria East was not formally included in the Ciskei at that stage, the De Jagers suspected that eventually it would be included.⁶⁶⁰ They therefore asked the government to make an offer. Their price was far below what the family expected and was rejected.⁶⁶¹ The De Jagers were then made an offer by Ronnie Knott, who farmed twenty kilometres to the northeast of Glenmore. Knott believed that the farms in the Victoria East area would be ‘ruined’ if handed over to the homeland. He felt that the white farming community could be “saved from disintegration” if the government was prevented from procuring any land in the district.⁶⁶²

The De Jagers decided to sell to Knott rather and in February 1974, Knott took ownership of Glenmore. However, in March 1976, Knott learned from a newspaper report that his new farm had been chosen as the site of the new township project.⁶⁶³ He then flew to Pretoria to meet with Department of Bantu Administration officials after being disappointed with the price the valuers valued the farm on behalf of the government.⁶⁶⁴ But in mid-November 1974 he received a letter notifying him that had 60 days from 4 November to vacate the farm.⁶⁶⁵ Shortly after moving his cattle off of the farm, the Department of Bantu

⁶⁵⁷ Statement by A de Jager made in 1979, quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 16-17.

⁶⁵⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 17.

⁶⁵⁹ P Green and A Hirsch, “The impact of resettlement in the Ciskei: three case studies” *Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit working paper 49*, (University of Cape Town, 1983) Cory Library, Pamphlet Box 20.

⁶⁶⁰ Statement by A de Jager made in 1979, quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 17.

⁶⁶¹ Quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 17.

⁶⁶² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 17.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶⁶⁴ They accepted R283 000 as being a fair price for the farm.

⁶⁶⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 18.

Administration offered to rent it back to him until work began there. Knott decided to return his animals back to the farm, accept the amount offered by the government and consulted with his lawyers in preparation for possible legal action. Knott believed that the adequate compensation for Glenmore could not be less than R500 000.

Meanwhile, Van Onselen had visited Grahamstown at the beginning of March, 1976 to announce that Glenmore was the new site for the township. Whilst in Grahamstown he asked the black African community leaders of the Grahamstown township for a mandate so that work could commence. On 21 April 1976, Koch proclaimed that a referendum would be held in Fingo Village on 29 April to determine Grahamstown's black Africans' attitude towards the government's proposals.⁶⁶⁶ The result of the referendum was kept secret for more than a month, during which the Minister of Bantu Administration, MC Botha denied any knowledge of it. On 22 June however, he announced that according to an "opinion poll" based on 20% of the black African population in Grahamstown, 647 voted against the move and 65 in favour.⁶⁶⁷

In May 1978, Botha's successor, Dr Connie Mulder said in parliament that Glenmore was not going to be a resettlement camp for the black Africans of Grahamstown.⁶⁶⁸ This was welcomed in Grahamstown and seen as a backtracking of government in that Glenmore was obviously no longer intended as a location for 'surplus' black Africans from Grahamstown. However, Dr Mulder had implied that only 'legal' workers – those with official permission to work in Grahamstown – would not be moved.⁶⁶⁹ His announcement left the way open for the mass removal of those unable to work, the elderly and all those who did not qualify under section 10 of the Urban Areas Act to be in Grahamstown.⁶⁷⁰ A month later the *Daily Dispatch* speculated that "at least 7000" of Grahamstown's black Africans could still be moved.⁶⁷¹ Koch did not deny the report. But the resistance to this news seemed to have unnerved the authorities and so they decided that the first people to be moved would be the "unemployed squatters" throughout the CMBAAB's area.⁶⁷² Klipfontein was seen as a particular "problem spot", and the Board planned to move those

⁶⁶⁶ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 29 April, 1976 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 18.

⁶⁶⁷ TRH Davenport, *Black Grahamstown: the agony of a community* (Johannesburg, 1980), pp. 38-39.

⁶⁶⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 18-19.

⁶⁶⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 18.

⁶⁷⁰ The Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945 prohibited Africans from living in urban areas outside of the homelands. Section 10 exempted those born in such an urban area and who had lived there since then, those who had worked or lived there legally for at least ten years, the immediate families of men with section 10 rights and migrant workers or scholars. The Act was repealed in 1986.

⁶⁷¹ As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 22 June, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

⁶⁷² As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 22 June, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

people first.

The CMBAAB's deputy director of community services actually explained that the overriding reason for the Klipfontein removal was "to reduce the Bantu population in the area to the barest minimum necessary for the labour needs of Kenton and Bushman's River."⁶⁷³ Once the "unproductive and unemployed" had been removed from Klipfontein and Kenton, the remaining employed black Africans of Klipfontein would be rehoused in the "emergency camp" at Kenton.⁶⁷⁴ This was part of a larger plan drawn up by the CMBAAB in conjunction with the local divisional council. According to the council's secretary, NW Anderson more than 3 700 'squatters' were to be removed.⁶⁷⁵ The plan was called the 'Prevent' plan, the name being an acronym for the seven 'principles' involved. These principles included the establishment of "resettlement camps", continuous inspections to ensure there was no new 'squatting' and the provision of transport to 'repatriate' any new arrivals.⁶⁷⁶

The first arrivals in Glenmore would form the 'nucleus' of the workforce to build the permanent township. A temporary settlement of 500 prefabricated houses would be erected on the agricultural land below the main site to accommodate the workforce. It was planned that as those original workers moved into the completed buildings, their places in the temporary houses would be taken by the new arrivals. According to Anderson, this process was to continue "till all the problem spots have been cleared".⁶⁷⁷ He elaborated:

The idea, I believe, is to encourage these people to build and produce and create things to become useful citizens; to be made to feel that they belong. They will also be a form of exchange labour. The breadwinners will be encouraged to come into the area to work as contract labour, returning to Glenmore after a period and being replaced by others. My council is very, very pleased that there is now a ray of hope for squatters.⁶⁷⁸

As with so many statements made by authorities, the real situation was at odds with the grandiose fiction that officials were spinning for the press.

⁶⁷³ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 30 June, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

⁶⁷⁴ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 223.

⁶⁷⁵ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 8 July, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

⁶⁷⁶ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 8 July, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

⁶⁷⁷ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 26 June, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

⁶⁷⁸ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 26 June, 1978 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 19.

Threats and resistance

Soon after 4 pm on 3 April, 1979, several white GG (Government Garage number plate) trucks arrived at what was called the divisional council road camp near the Kenton emergency camp.⁶⁷⁹ It was a fenced off area of open ground close to the Bushman's River. The trucks were met by a delegation comprised of police and CMBAAB officials. The vehicles and their drivers were part of what was known as "Black Spot Removals".⁶⁸⁰ They were a specialised squad of the Department of Plural Relations tasked with "mass removal operations".⁶⁸¹ The squad of the Eastern Cape consisted of approximately thirty 10- or 15-ton Bedford trucks and around eighty labourers and drivers, all under the supervision of a white overseer.⁶⁸² Most of the black African labourers were recruited from the then Transvaal on annual contracts, ensuring at least a partial language barrier between them and the people they were moving, thus decreasing the chances of the labourers finding any common ground with those people earmarked for eviction.⁶⁸³ This also apparently lessened the chance of reprisals against their families.

As the trucks arrived at the divisional council camp, the labourers unloaded tents and portable tin toilets and erected them very quickly. Before the entire fleet of trucks had even arrived at that camp, the first trucks were already on their way to Klipfontein to load up several families and their possessions, including the materials from which their homes were built.⁶⁸⁴ They returned to the camp shortly afterward and made the families disembark from the trucks. According to the CMBAAB's regional manager for the area, Dennis Bush, families were not being moved against their will. He assured the media: "There has been no opposition. People have been pulling down their own places."⁶⁸⁵

However, the situation on Klipfontein was rather more volatile than what the authorities wanted the public to believe. Speaking to journalists on 4 April, 1979, Nonono Memani, who was living on Klipfontein at the time, said that the first trucks had arrived at 7 am.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁷⁹ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* p. 222 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33. This camp had been established just outside the white area of Kenton in 1956, on the old commonage. It had not been allowed to develop into a permanent location because it was considered a temporary solution to the housing problems of Kenton's black African labour force.

⁶⁸⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33.

⁶⁸¹ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* pp. 222-224 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33.

⁶⁸² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33.

⁶⁸³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Stephen Goboza, 1 December, 1983 Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁶⁸⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33.

⁶⁸⁵ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 4 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 33.

⁶⁸⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Nonono Memani, 4 April, 1979, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

By midday six families had been moved. After the trucks drove onto the farm the workers demolished the houses, with the police and CMBAAB members looking on. "People didn't want to go. Some were crying. They (the workers) just put the furniture on one lorry and after they loaded the furniture they told people to get on. None refused to enter the trucks because they were told by officials otherwise they wouldn't get transport to go where their furniture is."⁶⁸⁷ Memani said that officials had arrived at his house as well that morning. According to him they told him that they would not demolish it then, but would come back later that afternoon.⁶⁸⁸

A "European sergeant" also informed Ndoyesile Nkingana that if he refused to go, his home would be demolished.⁶⁸⁹ Nkingana said that when he protested the move as the people were still awaiting legal advice, the sergeant allegedly "informed me that my lawyer could do nothing to stop the removals and that we had to go."⁶⁹⁰ Shorty Mxokozeli was apparently told a similar story, also by a "European sergeant": "The sergeant told me if I refuse, later on when he takes me to Glenmore he will be furious. He said he will knock down the house and break things inside because he will be so cross and not responsible for the damage."⁶⁹¹ The sergeant also allegedly told Mxokezeli that "it would be wise to move to Glenmore as he would in future only be able collect his old-age pension there" and not in Kenton as in the past.⁶⁹²

The authorities were desperate to remove the black Africans from Klipfontein as quickly as possible, using veiled threats and blackmail. The hasty nature of the mass removal stemmed from the fact that the black Africans and some of the usufructuaries of Klipfontein were instituting legal action to halt it. What follows is an attempt to accurately describe the events leading up to the removal and the real reasons behind it.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁹ Affidavit of Ndoyesile Nginkana, 11 April, 1979 in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹¹ Affidavit of Shorty Mxokozeli, 11 April, 1979 in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

⁶⁹² Affidavit of Shorty Mxokozeli, 11 April, 1979 in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2. The threat was not an empty one. In early April, six pensioners from Klipfontein travelled to Glenmore to collect their pensions after they were denied it in Kenton. The journey to Glenmore and back was more than 200 kilometres. It cost each pensioner R11 to make the trip. At that stage, a pension was R45 every two months.

In March 1978, little more than a year before the first GG trucks entered Klipfontein, 179 black African households (about 1 300 people) had settled there.⁶⁹³ The number did not rise significantly from then onwards, due to regular police visits being made to the farm to ensure that no new houses were erected. But this did not deter Magenis van Rensburg Sr from still allowing new arrivals onto his land, maintaining that he had the right to do so.⁶⁹⁴ As a result he was taken to court once more and the suspended sentence from the previous case against him came into operation.⁶⁹⁵ As he had no money to pay the fine, he was put in jail in Grahamstown.⁶⁹⁶ The committee headed by Tutu Gqukani collected money from those living on Klipfontein and a delegation travelled to Grahamstown and paid the fine.⁶⁹⁷

In May 1978, the Ciskeian Minister of the Interior, Lent Maqoma visited Klipfontein to speak to the people at the school hall.⁶⁹⁸ Sergeant Rigjrok, Dennis Bush and other board officials were also present. Gungutu Zake was at the meeting at related how Maqoma spoke to the crowd. Apparently Maqoma told them that he was there because he was “called by the white men”, even though Bush thought that the visit was a Ciskei initiative. Maqoma went on to say:

The white people say you don’t want to move from the coloured people’s land. I have come here to take my people from Klipfontein. I have land at Committees. There is a lot of tobacco there. You will have cattle and you will live in peace. Those of you who resist will face the court. For those who want to move to my land the trouble is over...⁶⁹⁹

An individual in the crowd then interjected and said, “I am not going to that coffin.”⁷⁰⁰ Gqukani then also rose and asked Maqoma “Why did you not come to us on your own? Why did you have to bring the white people?” Gqukani continued, pointing out the fact that

⁶⁹³ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* p. 221, L Platzky, *The surplus people: forced removals in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1985), p. 138 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 20.

⁶⁹⁴ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* p. 221.

⁶⁹⁵ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* p. 221. Van Rensburg, and his fellow usufructuaries, as well as 173 other family heads were taken to court and charged in contravention of the 1936 Development Trust and Land Act.

⁶⁹⁶ Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals* p. 221 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 20.

⁶⁹⁷ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 20. This re-illustrates a solidarity shown between the black African settlers and those coloured usufructuaries who were willing to let them stay on the farm.

⁶⁹⁸ Transcript of interviews between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 39 and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁶⁹⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

he had travelled the roads in that area since he was a boy, saying “that is barren land you’re talking about... The soil is full of rocks.”⁷⁰¹ Zake was just as angry as Gqukani with Maqoma’s proposal. He recounts that he told the minister that it was hard for them at Klipfontein because they were being “pushed out of this place to a place we don’t know”.⁷⁰² Zake said there were other people who then also stood up and spoke. Many people became angrier as the meeting proceeded.

After Maqoma left, Sergeant Rijgrok then told the crowd that he would like four men to meet him at the tar road running through Klipfontein the next day to discuss a certain matter.⁷⁰³ Eight men, including Felix Ngxande, Gqukani and Zake, gathered at the road the next morning.⁷⁰⁴ Sergeant Rijgrok told them there that he would like to show them the land of which Maqoma had spoken. They all agreed and were taken in a police van to Committees Drift. Zake said that the van first took them to the police station at Committees Drift where they alighted. According to him, they then walked a distance from the police station in the direction of Grahamstown.⁷⁰⁵ This was in the opposite direction of where Glenmore was situated. Zake said that the sergeant then allegedly pointed at the land on each side of the road in the direction of Grahamstown and said that this would be their land.⁷⁰⁶ Ngxande said that that land was not fit for human settlement because it was too stony. Gqukani said that this was the exact same place he had alluded to in the meeting with Maqoma.⁷⁰⁷

The delegation was then taken across the bridge into the Ciskei and was shown Glenmore. Zake said that the delegation refused to relocate to such a desolate site: “We didn’t like it and told him so.”⁷⁰⁸ They were then driven to Tyefu, an agricultural scheme run by the Ciskei government south of Glenmore. The scheme was begun in November 1976 and was open to only a selected number of farmers, all of whom had already been allocated plots.⁷⁰⁹ It did not include Glenmore.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰² *Ibid.*

⁷⁰³ Interview with Sergeant Rijgrok.

⁷⁰⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁶ Sergeant Rijgrok said later that he did not know himself where Glenmore actually was. He was given directions by his superiors of where to take them. He would only find out later that he showed them the wrong place.

⁷⁰⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 21.

When the delegation returned to Klipfontein, they called a meeting of the resident black Africans, with the permission of Sergeant Rijgrok.⁷¹⁰ According to the committee members, everyone rejected the proposed move.⁷¹¹ This rejection did not stem merely from dissatisfaction over the quality of the land. Many of the people saw through the plan as a political ploy conjured up by Maqoma who apparently saw the Ciskei as a “spiritual heartland for warriors fighting for freedom and redemption”.⁷¹² This view was encouraged by the South African government, because ‘repatriating’ the amaXhosa to their “ancestral homeland” was a much better explanation than the dumping of discarded people.⁷¹³ For many of the Klipfontein black Africans they were not particularly interested in the ‘tribal’ allegiances nor resettling on a land with which they were unfamiliar.

In the months following Maqoma’s visit, police continued to patrol the farm in an attempt to prevent new homes from being erected.⁷¹⁴ At the same time the case against the four usufructuaries for allowing “illegal squatting” on the farm was reinstated to the Boesmansriviermond magistrate’s court roll in November, 1978 but was postponed to May, 1979.⁷¹⁵ When the black African school was due to reopen in February, 1979, the residents were surprised to learn that this was not the case.⁷¹⁶ They were informed by the police that the school would remain closed as they would be moved off the land shortly.

On 22 March, 1979 all the Klipfontein black Africans were summoned by Sergeant Rijgrok to a meeting at the school.⁷¹⁷ According to Gqukani, the majority of the people were present,⁷¹⁸ though this was denied by the board superintendent at the Kenton “emergency camp”, Victor Keeton.⁷¹⁹ Keeton was present to ensure what he called “good race relations between the parties.”⁷²⁰ But anger soon manifested itself among the people present when Sergeant Rijgrok told them that they would have to move from Klipfontein on 2 April, 1979.⁷²¹ The crowd wanted to know how the removal could go ahead when the “illegal

⁷¹⁰ Interview with Sergeant Rijgrok and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁷¹¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39 and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁷¹² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 22.

⁷¹³ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 222 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 22.

⁷¹⁴ Interview with Sergeant Rijgrok.

⁷¹⁵ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 222 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 22.

⁷¹⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 22.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷¹⁸ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷¹⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 25.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷²¹ Interview with Leon Rijgrok and affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape*

squatting” case was due to be heard in court in May. Rijgrok apparently replied that the removal of the inhabitants had been sanctioned by a judge of the Supreme Court.⁷²² The committee members then said that they understood his reasoning but that the people were not prepared to go until the trial had been completed. Sergeant Rijgrok replied that anyone who did not leave would have to see the consequences with their own eyes.⁷²³ Members of the committee told the sergeant at the meeting that the matter would be further discussed by the committee. The sergeant agreed but said that the committee must meet peacefully “without trouble”, at which point the meeting ended.⁷²⁴ Keeton and Sergeant Rijgrok later denied that the sergeant had issued a warning as to the consequences of not leaving and that he had told them that the move was approved by the Supreme Court.⁷²⁵

A day later, Lieutenant Peter Kitching, station commander of the Alexandria police, accompanied Sergeant Rijgrok on a tour of Klipfontein. According to him the tour was undertaken at the request of the sergeant.⁷²⁶ The lieutenant returned to Alexandria that afternoon and by 3 pm he had written a sworn affidavit detailing his visit to what he called the “Klipfontein Squattercamp”. In this report, he mentioned his estimated population size of the black African population and that there were no employment facilities available on the farm. He further described their living conditions as ‘precarious’ as they were staying in “old tents, shacks erected out of zinc and planks and mud huts”.⁷²⁷ He also alluded to the water scarcity and that there were no sanitary facilities, except for an open field and a dry river bed which were used for that purpose. He was also adamant in his affidavit that crime was increasing. Housebreaking, assaults and robbery were “the order of the day”.⁷²⁸ It is evident that his concerns were more for the white residents from the “holiday resort” of Boesmansriviermond. He concluded: “It is obvious that the circumstances under which these people live are unhealthy and unbearable and is a hazard for the inhabitants and the public in general.”⁷²⁹

Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷²² Keeton later denied that Sergeant Rijgrok said that the move had been sanctioned by the Supreme Court.

⁷²³ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 25 and interview with Rijgrok. Sergeant Rijgrok said that he was convinced this was the case and had no reason to doubt its validity as the message had come from his superiors in Grahamstown.

⁷²⁶ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*

Lieutenant Kitching presented his affidavit to the chief magistrate for the Alexandria district, S van der Watt. On Monday 26 March, 1979, Van der Watt issued a "Notice in terms of Article 5 of Act 52 of 1951". It read as follows:

Whereas I, S van der Watt, magistrate for the district of Alexandria, am convinced by way of the attached affidavit by Lieut. Kitching, Station Commander, SA Police Alexandria and Mr Keeton, Administration Board of Cape Midlands Region.

That the conditions under which and circumstances in which the following persons who are squatting illegally at Klipfontein Alexandria and whose names appear on the attached list, are living on the specified property or buildings, are such that, unless they are removed therefrom, the health or safety of the public may be placed in danger.

I hereby give the specified persons notice that applications will be made before me on the 29th day of March 1979 at 9am that the previously mentioned persons will be removed or relocated to Glenmore dist. Peddie and that all buildings and constructions that have been erected by or for them, will be demolished and removed.

Please note that the persons mentioned are entitled to be represented before me by one or more persons from among themselves, or by an advocate or attorney and to answer the allegations in the abovementioned affidavits by means of either statements, or through such representatives.

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On 28 March 1979, copies of the notice, as well as Lieutenant Kitching's affidavit and a two-page list of names of black Africans on Klipfontein⁷³¹ were found by members of the black African community at three places on the farm, namely the school, on a dirt track with a stone on top of it and the third was nailed to a pole on the extreme western boundary.⁷³² According to Tutu Gqukani, he did not know for certain when the documents

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.* and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 26.

⁷³¹ There were 196 names of family heads on the list. These names only included those who were counted by the police during their head count. Many other family heads were not even on the list.

⁷³² Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief*

were placed at any of those three places, but he was certain that they were definitely “not there during the daylight hours of 27 March”.⁷³³ It is also uncertain whether any of the three documents were translated into isiXhosa. When Van der Watt was subsequently confronted in court with a set of these papers in English and Afrikaans only, he did not indicate that anything was missing therefrom.⁷³⁴

The hearing calling for applications on the morning of 29 March, 1979, was unsurprisingly unopposed due to the late notice given of its existence to the Klipfontein black Africans. On 2 April, 1979, Van der Watt issued a final eviction order stating that after he had consulted with the relevant local authorities, he ordered the “SA Police, and/or officials of the Administration Board and/or the Department of Plural Relations to remove the persons named and their personal possessions from the farm Klipfontein and to take them to Glenmore in the district of Peddie.”⁷³⁵

However, most of the Klipfontein black Africans had no intention of being removed. Nonono Memani told a reporter before the removals took place: “All the people have said they are not going to Glenmore. That is not the place where they were born and where they are used to.”⁷³⁶ He also said that he was certain that no job opportunities were mentioned to them as far as he knew so when the removal trucks come, they were determined to stay: “If they want to take off the roof they must do it themselves. If they break down the houses, we’ll just sit. We won’t break them down ourselves and we won’t climb on the trucks.”⁷³⁷

The Klipfontein black Africans were not the only people in the area who were under threat of eviction. The board had said that it also wanted to clear the “unproductive and unemployed” out of the Kenton emergency camp.⁷³⁸ On 22 March, while Sergeant Rijgrok was addressing the Klipfontein black Africans at the school, the Kenton emergency camp’s ‘headmen’ handed out pieces of paper to the seventeen families staying at the camp.

Magistrate of Alexandria (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1

⁷³³ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁴ *Tutu Gqokani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.* It is not certain why these people were specifically listed. But the pattern that emerges is that they were some of the earlier black African settlers who arrived at Klipfontein in the early 1970s.

⁷³⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Nonono Memani, 31 March, 1979, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 28.

Among the recipients was Joseph Gcirana, a blind 69 year-old pensioner.⁷³⁹ He was handed a notice with the date, his name and a message saying that he and his family were to be moved to Glenmore in the district of Peddie. The notice concluded by informing the reader that the move was to take place from April 2, 1979. Not only could Gcirana not read the notice himself, but it was also written in Afrikaans.⁷⁴⁰

Gcirana was one of the first people to establish a home in the emergency camp, clearing out a space for himself in the bush in 1951. He was very disturbed by the eviction notice. "I don't want to go to Glenmore. The people built their own homes, and started this location. I'm crying that people must go."⁷⁴¹ His son Lindisile said that Gcirana prayed every evening that the family would not be moved. "Sometimes he would wake up early in the morning...and he would say, 'My children, wake up, let us pray that we won't be moved to Glenmore.'"⁷⁴²

Mani Billy was another of the family heads who was served an eviction order. He was also a pensioner. His wife worked in Kenton and he had three children at school. Billy's reaction to the notice was one of anger. "If I have to leave I should leave fairly," he said.⁷⁴³ "I haven't committed a crime. I trusted Christians all these years. I used to think they were good people, but now I've lost my trust in them and I'm beginning to doubt Christianity."⁷⁴⁴

Nancy Somnyali, another resident at the emergency camp, also received an eviction order. She had worked for a white lawyer, Don Savage, a former member of the Kenton Village Management Board. Savage and his wife had left Kenton in 1977, but kept in touch with Somnyali.⁷⁴⁵ Faced with eviction she turned to them for help. The Savages travelled to Kenton on the weekend of 24 to 25 March, 1979.⁷⁴⁶ Savage discovered that Somnyali's employer at the time had not signed her reference book or paid registration fees to the board for quite some time. Therefore, according to the board, she was unemployed and 'redundant'. Savage then proceeded to write a lengthy and stern letter to the *Daily Dispatch* newspaper wherein he described the Fish River valley as a "hot, barren and

⁷³⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Joseph Gcirana, 21 March, 1979 PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Lindisile Gcirana, 27 July, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 34.

⁷⁴³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Mani Billy, 31 March, 1979 PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 29.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

inhospitable wilderness”.⁷⁴⁷ He added in the letter that Somnyali had two teenage daughters who worked part-time as domestic servants. An older daughter was a paraplegic. Somnyali also had a son who was healthy and at school, and her husband was mentally unstable, unemployed and, in Savage’s opinion, he was unemployable.⁷⁴⁸

According to Savage’s letter, it seemed possible that the removal of the Kenton black Africans had something to do with Klipfontein. He alleged that large numbers of ‘Bantu’ had settled on Klipfontein over recent years, with many of them reportedly unemployed. Those squatters who were unemployed were being removed, but those males who had employment locally were to be moved into the Kenton emergency camp with their families. In Savage’s opinion, this meant “replacing the unfortunates who have been lawful and in many cases industrious members of the Kenton community for many years...”⁷⁴⁹ Savage then ended the letter with a list of questions about the facilities available at Glenmore.⁷⁵⁰

Progressive Federal Party (PFP) members in Grahamstown who had read the letter, alerted the party’s MP, Helen Suzman who, in turn, spoke to Dr Koornhof, now the Minister of Plural Relations.⁷⁵¹ Koornhof responded by saying he knew nothing about the Kenton removals. However, it seems that Koornhof’s statements were more often than not contradictory. For example, in an article in the *Eastern Province Herald*, he spoke of his desire to see everyone “bound by a common loyalty to enable the people to have a happy and meaningful life in South Africa.”⁷⁵² But he could also declare in a speech to the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs, that South Africa was a “white man’s land” and, “instilling in the Bantu a longing to join his own people in the homeland” was a white man’s “patriotic duty”.⁷⁵³

The Friday before the removals were due to commence, the Albany branch of the PFP issued a statement urging the authorities to reconsider the removal.⁷⁵⁴ The Grahamstown Black Sash reiterated Don Savage’s sentiments when they pointed out that “After years of

⁷⁴⁷ As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 30 March, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 29.

⁷⁴⁸ As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 30 March, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 29.

⁷⁴⁹ As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 30 March, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁵⁰ As quoted in the *Daily Dispatch* 30 March, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁵¹ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 223.

⁷⁵² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁵³ 16th Annual Congress of the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs (IANA), Durban, September 1969 in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁵⁴ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 223.

faithful service people in the Kenton area had their site permits⁷⁵⁵ summarily cancelled.”⁷⁵⁶ It went on to say that not only was the statutory 30 days’ notice not given but that, from the passes they examined, the “retired people had a legal right to be in an urban area.”⁷⁵⁷

It is difficult to see how the brief notice of the move to Glenmore delivered only eleven days before the removal was to happen, could be construed as a notice of cancellation of the site permit or any other legal document for that matter. It can thus be suggested that the authorities were reliant on intimidation rather than on the power of the law.⁷⁵⁸ According to Bush, the people who were being moved were those living at the emergency camp ‘unlawfully’.⁷⁵⁹ In other words, he was referring to those who did not qualify under the Urban Areas Act to be there. But Black Sash’s contention was proved largely correct when, on the Saturday, a party of its members travelled to Kenton and interviewed some of the families to determine their residential rights and job status.⁷⁶⁰ The interviewers had received twelve questionnaires from respondents staying at the camp. Those questionnaires showed that most of the residents at the emergency camp had a job and had permits. Before the outstanding questionnaires could be completed, the Black Sash interviewers were removed from the camp by the Kenton police and escorted to the police station. There they were warned not to enter the camp again without a permit. The man responsible for issuing the permits was the selfsame Bush.⁷⁶¹ But Bush told a reporter later that day that he would not issue a permit for the Kenton emergency camp until he had been authorised to do so by Louis Koch.⁷⁶²

On 1 April, 1979, the CMBAAB merged with the Karoo and eastern Cape administration boards as part of a nation-wide move to reduce the total number of boards from 22 to 14, with the aim of making them more financially self-sufficient.⁷⁶³ Boet Erasmus was appointed chairman of the new enlarged board, called the Eastern Cape Administration

⁷⁵⁵ A site permit was issued by the township superintendent and authorised the occupation of a particular house or plot.

⁷⁵⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

⁷⁵⁹ Platzky, *The surplus people* pp. 222-223 and The Surplus People Project, *Forced Removals in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1983), p. 139.

⁷⁶⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 30.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁷⁶² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Dennis Bush, 31 March, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁷⁶³ R Humphries, “The origins and subsequent development of administration boards” MA Thesis, Rhodes University, (1983), p. 166.

Board (ECAB).⁷⁶⁴ Erasmus saw the aim of the board to “make blacks more homeland conscious”.⁷⁶⁵ Koch was named as chief director which meant that he had direct authority over an area encompassing 76 local authorities (municipalities).⁷⁶⁶ The new board had a budget of at least R70 million in its first year of operation and essentially had control over the lives of 1,3 million people. When asked on the same day what would happen if Klipfontein families wanted to remain on the farm, Koch replied that if they resisted the move they would be prosecuted, also reminding his interviewer that the Trust and Land Act case was deferred pending “their removal to Glenmore”.⁷⁶⁷ Koch maintained that there “had been the necessary consultation over the move”.⁷⁶⁸ He said that the Klipfontein people had met with them and Lent Maqoma and that they had indicated that they were in favour of the move. He assured the press that Klipfontein was without the sanitary facilities and so the move would be to the people’s advantage. “We will effect the move as humanely as possible.”⁷⁶⁹

Meanwhile, members of the Black Sash, PFP and a Rhodes student social action group, Delta, as well as other concerned white individuals, met in Grahamstown that evening and decided to form what they called an “action committee”.⁷⁷⁰ Its broad aim was to force the government to review the proposed removals.

The following day, 2 April, 1979, Koch announced that the removal from the Kenton emergency camp had been “temporarily stayed”.⁷⁷¹ He said that he wanted to be sure that there were no “alternative arrangements” that could be made for them.⁷⁷² He maintained that he had in fact ordered the suspension on the previous Friday, coincidentally the same day Suzman met with Koornhof. But if this was the case then Koch failed to mention it to the press on 1 April. In fact, he had assured the reporter that the removals to Glenmore “would go ahead as planned”.⁷⁷³

The decision to suspend the removals of the Kenton black African residents were also never directly communicated to them. Gcirana had to hear the news of the suspension

⁷⁶⁴ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 222.

⁷⁶⁵ As quoted in *The Evening Post* 2 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁶⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁶⁷ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 2 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁶⁸ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 2 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁶⁹ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 2 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁷⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 31-32.

⁷⁷¹ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁷² As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 31.

⁷⁷³ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 2 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 32.

from a group of visiting Rhodes students.⁷⁷⁴ No official confirmed the decision with the family. Dorah Mkhaliipi, another resident who received an eviction notice, said that she had heard the announcement over the radio when she tuned in to Radio Bantu for the 6 am news on Monday, the day of the removals.⁷⁷⁵

Pressure on the authorities had ensured the suspension of the Kenton removals, but the Klipfontein removals were to go ahead. After his announcement of the suspension of the removals from Kenton on Monday morning, Koch travelled to Glenmore to make sure, as he put it, “that everything that would be needed by the squatters was there and that all preparations were complete.”⁷⁷⁶ That morning he had also attended the first meeting of the new enlarged board. One of the items on the agenda was a message from the deputy minister of Bantu Administration, Dr Wilhelm Vosloo. The letter apparently requested the board to “propagate the numerous positive actions of administration boards” with the help of media publications, in light of “ongoing criticism of administration boards and their staff from all quarters.”⁷⁷⁷

When Koch returned from Glenmore that same day, he spoke to another reporter and provided greater detail as to how the removal was to be carried out, perhaps influenced by Dr Vosloo’s instructions. Koch told the reporter that when the trucks arrived, the removal staff would be thoroughly briefed. The people would only be removed in daylight hours, and the whole process would be carried out with the “utmost discretion”.⁷⁷⁸ He said that if anyone refused to board the trucks, they would not be treated in an undignified fashion.

That afternoon a group of board officials went from one house to the next on Klipfontein asking whether the occupants were willing to move to Glenmore the next day. When people answered that they would not leave until a legal representative told them otherwise, the officials allegedly told them that it would not stop the removals.⁷⁷⁹

⁷⁷⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Lindisile Gcirana, 27 July, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 34.

⁷⁷⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Dorah Mkhaliipi, 27 July, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 34.

⁷⁷⁶ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 32.

⁷⁷⁷ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 32.

⁷⁷⁸ As quoted in *The Eastern Province Herald* 3 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 32.

⁷⁷⁹ Affidavit of Fumanekile Tokwe in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

“People are being removed in terms of an order that may be illegal”⁷⁸⁰

On 5 April, 1979, Herbert Fischat transported Tutu Gqukani to Grahamstown, where a Supreme Court hearing had been arranged for that afternoon. Before collecting Gqukani, he stopped at the administration board headquarters just outside Port Elizabeth and then also at the office of the chief magistrate at Alexandria. There he left copies of affidavits from Magenis van Rensburg Sr, Gungutu Zake and the Gqukani which he had compiled the night before as well as a letter:

Dear sirs,

Re: Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake; and Removal of families from the farm ‘Klipfontein’.

This is to inform you that on the instructions of the above two persons we propose to make an urgent application before the Supreme Court in Grahamstown interdicting yourselves from removing any further families from said farm and directing yourselves to return to the farm at your own cost any families already removed.⁷⁸¹

He continued by pointing out that the families at Klipfontein were people who had lived there all their lives. They were now, according to the letter, being removed “illegally and also against their will”. He then went on to enumerate facts which made it an urgent matter:

- 1.) That the removals are continuing unabated despite protests and that families on the farm are suffering the prejudice of having their homes broken up and their goods and themselves taken away.
- 2.) That once the families on the farm have been removed therefrom, to Glenmore or some other place, the representative committee will lose touch with them and it will be impossible, or virtually impossible, thereafter to bring proceedings to have these persons reinstated in their right to live on the farm, or in their homes thereupon.⁷⁸²

The application hearing was heard soon after 4 pm the same day.⁷⁸³ The judge was

⁷⁸⁰ A statement made by Justice Eksteen during the first hearing in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79.

⁷⁸¹ Copy of the letter in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*

⁷⁸³ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 41.

Justice Jan Eksteen, the same man who had overturned the Klipfontein trespassing convictions of two years before.⁷⁸⁴ The judgment lists that Van der Watt and the board were represented by advocate Jimmy van Rensburg, and Gqukani and Zake by Tom Mullins.⁷⁸⁵ In the application, Mullins contended that Van der Watt had mistakenly used his ‘function’ by adopting an “improper course” in issuing the eviction order.⁷⁸⁶ He argued that there had been clear irregularities in the issuing of the eviction order. He said that the relevant section of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act specifically stated that the people against whom the order was sought had to be given at least three days’ notice of the eviction hearing.⁷⁸⁷ The original notice issued by Van der Watt was dated 26 March, 1979 and the inquiry was to be held at 9 am on 29 March, 1979.⁷⁸⁸ This meant that there were only two days left for the Klipfontein black Africans to intervene. Furthermore, according to the applicants’ affidavits the notices were only placed on Klipfontein on the 28th and 29th March.⁷⁸⁹

Mullins also criticised Van der Watt’s attitude leading up to the inquiry. He told the court that the “magistrate should not make any decision before the notices have been posted and the 3 days’ notice has expired.”⁷⁹⁰ It was beyond doubt, according to Mullins, that a decision had already been taken and that the magistrate was merely paying “lip service” to the procedure dictated by law. “This is a clear erosion of the applicants’ rights of notice and their rights of protest.” Mullins contested.⁷⁹¹ Another irregularity raised by Mullins was that there was no notice given in “the Bantu language”, only in Afrikaans - a language not spoken or read by most black Africans on Klipfontein. He declared that this was an example of administrative action “not contemplated by law” as it was done in such a “hurried manner”.⁷⁹² He concluded that there had been so many irregularities on the part of the magistrate in giving notice as well as in the “lack of sufficient notice” that the applicants had to be entitled to the relief sought.

For the board and the magistrate, Jimmy van Rensburg argued that the applicants had

⁷⁸⁴ *State v Posiwe Cibiya and seven others* (unreported) and *State v Shorty Myali and eighteen others* (unreported) Cory Library PR 10301, Book 6 Folder 36.

⁷⁸⁵ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁹ See p. 134.

⁷⁹⁰ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*

“misconstrued their remedy”.⁷⁹³ In terms of the Bantu (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act 64 of 1956, the court was not empowered to grant an interdict in “proceedings of this nature”.⁷⁹⁴ He said that they could seek redress after the event through an appeal or review, referring to a section in that Act which stated that any court which declared an order invalid could award compensation for “the actual loss sustained by him (the applicant) as a result of compliance with or the execution of such order”.⁷⁹⁵ According to notes taken by court reporters, Justice Eksteen then asked Van Rensburg if he was going to challenge Mullins’ argument as to whether the order itself was illegal.⁷⁹⁶ Van Rensburg asked for a postponement of seven days soon afterwards. Justice Eksteen responded that because this was an urgent application he had until the next day. “[W]e’re not going to wait while people are being removed in terms of an order that may be illegal.”⁷⁹⁷ Mullins then rose and objected to the matter being postponed at all, pointing out that a lot of damage could be done if the rate of removals was fifty families a day.⁷⁹⁸ Van Rensburg then said that the officials he represented were prepared to stop the removals for about three days.⁷⁹⁹ Van Rensburg said “I’m told they would be prepared to cease removals without an order being made. I will arrange that removals cease until in this matter has been completed.”⁸⁰⁰ Justice Eksteen, after hearing Van Rensburg’s assurances, agreed to postpone the hearing to the following Thursday, 12 April, 1979, and repeated aloud Van Rensburg’s undertaking.⁸⁰¹ The hearing ended just past 5 pm.⁸⁰²

After the hearing, Fischat transported Gqukani back to Klipfontein, where he immediately went looking for his family, whom he had left at the road that morning. According to Gqukani, the officials saw that he was going to Grahamstown and thus came back to fetch his family.⁸⁰³ When he got back to Klipfontein, his family was gone. The Jamjams had also gone when Gqukani arrived. Jamjam said later that Gqukani’s son approached him and

⁷⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁶ Maclellan, *Glenmore* p. 42.

⁷⁹⁷ As quoted in Maclellan, *Glenmore* pp. 42-43.

⁷⁹⁸ Maclellan, *Glenmore* p. 42.

⁷⁹⁹ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁰⁰ As quoted in Maclellan, *Glenmore* p. 43.

⁸⁰¹ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 and Maclellan, *Glenmore* p. 43.

⁸⁰² After the hearing Bush told a reporter that by nightfall that day, some 95 families (about half of the black African population of Klipfontein) had been moved to Glenmore.

⁸⁰³ Transcript of interview between Ben Maclellan and Tutu Gqukani, 16 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 41.

said that it did not help to resist the move when the family's furniture was at Glenmore.⁸⁰⁴ Jamjam said "He (Gqukani's son) said we had better go to be with our belongings there. I went to Glenmore on a lorry that night with my family."⁸⁰⁵ Gqukani slept the night at Klipfontein and the next morning asked for a lift to Glenmore.

On the morning of Friday 6 April, 1979 – a day after the Supreme Court hearing, Dr Vosloo and a group of officials, including Koch, the board's vice-chairman Dr Jannie Wessels and department's chief commissioner for the eastern Cape, John Hitge, travelled to Glenmore.⁸⁰⁶ They met with Lennox Sebe and his full cabinet and went with them on a tour of the township. Koch said that the reason for the tour was to 'assure' Sebe and his cabinet of the "quality and conveniences" of Glenmore.⁸⁰⁷ According to Koch's affidavit he asked several of the families if they had been moved against their will. Their answer, apparently, was that none of them had been forced to move to Glenmore and that they were "highly satisfied with their present circumstances."⁸⁰⁸ He even went as far as to say that the attitude of the residents was perceptible in that there "was a jovial spirit among all those present."⁸⁰⁹

Sebe told reporters that he and his cabinet had agreed to a new arrangement with Dr Vosloo during the meeting. He proclaimed "We have had enough of this phraseology about 'voluntary' removals. Now we insist that officials have a letter of consent before squatters' possessions are removed."⁸¹⁰ Furthermore, Dr Vosloo had assured him that no one would be forced to leave Klipfontein at "this stage of the operation".⁸¹¹ The Ciskeian leader maintained that his government was vehemently opposed to resettlement and gave aid to communities from South Africa who had been dumped in the Ciskei for "humanitarian reasons".⁸¹² But Ciskeian authorities also played quite a significant role in ensuring compliance from communities about to be resettled from South Africa. This was at the insistence of the South African central government that offered the 'homeland'

⁸⁰⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Sindeka Jamjam, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 40.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁶ Affidavit of Lodewyk Christiaan Koch in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸¹⁰ As quoted in *Weekend Post* 7 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 43.

⁸¹¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 43.

⁸¹² As quoted in *Weekend Post* 7 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 43.

additional land for its agricultural schemes in return for its compliance.⁸¹³ Another reason why Sebe was attracted to the idea of communities being moved to the Ciskei, stemmed from the manner in which the homeland leaders' salaries were allocated. Sebe was not 'chief' or clan leader by right.⁸¹⁴ He was granted this title by the South African government, which also gave him his "domain" of governance as well as new 'citizens' in the form of thousands of farmworkers evicted in the Republic. A 'chief's' salary was determined by the number of subjects he had under his authority, so it was very advantageous for Sebe to have a human 'dumping-ground' on his border.⁸¹⁵

Therefore, it is difficult to reconcile the contradictory actions/statements of a man who cared generally for the well-being of these displaced people when it was to his advantage to have them removed – whether by force or not – to his territory. When he insisted on the "letters of consent", Sebe was more concerned with his public image than what really would happen to the black Africans from Klipfontein.

The officials who carried out the removal had no objection to the introduction of Sebe's "letters of consent". This is because the government's attitude was such that sooner or later they obtained the consent of all of those people they had removed in the past. MC Botha, the minister of Bantu administration and development encapsulated this approach when he stated: "We get their co-operation in all cases voluntarily. As a matter of fact, sometimes it is necessary to do quite a lot of persuasion, but we do get them away."⁸¹⁶ Botha does not mention coercion and threat of force as methods of 'persuasion', but he did not have to. The consent letters were as with the notices of eviction, a smokescreen in order to proceed with the removal without interruption.

By all accounts, no removals took place while the tour of Glenmore was underway.⁸¹⁷ But by 1 pm that same day, Derbyshire and Constable Khani were back on Klipfontein with a pile of handwritten copies of consent letters.⁸¹⁸ At the top of each page was a space for the signatory's name and age and below that the following words written in Afrikaans:

⁸¹³ P Green and A Hirsch, "The impact of resettlement in the Ciskei: three case studies", *SALDRU working paper 49*, (University of Cape Town, 1983).

⁸¹⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 44.

⁸¹⁵ Surplus People Project, *Forced removals in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1983), pp. 143-144.

⁸¹⁶ He was speaking on a SABC programme *Top Level* 20 November, 1969, requoted in Surplus People Project, *Forced removals* p. 1.

⁸¹⁷ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸¹⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 44.

Declare under oath, that I am an adult black man and presently of the farm Klipfontein in the Alexandria district. I choose out of my own free will and without being in any way influenced to do so to move to Glen More [sic].

1.) I am familiar with the contents of this statement and understand it.

2.) I have no objection to taking the prescribed oath.

3.) I regard the prescribed oath as binding on my conscience.⁸¹⁹

The two men went from house to house – those that still remained – collecting signatures, or as was more often the case, thumb-prints on the documents. By 5:15 pm eighteen “letters of consent” had been signed, meaning that eighteen families had ‘consented’ to being moved.⁸²⁰ Just after 4 pm, the removal squad trucks had returned to the farm.⁸²¹ Despite the week-long suspension ordered by the Supreme Court only the day before, the removals were once again in full swing.

The following day, Saturday 7 April, 1979, fifteen ‘simplified’ versions of the “consent letter” were signed.⁸²² None were signed on Sunday and then another ten were signed on Monday. In all, 43 heads of households signed the letters.⁸²³ According to Bush, all families, from 6 April, 1979, were required to “give a written request to that effect or to make an affidavit to that effect.”⁸²⁴ On Friday afternoon, as the first letters were being presented to be signed, Dr Koornhof declared that he still stood by his original assurances: there would be no removals at that stage.⁸²⁵ These kinds of statements from Bush and Koornhof seem to indicate that the Klipfontein black Africans who signed the letters did it of their own free will and were aware of what they were doing. Once again, their version differs significantly from the eyewitness accounts of people who were not officials.

Jack Matiwane, who was also living on Klipfontein at the time, said that on Monday 9 April, 1979, he observed the removal squad knocking down several houses near his own house.⁸²⁶ He said that he saw CMBAAB officials were busy demolishing houses while their

⁸¹⁹ Platzky, *Surplus people* p. 229.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁸²¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 44.

⁸²² Platzky, *Surplus people* p. 226 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p.44.

⁸²³ Platzky, *Surplus people* p. 226.

⁸²⁴ Affidavit of Dennis Bush in *Tutu Gqokani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸²⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 45.

⁸²⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Jack Matiwane, 16 April 1979 Cory Library PR

occupants were cleaning them out:

I packed up our own goods, to be ready by the time they came to us, because I felt it was better that they didn't damage my clothing. The BAAB gave me a paper on Monday when they finished loading the lorries, saying I must sign. I signed. I don't know what it was for. If it had been explained, I would not have signed.⁸²⁷

He said further that everybody was compelled to sign this paper (presumably the "letters of consent") at the gate of Klipfontein by CMBAAB officials, willing or not: "We did not want to leave Klipfontein. We left because it was insisted that we must leave and because we were harassed by the police."⁸²⁸

Skotomani Ndesi was also one of those who signed a "consent" letter". He said that the squad passed right by him and "began stripping the house and loading my belongings on to the lorry."⁸²⁹ He alleges that Sergeant Rijgrok and Constable Khani approached him and said he had to sign a piece of paper.⁸³⁰ Ndesi then asked Constable Khani why he had to sign it. Constable Khani replied by saying that they were taking him away.⁸³¹ Ndesi then said, "I don't want to go. He (Constable Khani) said 'Sign here and there won't be any trouble."⁸³² By this time, Ndesi says, the removal squad were already removing the zinc sheets off of his roof. He asked: "Where are you taking us to? They said, 'to a place called Glenmore.' I said, 'where's that? I'm happy here.' They said, 'it's no time to talk now: let's argue about that when you get there.'"⁸³³

Witvoet Mapapu and his wife recalled how alarmed they were on the Wednesday and Thursday (before the "letters of consent") by the manner in which people were being evicted whether they wanted to leave or not.⁸³⁴ They were so concerned about their own future on Klipfontein that Mapapu's wife, Nokwanada, suggested that she go off to look for

10301, Book 3 Folder 97.2.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 45.

⁸²⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*

⁸³² *Ibid.*

⁸³³ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 45.

a farm in the vicinity.⁸³⁵ On the Friday morning, before the arrival of the first batch of letters, she journeyed to Southwell. Mapapu stayed at home with the children. Later that day, Mapapu says that a “white sergeant”, a white board official and the emergency camp ‘headman’ arrived at his house.⁸³⁶ He said that the “white sergeant” asked him “Old man, are you moving?”⁸³⁷ Mapapu said that he was not: “The black man said, ‘It is a pity father, for you will be crying after some time.’”⁸³⁸ Mapapu said that the “black man” was translating for the white men. The man told him: “Old man, if you don’t want to put your house down and follow the other people, it will be too bad for you when you have to move.”⁸³⁹ He said that he was afraid that the police might come back and arrest him. “So I took a crowbar, took the house down and called the trucks to collect the material. They gave me a paper and showed me where I had to sign. They didn’t tell me what I was signing, but I signed because I did not know what would happen. That day was quite a rough one, so we had no argument to make.”⁸⁴⁰

It seems that the officials were not concerned about the order in which the signing of the “letter of consent” should take. Whether it was signed before or after the signatory’s house was demolished was inconsequential. For the officials overseeing the removals, it was about getting as many forms signed as quickly as possible in order to remove as many people as fast as what the process allowed. This was by no means a tactic reserved for the black Africans of Klipfontein. Such dubious methods of legitimising a forced removal had been employed by South African government authorities prior to the advent of apartheid.⁸⁴¹ It seems the most common method was to offer compensation to the families being removed.⁸⁴² If families resisted the removal, the authorities would zealously perceive it as them forfeiting their right to compensation.

Connected to this gross imbalance in the power dynamics between the authorities and black African families was the high level of illiteracy prevalent among black South Africans

⁸³⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Ironically, Nokwanda did find a farmer at Southwell who was prepared to inform her husband. But when she returned to Klipfontein, she found that her home had already gone, and her husband and children had been taken to Glenmore.

⁸⁴¹ See S. Victor, *Segregated Housing and Contested Identities: The Case of the King William's Town Coloured Community, 1895-1946* MA Thesis, Rhodes University (2007) pp. 80-81.

⁸⁴² See C Desmond, *The Discarded People* (Victoria, 1972).

at the time.⁸⁴³ Without understanding the legal ramifications of any promises made to them, or written documents they were told to sign by the authorities, most black Africans adhered because they feared the uncertain consequences of refusing to 'cooperate'.

All of the "letters of consent" signed on Friday, Saturday and Monday were supposedly filed at the Supreme Court in Grahamstown on Tuesday morning.⁸⁴⁴ The board apparently hoped to show to the court on that Thursday, when the hearing resumed, that all the removals that were done in the interim were voluntary.⁸⁴⁵ The filing of the letters meant that they could also be scrutinised and compared with one another. Further scrutiny of the letters showed that several of the heads of the families apparently signed more than one letter.⁸⁴⁶ For example, the court saw that there were two letters that contained the name Nazo.⁸⁴⁷ The first was one of the original handwritten letters, signed with a thumb-print on Friday afternoon. The name, "Soli Nazo", had been handwritten by an official. The second one was the modified, typed letters with the name of "Solly Nazo" and thumb-printed on Saturday. Asked years later about this, Solly Nazo was adamant that he was the only one on Klipfontein who bore that name. This assertion was also supported by the list of names on Van der Watt's eviction order.⁸⁴⁸ Even more revealing was that he was certain that he only signed only one letter. He said that Sergeant Rijgrok approached him with a piece of paper and told him that a number of people were willing to go to Glenmore. Nazo said that he told him that he was not going anywhere. "He (Sergeant Rijgrok) told me we wouldn't be long in Glenmore – five years, and then adequate houses would be built for us somewhere. He told me to put my fingerprints on the paper and showed me the place to put it. As I was going to put my finger I drew it backwards saying that if my finger meant that I accepted going to Glenmore, I wasn't going to sign."⁸⁴⁹

It seems that Nazo's case was not the only case where a name would be duplicated on these "letters of consent". Nontinam Myali was also given a letter to sign.⁸⁵⁰ She was a

⁸⁴³ Desmond, *Discarded People* pp. 22-26 and E Cavanagh, "The History of Dispossession at Orania and the Politics of Land Restitution in South Africa" *Journal of Southern African Studies* June, 2013, 39 2, pp. 397-398.

⁸⁴⁴ Platzky, *Surplus people* p. 225 and Maclellan, *Glenmore* p.44.

⁸⁴⁵ Affidavit of Lodewyk Christiaan Koch in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁴⁶ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben Maclellan and Solly Nazo, July 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 44.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben Maclellan and Nontinam Myali, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR

domestic worker and on the Saturday morning she was at the home of her employer, Lilian Futter. When Myali's son arrived from Klipfontein with the news that their house was being pulled down, Futter wrote a note for Nyali: "She said I must give it to the people who were pulling the house down; it said I'd been at Klipfontein for 15 years and I couldn't be moved just like that."⁸⁵¹ Myali told her husband, who also worked at Futter's house over the weekend, to stay. She said: "I was relying on this note to ensure we would not be moved. When I got there, the zinc had gone and about half the house was down. Most of our stuff was lying outside the house..."⁸⁵²

She then proceeded to give the note to the sergeant who was there. He read it and then gave her "a paper" and told her to sign. "He said that paper was the paper that said I'm going to Glenmore."⁸⁵³ Myali pleaded to the policemen, maintaining that they did not live on "a coloured man's land like the other people who were being moved".⁸⁵⁴ After she told him that she refused to move, the sergeant was adamant that she could not stay there. Myali remembers the sergeant saying, "[U]nder no circumstances are you going to stay here; it doesn't matter whether you sign the paper or not, you're going to move."⁸⁵⁵ She then described how her possessions were packed up piece by piece onto the trucks: "The truck took off a first load and one came up for the second load. I stopped the people who were loading things and tried to talk to them, but they spoke another language."⁸⁵⁶ Myali quickly grabbed the small items which she treasured and headed back to Futter's house. Myali's husband headed to Klipfontein where he took a lorry to Glenmore in an attempt to recover the rest of their property.⁸⁵⁷

In this case, both the Myalis were adamant that they never signed the "letter of consent". But in the papers presented to the Supreme Court, it shows that two letters were signed, both dated Saturday, 7 April, 1979.⁸⁵⁸ One is signed "William Myali" while the other is signed "William Myali" – though this letter seemed to have a completely different signature to the first. Below that name was written "Cynthia Myali", Mrs Nyali's English name. Both

10301, Folder 46.

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁴ Apparently they were living on the section of Klipfontein rented by Nico Bessinger.

⁸⁵⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Nomtinam Myali, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 46.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁸ *Tutu Gqokani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

letters were witnessed by two different officials. Myali was certain that he was the only person with that name on the farm at the time of the removal.⁸⁵⁹

There are letters for at least three others, all of whom refused to leave. There was even a letter purportedly signed by Joseph Nkinqana, who was mentally ill.⁸⁶⁰ His brother, Ndoyesita Nkinqana, said that Joseph was allegedly told that if he refused to leave, his disability grant would be taken away. He said that a policeman took his thumb and put it on the paper.⁸⁶¹ “My brother is gone. He signed on Monday and was gone on Tuesday. The house is gone too.”⁸⁶²

It may be possible to postulate, as MacLennan did, that the Klipfontein black Africans who were interviewed might have forgotten that they signed a “letter of consent”.⁸⁶³ With the passing of time and added trauma of being removed from their homes, remembering certain events may inevitably become difficult. They may even have forgotten signing two letters. But if Nazo, Myali and many others signed the letters with full awareness as to their nature as what was required, it should not have been necessary for them to sign the documents twice. In addition to this, it is very doubtful that these men and so many others would have signed the documents when they did not even want to leave the farm. The fact is that the authorities thought that the “letters of consent” would legitimise the removal of those who were on Van der Watt’s list. MacLennan theorised that the letters were to solve the problem of getting as many people off the farm as possible.⁸⁶⁴ He claims that the names of several people – Celala Goswana, Alfred Lungile, Spotomani Mchobongi, Wilton Nlamla, Mncinezali Nkinqana and some others – had not been on the list, but still signed “letters of consent” and were, ultimately removed.⁸⁶⁵ Unfortunately there is no other evidence other than what is provided in his monograph to support this claim. But what is evident is that the “letters of consent” also made their way over to the Kenton emergency camp. According to Bush approximately five families ‘agreed’ to leave after signing the letters.⁸⁶⁶ Most of these people were apparently young, and by all accounts it seemed that in most cases the removal there was voluntary. However, Elizabeth Gxowa and her family

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 47.

⁸⁶¹ In actual fact, there was a signature and not a thumbprint.

⁸⁶² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Ndoyesita Nkinqana, 14 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3 Folder 97.2.

⁸⁶³ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 44-48.

⁸⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸⁶⁶ Affidavit of Dennis Bush in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

did not have the same experience.⁸⁶⁷

On Saturday 7 April, 1979 at about 7 am, his daughter, Elizabeth, saw the trucks come into their camp towards their house. Elizabeth said,

The boys from the lorries took the clothes and furniture into the lorries and pulled the house down. My father shouted at them because he didn't want to go. They said they had authority to do this. My father cried when they took clothes out – he said, what's this place Glenmore, I've never heard of it. They told my father to get on the truck. He went on without any trouble because the police said his pension would be at Glenmore; he would get no pension here (Kenton). My mother and I went (to Glenmore) too.⁸⁶⁸

By nightfall on Monday 9 April, 1979, approximately 50 so-called 'voluntary' families had been removed from Klipfontein and the emergency camp and the number of families at Glenmore rose to about 145.⁸⁶⁹ Koch said that there were "about 50 families" left at Klipfontein.⁸⁷⁰ He said that these families included about 30 who were headed by "registered employees" and 20 families "which refused to move".⁸⁷¹

The authorities were intensifying their efforts to clear the farm, especially as Thursday, 12 April, 1979, the date of the commencement of the Supreme Court hearing, was looming. A divisional council employee, Sandi Yose, was a patient at the clinic in Port Alfred.⁸⁷² He had been treated for tuberculosis during the course of the previous three months. He was still in Port Alfred when his wife telephoned him on 4 April to say that people were being removed from the farm. In an affidavit, Yose stated that Constable Khani came to him and "enquired from me whether I would be leaving, as all other people would be leaving. I told him I would not be leaving."⁸⁷³ He said that on Monday 9 April a group of board officials arrived at his house and asked him when he would be leaving. Apparently, as a form of intimidation, GG trucks parked right outside his door. Yose was persistent in his refusal to

⁸⁶⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Elizabeth Gxowa, 4 December, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

⁸⁶⁸ *Ibid.* On another part of the emergency camp, near the Kenton rubbish tip, three families living there in makeshift shacks were also removed.

⁸⁶⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 48.

⁸⁷⁰ As quoted in *Eastern Province Herald*, 10 April, 1979, cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 48.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁸⁷³ Affidavit of Sandi Yose in *Tutu Gqokani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

leave the farm. On 10 April a board official came to him and said that he would have to leave. They allegedly falsely informed him that his lawyers could not help him anymore as they had “lost the case”.⁸⁷⁴

The board apparently accused Yose as being responsible for “causing all the trouble in Klipfontein” and that Yose would be relocated to wherever officials saw fit.⁸⁷⁵ He proceeded to tell the official that he had his attorney’s permission to remain on the farm. The official then asked him how they had paid for the attorney. Yose said:

I replied saying that they could find this out from the attorney themselves. The official further told me that we were wasting our money as our lawyers had lost the case. Later in the day Constable Khani approached me and asked me whether I could see what was happening around me. I told him I was not worried.⁸⁷⁶

Yose was only one of a number of heads of households to be harassed on 10 April. Daniel Boko was told that the next day would be the last day in which to move with the trucks.⁸⁷⁷ After that he would have had to make his own transport arrangements to Glenmore. Shorty Mxokozeli was told by Constable Khani that resistance was just wasting time as their lawyers had lost the case.⁸⁷⁸

By 12 April 1979, the day of the commencement of the hearing, at least 170 families had been removed from Klipfontein.⁸⁷⁹ There were 28 families that remained. According to the board 17 of these had refused to leave from the beginning while the other 11 had breadwinners working in the surrounding area.⁸⁸⁰ They were scheduled to move to the emergency camp, but they too refused to leave the farm.

The Hearing continues

The Supreme Court hearing commenced on Thursday morning with several senior officials,

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷⁷ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 49.

⁸⁷⁸ Affidavit of Shorty Mxokozeli in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.2.

⁸⁷⁹ Platzky, *The surplus people* pp. 225-226. And MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 49.

⁸⁸⁰ Affidavits of Lodewyk Christiaan Koch and Dennis Bush in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

including Koch and the chief commissioner, John Hitge present.⁸⁸¹ Advocate Van Rensburg still represented the chief magistrate, but the administration board had decided to appoint its own advocate. The applicants' legal team now consisted of two advocates – advocate Mullins and a colleague from Port Elizabeth.⁸⁸² In the week between the two court dates, the number of documents before the court had grown to more than 60 pages of affidavits as well as the “letters of consent” which were filed by the board and a lengthy affidavit from Van der Watt.⁸⁸³ But it seems the crux of the board's reply to the applicants' case was the affidavit by Koch. He claimed that the board was “totally incorrectly cited in the Application as a Respondent, in that neither the Administration Board nor any other Administration Board incorporated in it issued or requested an order, or had in any way any part in any removal, packing up possessions, breaking down of dwellings, or loading of possessions on lorries...”⁸⁸⁴ He said that the board merely took on a supervisory capacity during the removals to ensure that “good human relations were maintained between the black people being transported to Glenmore and the police as well as persons in the service of the Department of Plural Relations who attended to removal and transport.”⁸⁸⁵ This implied that if the applicants wanted to challenge the removals, they should have cited the Department of Plural Relations as a respondent and not the board. Moreover, Koch was quick to defend the board by suggesting that it had merely fulfilled a “supervisory capacity”.⁸⁸⁶ This came as a surprise to Sergeant Rijgrok, who was under the impression that the board had applied to the magistrate at Alexandria on behalf of all the parties concerned, for the eviction order.⁸⁸⁷

Koch was also apparently eager to dispute the statements made in Tutu Gqukani's affidavit. Gqukani had claimed that there were about 400 black African families living on Klipfontein at the time of the evictions.⁸⁸⁸ Koch responded by saying that there were only about 198 families and not all had lived on the farm their whole lives.⁸⁸⁹ They also erected homes which according to him “come nowhere near to complying with standard building

⁸⁸¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 49.

⁸⁸² *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁴ Affidavit of Lodewyk Christiaan Koch in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁷ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

⁸⁸⁸ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁸⁹ Affidavit of Lodewyk Koch in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79.

regulations”.⁸⁹⁰ He went on to say that even if they had permission from the usufructuaries to be on Klipfontein, it was still a contravention in terms of the Trust and Land Act. He did not know whether the department was moving the families legally or illegally, but he denied that “all families are being moved against their will”.⁸⁹¹ He concluded by repeating his contention that the board officials were only present in order supervise the move and “maintain good human relations” and that the board was “in no way involved with the execution of orders and/or notices in terms of article 5 of Act 52 of 1951 (Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act)”.⁸⁹²

Koch’s estimation of the number of black African families on Klipfontein may have been the more accurate one in this case. A persistent police presence during the weeks leading up to the removal had restricted any further settlement on Klipfontein, therefore a number approaching 400 would be highly unlikely. However, according to Sergeant Rijgrok, over 1 000 people were removed during the week between the first and second court hearings.⁸⁹³ This vast number of people moved in such a short space of time alone, gives one a perspective of the sheer scale of the removal. Furthermore, Koch’s assertion that he did not know whether the order to evict was legal or illegal is difficult to believe. The ECAB must have received the order and should have recognised gross irregularities with the procedure. After all, they should have had knowledge of the law that governed their own actions.

However, in the hearing itself, none of Koch’s points were argued. Van der Watt’s affidavit made that unnecessary. In it he ‘consented’ that the “order (eviction order) made by me on the 2nd April, 1979...be set aside and further consent to the award of costs accordingly”.⁸⁹⁴ When the court convened, Justice Eksteen was informed that both parties had agreed that the applicants withdraw their application against the board. Furthermore, both parties asked Justice Eksteen to order that the eviction notice be set aside, and that the chief magistrate be required to cover the legal costs of the applicants.⁸⁹⁵

Van der Watt made it clear that his admission did not mean that he agreed with Mullins’

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*

⁸⁹³ Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

⁸⁹⁴ *Tutu Gqokani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

assertions that the order was irregular and illegal. He said that it was done more for “tactical reasons”.⁸⁹⁶ He said afterwards that “the costs were mounting up. And by that time all the squatters had been moved anyway.”⁸⁹⁷ This implied that it was no longer necessary to enforce a legal eviction notice, because the eviction and relocation operations had already been completed.

Inexplicably, the court did not broach the subject of the “letters of consent” at all. It seems reasonable to think that the order given to Van Rensburg to relay to his clients were clear enough: no more removals were to take place until both parties had fully argued their case. On the Monday after the postponement of the hearing, when the signing of the consent letters was well underway, Koch was adamant that the undertaking had been that “only squatters who specifically requested the removal would be shifted”.⁸⁹⁸

The true reasons of why the board was allowed to blatantly manipulate the order by Justice Eksteen will probably never be known. It might be that Justice Eksteen might have agreed with Koch’s interpretation. Even so, one would have expected Herbert Fischat to bring to the judge’s attention that the removals enforced as a result of the “letters of consent” were not all voluntary as claimed by the board. A number of reasons for this lack of action are possible. Firstly, Fischat may not have been fully aware of what was happening on the farm. No new affidavits from the applicants were submitted when the hearing resumed on 12 April.⁸⁹⁹ Gqukani and Zake did not know about the consent letters until after the hearing, due to the relative isolation of Glenmore. Another explanation is that even if Fischat knew about the consent letters, he assumed that it would not be necessary to raise the matter as he believed that the withdrawal of the eviction order would restore the *status quo ante*. This theory is supported by a declaration he made in a news conference after the hearing that “the families at Glenmore will be free to return to Klipfontein with no restrictions on them, if they want to”.⁹⁰⁰

Fischat was correct in thinking that there would be no prevention placed on families who wanted to leave Glenmore. Yet, Van der Watt had clearly stated in the final paragraph of

⁸⁹⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 51.

⁸⁹⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Stephanus van der Watt, 30 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 31.

⁸⁹⁸ As quoted in *Eastern Province Herald* 13 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 51.

⁸⁹⁹ *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹⁰⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Herbert Fischat, 12 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

his affidavit, that in terms of the Trust and Land Act, none of the families removed from Klipfontein were to return and that the authorities were ready to take action against those who returned:

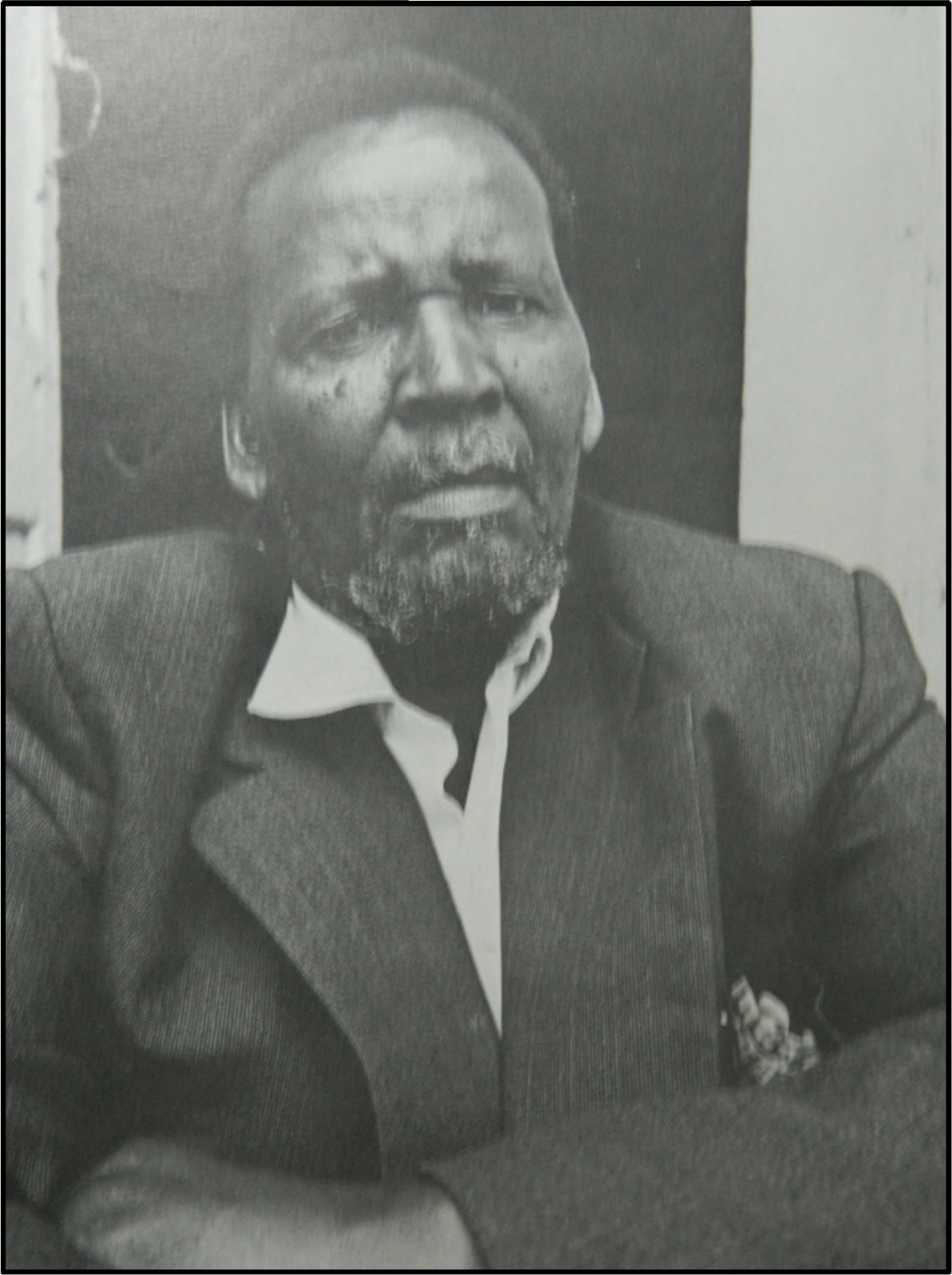
In the event of any persons who are at present at Glenmore returning to the said farm Klipfontein the possibility exists that they may face prosecution in terms of section 26 of Act No. 18 of 1936, the Trust and Land Act. As far as I am aware no permission has been granted in terms of the said Act by the Secretary of Plural Relations for black persons to stay on the said farm.⁹⁰¹

This meant that the Klipfontein black Africans would be able to leave Glenmore but because the authorities would never agree to them returning to Klipfontein, they could not legally do so. It is clear, taking all the events and affidavits of Koch and Van der Watt into consideration that the postponement of the hearing was very convenient for the authorities. It bought them enough time to remove almost all of the black African population from Klipfontein and, once they were off, they had no more rights to return to the farm. In hindsight, these people were illegally evicted, even though it was never officially declared to be the case by the Supreme Court due to the pre-emptive actions of Van der Watt.⁹⁰² The illegal eviction eventually paved the way for the authorities to carry out their original plan to cleanse the area of black Africans. Thus, the postponement of the hearing inadvertently went a long way in helping this plan succeed.

⁹⁰¹ Affidavit of Stephanus van der Watt in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.2.

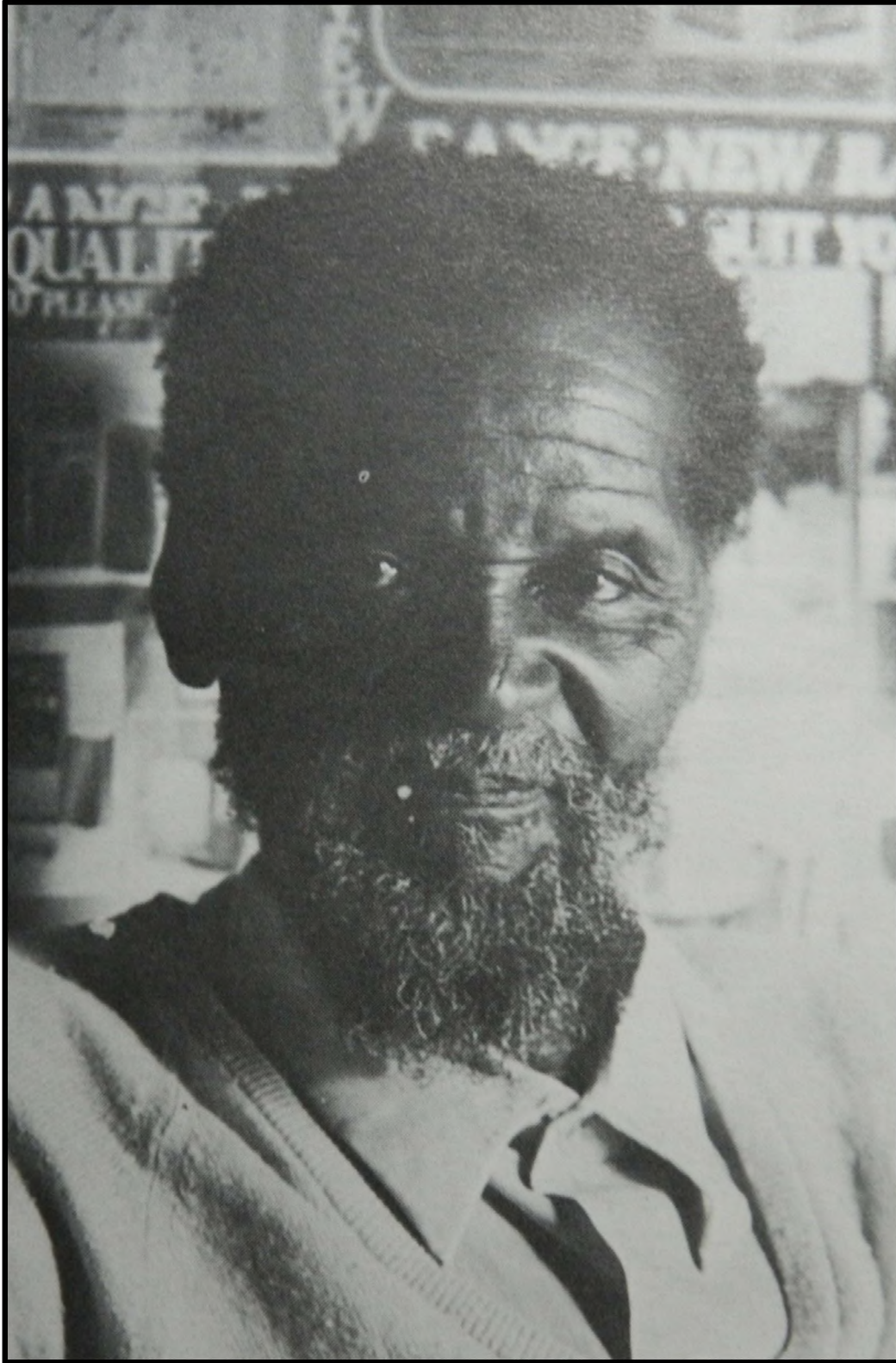
⁹⁰² *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

Witvoet Mapapu



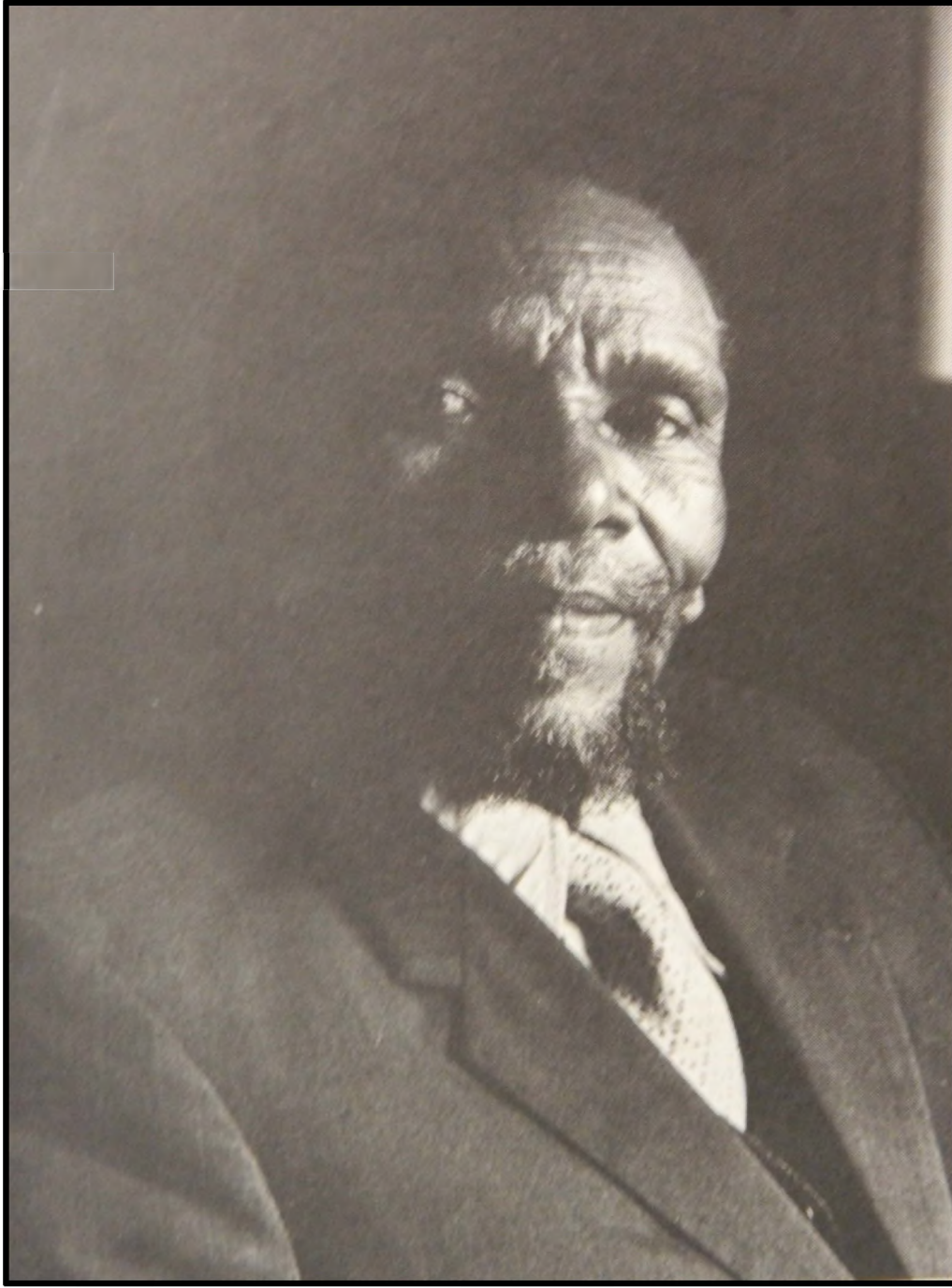
(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Tutu Gqukani



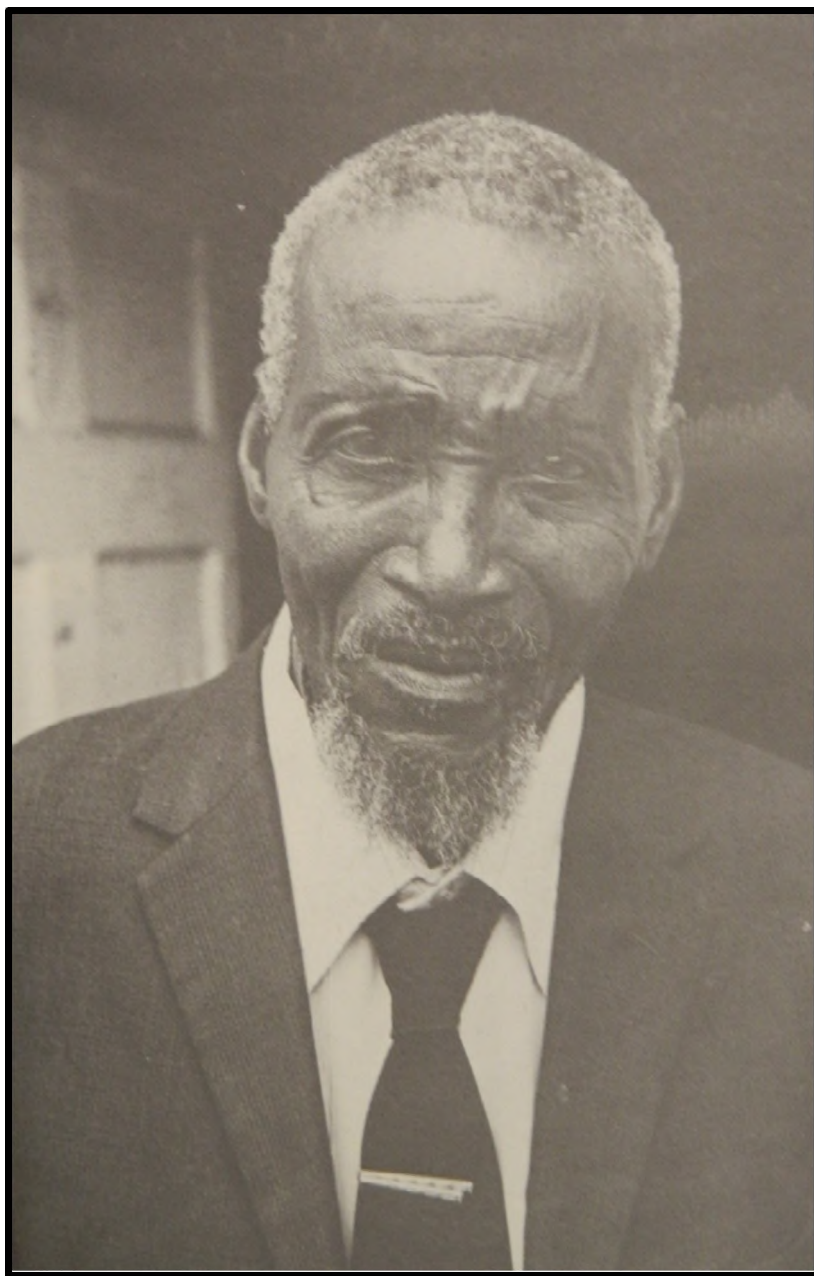
(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Gunqutu Zake



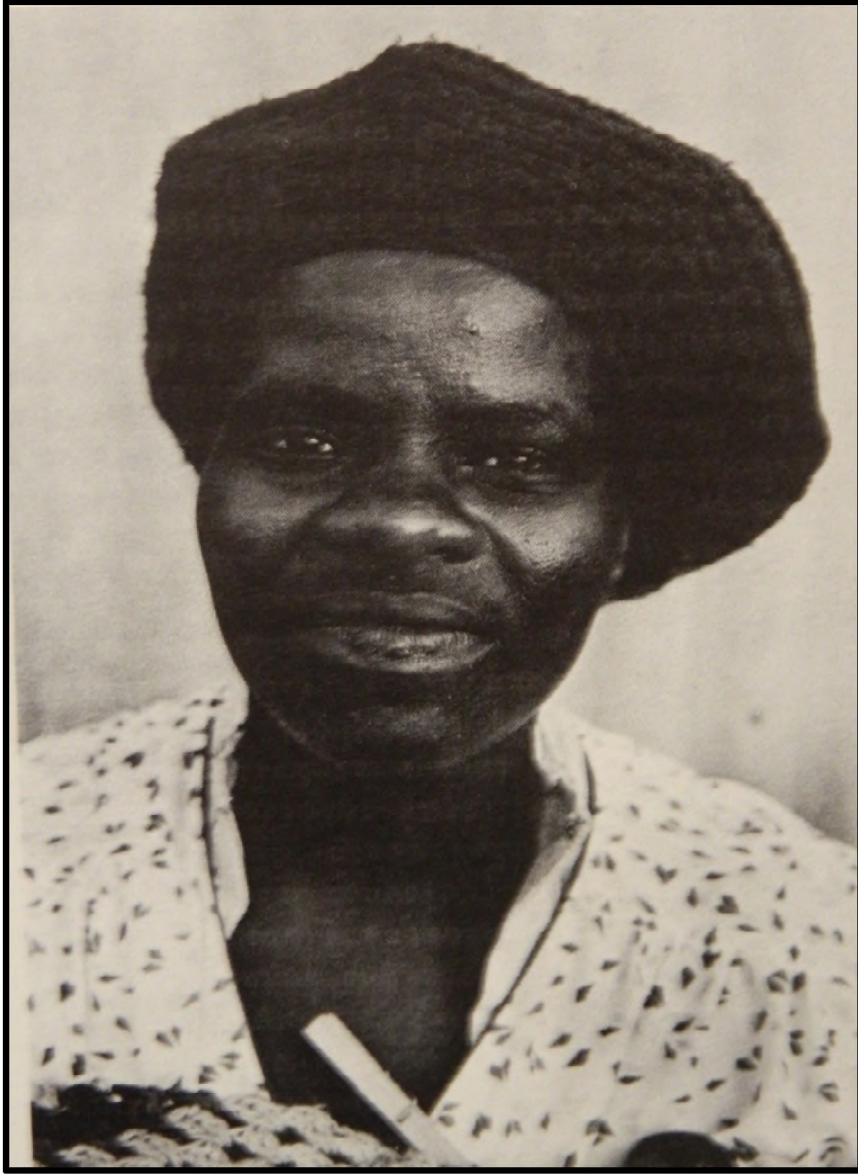
(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Rayi-Rayi Mqogoshe



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Sindeka Jamjam



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Klipfontein, March 1978



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Emily Sikiti and the youngest of her two children outside the shack she shared with six other members of her family, Klipfontein 1978



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Klipfontein, March 1979



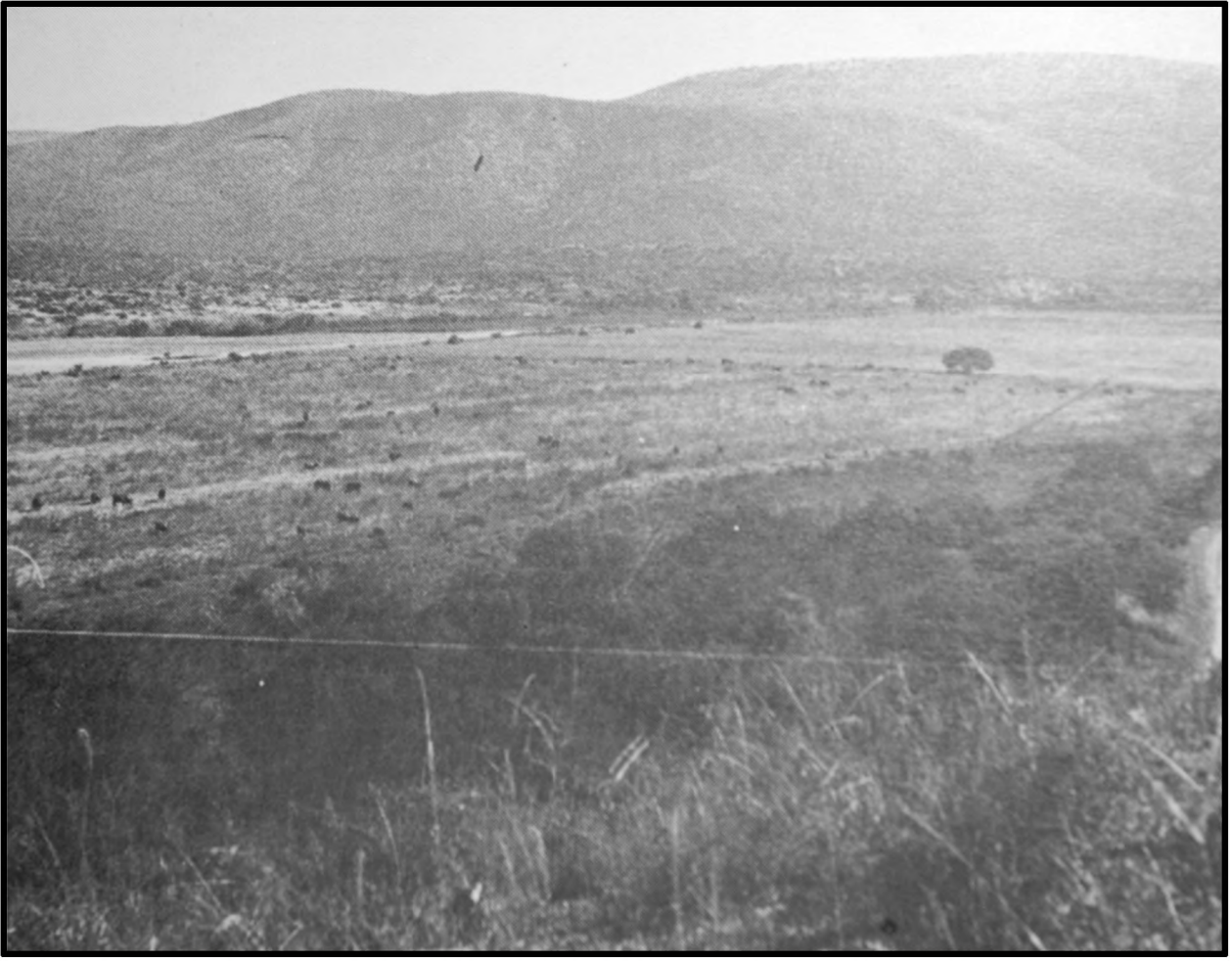
(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

The Kenton “emergency camp”



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Glenmore in 1976, while it was still being farmed



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Ronnie Knott



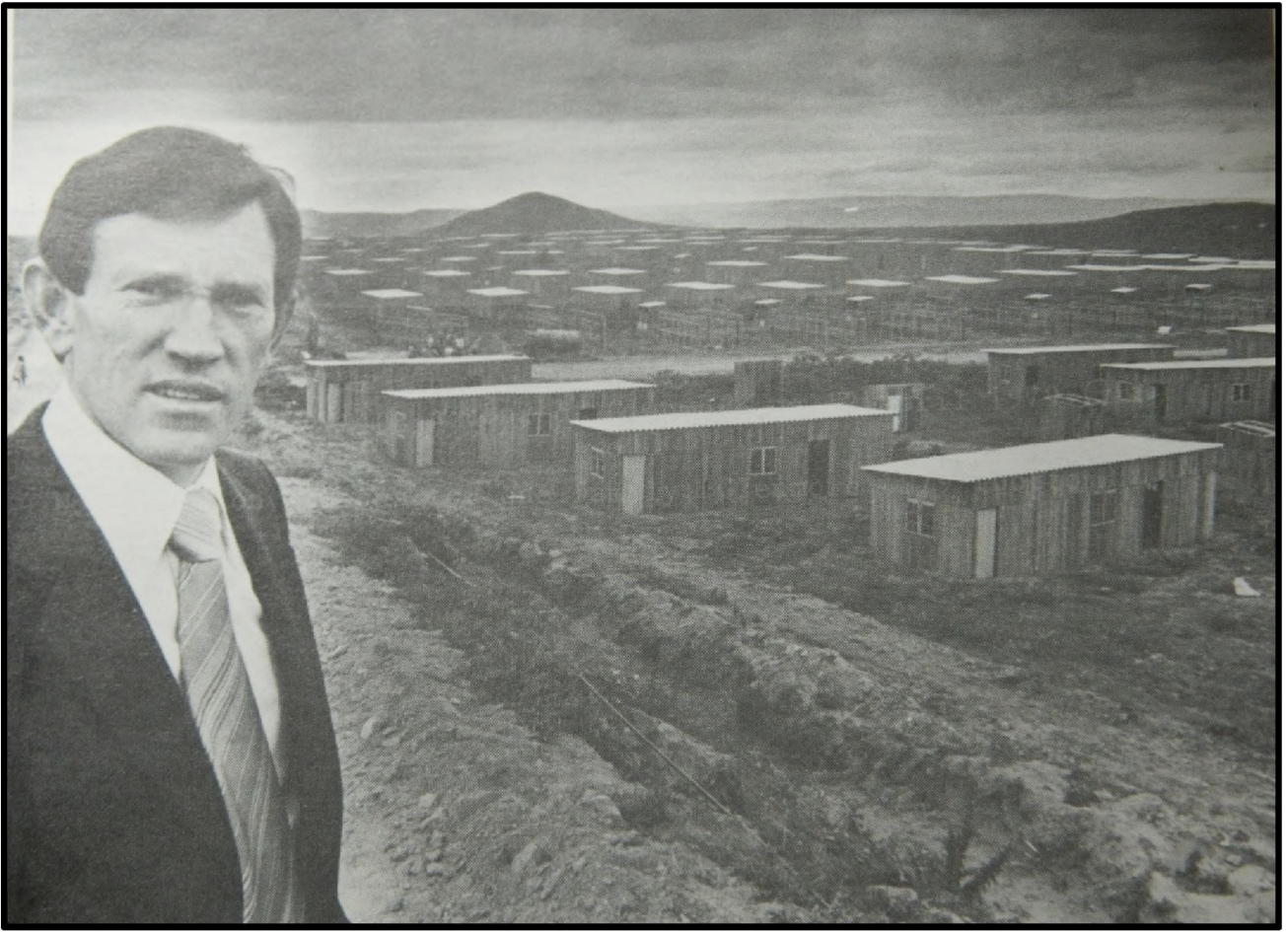
(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Tyefu Irrigation Scheme



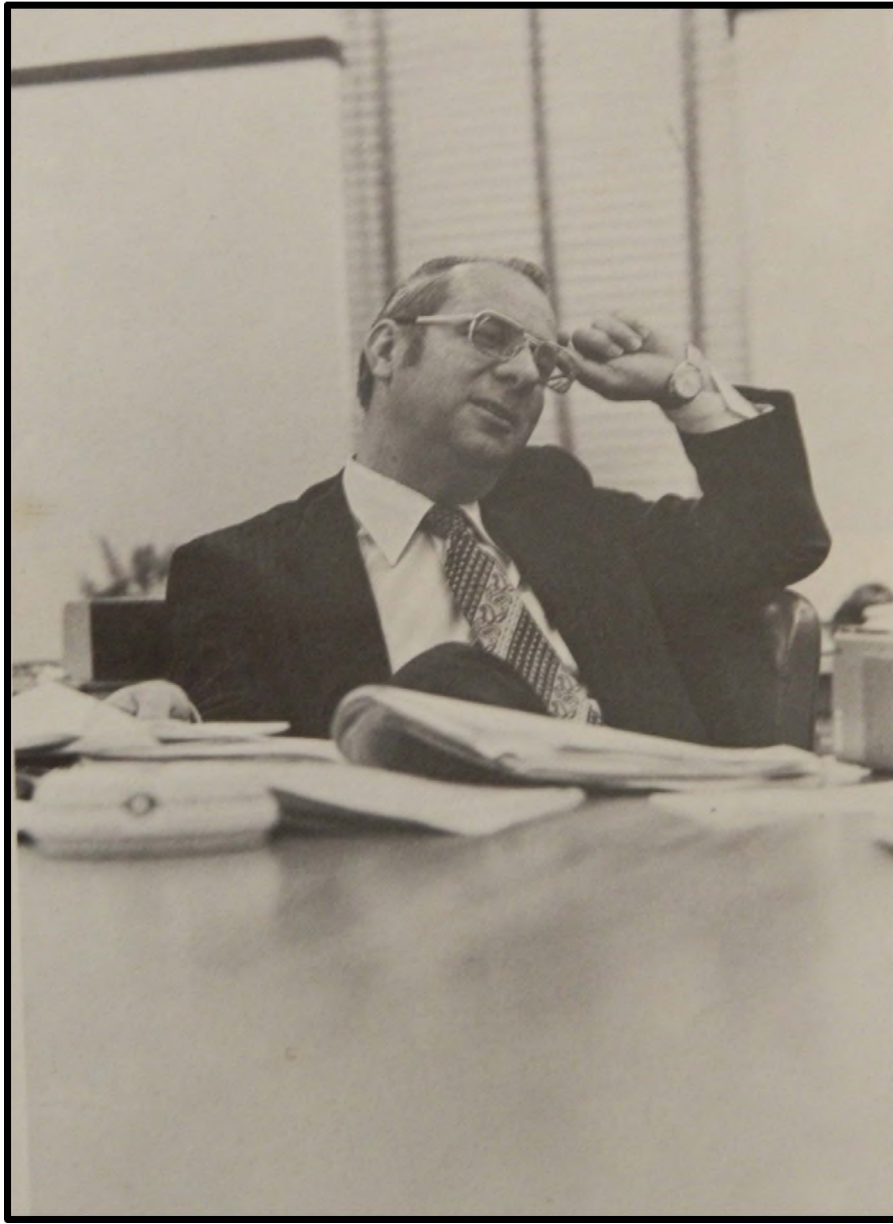
(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Louis Koch during a tour of Glenmore on 12 April, 1979



(Photo: Ben Maclellan)

John Hitge



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

April 12, 1979: Louis Koch leaves the Supremem Court in Grahamstown
after the setting aside of Van der Watt's eviction order. Behind Koch (from
left): Advocate van Rensburg, Dennis Bush and Van der Watt.



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Klipfontein black Africans confer with Herbert Fischat



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

CHAPTER 6: Black Africans on Klipfontein: Dispossession and Relocation

“Then they took the house to pieces.”

On the afternoon of 3 April, 1979, the board's local superintendent, Victor Keeton, following a visit to Klipfontein, declared that no one had protested against their belongings being loaded up onto the trucks.⁹⁰³ In his affidavit he wrote that all the families he had visited were already prepared to leave and all of them were “content and eager to go”.⁹⁰⁴ George Derbyshire, the board's Alexandria inspector, said that people had actually been waiting at the gate to ‘book’ a lorry.⁹⁰⁵ He said that about twenty families who were “very anxious and eager to move” were loaded up and taken to the divisional council camp that night.⁹⁰⁶ Sergeant Rijgrok said some 50 families in all were packed and ready to go. He said that they were “running to the lorries – they really want[ed] to go”.⁹⁰⁷

According to eyewitnesses on the farm, there were some families who were indeed willing to leave, but the total number was nowhere near 50 families. Nonono Memani claimed that only seven families were packed and ready to go.⁹⁰⁸ He said that the officials “took apart the shacks of those people first – those people who wanted to go.” The officials then apparently told the rest of the people that they would “come the next day with soldiers and shoot those who didn't want to move.”⁹⁰⁹ Nikile Mangani's wife was told that if they did not leave the next day, their home would be bulldozed.⁹¹⁰

Many other people said they were threatened with bulldozers, though nobody reported seeing one on Klipfontein. But Skotomani Ndesi described an alternative method used by the removal squad which was equally effective:

They took the furniture out and took the roof off. Then they put a large chain around the house, and attached it to a truck and then pulled it over. I

⁹⁰³ Affidavit of Victor Difford Keeton in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹⁰⁴ Affidavit of Victor Difford Keeton in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹⁰⁵ Affidavit of George Derbyshire in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Leon Rijgrok, 3 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁹⁰⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Nonono Memani, 4 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁰ Affidavit of Nikile Mangani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

saw this being done to a number of houses.⁹¹¹

It seems that the removal squads concentrated their efforts of the first few days of the removal on those who were more likely to offer no resistance to the removal. For example, many of the families moved on Wednesday morning were those either headed by a woman, or where the husband was away. A 64-year old widow living with her four daughters said she decided to leave that day because she did not have a husband to defend them.⁹¹² Oupien Cengani said that the authorities came to his home on the Tuesday while he was away and his elderly mother informed them that the family could not move because her husband was still in hospital.⁹¹³ They came back on Wednesday and told her that they were going to break the house down. When Cengani returned to his house, he found her on the truck and all of their possessions were on another truck.⁹¹⁴

Keeton was apparently the only board official, who encountered resistance on 4 April, 1979.⁹¹⁵ He noted that he met only one person who said he would not be moved. Keeton said that this man was on his way to a "meeting of inhabitants at the school".⁹¹⁶ The man returned shortly afterwards and allegedly told Keeton that he wanted to be removed to Glenmore.

The meeting at the school had been called by Herbert Fischat, the *de facto* lawyer for the black Africans on Klipfontein who were unwilling to move. Four members of the so-called Klipfontein committee had contacted Fischat after finding copies of Van der Watt's notice on the farm on 28 March, 1979. They travelled to Port Elizabeth to see Fischat early on the morning of 4 April.⁹¹⁷ Meanwhile, Fischat drove to Klipfontein at around lunchtime and spoke to approximately 200 people at the school.⁹¹⁸ He told them that when the 19 trucks came they were to leave their homes and belongings, but take their clothes. He further instructed them to wait in the bushes and when the trucks left they were to go back to their homes. Fischat assured them that no one would be able to force them to leave if they were

⁹¹¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, July, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 43.

⁹¹² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 36.

⁹¹³ Affidavit of Oupien Cengani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁵ Affidavit of Victor Difford Keeton in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁷ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹¹⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore*, p. 36.

absent from the scene.⁹¹⁹ Unsurprisingly, the people did not think much of this plan.⁹²⁰ A few of them tried it later that afternoon, but the removal squad just climbed onto the roof, pulled off a piece of the corrugated iron, entered the house through the hole and opened the door from the inside. Skotomani Ndesi told of how his neighbour's house was invaded in a similar fashion: "Mevan Ngxande locked his house in the hope that he would be passed by."⁹²¹ Mevana was away when the squad came to his house. "They took the clothes and everything to Glenmore. They gave his wife the number that they were taking them to."⁹²²

Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe was also at the meeting.⁹²³ He had left his wife at home to listen to what Fischat had to say. While he was there, a child came to him and told him that the trucks were at his house. Mgogoshe told Fischat and he apparently indicated that he should stay. After a while, he eventually left the meeting without telling Fischat.⁹²⁴ When he arrived at his house, he found that the removal squad had just finished loading the last of his possessions on to the trucks. His house had been completely demolished and his wife was collecting the belongings that were falling off of the trucks.⁹²⁵

Some families whose heads were employees in the area were also moved by the squad, regardless of whether they were registered or not. According to Keeton, these families were so keen to go to Glenmore that Wednesday that, when he told them that they would be given homes at Kenton, "none of the families availed themselves of this offer and all families requested to be moved to Glenmore."⁹²⁶ This statement contradicted many of the accounts from people who were registered employees in the area. Eunice Nuwele for example, returned from her place of employment at Boesmansriviermond to find that her mother and two children had been taken on the trucks to Glenmore.⁹²⁷ She immediately

⁹¹⁹ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 36.

⁹²⁰ Affidavit of Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹²¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, July, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 43.

⁹²² *Ibid.*

⁹²³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 32.

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁶ Affidavit of Victor Difford Keeton in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹²⁷ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 37 and Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 223.

got onto another truck going to Glenmore to find them.⁹²⁸

Meanwhile, the four committee members who went to Port Elizabeth to meet Fischat, were waiting for him at his house.⁹²⁹ When Herbert Fischat returned from Klipfontein they had already been waiting for several hours. Fischat had brought Magenis van Rensburg Sr back to Port Elizabeth with him.⁹³⁰ At his house Fischat took statements from Van Rensburg, Gungutu Zake and the chairman of the committee, Tutu Gqukani. By the time the statements had been typed and sworn to at the nearest police station, it was after midnight. Fischat organised a driver and car to take the men back to Klipfontein. According to Zake, it was about 1 am on Thursday morning when they were dropped off on the tar road running through the farm.⁹³¹ Zake's house was closest to the road. When he got there, his house was all but demolished:

The only things there were a roll of barbed wire I had, some balks and posts. Just posts slanting half over. It was dark, but I could see them against the sky. They had taken off the tin and the things inside and just left the frame of the house. It was too bad a scene for me.⁹³²

The shacks of the other three men had also been demolished.⁹³³ The authorities had decided that if they forced the leaders of the community to move, the rest would follow. The trucks came to the Zake's house while his wife was at the meeting with Fischat. But Witvoet Mapapu, who stayed on top of a hill overlooking their house, did not attend the meeting and watched what happened from a distance. "I was at a distance but I could see the house clearly", he said.⁹³⁴ He described the scene in an interview done with Ben MacLennan four years after the fact:

There were a number of those trucks in front of Mr Zake's house, one with its back towards the house. The driver went into the truck, and some of the

⁹²⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 37.

⁹²⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹³¹ *Ibid.*

⁹³² *Ibid.*

⁹³³ Transcripts of interviews between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1, Zenzile Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book3, Folder 97.2 and Sindeka Jamjam, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 40.

⁹³⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

izibonda (black African labourers of the Board) climbed onto the back. He reversed the truck towards the corner of the house. They went in through the hole and opened the door from the inside. Then they took the house to pieces.⁹³⁵

Meanwhile, officials had also gone to the Gqukani's home with two trucks. Gqukani's son, Zenzile recounted that his mother told the officials she would rather be left at the roadside than be taken to Glenmore: "The BAAB said they would drive her to the road. They asked her to sign a document and she refused."⁹³⁶ The document was a residential permit issued by the board to all families moving to Glenmore. Each permit bore a list of the members of the household, the number of the house they had been allocated and a space for the signature of the head of the household.⁹³⁷ According to Zenzile Gqukani, a white BAAB official then approached his mother and said she should make a cross indicating that she was refusing to go to Glenmore.⁹³⁸ Following her making the cross, she was asked to get onto the truck.⁹³⁹ The drivers apparently told her that she would be taken to a nearby farm. But her son heard the white official instructing the driver to drive "non-stop to Glenmore".⁹⁴⁰ The Gqukanis then refused to get on the truck and eventually the official told the drivers that the family should be left alone. Instead, he instructed both trucks with the family's furniture on board to leave. Zenzile Gqukani then told his mother to get on that truck which she did immediately. He said, "As the second load left, I feared our furniture would get lost."⁹⁴¹

At about 7 pm on Wednesday, the squad reached James Jamjam's house, another member of the delegation who went to Port Elizabeth. According to his wife, it was dark and the policemen were searching for the house with torches.⁹⁴² They told her to pack but she argued with them, telling them that her husband was not here so they must wait for him. They refused to wait and proceeded to take off the zinc roof material. "I started

⁹³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Zenzile Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book3, Folder 97.2.

⁹³⁷ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 38.

⁹³⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Zenzile Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book3, Folder 97.2.

⁹³⁹ While Mrs Gqukani signed on behalf of her husband, the official who went to Zake's house merely wrote "owner ran away" at the bottom of the permit and handed it to Zake's wife.

⁹⁴⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Zenzile Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book3, Folder 97.2.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Sindeka Jamjam, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 40.

packing my cups and saucers because I was worried they might be broken. All that was done in a great hurry – packing, throwing things in – they said it was late, the time was up.”⁹⁴³

All four families were taken to the divisional council camp and spent the night there. It was dawn on Thursday morning when, Zake, Gqukani, Jamjam and the other delegation member, Boyce Magwaxaza arrived there.⁹⁴⁴ Zake’s family had already been taken to Glenmore when the four men arrived. Gqukani refused to leave for Glenmore and went back to Klipfontein with his family, abandoning his furniture in the process.⁹⁴⁵ Just after 10 am Herbert Fischat arrived to take him to Grahamstown, where a Supreme Court hearing had been arranged for that afternoon. Gqukani left his wife and children next to the main road running through Klipfontein. They were instructed to wait for him there until he returned. His rationale was that if they were not on Klipfontein itself then they would be left alone by the authorities.⁹⁴⁶

Jamjam and Magwaxaza abandoned their furniture and took their families back to Klipfontein. Zake went to Glenmore to look for his wife. He refused to go with the trucks. Instead he asked for a lift with another evictee who used his own vehicle. Zake vividly recalled that day in his interview with MacLennan four years after the removal: “From then up to now I have maybe forgotten but I won’t forget. That day meant a lot in my life.”⁹⁴⁷

By the end of Wednesday, 4 April, 1979, 38 families had been removed from Klipfontein.⁹⁴⁸

“I will not allow indignities for other people”⁹⁴⁹

At the same time when families were being forced off of Klipfontein, journalists heard for the first time that Dr Koornhof instructed Koch that only those people willing to move to

⁹⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁹⁴⁵ Affidavit by Tutu Gqukani in *Tutu Gqukani and Gungutu Zake v East Cape Administration Board and Chief Magistrate of Alexandria* (unreported) Case no: M110/79 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 4.1.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, 24 November, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 38.

⁹⁴⁸ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 224 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 37.

⁹⁴⁹ Louis Koch, with regards to allegations made against the board that the eviction was a forced removal, as quoted by the *Evening Post* 5 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

Glenmore should be removed from Klipfontein at that stage.⁹⁵⁰ However, verifying whether these orders were being adhered to on the ground proved to be a difficult task for the few reporters covering the removal. All journalists had been barred from entering Klipfontein and the divisional council camp. For example, one reporter tried to follow the removal trucks on to the farm on the Tuesday afternoon, but was turned back by police, who told him that the “owners” of the property had requested them not to allow anyone except Plural Relations officials on the farm and that any trespasser would be prosecuted.⁹⁵¹ Klasie Fischat, one of the usufructuaries also told reporters, “I’m not letting a reporter on to my property and that’s final. If you trespass there will be trouble.”⁹⁵² He allegedly revealed later that he had “signed an oath” with the police not to allow journalists onto Klipfontein and that he was afraid of being jailed if he did.”⁹⁵³

However, journalists were able to speak to evictees and witnesses to the removals next to the main road. Here they heard full accounts of the removal from them. On Wednesday evening, Koch was confronted by various newspapers with the version they had heard from the Klipfontein black Africans of what had happened that day.⁹⁵⁴ That Thursday the *Evening Post* published an article about the removals where Koch described the allegations that it was a forced removal as “not the truth”.⁹⁵⁵ He told the newspaper that he had given strict instructions to all his staff “in the field” to make sure that nobody was forced to leave. “I will not tolerate my people behaving in an undignified manner and I will not allow indignities for other people.”⁹⁵⁶

It is difficult to accept that Koch believed this obvious political rhetoric that he was relaying to the press, when he knew of what was actually happening on Klipfontein. Willem Malherbe, the project engineer at Glenmore, said later that he did not think Koch acted with malice:

I think he believed in what he was doing, and when one believes one is acting in the best interests of the people, one can justify many things. What Mr Koch says is voluntary is not necessarily the same as what other

⁹⁵⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* pp. 33-34 and p. 39.

⁹⁵¹ Transcript of interview with Ben MacLennan and, 3 April, 1979.

⁹⁵² MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 39.

⁹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁹⁵⁵ As quoted in the *Evening Post*, 5 April, 1979 and cited by MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

⁹⁵⁶ As quoted in the *Evening Post*, 5 April, 1979 and cited by MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

people may say is voluntary.⁹⁵⁷

This kind of justification presupposes that the right thing was based on an inherently racist ideology. It purported certain moral principles which Koch sought to uphold. But these principles were vested in an idea that those who wielded power determined what was right or wrong.

For Dennis Bush, this was an easier decision to make. He merely followed the policy laid down by Koch. When he was asked about allegations that Klipfontein black Africans had told officials that they did not want to leave, Bush responded by saying that this was true, but they had changed their minds once the “situation” had been explained to them by officials.⁹⁵⁸ Bush said that he had not witnessed any of the incidents described by the residents that day. “All we used was persuasion,” he said.⁹⁵⁹ This he told the press despite the fact that the policy of the board was that everyone at Klipfontein had to be willing to leave from the start. However he insisted that it was close to impossible for them as officials to force such a large group of people to move. “How six people can force 1,400 people to board trucks is beyond me. If we had tried that there would have been incidents and I assure you there were no incidents yesterday.”⁹⁶⁰

Sergeant Rijgrok, at the time, reiterated the position held by the board: “We never forced anyone to get on trucks or to start loading. It’s bloody unfair to put that in the paper – you’ve only got one side of the story. They are willing to go. There is no doubt in my mind that not a single one was forced.”⁹⁶¹ He was sure that the eviction order granted by Van der Watt was legally binding and therefore proceeded to carry out the order. Years later, he admitted that his actions were wrong, but he would only come to know about it following the Supreme Court hearing that was to follow.⁹⁶² He still maintained that, on his watch, there were no incidents of people who were unhappy that they were being removed. “I cannot recall anyone who was upset about being moved.”⁹⁶³

⁹⁵⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Willem Malherbe, 1 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 29.

⁹⁵⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

⁹⁵⁹ As quoted in the *Evening Post*, 5 April, 1979 and cited by MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

⁹⁶⁰ As quoted in the *Evening Post*, 5 April, 1979 and cited by MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 40.

⁹⁶¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Leon Rijgrok, 4 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 1, Folder 97.1.

⁹⁶² Interview with Leon Rijgrok.

⁹⁶³ *Ibid.*

Klipfontein was not the only black African informal settlement in the Eastern Cape to be moved to Glenmore. There were similar 'pockets' of people in the Coega and Colchester areas. These removals followed the same pattern as what happened at Klipfontein. The press were once again barred from entering the farm.⁹⁶⁴ According to the ECAB, they were only moving families who were "willing to go".⁹⁶⁵ At about the same time, ten families had been evicted from Thorn Valley, a white farm near Alexandria.⁹⁶⁶ The following week, three families were removed from Grahamstown. On Wednesday, 25 April, the board's deputy director, WHS du Plessis told the *Evening Post* that "nearly all the 500 houses at Glenmore were full."⁹⁶⁷ By that evening, 489 families had been removed to Glenmore.⁹⁶⁸

The journey to Glenmore

By 12 April, 1979, the majority of the Klipfontein removals had been completed.⁹⁶⁹ John Hitge, the Department of Plural Relations' chief commissioner for the eastern Cape, announced that journalists would now be allowed to enter Glenmore, conditionally.⁹⁷⁰ Before that, no outsiders were allowed by the authorities to get into Glenmore, unless they had a permit. The permit had to be in writing and was issued only in Port Elizabeth.⁹⁷¹ This apparently discouraged the journalists, whose offices were in East London, some 300 kilometres from Port Elizabeth. In fact, the issuing of permits was the responsibility of Hitge's office in Queenstown. Hitge said that he would not issue a permit while the move was in progress.⁹⁷² His reasons were that he did not want photographs to be taken during the move there was "too much interference at this stage".⁹⁷³

Once the removals were all but over, he announced that Dr Koornhof had examined each application from journalists wanting to enter the settlement and granted permission on the condition that it was "a conducted tour and that journalists would not be allowed to go off in

⁹⁶⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 57. At Coega armed policemen barricaded the access points to the farm.

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁹⁶⁶ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 25 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 58.

⁹⁶⁷ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 25 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 58.

⁹⁶⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 58.

⁹⁶⁹ Platzky, *The surplus people* pp. 225-226.

⁹⁷⁰ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52. Hitge was appointed to the post, which was in Queenstown, in February 1978. He also held the position of the Glenmore control committee, the same body which had undergone so many changes of leadership a few years earlier. Hitge already had some experience in the 'resettlement' business. In October, 1978, he was asked by a journalist about the 'difficulties' experienced by residents of a resettlement camp in his area with regard to finding employment. He responded: "That is not my problem. We will provide the necessary infrastructure of water and toilets in the camp. Where the people work is not my business... The provision of jobs has nothing to do with me."

⁹⁷¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52.

⁹⁷² As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 4 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52.

⁹⁷³ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 4 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52.

all directions.”⁹⁷⁴ The “tour party” consisted of seven journalists, Hitge, Bush, Koch and Malherbe, Glenmore’s chief engineer.⁹⁷⁵ At Glenmore they were taken to the site office where they were briefed on the township plans by Koch and Malherbe. The details of the township were nothing new – they had been public knowledge for over a year. However, Koch mentioned in passing that the permanent township would now be developed according to a 7-10 year plan and not the original 5 years as proclaimed by the board.⁹⁷⁶ It seems that none of the journalists picked up on the significance of such a statement. Koch also revealed another little known fact hidden from public knowledge. He said that the temporary settlement was developed before the permanent township because the Ciskei government were supposedly receiving ‘representations’ from people living in areas where there were no facilities available to them.⁹⁷⁷ According to him the ECAB and the Ciskei government both had problems with citizens who lived in “unfavourable conditions”.⁹⁷⁸ He said that “[t]he situation at Klipfontein could no longer be tolerated. It was decided to alleviate the suffering of these people.”⁹⁷⁹

Koch said that the wooden houses were ‘approved’ by the Ciskei government. He boasted that they were the cheapest and had a short lifespan. “That’s why they were chosen.”⁹⁸⁰ The temporary settlement would be dismantled as soon as permanent accommodation became available. Koch took the party by bus to a water purification works and then to one of the houses. He then told the journalists that they could leave the tour bus on condition that they did not stray too far. Koch asked, in isiXhosa, permission from the occupants to show the journalists how the building was constructed.⁹⁸¹ The wooden walls were plastered on the inside, it had an asbestos roof and glass windows shielded with netting. They then went to a second house and spoke with the woman who lived there, translating her words into English. According to him, she “was starving at Klipfontein” but she was living “better now” at Glenmore.⁹⁸² Koch then took them to a nearby tap where they were encouraged to drink the water by Malherbe. He said that it was a little brackish but that was because of the treatment. Koch again engaged with a woman in conversation at the tap who was filling her bucket with water. He translated her words that the water was much

⁹⁷⁴ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 4 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52.

⁹⁷⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 52.

⁹⁷⁶ Notes made by MacLennan, 12 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.1.

⁹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷⁸ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁷⁹ Notes made by MacLennan, 12 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

⁹⁸⁰ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 13 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁸¹ Notes made by MacLennan, 12 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*

better there than at Klipfontein and that she was “very happy here”.⁹⁸³ He remarked, “Generally the people are very happy about coming here...she hasn’t heard of anybody who didn’t want to come.”⁹⁸⁴

When asked why it was necessary to ban journalists while the removals took place, Koch responded that Sebe had declined a media presence, because of the “emotion to be created” with the news of rehousing of people.⁹⁸⁵ Hitge then interjected by saying that it was privacy issue for the Ciskeian government:

When you are moving a home you are opening up the privacy of your home. Your personal privacy is exposed. The black people are possibly much more dignified and more sensitive to this sort of thing. I think most people realise they would be unwilling to be subjected to this sort of exposure of their privacy while their things are being moved out. There are no sinister motives for keeping the press out.⁹⁸⁶

Hitge then concluded by proclaiming: “We believe that in moving the squatters here we have succeeded in bringing dignity to the lives of people who have been living in very unfavourable conditions.”⁹⁸⁷ It was very convenient for him to omit to mention the reasons why the evicted black Africans’ possessions were being moved out in the first place.

Once the removals were made public by the reports related to Nancy Somnyali and letters published by Don Savage, as well as the Supreme Court hearing, Hitge and Koch were forced to undertake damage control. Unsurprisingly, given the strict censorship placed on the media during the removals, this was done relatively easily. Authorities also divulged to mainstream press what they wanted the public to know. The *Eastern Province Herald* reported that the newly arrived “residents appeared to be making the most of their timber frame three-room homes.”⁹⁸⁸ The *Oosterlig* reported that “[p]rojects to the value of R1 million are waiting to get under way. There will be ever more work, especially for the Eastern Cape’s black people with no future.”⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸³ Notes made by MacLennan, 12 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁸⁴ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁶ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 13 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁸⁷ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 13 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 53.

⁹⁸⁸ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 13 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 54.

⁹⁸⁹ As quoted in *Die Oosterlig* 16 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 54.

It is evident that the journalists' tour of Glenmore was a charade and that the experiences of the residents told an altogether different story. On Friday, 6 April, 1979, Witvoet Mapapu and his family spent the night after their home was demolished at the divisional council camp.⁹⁹⁰ They were woken up at around 3 am and were put on to a truck with a canvas cover. Mapapu said that other families were already on the lorry. Some had managed to take blankets with them and wrapped themselves tightly in order to keep warm. The trucks then took the road to Grahamstown and then beyond, turning off towards Peddie.⁹⁹¹ Mapapu recounts the journey to Glenmore: "We turned on to a dirt road, and a short while after, the road began to look very bad. There were steep cliffs off the side, and these curves. It was still dark and the lorries were going very fast."⁹⁹² He said that for most of that section of the journey he was so afraid that after a while he preferred not to look outside anymore.

When they arrived at Glenmore, it was filled with activity. He saw people and furniture were being unloaded from 20 trucks as well as builders who were busy erecting the last of the wooden houses. Mapapu was immediately unhappy with what he saw: "From my first sight of Glenmore I didn't like the place. It was very bad, especially when I saw how the houses were inside."⁹⁹³ The houses were meant to be temporary while the permanent houses were being built. For the first arrivals, the houses were plastered on the inside with a mud and cement mixture. The journalists of the tour party were shown two of these houses by Koch. For the later arrivals like Mapapu and his family, the walls of the house were wooden slats nailed onto a wooden frame.⁹⁹⁴ Only a layer of chicken wire stretched over the slats on the inside. They were expected to do the plastering themselves.

The finished houses were also not without defects. Doors were fitted so badly to their frames that there was at least "an inch-wide gap" along the sides, that failed to prevent the wind from entering.⁹⁹⁵ For those who stayed in houses without plaster, this problem was compounded by the badly built walls constructed from the ill-fitted slats. Sometimes it left gaps wide enough for a person to stick a finger through.⁹⁹⁶ Wind entered into every house

⁹⁹⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁹⁹¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 59.

⁹⁹² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

⁹⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁵ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 59.

⁹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

and heat escaped through the gaps between the asbestos roof and the wooden walls to which it was fixed. There were also no doors between the three rooms as well as any ceilings and floors. In many houses, including Mapapu's house, the earth floors were damp. It was later discovered after the first heavy rains that some houses were even built across natural drainage channels.⁹⁹⁷

Evictees would many times arrive at Glenmore with broken crockery, smashed mirrors and damaged furniture. Some belongings would go missing. Jamjam lost R40, taken from his suitcase.⁹⁹⁸ Zake lost a roll of fencing wire, several poles and a beam. His couch was completely broken, nineteen of his chickens died and the corrugated iron that was removed from his house had been torn.⁹⁹⁹ Despite the violent disruption and trauma which the new arrivals experienced, they were able to still cope with the circumstances they found themselves in. However, they would need all the resources they had for what was to come.

“There is no way you can describe that hunger”¹⁰⁰⁰

According to the general circular No. 25 of 1967 from the secretary of Bantu Administration and Development, entitled “Settling of non-productive Bantu resident in European areas, in the homelands”, there were various procedures which had to be observed by officials in the removal of several ‘categories’ of “non-productive Bantu”.¹⁰⁰¹ One of these categories was “squatter families” from farms. One of the requirements for the resettlement of squatters was that they would be given rations for “approximately 3 days” after removal.¹⁰⁰²

At the time of the removals, the department personnel in Queenstown responsible for the rations must have been aware of this requirement. However, according to the deputy chief commissioner, J Swanepoel, their department's interpretation of this was even more generous than what the circular had intended.¹⁰⁰³ Swanepoel said that everyone at Glenmore would receive rations for the first three days after their arrival. After that, food

⁹⁹⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 59.

⁹⁹⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Sindeka Jamjam, 4 December, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 40.

⁹⁹⁹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 60.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁰¹ G Maré, *African population relocation in South Africa*, (Johannesburg, 1980), p. 82.

¹⁰⁰² Maré, *African population relocation* p. 82.

¹⁰⁰³ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 60.

would be given out only in “cases of need”.¹⁰⁰⁴ Therefore, despite the boast from Swanepoel, authorities distributed as little food as possible in an arbitrary fashion.

Mapapu confirms that he and his family were given rations on the day they arrived at Glenmore: “That was on the first day we got there. The people who arrived later didn’t get rations. The rations were meant for the first arrivals, and luckily they reached my street. We were among the last people to get rations. We didn’t get any more after that.”¹⁰⁰⁵ Many new arrivals reported that they received no rations at all. For the “cases of need” Swanepoel was referring to, there were indeed handouts. However, it is not clear how this was determined. Several families found themselves in a precarious position within two week of their arrival.

Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe had stayed on at Klipfontein for a few days to care for his cattle after his family was removed.¹⁰⁰⁶ He had been at Glenmore for just over a week when he spoke with Ben MacLennan on 15 April: “I don’t know if my wife had rations, but we’ve had none since I arrived. Presently I’m starving.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Zolile Somyali, who was a gardener at Boesmanriviermond, was removed along with his wife and children. He said that they looked for jobs but were unable to find any. “The BAAB haven’t given us jobs. We are starving. This morning I haven’t touched food and I don’t know what I’ll have tonight. I had crops at Klipfontein for winter – I was not ever as hungry as this there. I don’t want to ask for credit at the shop here because I don’t know where I’ll get the money to pay it back.”¹⁰⁰⁸

Another concern for the new arrivals was the emergence of mysterious illnesses which affected the young and the old. In Tutu Gqukani’s household alone, five children, aged between 2 to 8 years, all fell ill shortly after they arrived at Glenmore. Gqukani remembers: “They were hot and had pustules all over the face and inside the mouth. They were vomiting and shitting blood too. They were like that for 5 days before I took them to the clinic.”¹⁰⁰⁹ Walter Kondile said his 16 year-old had developed what he thought was

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Zolile Somyali, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Tutu Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR

measles inside her mouth, accompanied by coughing and back pains. Kondile had her daughter taken to the clinic in Grahamstown but she did not get better after that visit: "She's very sick at night. Her baby is sick – it's 3 months old – but we haven't taken it to the clinic. We're waiting to see how sick it is."¹⁰¹⁰

The clinic at Glenmore was not in operation by the time the first arrivals were streaming into the settlement.¹⁰¹¹ When the clinic was eventually established, it did not have a full-time doctor. Instead, the person in charge was a state health nurse, Sister Kidson.¹⁰¹² On 16 April, 1979, she responded to the complaints of sickness by the people, saying that the complaints were exaggerated.¹⁰¹³ She said that there was "no noticeable outbreak" and everything was "under control".¹⁰¹⁴ Some people blamed the sicknesses on the water. Gqukani said that it stank as it came out of the taps.¹⁰¹⁵ Sister Kidson reassured the people and the public that the water was absolutely pure. Apparently the water did meet the government standard for human consumption. However, there was a significant gap between the officially recommended level for dissolved salts in drinking water and the permissible maximum, which was four times higher.¹⁰¹⁶ As the water came straight from the Fish River with minimal desalination, it was probably closer to the maximum level rather than the recommended level.¹⁰¹⁷ It was probably these salts along with the chlorine used to purify the water that led to the complaints about the smell.

The medical superintendent of Grahamstown's Settlers Hospital suggested that the cause of the health problems at Glenmore might lie in a combination of allergies to the chlorine and *impetigo*, a contagious pustular disease of the skin.¹⁰¹⁸ The superintendent was actually "pleasantly surprised" to find out that there was such a small number of patients from Glenmore coming to the hospital for treatment.¹⁰¹⁹

Meanwhile, responding to the complaints of hunger, deputy chief commissioner

10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰¹⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Walter Kondile, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR

10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰¹¹ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰¹² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁰¹³ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 17 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰¹⁴ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 17 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰¹⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Tutu Gqukani, 15 April, 1979 Cory Library PR

10301, Book 3, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰¹⁶ MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁰¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁰¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61. Presumably the vast distance between Glenmore and Grahamstown meant that many families could not afford to go to Settlers Hospital after they had been referred to there by the clinic.

Swanepoel said: "Rations are being provided and will be provided. There is no question of families going short on food."¹⁰²⁰ Bush also could not understand the people's unhappiness: "They can leave at any time if they're unhappy."¹⁰²¹ Unfortunately this was not a feasible option for many.

By the end of April, 1979, two people from Glenmore had died.¹⁰²² The first one was an eight-month old child, Nozodwa Lamani.¹⁰²³ She was diagnosed with gastroenteritis and died on 23 April. The second person to die was Thembile Mangesi, a forty year-old man, who died on 30 April, apparently of tuberculosis.¹⁰²⁴ His death seemed to have caught the authorities unprepared. William Nobadula remembered that there was no cemetery in place yet to bury the dead. He said, "The body lay in the house for 4 days, and it was terribly hot. There was no ambulance, there was no coffin and there was no graveyard."¹⁰²⁵ Sopink Gotyana had two children aged 2 and 5 years-old and both were ill.¹⁰²⁶ He said that both had "big feet and swollen faces". Gotyana said, "They are vomiting. I take them down to the clinic every day. They gave them medicine in bottles. The children are still sick though."¹⁰²⁷ He said that in two weeks since their illness started, there had been no improvement. "There's no food to give them. I didn't get rations at any stage."¹⁰²⁸

Gotyana tried to derive some sort of income by selling the corrugated iron sheets of his roof from his Klipfontein home in order to buy food. He said he was looking for work, but would always be told to come back the next day.¹⁰²⁹ James Jamjam also struggled to find work. He and his family were living off their savings and money earned from the sale of his car.¹⁰³⁰ Tutu Gqukani lamented how his son had given up hope of getting a job in the settlement itself: "There are too many people looking for a job in Glenmore. They've taken only 30 in the whole month. They say those must work there for a fortnight, then they'll take another couple."¹⁰³¹

¹⁰²⁰ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 17 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰²¹ As quoted in *Die Oosterlig* 17 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 61.

¹⁰²² List of deaths at Glenmore, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 65.

¹⁰²³ List, PR 10301, Folder 65.

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and William Nobadula, June 1984 Cory Library PR10301, Folder 52.

¹⁰²⁶ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Sopink Gotyana, 2 May 1979, Cory Library PR10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and James Jamjam, 2 May 1979, Cory Library PR10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰³¹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Tutu Gqukani, 27 May 1979, Cory Library PR10301,

Koch had declared before the removals commenced that people could apply for jobs which “would become available in building the 5 000-house permanent township.”¹⁰³² However, authorities were actually uncertain about when this would begin. The project had already run into significant difficulties. Willem Malherbe, the chief engineer of Glenmore Township had asked for R1.5 million for the first 5-year programme.¹⁰³³ Instead the project was only allocated R675 000.¹⁰³⁴ According to Malherbe this was barely sufficient to build 500 houses, which was half the projected quota for the first year.¹⁰³⁵ This meant that they would be no funds available for facilities which had to be included in that first year of development, such as a school, clinic, workshops, roads, storm-water drainage and electricity etc. As a result, the only jobs on offer in the first year were those in the maintenance of the temporary township and almost a month after Koch’s declaration, many people were still unable to obtain employment.¹⁰³⁶

Meanwhile, the complaints of illness and hunger were growing. The authorities, uncertain of how to proceed with the increasing numbers of starved and starving people arranged a scheme towards the end of April.¹⁰³⁷ This scheme, agreed to by Glenmore’s shopkeeper, entailed that those who were due to get pensions or grants could obtain “credit notes” from the superintendent’s office and use these to buy goods at the shop against the next pay-out on 22 May.¹⁰³⁸ However, the shop was very expensive. For example, according to Gqukani, half a bag of mealie meal cost R14,60 at the shop whereas it was R8,40 at Boesmansriviermond.¹⁰³⁹ In addition to the inflated prices, the rations that were promised were still not being issued. Gqukani commented on this: “People are hungry – everyone is begging food from one another. The children are hungry. They come to me and ask for food. I gave a lot until my food was finished.”¹⁰⁴⁰

While people were getting hungrier, more people were getting sicker. Unfortunately,

Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰³² As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 4 April, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 62.

¹⁰³³ W Malherbe, *Glenmore: five year capital programme* Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 25.

¹⁰³⁴ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Willem Malherbe, 1 December 1983, Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 29.

¹⁰³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁷ Environmental and Development Agency, *Development Proposals for Glenmore Settlement Camp* 15 October 1979, Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 56.

¹⁰³⁸ Transcripts of interviews between Ben MacLennan and Gungutu Zake, Tutu Gqukani, Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshé and Witvoet Mapapu, 27 May 1979, Cory Library PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.1.

¹⁰³⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Tutu Gqukani, 27 May 1979, Cory Library PR10 301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Tutu Gqukani, 27 May 1979, Cory Library PR10 301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

according to the evictees, the doctor only came in to the clinic on Wednesdays and Fridays but did not get around to seeing all the people who waited.¹⁰⁴¹ A patient had to 'register' at the clinic the day before to see him. Sister Kidson responded to these complaints by saying that "not a single resident had complained of hunger" at the clinic. She said that there was one case of *kwashiorkor* but that was chronic and could not have started at Glenmore. Deputy Chief Commissioner Swanepoel also dismissed the complaints, saying that he believed rations had been issued at the beginning of May.

Witvoet Mapapu could not take on employment without forfeiting his disability grant.¹⁰⁴² His eldest son had also not been able to find work on or near Glenmore. Mapapu's credit at the shop accumulated rapidly as well. With his note from the superintendent, the bill stood at R16.28.¹⁰⁴³ He had bought mealie meal and samp, salt, flour, sugar, a small packet of tea and one luxury: a packet of tobacco valued at 62c. But because he was uncertain of what lay ahead, he was wary of spending the full amount of the grant.¹⁰⁴⁴ Instead his family were saving as much food as they could. By the beginning of May, pension day was still three weeks away and the shortage of food was beginning to tell.¹⁰⁴⁵ Mapapu began to notice a change in appearance and behaviour of his two small daughters: "They had sunken faces, they got pale and their bodies were thin. Most of the time they just lay on the ground – in the daytime too."¹⁰⁴⁶ He and his wife took them to the clinic but the staff could not see what was wrong with them. He said, "I saw their feet were swollen. They were weak because they didn't get food."¹⁰⁴⁷ By 7 May, 18 month-old Nominiki Mapapu's condition had deteriorated rapidly.¹⁰⁴⁸ Three members of the Glenmore Action Group¹⁰⁴⁹ visited the camp that evening to demonstrate 'wonderboxes' (fuel-saving cardboard boxes stuffed with torn newspaper, in which heated food is left to continue cooking).¹⁰⁵⁰ Mapapu

¹⁰⁴¹ Transcripts of interviews between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, July 1983, PR 10301, Folder 43, Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983, PR 10301, Folder 39, James Jamjam, 4 December 1983, PR 10301, Folder 40, Maggie Mgebusa and Bles Mapapu, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁴² Transcripts of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 27 May 1979 PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2 and 23 November 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁴³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁴⁴ His disability grant amounted to about R60 every two months.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁸ Unknown Author, "No title" Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 53.

¹⁰⁴⁹ The Glenmore Action Group was established on 1 April, 1979 by Grahamstown members of the Black Sash, the Progressive Federal Party and a Rhodes University student social action organisation called Delta. Its broad aim was to force the government to 'review' the intended removals in the light of information gathered by its members.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Unknown Author, "No title" Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 53.

urged them to have a look. One of them said afterwards:

She was lying on the damp ground on a thin reed mat. We didn't know what to do – whether to take her back to Grahamstown or not. She looked so ill it deterred us from intervening. All we could do was offer newspapers from the wonderboxes, which Mr Mapapu laid under the mat to keep his daughter warm and dry.¹⁰⁵¹

The next day they returned with a nurse who spoke to Sister Kidson. She agreed to have the child re-examined by a member of staff at the clinic. Nominiki was then transferred to Settlers Hospital in a dehydrated state and weighing only 7.3 kilograms.¹⁰⁵² She was diagnosed as suffering from malnutrition, gastroenteritis, septicaemia, primary tuberculosis and keratomalacia (which was a 'clouding' of the cornea caused by vitamin deficiency).¹⁰⁵³ She was discharged six weeks later, after having gained 2.14 kilograms.¹⁰⁵⁴

Her sister, Ntombiyakhe, who was five years-old, was given medicine at the clinic and was sent home again. Mapapu said that the clinic staff did not tell him what the medicine was for, only how often he had to administer it. "They did not give any rations for her", he said.¹⁰⁵⁵ With a child in hospital as well as with the help of neighbours, Mapapu was able to save a little on the food they had already bought. But Ntombiyakhe was still not getting enough nourishment. He lamented his daughter's condition: "Even with the food from the neighbours it was not enough, but I was trying to hold the spirit so that it didn't slip away..."¹⁰⁵⁶ Mapapu himself was also getting weaker: "We were hungry, I and my wife. There is no way you can describe that hunger."¹⁰⁵⁷

"Free coffins"¹⁰⁵⁸

When pension day eventually arrived on 22 May, 1979, it brought little relief.¹⁰⁵⁹ Thanks to

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵² Letter to Ben MacLennan from Dr White, Senior medical supernitendant, Settlers Hospital, *RE: Mildred Mapapu, In-patient No. 2633/79*, 22 August 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 83.

¹⁰⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁸ In MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 59.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Transcripts of interviews between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, July 1983, PR 10301, Folder 43, Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983, PR 10301, Folder 39, James Jamjam, 4 December 1983, PR 10301, Folder 40, Maggie Mgebusa and Bles Mapapu, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

the credit scheme, many people found that all they could do was pay off what they owed at the shop in preparation for another two months of mounting debt. Bles Mapapu, Witvoet's brother, complained that the "One thing that beat us was that we ate the money while it was in our pockets."¹⁰⁶⁰ He received a pension of R46. After he had paid his credit which was over R10, he spent more money on groceries, which left him with R10 until next his next pension arrived.¹⁰⁶¹ Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe had to support a wife and eight children on a pension of R54.¹⁰⁶² Barely a week after the pay-out he had none of it left. Maggie Mgebusa was the head of a household of seven after her husband had died.¹⁰⁶³ While still at Klipfontein, she and a daughter had worked in the chicory fields, while a son worked as a gardener. At Glenmore, the family could only live off the money she was paid for a calf she had sold at Klipfontein as well as on her grandfather's pension. Five days after the pay-out of the pension, it was finished.¹⁰⁶⁴

For those who did not have a pension or disability grant to rely on, the prospects were even bleaker. Bede Tyileke was given rations when he arrived at Glenmore and received none after that.¹⁰⁶⁵ His son and his daughter had fallen ill. His 7-year old son became very sick and lost a lot of weight. He developed a swollen stomach and very thin arms and legs, typical symptoms of malnourishment. He also had small scars all over his body. Tyileka shook his head in disbelief when he saw his emaciated son, "That's not his body."¹⁰⁶⁶

When Witvoet Mapapu went to collect his disability grant on 22 May, he was told that it "had not arrived".¹⁰⁶⁷ He went to the Glenmore shop and tried to get more food on credit, but he was turned away. They were still living off handouts from neighbours and his brother Bles, who was also struggling. At the same time, Ntombiyakhe had developed a very bad cough.¹⁰⁶⁸ Mapapu became very concerned about her deteriorating health: "I expected she would die – there was nothing to relieve the hunger."¹⁰⁶⁹ However, for a few

¹⁰⁶⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Bles Mapapu, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶² Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Rayi-Rayi Mgogoshe, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁶³ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Maggie Mgebusa, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁵ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Maggie Bede Tyileka, 27 May 1979, PR 10301, Book 4, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

days it seemed that Ntombiyakhe was going to recover as she showed signs of her former vitality and even chatted with the other children. Then on the morning of 4 June, Mapapu woke up and tried to give her food, but she would not take anything. Mapapu's wife tried to make her drink some of the clinic's medicine, but she refused that as well. Shortly after 4 pm Ntombiyakhe was found dead when her mother returned to the house.¹⁰⁷⁰

Ntombiyakhe was buried the next morning in a makeshift graveyard which lay beyond the furthest houses of the settlement.¹⁰⁷¹ There was no need to dig a grave, as the board had apparently caused a number of them to be excavated already. Adult graves were placed on the east side of the cemetery and the children's graves were on the west.¹⁰⁷² Mapapu also said that there was no need to buy a coffin:

When we arrived at Glenmore, a number of people died and many people had no money. A load of coffins was sent out to Glenmore from Grahamstown and put in the premises of the superintendent. So when a person or child died you just went to the superintendent and took the size of coffin you wanted, free of charge.¹⁰⁷³

Before Ntombiyakhe died, there had already been ten other deaths at Glenmore.¹⁰⁷⁴ Besides Thembile Mangesi and Nozodwa Lamani, there were seven others who succumbed at Glenmore before Ntombiyakhe. One was a young man who drowned while trying to cross the Fish River in heavy rains.¹⁰⁷⁵ Another was an old pensioner who died after suffering a stroke.¹⁰⁷⁶ The rest were all children.¹⁰⁷⁷ On 7 June, 1979, the *Eastern Province Herald* ran a front page article about the deaths at Glenmore.¹⁰⁷⁸ The story was based on an interview with Gungutu Zake, who travelled to Grahamstown to seek help from the Glenmore Action Group. The eleven deaths were later confirmed by Sister Kidson.¹⁰⁷⁹ She said that Ntombiyakhe Mapapu was "one of a number that died of

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷¹ List of deaths at Glenmore, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 65 and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁴ List of deaths at Glenmore, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 65.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁷ Another six people died soon after Ntombiyakhe. Most of them died as a result of malnutrition while others died from diarrhoea. This put the death toll at 16 within a year of the removals.

¹⁰⁷⁸ 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁷⁹ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

bronchial pneumonia after contracting measles at Klipfontein".¹⁰⁸⁰ Two other children had died from gastroenteritis, another from inflammation of the kidneys and another from *kwashiorkor*.¹⁰⁸¹ According to her four of the children had died in hospital in Grahamstown. But she assured reporters that she and her staff were "coping adequately" with the situation.¹⁰⁸² She said that the clinic had no shortage of medicine or rations for those who needed them. She conceded that some residents were malnourished or in a weak condition but this occurred before they were moved to Glenmore. Deputy Chief Commissioner Swanepoel, when asked on 7 June about the deaths and the residents' complaints about the lack of jobs, responded by saying that he would check into the rations and unemployment immediately.¹⁰⁸³ With regards to the deaths, he declared that these were the responsibility of the district surgeon: "Nobody can say that the people died as a result of being resettled to Glenmore."¹⁰⁸⁴ He suggested that these deaths were not solely due to the removal or the new circumstances the people found themselves in, saying "They might have died at Klipfontein or wherever else they came from."¹⁰⁸⁵

The problem with the rations had apparently been investigated by the evening of 7 June when Hitge told reporters that although he was aware of two people that had died he had not been officially notified of any deaths. He said that the rations were now available, so there was "no need for anybody to die of hunger".¹⁰⁸⁶ But the rations were still not available to everyone at Glenmore. Meanwhile, the regional director of health, Dr Krynauw said that the doctor who visited Glenmore had not brought any untoward circumstances to his attention, so there was "no cause for concern".¹⁰⁸⁷ But Mapapu had his own views on why his daughter had died: "The reason for Ntombiyakhe's death is, I think, that while we were in Klipfontein there was a great deal of food in the household. On the day she died there was absolutely no food in the house. I think that she died of hunger."¹⁰⁸⁸

The stories of Ntombiyakhe and the many others who died at Glenmore indicate that if timely intervention and treatment of these illnesses were forthcoming, perhaps the death toll would not have risen so rapidly within the first few months of the settlement. The issue

¹⁰⁸⁰ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸¹ List of deaths at Glenmore, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 65.

¹⁰⁸² As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸³ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁴ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 7 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁵ As quoted in the *Evening Post* 7 June, 1979, requoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁶ As quoted in the *Eastern Province Herald* 8 June, 1979 and cited in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Quoted in MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, 23 November, 1983 PR 10301, Folder 39.

of whether the deaths could have been prevented had the move not taken place is a contentious one. The authorities argued that the shortage of food and sanitation was not an inherent problem of Glenmore. To the contrary, they convinced themselves that those who became seriously sick, were either already sick at Klipfontein or wherever else they came from, or they got sick at Glenmore due to the malnourishment they suffered at their previous place of residence. On the other hand, the evictees were more aware of the conditions on the ground. The lack of foresight by the officials in having sustainable employment and feeding schemes in place when the evictees arrived, led to mass unemployment and starvation. This in turn made the people vulnerable to curable sicknesses. Added to this, the gross lack of preparation in supplying health facilities for a large settlement such as Glenmore, led to minimal treatment of patients who needed it speedily.

However, one cannot say without doubt that the same results would not have taken place had the people not been removed. Klipfontein already had a critical water shortage and lack of sanitation facilities. Whether the eleven victims would have died there or at the other settlements they originated from is a cause for speculation. However, by observing the timeline from the start of the removal, to the first spate of deaths (with the exception of the accidental drowning) at Glenmore, one has to come to the conclusion that the removals combined with the food shortage and inadequate healthcare at Glenmore directly played a part in causing the deaths of at least eight of these people.

The Aftermath: Tying up loose ends

By the time the Supreme Court had set aside the eviction order, only 28 black African families were left on Klipfontein.¹⁰⁸⁹ Seventeen of those families were still waiting to be moved to the Kenton emergency camp. The rest had refused to leave. The officials were determined to 'cleanse' the farm of all black Africans and on 17 June, a police spokesperson declared that the 'squatters' would be prosecuted, unless they agree to be removed.¹⁰⁹⁰ On 2 May, the 78-year old Shorty Mxokozeli appeared in the Boesmansriviermond magistrates' court and pleaded not guilty to a contravention of the Trust and Land Act – the charge which was originally laid against the black African family heads before the removals took place.¹⁰⁹¹ The magistrate fined him R90 (or 100 days in

¹⁰⁸⁹ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 230.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 230 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 102.

¹⁰⁹¹ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 230 and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, 2 May, 1979, PR 10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

jail), conditionally suspended for three years, and issued an order, at the request of the prosecutor, that he leave Klipfontein before 2 June.¹⁰⁹²

Another two weeks passed and then the authorities moved against the remaining families. On 19 May, the other family heads were summonsed to appear in court after an application was made by the authorities for their eviction in terms of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act.¹⁰⁹³ The authorities had brought the application on the grounds that the remaining families posed a health hazard not only to themselves, but also the Klipfontein coloured community and the white community of Boesmansriviermond. It was dismissed by the Alexandria magistrate on the grounds that the authorities had failed to prove that the families posed a health hazard.¹⁰⁹⁴

The authorities now had no choice but to rely on the Trust and Land Act once more. On 6 June, 1979, 22 men from Klipfontein appeared in court on various charges under this Act. One of them, Mongile Nlamla was given a suspended sentence and ordered to leave the farm within a month.¹⁰⁹⁵ On 9 July, seventeen more were convicted and warned to leave within 60 days. But the legal proceedings moved slowly, and it appears that even when the eviction orders were obtained, in some cases they could not be enforced. In a twist of irony, Glenmore had reached its maximum capacity, so there was no room for the families there. The settlement had once again failed in its purpose. By mid-1980, the last thirteen black African families on Klipfontein were removed, not to Glenmore, but to the Kenton emergency camp.¹⁰⁹⁶

Some said they were happier at the emergency camp than what they were at Klipfontein. They were obviously closer to Kenton, which meant that it was a shorter distance to work. But Shorty Mxokozeli did not share this enthusiasm.¹⁰⁹⁷ He had to sell his cattle when he was moved because there was no room to load them. The eviction ordeal also left a lasting scar on the old man. He said later, while at the emergency camp, that he feared the arrival of any white male at his house, because he was afraid it would be a policeman. But it seems that he did not bear any form of resentment against Rijgrok or the others who

¹⁰⁹² Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 230 and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Skotoman Ndesi, 2 May, 1979, PR 10301, Book 6, Folder 97.2.

¹⁰⁹³ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 230 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 75.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 230.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Platzky, *The surplus people* p. 231 and MacLennan, *Glenmore* p. 102.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Shorty Mxokozeli, 4 December 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 23.

carried out the removals. He said “I wasn’t angry with Rijgrok and the BAAB because I knew they were only doing the job they had been told to do by the government.”¹⁰⁹⁸ Unfortunately, this would not be the end to the disruption.

In early 1983 the ratepayers and municipalities of Kenton and Boesmansriviermond and the farmers’ associations finally agreed on a site for a permanent black African township for the area, just across the main road from Klipfontein.¹⁰⁹⁹ Building commenced some years later, on the farm, Marselle, on the eastern boundary of Klipfontein. At the end of 1983, those in the Kenton emergency camp were notified that the camp was to be cleared.¹¹⁰⁰ The records are unclear as to how many, if at all, any families were moved from the camp to the new township. But what is clear is that not only did Marselle township grow exponentially since its inception, the emergency camp remained and still remains to this day.

The forced mass removals of black Africans from Klipfontein effectively cleansed the farm of any ‘undesirable’ residents. Even the Supreme Court order setting aside the eviction order did little to change the outcome. None of the evictees ever returned to the farm. Even if they had enough money to pay for trucks to take them back, the authorities had blocked the access points to Klipfontein, preventing any black Africans from entering.

The removals also enabled the Kenton and Boesmansriviermond municipalities to get rid of any black African who could not contribute to the labour pool of Kenton and Boesmansriviermond.¹¹⁰¹ But eventually, even those who had employment in the area were evicted and moved off either to Glenmore or dumped at the emergency camp to eke out an existence on strange land. It seems that such removals were based on racist policies that were pursued so long as it did not cripple the local (white) economy by removing all labour. Indeed, the original intention by the authorities was to clear the area of black Africans – to remove the “black spot”. But at the same time, the local authority faced the dilemma of a drain in cheap domestic and farm labour. Therefore, the ‘excess’ who

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁹ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Jan van der Vyfer, 29 November, 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 27, Letter *RE: Removal of Klipfontein Squatters* from WH Deacon, town clerk, Municipality of Boesmansriviermond, to Ben MacLennan 16 August, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 12 and interview with Marselle Marais.

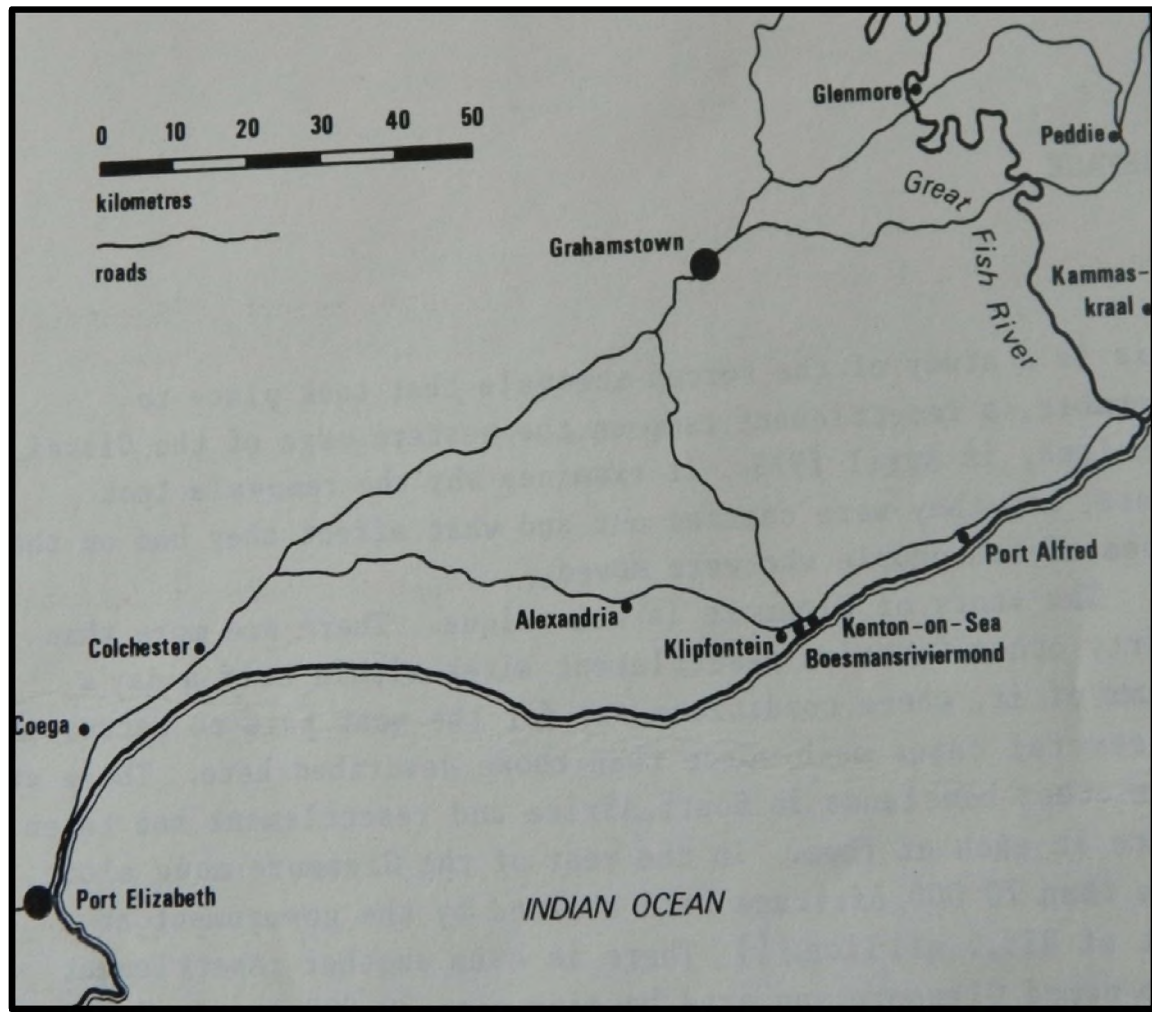
¹¹⁰⁰ Transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Shorty Mxokozeli, 4 December 1983, Cory Library, PR 10301, Folder 23.

¹¹⁰¹ Letter *RE: Removal of Klipfontein Squatters* from WH Deacon, town clerk, Municipality of Boesmansriviermond, to Ben MacLennan 16 August, 1983 Cory Library PR 10301, Folder 12 and transcript of interview between Ben MacLennan and Witvoet Mapapu, June 1983.

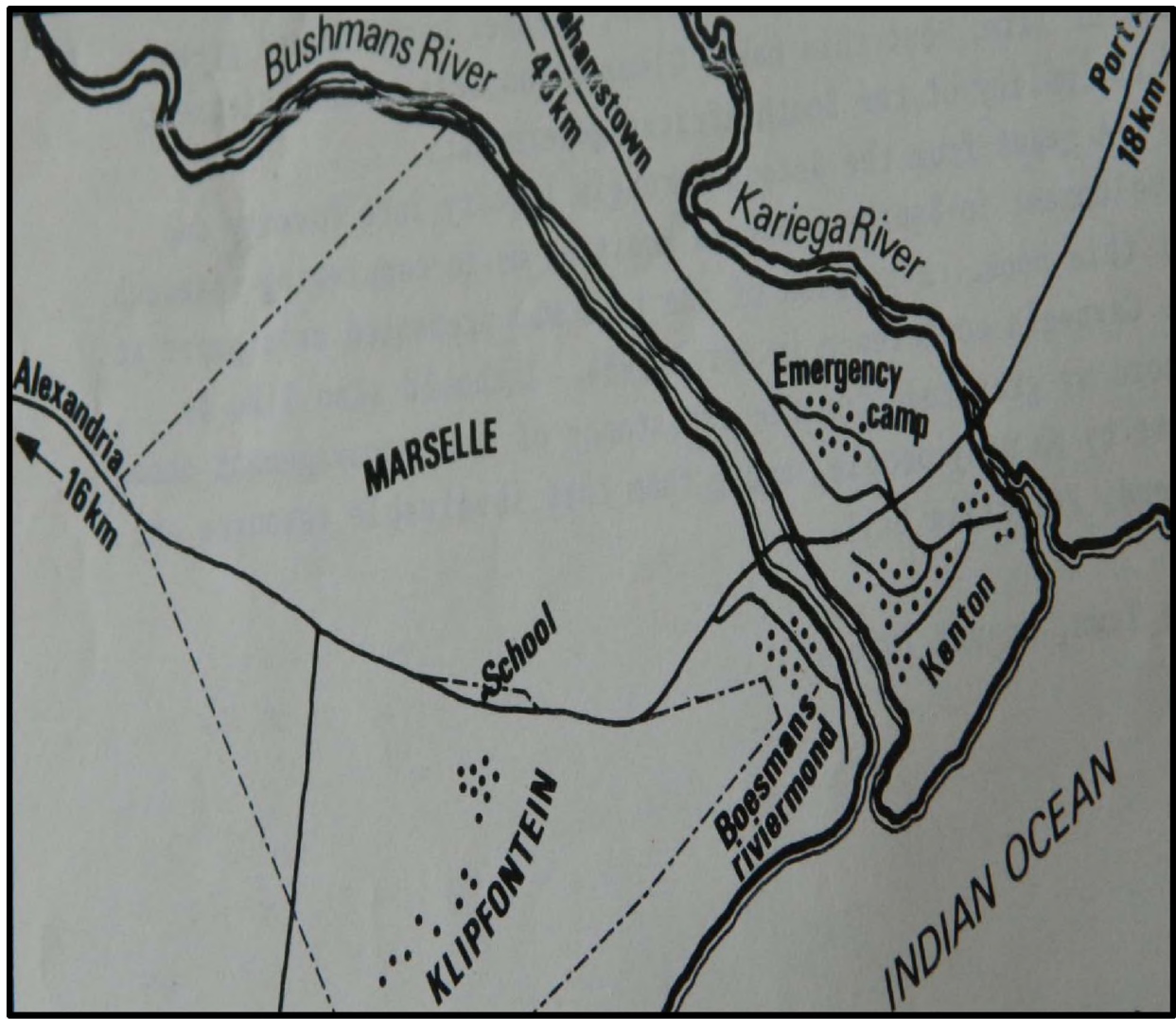
were still of working age were kept at the emergency camp or moved to Marselle.

Lastly, it is can be seen that the scale of the tragedy of this forced removal could have been prevented or at least drastically reduced, had it not been for the persistence of authorities in enforcing the eviction order. Although it was evident to the CMBAAB (later ECAB) that the Glenmore settlement would be at best a temporary solution, they still commenced with the operation. In the face of mounting evidence that the entire eviction from Klipfontein was illegal, they commenced with the operation. Even when people resisted, the authorities came up with new forms of intimidation and the tricking of illiterate residents by legal and other means to force them off Klipfontein. The authorities were the architects of a failed scheme, and the scars of that failure still litter the green pastures of Klipfontein and barren wasteland of Glenmore.

Map 8: Klipfontein and Glenmore



Map 9: Klipfontein and the Kanton Emergency Camp



Klipfontein, 3 April, 1979: The “Black Spot Removals” squad dismantles a home on the first day of the removals



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Members of the “Black Spot Removals” squad



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Klipfontein, 3 April, 1979: Sergeant Leon Rijgros, Constable James Khani and a captain from Grahamstown eject a reporter from the farm



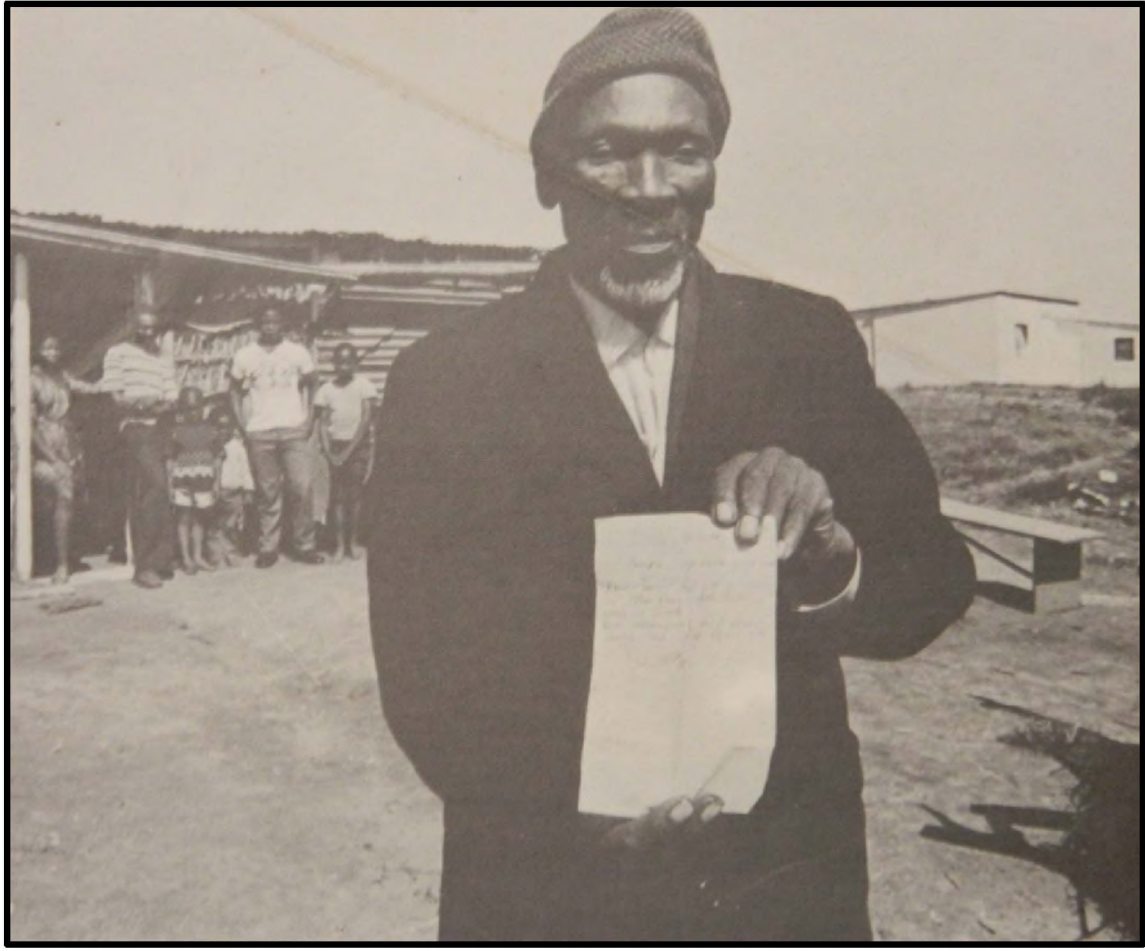
(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Resistance: Klipfontein black African residents gather on the farm to discuss the impending move, March 1979. The man with the white beard in the centre is Shorty Mxokozeli



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Kenton emergency camp, March 1979: Blind Joseph Gcirana with the evction notice ordering him to go to Glenmore



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Klipfontein, 4 April, 1979: Black African residents disperse after attending the meeting in which Herbert Fischat told them to hide from the removal squad



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

The divisional council camp, Kenton, 4 April, 1979. Klipfontein black African residents wait with their belongings to be taken to Glenmore



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Figure 9: An example of a "Letter of consent"

Spatinani Mchobongi, ± 34 JR., Ni. N18

VERKLAAR ONDER EED:-
 Ek is 'n volwasse Swart man en tons van
 die plaas Klipfontein in die Alexandra
 distrik.
 Ek verkies om uit die vrye wil en sonder
 dat ek enigiens daartoe beïnvloed is na
 Glen More te Verhuis.

- 1) Ek is vertrouwd met die inhoud van hierdie
 verklaring en begryp dit.
- 2) Ek het geen beswaar teen die afleë
 van die voorgeskrewe eed nie.
- 3) Ek beskou die voorgeskrewe eed as
 bindend vir my gewete.

Klipfontein.
 1979-04-06.
 13h30.

1) *[Signature]*
 2) *[Signature]* S. 1532860. Rust.

[Stamp: R. O. A.]

[Stamp: JEBIKILE KHAW']
[Stamp: Rust.]
[Stamp: 79/04/06]
[Stamp: Rusten en Ste.]

[Signature]

Glenmore from the air: Site of permanent town is visible behind and to the right of the 'temporary' homes



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Glenmore, April 1979: The houses ready for the first occupants



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Glenmore, 26 December, 1980: House damaged by a storm



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Officials inspect the damage to the Glenmore school after the storm



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Glenmore graveyard, 1982



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Glenmore, 1980



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

Shorty Mxokozeli at the Kenton emergency camp, 1983



(Photo: Ben MacLennan)

Klipfontein, 1983: The outline of a house demolished during the 1979 removals



(Photo: Ben MacIennan)

CHAPTER 7: Conclusion

In 1872, the farm of Klipfontein was established, with the formal transference of ownership to the community's *stamvader*, Dirk Janse van Rensburg. Van Rensburg worked on the land for JA Scheepers and as a sign of gratitude he transferred a portion of it to Van Rensburg. By the time of the final transfer in 1872, Van Rensburg and his wife, Sarah, already had five children who were deemed '*bastaards*' at the time. Various racially-based ordinances had been passed in the Cape Colony during the first half of the 19th century, making it close to impossible for coloured landowners to retain ownership of their farms.

The Van Rensburgs entered into a joint will in 1877, leaving the farm to a trust they had established. Following their deaths the trust administered the farm, but the Van Rensburg children retained full possession of the land and received any benefits of the fruits borne of that land. The validity of this provision would run 'forever'. The first son or male relative of each generation from each family would inherit the rights of a usufructuary upon the death or resignation of the previous usufructuary in perpetuity.

The Will stated that none of the heirs had the power to "sell, alienate, mortgage, encumber, let, lease or dispose" of their rights. It is possible to conclude that the purpose of this provision was not only to protect the Van Rensburg children, but also their descendants in the face of growing fears of land dispossession. But it would also have a significant bearing on how the land was to be used. No longer was it under the supervision of one central figure, but rather by four natural persons and administered by one juristic entity. This led to dispute and argument and eventually to the division of the land into four separate portions. There could seldom be any agreement between the usufructuaries on how the land was to be worked. By 1910, land was already being rented out unlawfully to neighbouring farmers by usufructuaries in order to derive some form of income from it.

The Will also made provision for the relatives of the Van Rensburg *stam* who were "poor and destitute". This "asylum clause" stipulated that each usufructuary had to provide for these relatives and that the trustee would bear the costs. By the beginning of the Second World War, the land which was not rented out already, was overpopulated and overstocked by these people, called the *inkomers*. Therefore, regardless of whether Klipfontein was a flourishing agricultural concern before this time or not, it ceased to exist as one unit virtually as the Will came into operation.

As a result of the strict implementation of this provision demanded by the Will, the *inkomers* were able to settle on the land without any threat of being removed. However, the usufructuaries appointed themselves as caretakers of the land, leaders of those destitute and poor who found refuge there. In return, the usufructuaries expected the *inkomers* to abide by the decisions made by them on behalf of the Klipfontein 'community'. The *inkomers* reacted unfavourably to this. They interpreted the Will as a document giving them as many possessory rights as the usufructuaries. To them the only thing that separated them from the usufructuary was a bloodline. Thus a reactive group identity developed to counter the 'caretaker' mantle of the usufructuaries. This identity was not formed right way and by no means was it adopted by every *inkomer*, but rather, it evolved over time as the *inkomers* became more accustomed to the land and the area surrounding it.

As in the case of the the usufructuaries, the *inkomers* formed their identity, in part, in response to the attachment they had to Klipfontein. Where the land was a safe haven for the usufructuaries, it was a place of sanctuary and new beginnings for the *inkomers*. Their rhetoric envisioned Klipfontein as their "Promised Land". Customs, rituals and their folklore are inextricably linked with the land. Mundane activities such as fishing have become an integral part of this identity. It has become a vehicle of passing on the spiritual importance of the connection between this place and its people to the next generation. Just as the usufructuaries may see Klipfontein as the "Garden of Eden" bestowed to them by God, so too do the *inkomers* see it as a place which God provided them on which to settle.

Under apartheid, many coloured people argued that they were not "white enough" to enjoy the benefits of citizenship, and now in the new dispensation they claim that they are not "black enough" to access programmes that address social inequalities.¹¹⁰² Klipfonteiners too feel that they have been re-marginalised, regardless of democratic change. For example, the idea in the mid-1990s to bring Klipfonteiners together through the building of a township on the farm emanated from pleas of the community itself and not at the instance of government.¹¹⁰³ Assistance from the municipality only came after pressure was put on it by the Klipfontein elders. In fact, plans for the building of this township, later

¹¹⁰² M Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Cape Town, 2005), pp. 175-187 and M Adhikari, *Hope, fear, shame, frustration: Continuity and change in the expression of Coloured identity in white supremacist South Africa, 1910-1994* (PhD thesis) (University of Cape Town, 2002).

¹¹⁰³ Letter RE: Investigation into Demarcation of Areas of Jurisdiction of Various Forums – to The Secretary, Demarcation Board for the Province of the Eastern Cape (Boesmansriviermond, 19 September 1994).

named Harmony Park, started in earnest during the late 1980s.¹¹⁰⁴

As with any identity, Klipfonteiner identity would continue to form and change to adapt to the changes occurring throughout the rest of the country. The end of apartheid provided opportunities for people to self-identify as they wished and to experiment with their identities. All South African identities are therefore currently in the process of reconstruction as citizens are adapting to new relations of power.¹¹⁰⁵ The 'new' South Africa has created problems for communities that perceive themselves as marginal and who consequently either call for recognition or withdraw from political participation. Different communities grapple with their own specific identities in response to the discourse of national identity created by the political elites.¹¹⁰⁶ In post-apartheid South Africa, most identities are in the process of being reconstructed particularly in opposition to those 'apartheid-era incarnations', presenting themselves as not racist, not divisive and not isolated. But because of the perceived threat of outsiders towards Klipfonteiners and their right to occupation, such a radical shift in identity on Klipfontein has not taken place. While some allegiances may have changed to reflect the change in authority, this is only a purposive approach with the intention of benefiting Klipfontein.

This dichotomy of identity between usufructuaries and *inkomers* does not end with a connection to land. For the people of Klipfontein, justification to their claims of legitimacy not only lay in the law or their interpretation thereof, but also in the church, initially only the Dutch Reformed Church. The church has had and continues to have a significant influence on Klipfonteiners' lives. It has become a platform from which to perpetuate different group and individual identities, utilising the authoritative power of the church to achieve their socio-political aims. The church became not only a physical meeting space for Klipfonteiners to voice their concerns, but also a meeting point of ideas which would grow into the formation of a group identity. In fact, the church became such an integral part of the Klipfontein social structure that the elders of the three dominant churches currently on Klipfontein became representatives for Klipfonteiners. The church also provided the support *via* the elders, for the development of a portion of Klipfontein into a residential area for Klipfonteiners only. It was the pleas by church elders (*ouderlinge*) that would lead to the establishment of Harmony Park on Nicolaas Fischat's 'portion' of land. The establishment

¹¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁵ M Ruiters, "Collaboration, assimilation and contestation: emerging constructions of coloured identity in post-apartheid South Africa", in Adhikari, *Burdened by Race* pp. 104-105.

¹¹⁰⁶ Ruiters, "Collaboration, assimilation and contestation" in Adhikari, *Burdened by Race* p. 105.

of the township was an attempt at community building, physically bringing all the families together and forcing various factions to interact and mend broken relationships. However, this has been largely unsuccessful due to suspicion and distrust based on generations of interfamilial disputes. A community was not allowed to flourish because of the different agendas pushed by the different family factions.

The cause of this fracturing has mainly been unhealthy competition for resources on a piece of land gradually decreasing in size due to government expropriation and hiring out of land by the usufructuaries to neighbouring farmers. While population numbers continued to swell with the steady influx of *inkomers* over the years, white tenants also vied for control of as much of the grazing land as they could get their hands on. As the usufructuaries were unable to successfully work the land for profit, they went against that provision of the Will and hired these portions out to the farmers who were only willing to utilise the fertile land. Once again, these private negotiations and contracts were not well received by the *inkomers*. Similarly, when land was expropriated for the building of the national road, the *inkomers* overlooked the trustees' role in the expropriation and perceived it as a betrayal by the usufructuaries as they had not communicated their decision to them. Even though these decisions were made by the trustees, the *inkomers* mistakenly viewed the usufructuaries as agents for the trustees. This distrust of the usufructuaries as well as a failure by usufructuaries to include the *inkomers* in the decision-making process, however well intentioned they may have been, led to this fragmentation of a community.

The rapid influx of black Africans onto the land during the early 1970s decreased the living space even more. Some of these families had been living there since at least the beginning of the 20th century. But as a result of premature announcements of a future black African township during the early 1970s, as well as encouragement from some of the usufructuaries, many vagrant farm labourers also perceived the farm as a sanctuary. Poor planning and indecision by government authorities and gross exploitation of farmworkers by farmers led to increasing levels of vagrancy in the area. The need for a convenient cheap labour pool for Kenton and Boesmansriviermond and surrounding areas clashed with the racially-based laws of the apartheid regime. The local authorities and farmers needed a constant supply of labour, but at the same time, they were afraid that those too old or too young to work would burden the resources of the local municipalities, and would

resort to vagrancy and squatting.¹¹⁰⁷ Without an established black African township in the area, Klipfontein was seen as the ideal location for these families to settle.

However, Klipfontein could never sustain such a rapid influx of people. Water resources were limited and very little sanitation facilities existed for the Klipfonteiners themselves, let alone for the black Africans. The settlements were also encroaching upon the land set out for the white tenants. The local municipalities used the lack of sanitation as proof of a potential health hazard which could affect the neighbouring white towns as well. Similarly, they cited a rise in the crime rate on Klipfontein as an indicator that the black Africans needed to be removed and quickly too, in order to prevent future settlement and heavy resistance. Thus, the eviction order by magistrate Van der Watt was effectively a rubber stamp to give the CMBAAB (later the ECAB) the needed approval to commence with their removal operation.

Given their fear that removals would be opposed by certain lobby groups, the operation needed speed, precision and sleight of hand to be successful. Various tactics of intimidation and coercion were employed against the Klipfontein black Africans, including threats of imprisonment if they did not yield to the authorities' demands. Even an appeal to the Supreme Court did not prevent the CMBAAB from proceeding with the removals. They managed to continue removing families off Klipfontein under the guise of 'consent' being granted by those families to be removed to Glenmore.

Such a tactic was nothing new in the history of forced removals in South Africa. In these cases, people were well aware that if they did not agree to move when they were ordered to do so, they would be removed to even worse conditions. For example, at Barotha in the former Northern Transvaal, those who consented when they were ordered to move, were allocated land for ploughing and grazing, whereas those who refused to be removed were eventually allocated only half a normal residential plot for each family with no ploughing or grazing land.¹¹⁰⁸ Desmond identified a common theme in most of the interviews he

¹¹⁰⁷ This was a 'problem' effectively dealt with in various ways by authorities elsewhere in the country, for example Stinkwater in the former Transvaal, and Weenen and Limehill in KwaZulu Natal. At Dimbaza, near King William's Town, most of the people who had been moved there were also declared 'redundant'. They came from Middelburg, Burgersdorp and even Cape Town. Immediately prior to the removal of families from Middelburg, the rent of their houses increased from R2 a month for a "private stand" to R6 a month, presumably to encourage people to 'agree' to move. Many of the people moved to Dimbaza were adamant that they had been employed and had been reasonably housed at Middelburg. But as one of the Dimbaza residents told Cosmas Desmond during his visit to the camp, "You can't say no to a white man."

¹¹⁰⁸ Desmond, *Discarded People*, pp. 187-188.

conducted – except for some people who had been squatters or labourers on white farms.¹¹⁰⁹ Each and every person said that they did not want to leave, but “we had no choice”. They were told by the authorities that they had to move, so they moved.

The removal of black Africans from Klipfontein was part of a much grander plan of the CMBAAB to remove the remaining “black spots” in the eastern Cape overlooked by the authorities to the Ciskei. However, the Glenmore housing scheme was doomed to fail from the beginning. Due to its isolated location and lack of foresight and planning by the CMBAAB, there were very few to no employment opportunities in the area. Inadequate support in the form of food parcels or grants led to the prevalence of many diseases related to malnourishment. The inability by the authorities to recognise and treat these ailments led to prolonged illnesses and even death in some cases.

The removal also disrupted the sense of community among the Klipfontein black Africans and unsurprisingly, it had far-reaching effects on those people who were removed as well as those who stayed behind. For those who were removed, their narrative shifted slightly. Rather than adopting an identity of belonging, they adopted a trauma narrative; one which did not so much attach itself to the land, but rather to the event of removal and its aftermath. For example, the forced removals created a sense of shared suffering and hence community among the black Africans of Klipfontein. The court cases prior to and during the removals seemed to connect the different families and mobilised them into resisting the removals. While some seemed to leave willingly, the majority of the community refused and it took considerable coercion and force from the authorities to get them off the farm. The black Africans even elected a representative committee that worked in the interests of those who wished to stay to keep them on Klipfontein. In fact, while they were already at Glenmore the nucleus of this committee continued to play an important role by generating awareness of their plight. In the meantime, the families from Coega, Colchester and other parts of the Eastern Cape had also joined the Klipfontein families at Glenmore. Though they were organised into sections of accommodation according to the area from which they had been removed, they integrated reasonably effortlessly (given the circumstances) with the Klipfontein black Africans. However, this solidarity in the face of adversity would be seriously tested following new national legislation regarding land claims and restitution promulgated in the early 1990s.

¹¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

In 2012 *The Sowetan* reported an apparent rift between Klipfontein families and the rest at Glenmore, after the Klipfontein black Africans had succeeded in their land claim. The claim amounted to R20 million, whereby each family was awarded R103 000. The former Glenmore municipal councillor alleged that the Klipfontein claimants submitted their application late at night on the very last day of the window period in 1998. Claims had been received individually from each displaced community by the claims office in Port Elizabeth. The payouts were determined by the quality and amount of land taken by the apartheid government. The other groups at Glenmore were under the impression that the application for reparations at the then Department of Land Affairs was on behalf of the whole Glenmore community and not just a certain group. However these groups received no reparations.

Meanwhile, the Klipfontein usufructuaries are currently engaged in a land restitution claim for the two portions of land closest to the river, sold by the trustees in order to settle arrear rates and taxes during the late 1930s. The one portion next to the river was subsequently developed and became a part of what would be the town of Boesmansriviermond. The claimants believe that the sale was illegal in terms of the Will or alternatively, that the Boesmansriviermond portion was grossly undervalued at the time of sale. Information contained in this thesis has been made available to the usufructuaries in aiding their claim. The impact of these land restitution claims on the Klipfontein residents as well as the Klipfontein black Africans still needs to be addressed. How does land restitution assist the displaced communities who were subjected to forced removal and dispossession? Further research is also required in order to ascertain how the forced removals affected the post 1979 Klipfontein identity and how this influenced the policy of local municipal management in commencing with the development of the coloured township there during the early 2000s.¹¹¹⁰

Connected to this, is the question of why government has been lax in its integration of the Keston emergency camp to the town of Keston since the mid-1990s. This laxity led to the failure of a number of development programmes planned for that area. Frustration by the residents came to a head in 2015 when they, encouraged by an EFF-affiliated independent councillor, held two mass protests, demanding that the local municipality keep its promise of providing adequate housing and do so in a transparent manner.

¹¹¹⁰ *Agenda for the first meeting held on 15 April 2002 at 10h00 at the Community Centre for Cacadu District Municipality, contract no: 102/2001, by Engineering Advice and Services.*

Protests are set to continue unless local authorities address this issue in a more serious light than what they have done in the past.

It is evident that in the absence of any historical assessment of the existence and utilisation of group identity, misinterpretation and exploitation will undoubtedly follow. The need for this type of assessment is essential to understanding and accurately critiquing such a delicate but relevant issue. Nowhere is this more essential than in the Eastern Province of South Africa. There is a gross lack of historical assessment of coloured identity formation in the province. As a result, very little understanding is shown towards these people by local authorities and neighbouring communities. Moreover, the Eastern Province has been scarred by the near irreparable damage of land dispossession and ethnic cleansing of black African people. These scars still litter the social landscape of this province.

As a necessity then, this thesis contributes to the broader (often parallel) national stories of identity formation and dispossession in the wake of our racialized past. By furthering our understanding of these complex and sensitive issues, we take one step closer to understanding each other as people and not as racial categories. In doing so we offer ourselves the opportunity to build a viable future on the foundations of compassion and wisdom.

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