THE LETTERS OF HANNAH DENNISON, 1820 SETTLER, 1820 - 1847

A Thesis for the Degree of Master of Arts

by

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P R E F A C E

In 1959, the late Miss M.C. Masson of Salem, at the instigation of Mrs. Dorothy Rivett-Carnac, presented a bundle of Gush family papers to the Cory Library. Among these papers was a series of letters written by Hannah Dennison, who came out to South Africa in 1820, as a member of Calton's party from Nottinghamshire.

Early in 1834 she fled with her two youngest children from her husband in Grahamstown, and in her efforts to support herself and her children she became the first English midwife in Graaff-Reinet, one of the first European 'businessmen' in Colesberg, and the first professional midwife employed by the Methodist Church for missionaries on the Bechuana Circuit. The letters are written to the children she left behind, particularly to her daughter, Charlotte, who later married Joseph Gush.

Some of the letters are in good condition but many are torn, others are incomplete: in some cases they have come adrift at the folds, and holes have been worn in the paper, usually where the seal was affixed.

This thesis offers a transcription of the letters together with editorial comment, and the letters form the main source for a reconstruction of the life and attitudes of a most enterprising woman. The last extant letter was written at Ratabani, one of the Methodist Mission Stations on the Bechuana Circuit. It is dated 25th July, 1847. Neither the records of the Bechuana Circuit, nor the archives of the Free State at Bloemfontein, have any further trace of her. Diligent enquiry among surviving members of the Gush and Dennison families has likewise been fruitless. Apart from these very remarkable letters, Hannah 'perished as though she had never been.'

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in this work :

Almanac	The Cape of Good Hope Annual Register, Directory and Almanac.
B.C.M. (r)	Bechuana Circuit Minutes, recto.
B.C.M. (d)	Bechuana Circuit Minutes, dorso.
C.H.B.E.	Cambridge History of the British Empire.
Cory	Cory, Sir George, The Rise of South Africa.
Edwards	Edwards, I., The 1820 Settlers in South Africa.
Ec.H.R.	Economic History Review.
E.P.H.	Eastern Province Herald.
G.T.J.	Graham's Town Journal.
Hockly	Hockly, H.E., The Story of the British Settlers of 1820 in South Africa.
L.A.C.	Compiled by E. Morse Jones, Lower Albany Chronicle.
Notts.	Nottinghamshire Settlers in the Cape of Good Hope. (Thoroton Society Reprint).
Records	Theal, G.M., Records of the Cape Colony.
R.U.	Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

CHAPTER ONE

The Nottingham Party

Born in 1791 in County Limerick, Ireland, on the eve of the Napoleonic wars, Hannah Elizabeth Purcell grew to womanhood in a very different environment from that of early and mid-nineteenth century South Africa. Sometime between 1791 and 1812 she escaped from 'the cruel caricature of a rural economy that was Ireland',[1] and became one of a stream of destitute people who migrated across the Irish Sea to seek work in England. Probably in 1812 she met and married George Dennison, a framework knitter, who lived at Arnold, one of the peripheral villages of industrial Nottingham.[2] There the strain of peace time conditions after the battle of Waterloo, was probably greater than the tensions of war which she had known all her life. In 1813 her eldest child, Ann, was born, and in 1820 when she emigrated again she had four small children.

In the pre-industrial era before the industrial towns began to straddle the countryside, Nottinghamshire presented a landscape of green pastures and hawthorn hedges, willow-lined streams and gently undulating clay lands intersected by the three big midland valleys. In summer the pastures were thick with butter-cups and cow-slips and the slopes clothed with heavily-scented hawthorn. This gave way in winter to pastures whitened by frost, which were occasionally relieved by 'coffee-coloured' ploughlands. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the often ugly marks of early industrialisation were thrusting into the landscape of framework knitting villages and dotting the quiet river banks with cotton and worsted factories. By 1821, Nottinghamshire had become the fifth

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[1] E.J. Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire - An economic history of Britain since 1750. p.63.

[2] A note written by Hannah Dennison's grandson, Major Charles George Dennison, on the fly-leaf of T. Sheffield's, The Story of the Settlement, states that Hannah Dennison's maiden name was Purcell, that she came from County Limerick, Ireland, and that her husband, George, lived at Arnold, Nottinghamshire.

most industrialised county in England.[1] But the framework knitting industry, perhaps the most important staple of the economic development of Nottinghamshire,[2] remained organised on the domestic basis well into the nineteenth century 'until such virtue and advantage as it might once have possessed had gone... and only the vices remained.'[3]

According to Peers, the author of Thomas Cooper, the Leicester Chartist, 'the story of framework knitting after 1810 is the history of a dying craft.'[4] It was an industry in the transitional stage between the domestic and factory systems and as such was the source of much abuse and terribly oppressive conditions. It represented the adaptation of the old domestic system to the needs of a new industrial society and the framework knitters suffered in the strangle-hold of a new, competitive 'get-rich-quick' spirit.[5]

Under the domestic system knitting frames were scattered throughout the towns and countryside of Nottinghamshire. The capitalist hosier had emerged at an early stage in the industry because the ordinary worker could neither advance the capital for the frame nor, usually, for the raw material of his trade. The frame itself was also expensive to maintain since rapid changes in fashion necessitated changes in the setting of the machine. The capitalist hosier dominated but could not absorb the hosiery industry until it became organised on a factory basis. The middleman developed as intermediate agent between hosier and stockinger. In effect he was 'the pivot upon which this ramshackle and persistent organisation worked.'[6] The middleman was a necessary evil to the stockinger who became entirely dependent on him for employment.

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1 J.D. Marshall, 'The Nottinghamshire Reformers and their Contribution to the New Poor Law,' E.H.R., 2nd Series, XIII, No.3 (1961) p.382.

2 J.D. Chambers, Nottingham in the Eighteenth Century - A Study of Life and Labour under the Squirearchy, p.89.

3 A. Temple Patterson, Radical Leicester - A History of Leicester 1780-1850. Preface VII.

4 quoted by Patterson, Ibid. p.62.

5 Ibid. p.62.

6 J.D. Chambers, op.cit. p.125.

Methods of organisation already outmoded in many other branches of the textile trade, persisted for a variety of reasons. Among them was the technical difficulty of applying steam power to the stocking frame. This difficulty was much greater than in other textile industries because the stocking frame was flat.[1] Yet in 1816 Brunel, a French engineer, had built a circular hosiery frame worked by rotary motion - a much more suitable machine for rotary-powered production. A few unsuccessful experiments with steam-powered hosiery frames were made[2] but it was only in the 1850's that any real success was achieved, and the erection of Hine and Mundella's large factory in Nottingham in 1851, which housed steam-driven circular frames,[3] marked a turning point in the transition of the framework industry from a domestic to a factory basis. This slow progress can perhaps be attributed to something more fundamental than technical problems - the structure and organisation of the industry itself which stimulated the self-interest of the hosier and the middleman.[4] From the hosier's point of view the great expense which the introduction of power machinery would involve was not worth it as under the old organisation, the needs of the market were adequately met and there was a reasonable return for capital invested. The stockingers feared the introduction of power machinery because it threatened to reduce the demand for their labour and because it might mean further over-stocking of the market and consequent unemployment. Moreover the factory system would mean the abolition of the frame rent, a lucrative source of income to both the hosier and the middleman. A further brake on the incentive for mechanised advance was applied by the 'never-failing' supply of cheap labour.[5]

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1 R.A. Church, Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town - Victorian Nottingham. 1815 - 1900. p.257.

2 Ibid. p.52.

3 Ibid. p.257.

4 Ibid. p.32. See also J.D. Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent', E^{c}H.R. Supplement 3, 1957. pp. 59-60.

5 J.D. Chambers, 'The Vale of Trent', E^{c}H.R. Supplement 3, 1957. p.60.

The difficult problem of adjusting from a war economy to peace-time conditions, aggravated by the inadequate fiscal and administrative resources of the country for large-scale planning, made the immediate post-war era a time of particular distress for the working classes. Moreover 'laissez-faire' ideas militated against any attempts to regulate employment or control working conditions. Although distress was punctuated by slow recovery, it was an era of particular hardship for the framework knitting industry. The Napoleonic wars had brought about the loss of continental markets : expectations concerning the South American market proved to be over-optimistic.[1] In 1810 the South American trade had collapsed. The American Non-Intercourse Act of 1811 and the ensuing war closed the American market on which Midland hosiers had relied to a considerable extent. Between 40% and 50% of the hosiery output of Nottingham was exported to Europe and America.[2] There was consequent wide unemployment: for those still in work, starvation wages. Unemployment was aggravated by the fact that the war had creamed off many stockingers whose place was taken by others. On their return after the war the industry was hopelessly over-crowded. The labour position was made worse by the practice of 'colting' - an expedient adopted by many hosiers. In order to increase the number of frames in operation, many stockingers were released into the trade after insufficient training. Further decline in the framework knitting industry was caused by 'cut-ups'. Stockings were made on a wide frame, then cut up and sewn together - an inferior and ill-wearing product in comparison with the properly woven stocking. The system of 'truck' - payment in kind - was another grievance of the stockinger, who, in addition, had to put up with excessive frame rents. Taken in a context of bad harvests and high food prices and sudden and frequent changes in stocking fashions, the position of the stockinger in the post-war years was indeed desperate and there was little he could do except drift into the violence of Luddism or tighten his belt.

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[1] E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class. p.582.

[2] R.A. Church, op.cit. p.13.

As William Felkin,[1] himself a framework knitter and 'self constituted chronicler of the trade',[2] put it : 'They were hopeless of improving their condition, and helpless if they attempted it.'[3] There were violent Luddite disturbances in 1811-13 which continued sporadically until 1817.[4] In Hannah Dennison's village, Arnold, sixty frames belonging to an obnoxious employer were smashed by enraged workmen.[5] It was a time of tension as the knitters crept about with blackened faces, whispering watch-words to each other. Occasionally there was the crack of gunshot as knitters warned one another that they were about to be caught. This machine-breaking was not so much a protest against new machinery as such but a desperate attempt to force the employers to make wage concessions and to stop cut-ups which the stockingers felt was one of the reasons for the decline in their trade and the consequent unemployment and distress. As the Nottingham Review reported, 'There is no new machinery in Nottingham, or its neighbourhood, against which the workmen direct their vengeance. The machines or frames ... are not broken for being upon any new construction ... but in consequence of goods being wrought upon them which are of little worth, are deceptive to the eyes, are disreputable to the trade, and therefore pregnant with the seeds of its destruction.'[6] William Felkin regarded 'the broad substratum of the whole of this wretched heap of wrongdoing' as undoubtedly due to 'the

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1 William Felkin started his apprenticeship as a framework knitter in 1809 and was the author of Account of the Machine Wrought Hosiery Trade (London, 1845) and History of the Machine wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufactures (London, 1867) among other publications connected with the hosiery and lace trades.

2 W.H.G. Armytage, 'A.J. Mundella and the Hosiery Industry', E.H.R. (1948) Supplement 8. p.92.

3 W.H.G. Armytage, A.J. Mundella 1825-1897 - The Background to the Labour Movement. p.17.

4 F.O. Darvall, Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England. pp. 1-5.

5 R.F. Wearmouth, Methodism and the Working-class Movements of England. 1800-1850. p.16.

6 quoted by E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class. p.561.

hunger and misery into which the large portion of the fifty thousand framework knitters and their families were fallen and from which they never fully emerged for the following forty years.'[1] By 1819, when the average weekly earnings had fallen to about 7s. for fifteen hours daily labour,[2] the position of the framework knitter was indeed bleak and the phrase 'as poor as a stockinger', current since 1750, had taken on a tragic significance.

A contributory factor to the distress suffered by the framework knitters and the majority of the labouring classes in the nineteenth century, was the loss of common rights as the result of enclosure, the method by which agricultural organisation and technique were adapted to the changing needs of the community during a period of accelerating economic growth. Many framework knitters in the villages of Nottinghamshire had cultivated small plots of land to supplement their incomes.[3] By 1800 most of the waste tracts of Nottinghamshire had been enclosed and in the early nineteenth century the enclosure of open fields continued apace. Between 1802 and 1824, 18,596 acres of land were enclosed,[4] generally at the expense of the poor labourer and the small landowner.

One of the striking features of the industrial and agricultural revolutions was the rapid growth of the population of Great Britain. It was a point stressed and feared by Thomas Malthus in his Essay on Population, which between 1798 and 1817 went through five editions. The three censuses taken between 1801 and 1821 revealed, what Clapham has termed, a 'flood of life', which, taken in a context of swift social changes, a sequence of bad harvests and possibly the maladministration

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1 quoted by J.L. and B. Hammond, The Skilled Labourer 1760-1832. p.243.

2 R.A. Church, op.cit. p.41

3 R.A. Church, op.cit. p.39.

4 The Victoria County History of Nottinghamshire. Vol.II. p.295.

of the Poor Law,[1] gave rise to the idea of a 'redundant population' in Britain. Clapham has shown that between 1750 and 1821, the population of Great Britain almost doubled itself from 7,250,000 to 14,392,000.[2] This 'flood of life' which inspired Malthus to speculate on the causes and cure of a redundant population, was to some extent made possible, and it was a point he missed, by the changes wrought by the industrial revolution.[3]

This population increase was also reflected in Nottinghamshire. Between 1811-21 and 1821-31, the population of Nottinghamshire rose 15% and 21% respectively,[4] so that by 1831 the population stood at 225,327, a quarter of whom lived in Nottingham. Yet Nottingham was forced to grow within the shell of its ancient manorial boundaries and provides an interesting example of how the failure to enclose could produce as much misery and hardship as the enclosing process itself often did. Some midland towns were forced to grow in the midst of their open fields which could not be enclosed because of complicated property rights. One of the most effective obstacles were the Lammas rights[5] - the right of some or all of the burgesses to graze their cattle and sheep over the open fields after harvesting. Although the land itself might be in the hands of half a dozen farmers, the Lammas rights had a devasting effect on town development in the midlands, not least on Nottingham and the ensuing overspill of population must have had some effect on the outlying

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[1] Mark Blaug has argued that, contrary to the views of the Poor Law Reformers of 1834, reflected also in the consensus of modern opinion on the subject, the Settlement Laws did not invariably work with 'harsh and wasteful rigidity', nor was the Speenhamland policy always 'improvidently administered'. (Mark Blaug, 'The Myth of the Old Poor Law and the Making of the New', Journal of Economic History, XIII, 2, (June 1963).)

[2] J.H. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain - The Early Railway Age, 1820-1850. pp.53-54.

[3] J.D. Chambers, 'Population Change in a Provincial Town, Nottingham 1700-1800', Studies in the Industrial Revolution, Essays presented to T.S. Ashton, ed. L.S. Pressnell. p.101.

[4] The Victoria County History of Nottinghamshire. Vol. II. p.303.

[5] W.G. Hoskins, The Making of the English Landscape. p.216.

villages.[1] In Nottingham itself, this gave rise to 'a resurrection of buildings generally without order, seated like clusters of mushrooms in a field cast up by chance.'[2] In 1739, the German doctor, Deering, eulogised Nottingham as a town where 'Agues are rare, few men Hypochrondiacal, few women afflicted with Hysterical Disorders, nor do we meet with many Rainbow Complexions...'[3] By 1845, the Commissioner, who reported on Nottingham to the Health of Towns Commission of that year, said, 'I believe that nowhere else shall we find so large a mass of inhabitants crowded into courts, alleys, and lanes as in Nottingham, and those, too, of the worst possible construction. Here they are so clustered upon each other; court within court, yard within yard, and lane within lane, in a manner to defy description... some parts of Nottingham [are] so very bad as hardly to be surpassed by anything to be found within the entire range of our manufacturing cities.'[4] The commissioner, J.R. Martin, went on to condemn the Lammas rights as 'A privilege, declared to be "in itself nearly valueless", but which in its operation, gives rise to such dens of misery as the lanes, courts and alleys of Nottingham - that opposes a barrier to the just extension of the town in any direction.'[5] The preservation of the famous crocus meadows which in spring time 'spread a purple hem to the skirts of the old town'[6] must have been cold comfort to the framework knitter, whom

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[1] R.A. Church, op.cit. p.8, see also his Introduction XII.

[2] J.D. Chambers, 'Population Change in a Provincial Town, Nottingham 1700-1800', Studies in the Industrial Revolution, Essays presented to T.S. Ashton, ed. L.S. Pressnell. p.99.

[3] J.D. Chambers, Nottinghamshire in the Eighteenth Century. p.85.

[4] W.G. Hoskins, op.cit. p.218.

[5] J.R. Martin, 'Report on the Sanatory Condition of the Labouring Population in the Towns of Nottingham, Coventry, Leicester, Derby, Norwich, and Portsmouth.

In Second Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts. Vol.II. p.130.

[6] J.D. Chambers, 'Nottingham.' History Today. October 1951. p.42.

Felkin has described as 'mentally depressed, and too often morally debased. Ill fed, ill lodged, ill clothed, with careworn and anxious countenance ... easily distinguishable from most other [people by his] personal appearance.'[1]

The Luddite outbreaks in Nottinghamshire were symptomatic of the general unrest which shook Regency England from 1811 through to the Peterloo 'massacre' of August, 1819. The 'ebb and flow' of popular distress[2] found expression in 'the march of the blanketeers', the 'Pentridge Revolution', 'the Huddersfield rising' and generated a widespread fear of disorder and the possible analogue of the French Revolution of 1789, for many workers saw political reform as the only answer to their immediate ills. Hence the repressive action of the Tory government - the evolution of a widespread spy net headed by the notorious 'Oliver' with his bristling red whiskers, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1817, and the Six Acts or Gagging Acts of 1819,[3] passed after the Peterloo 'massacre' to clarify, among other objects, the law concerning public meetings and to prevent revolutionary outbreaks.[4]

The long term effects of the industrial revolution were probably on the whole favourable for it brought overall material prosperity with an improved standard of living, growing political awareness for the hitherto inarticulate 'masses', improved health, lengthened life and in the long run greater leisure with the diminution of laborious toil. It initiated one of the most important social revolutions, the emancipation of women,[5] and made possible a more logical argument for it.[6] But these

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1 quoted by R.A. Church, Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town - Victorian Nottingham 1815-1900. p.43.

2 F.O. Darvall, op.cit. p.3.

3 A.V. Dicey, Law and Public Opinion in England in the Nineteenth Century. p.102.

4 E.L. Woodward, The Age of Reform 1815-1870. p.65.

5 R.M. Hartwell, 'The Rising Standard of Living in England,' E.H.R. XIII, 3, (1961). p.416.
See also I. Pinchbeck, Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution

6 Olive Schreiner, Woman and Labour.

effects were slow in coming and for the majority of working class men and women, the immediate effects of that 'catastrophic upheaval of deep-rooted custom'[1] entailed much hardship and suffering, not least in those industries which failed to progress with the changes wrought in the social and economic structure of the country. Had Hannah Dennison remained in England, she would have lived and died in the cramped cottage of her framework knitting husband, George, and endured the bitter suffering of that class of worker in the first half of the nineteenth century.

'Distress of the times and the badness of trade'[2] together with the growth of an apparently 'redundant population' gave rise to the idea of emigration to the colonies as a cure. Although between 1812 and 1817, no government assistance was given to settlers, and free passages to New South Wales were only given to those who had capital, a growing stream of emigrants had made their way to America where they hoped to improve their condition. Many letters were written to the Colonial Secretary, Lord Bathurst, by those who wanted to emigrate but could not afford to do so. Indicative of distress was the increased expenditure in the administration of poor-law relief, from about £4 million in 1803 to about £7 million in 1815.[3] In 1817, a Select Committee on the Poor Law recommended 'that all obstacles to seeking employment wherever it can be found, even out of the realm, should be removed; and every facility that is reasonable afforded to those who wish to resort to some of our colonies.'[4]

Simultaneously a situation favourable to the reception of a large body of immigrants had developed at the Cape. The momentous last two decades of the eighteenth century had seen the outbreak of the first Caffre war in 1779 - and so commenced the Cape's 'Hundred Years War' - a series of outbursts on the Eastern frontier culminating in the Ninth and last Caffre war which ended in 1878. In the first decade of the

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1 Dorothy George, England in Transition. p.114.

2 Edwards. p.34.

3 Edwards. p.34.

4 C.H.B.E. Vol.II. p.283.

nineteenth century, the idea of holding a military frontier by the planting of civilian settlers, emerged, and was recommended by Lieutenant-Colonel Collins in his report on the Eastern frontier in 1807. The trek-boer or frontiersman was not really suitablefor the task. During the course of the eighteenth century, he had evolved a pastoral way of life and in his drift across the Colony had staggered its boundaries while there was no substantial increase in population, the majority of which was concentrated in the area round Cape Town. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the drifting trek-boer was halted by the westward moving Caffre tribes near the Sunday's River. And so began many years of frontier contact and conflict. The boundary line dividing two pastoral peoples was not a firm one - it was rather a danger zone than a frontier line and between the Sunday's and Fish Rivers a grim struggle for land, grazing and cattle was waged. The British government at the Cape evolved a two-stage plan aimed at converting this restless frontier zone into an area of settled security. During the Fourth Caffre War of 1811-12, the Caffre tribes were driven back across the Fish River. The Fifth Caffre War of February 1819, marked the defeat of Ndhlambi and in October of that year, the Xhosa tribes were theoretically removed from the 'Neutral Territory' between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers. This neutral territory was to act as a buffer between the two races and the colonial side was to be reinforced by a close civilian settlement.

Prior to this, in 1817, Lord Charles Somerset, Governor of the Cape, had visited the frontier zone and on 8 December he reported on conditions in Albany to Lord Bathurst. He pointed out to the Colonial Secretary that during the eighteen months preceding 1817, ninety of the hundred and five boer families who had settled in Albany forsook their lands because of Caffre depredations.[1] Military protection of the frontier was further weakened by the army reductions, which were adopted by the British government as an economy measure.

Between 1812-17, the attitude of the British government to emigration was apathetic, perhaps because of the persistence of the

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[1] Edwards. p.29.

influence of sixteenth century economic theorists, who argued that emigration would harm the economy of the country.[1] In 1817, despite his failure to gain government backing, Benjamin Moodie, had embarked on a private emigration scheme to settle two hundred Highlanders at the Cape.[2] This move served to stimulate interest in emigration to the Cape. By February 1818, the attitude of the British government to emigration to the Cape had changed, and it was clear that the principle of establishing 'a strategic settlement near the eastern frontier' had been accepted. Perhaps the most important motive for this change in attitude was considerations of imperial defence. India was beginning to play an important rôle in British imperial thinking and the Cape Colony acquired value as a strategic calling station and important naval base on the route to the east.[3] It was imperative to settle the dangerous Eastern frontier which threatened security throughout the Eastern districts. In July 1819, Mr. Vansittart, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, persuaded the Government to vote £50,000 to assist 'unemployed workmen to remove to one of His Majesty's colonies.'[4] The Poor Law Committee had re-iterated its 1817 recommendations and referred to unoccupied land in the colonies where 'the labour of man, assisted by a genial and healthy climate, would produce an early and abundant return.'[5] An undated circular,[6] stating the conditions under which the Government would assist emigration to the Cape, was issued by the Colonial Office in 1819. It offered the same conditions as an earlier circular issued in February 1818.[7] The Colonial Office invited applications from persons wanting to cultivate a grant of land in the Cape of Good Hope. Grants of land would be made to parties of not less than

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1 T.P. Woods, The Case of James Erith, 1820 Settler, and his struggle for compensation. p.16.

2 Edwards. pp. 40-43.

3 Edwards. p.42.

4 Edwards. p.52.

5 C.H.B.E. Vol.II. p.254

6 Notts. p.41

7 Edwards. p.54.

ten emigrants and the land would be granted in proportion of a hundred acres per settler. To enforce this condition each applicant was required to deposit £10 per head as a guarantee. This would be repaid in three instalments as soon as the settlers were established on the land. The government would provide free passages to the Cape. Men from all classes of society were attracted by this scheme, united by a common desire to escape a country racked by distress, to seek a livelihood in a colony of hope and opportunity. The leaders of each party were free to make their own arrangements with the settlers in their parties. Two distinct types of parties emerged. In some parties, the leaders paid the deposit to the government and the men who emigrated with him went as his indentured servants for a stipulated number of years. They had no share in land allotments unless articles of agreement provided for it. But the majority of parties were 'independent' - each settler paid his own deposit and there was equal distribution of the land granted to the party.

The organisation of the Nottinghamshire party was different from that of the 'two distinct types of party'. The initiator of the scheme was the Duke of Newcastle, an 'ardent ultra Tory'.[1] As Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, he had been actively concerned in suppressing the unrest which shook his county between 1811-1819. He was the author of many alarmist letters to the Home Office in connection with the unrest.[2] The Peterloo 'Massacre' of August, 1819, had provoked a large protest meeting at Nottingham. This in turn provoked the alarm of the aristocracy and the gentry who arranged for the garrisoning of Bromley House. The Dukes of Newcastle and Portland, Earl Manvers and others held a meeting at Shire Hall and condemned all 'Radical Reformers'. This resolution and a request to magistrates to enforce the Six Acts 'with promptitude and energy', were printed in the newspapers.[3] Although dull, humourless,

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[1] J.M. Golby, The Political and Electioneering Influence of the 4th Duke of Newcastle. p.2.

[2] F.O. Darvall, Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England. p.82.

[3] R.A. Church, Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town - Victorian Nottingham. 1815-1900. p.105.

bigoted and prejudiced, the Duke of Newcastle was imbued with a strong sense of duty and awareness of the responsibilities of his rank and position.[1] While horrified at the methods adopted by the framework knitters to express their distress, he nevertheless sympathised with their plight. But his attitude to the causes of distress was fatalistic.[2] For instance, he counselled the framework knitters who had demonstrated against poverty in 1819, 'let me beg of you to bear up manfully and make the best of what you consider to be an indifferent lot.'[3] The Duke shared with Malthus the opinion that the country was over-populated. Emigration schemes to remove the 'redundant' population provided the only practicable solution.[4]

In answer to an appeal of the framework knitters of Nottingham in 1819 to help them in their stand against further lowering of their wages, the Duke of Newcastle called a meeting at Blackmoor's Head in Nottingham on 30 August 1819,[5] but the outcome left, as the Tory Nottingham Journal reported, 'a strong feeling of disappointment in the minds of the workmen. His Grace found it impracticable to interfere in the question at issue between the workmen and their employers.'[6] But the Duke did not leave the matter at that. In a letter dated 30 August, which was published in the Nottingham Review of 3rd September, he regretted that he could not devise 'any legal means of adjusting the differences now existing between the Workmen and their Employers in the Hosiery Business', but added that, 'having received application, which makes it appear, THAT COLONISATION AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE would prove

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1 J. Martineau, The Life of Henry Pelham, fifth Duke of Newcastle. pp.5-7.

2 J.M. Golby, op.cit. p.249.

3 R.A. Church, op.cit. p.106.

4 Giving evidence to the Select Committee on Emigration from the U.K., Malthus stated that 'a removal of a small part of the whole labouring population might effect a very beneficial change in the condition of the remainder.'
from: The Third Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the U.K. 1827. p.16.

5 J.M. Golby, op.cit. p.249.

6 J.M. Golby, ibid. p.250.

a desirable object to many, the Duke wishes to acquaint the workmen, that he will afford the measure every facility in his power, either by giving them personal information, or by convening the County to take the subject into consideration, upon receiving a proper application for that purpose.'[1]

As a result, numerous people wishing to emigrate sent enquiries to the Duke of Newcastle. After writing to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for further information, he made public his proposal to set up a fund to aid these persons to emigrate, and a committee consisting of the Dukes of Newcastle and Portland, Earl Manvers and the Clerk of the Peace, Godfrey for the Shire, and the Reverend Becher for the Liberty of Southwell and Scrooby, was set up to promote emigration.[2]

The Duke of Newcastle donated £500 to the fund.

The Duke of Portland and Earl Manvers added a further £500 each, and a total sum of £2,626 was raised.[3] Newcastle's interest in the scheme continued through the preparations for the departure[4] and remained alive long after the settlement had been established at Clumber in the Cape Colony.[5] For instance, he informed E.S. Godfrey that

> 'My mother and the Duchess have jointly purchased childbed linen for 4 women and 8 children, these things are to be entrusted to the care of Mr. Calton and are by him to be lent out when wanted for the use of our colonists - after the month these things are to be returned by the women to Mr. Calton and then lent to any other that may want them - these things are not to be <u>given</u> they are only to be <u>lent</u> under Mr. Calton's direction to the colonists.' 6

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1 J.M. Colby, <u>ibid.</u> p.250.

2 Notts. p.40.

3 J.M. Colby, <u>op.cit.</u> p.250.

4 The Duke of Newcastle's concern for 'his colonists' can be seen in a letter he wrote to Earl Bathurst, on 12 November 1819
'... we find it necessary to enquire whether a sufficiency of corn for bread and seed will <u>certainly</u> be found at the Cape of Good Hope and at a reasonable price.'
[Records, Vol. 12. p.370.]

5 Notts. p.40.

6 J.M. Colby, <u>op.cit.</u> p.250.

Another member of the Committee was the Rev. J.T. Becher, 'an earnest, dedicated and somewhat autocratic clergyman',[1] who had been actively concerned in the parochial administration of Southwell in Nottinghamshire. He had been engrossed in poor law administration since 1793 and some of his ideas, e.g. the principle of less eligibility, played an important part in the formulation of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment.[2]

The Committee based its plans on the undated Colonial Office Circular of 1819.[3] Thomas Calton, a surgeon of North Collingham, was chosen to lead the party. The Rev. John Thomas Becher and Edward Smith Godfrey drew up the Articles of Agreement on 7 December 1819, which concerned three parties :- a) themselves, the Duke of Newcastle 'and several other Noblemen and Gentlemen subscribers to the Fund for the relief of Persons resident in the Said County by Colonisation to the Cape of Good Hope,' b) Thomas Calton, and c) the settlers, 'the several other Persons whose names are hereunder written.'[4] Thomas Calton was made responsible for the actual division of the land. In the event of the death or bad conduct of Thomas Calton, the majority of settlers could elect some-one else in his stead. Provision was made for the building of a church and roads by joint settler labour. Each settler was to have a house or hut and an allotment of four acres of land. Any settler failing to carry out his duties would have to pay a fine of £20. Each settler signed the articles.[5] Many applied to join the emigration party. All applicants were carefully screened before being accepted. In a letter to Earl Bathurst dated 12 November 1819, the Duke of Newcastle stated that 'at present from unfitness in some, and unwillingness in others, continual alteration is taking place

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[1] J.D. Marshall, art.cit. p.387.

[2] J.D. Marshall, art.cit. p.382.

[3] Notts. p.41.

[4] Notts. p.42.

[5] Notts. p.42.

in the list ...'[1] Rejection was usually based on grounds of bad character, age or health. In a letter to the Rev. Becher, Thomas Calton wrote, 'we have nearly corrected our Lists, the Serjeant[2] as well as myself... that the characters of the persons chosen shall be well enquired into; that none but the industrious, and honest, should go out with the first party...'[3] In another letter he refers to the rejection of a man named Raynor as an 'improper person', 'being a Preacher and weakly constitution.'[4] Others were rejected on account of their 'character very Bad', 'character idle', because they were 'Radical' and one, John Bilby, was refused because he had signed the Nottingham Petition.[5]

The Duke of Newcastle, like the Rev. Becher, was a staunch Anglican Tory[6] and it is not surprising to find that several of the settlers in the Nottinghamshire party, notably William Pike, had to conceal their 'Methodist predilections'[7] or stay at home like the 'man Raynor'. Before their departure the settlers were exhorted to observe Sunday prayers and hear the occasional sermon. A sum of £10.14.0. was expended on Bibles, Common Prayer books, 'Crossman's Small Books' and children's books.[8]

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1 Records. Vol. 12. p.370.

2 'the Serjeant' could be George Dennison. In a letter to E.S. Godfrey, Thomas Calton referred to 'Serjt. Dennison'. [Notts. p.54.] and George Dennison does seem to have played some part in the purchasing of supplies for the party and hence some rôle in its organisation. [Notts. p.58.]

3 Thomas Calton to the Rev. J.T. Becher. 14 November 1819.

4 Thomas Calton to the Rev. J.T. Becher. 11 December 1819.

5 Thomas Calton to the Rev. J.T. Becher. 11 December 1819.

6 'His strong religious feelings were such that he inserted clauses in the leases of his property in Nottingham preventing any form of religious service being held other than that of the Church of England.' J.M. Golby, op.cit. p.42

7 William Shaw, The Story of My Mission. p.93.

8 Thomas Calton to the Rev. J.T. Becher. 11 December 1819.

The whole party eventually chosen, totalled 158 persons, sixty of whom were men. Seventeen of them were framework knitters and a further nine or ten had been engaged in town occupations such as draper, grocer or tailor.

Early in January 1820, a boat was provided by the Navy to take Calton's party to the Cape. The ship was to set sail from Liverpool. The men covered the distance to the port on foot. Their wives and children followed in wagons.[1] Liverpool presented all the characteristics of a 'fast-rising' port. There the ship remained weather-bound for several days, affording the passengers a view of the tough brutality of the waterside with its taverns and prostitutes, mingled with the exciting flavour of foreign lands that often characterises a busy port. On 15 February 1820, the Albury set sail with George and Hannah Dennison and their four children, Ann (7), George (5), Henry (2) and Charlotte (4 months),[2] on board.

By March 1820, Thomas Calton wrote a letter to Godfrey of the Shire containing complaints which did not augur well for the future of the settlement. 'Some there are whom I find have proved themselves greater eaters than workers, so I am afraid will prove the same at the Cape. These are the F.W.K. I must surely beg and pray you to send no more here; on this point you will here (sic) from me at the Cape when I have proved their exertions when acting for themselves. Should it be determined to send a second party before we can give you an accurate acct of our agricultural proceedings, I sincerely hope the country people will be preferred (farming men I mean)'.[3]

On 8 May, George Dennison wrote a letter to S.S. Godfrey from Simon's Bay describing conditions on the voyage out. The passengers had a glimpse of the gardens and vineyards of Madeira. They caught sharks and shot 'albatrosses' and were occasionally tossed by heavy

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[1] J.M. Golby, op.cit. p.251.

[2] Notts. p.44.

[3] Notts. p.54.

gales. On 15 March the Albury crossed the Equator and shortly after was becalmed for ten days in the tropical heat. Some became ill and one died. 'Sykes ... broke out with an eruption from Head to foot' and eventually 'departed this life in deranged state.'[1]

Conditions on board a small, cramped ship[2] must have been difficult for a mother with four young children, especially when aggravated by the activities of her recalcitrant husband*, who spent his time fomenting quarrels on board ship. A glimpse of what it was like on the Albury is afforded by Jeremiah Goldswain in his Chronicles. He and his party boarded the quarantined Albury in Simon's Bay in May 1820, as the contract for the Zoroaster had by then expired. He mentions their

> 'grait surprise and astonishment wen we got onbord to see the difrence betwen they two shipes. I was astonished: they Zoroaster was as clean as poosable for a veasel to be but the Albury you could not upwright betwen her deackes and she was not the cleanest veasel I ever saw... she was Quit ful...' 3

Eventually the Albury sailed into Algoa Bay. It was a calm day, 'the bay smooth and very little surf',[4] and the landing on shore was accomplished with ease on 28 May 1820. On 6 June, Calton wrote to Godfrey 'I am much afraid that our party will be here for these 14 days to come; all go in rotation as landed I suppose at least 1500 before us.'[5] Hence Hannah Dennison and her family spent their

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1 Notts. pp. 56-57.

2 In comparison with the hardships suffered by passengers on board emigration ships bound for British North America, conditions on the Settler ships were good. K.A. Walpole has shown that passengers to British North America were subjected to excessive crowding, ill-ventilated, unsuitable accommodation with insufficient food and water supplies.
K.A. Walpole, 'Emigration to British North America under the early passenger Acts' (1803-1842).
Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research;
VII, 21, 1930.

3 ed. Una Long, The Chronicles of Jeremiah Goldswain Vol. I. p.17.

4 Notts. p.60.

5 Notts. p.60.

* Notts. p. 54.

first days in the Cape Colony in a tent village, known as 'Settlers' Town', on the shores of Algoa Bay - a stay which was to last for nearly seven weeks.[1] Thomas Calton died in his tent on 8 July, and Thomas Draper, a gardener, was elected leader in his stead. Under him, the Nottingham party eventually departed on board the creaking ox-wagons and took the coastal route to their destination, a picturesque valley north of the Kowie River between Bathurst and Lemoen Laagte, about ten miles from the 'frontier'. They called it Clumber after the Duke of Newcastle's large and beautiful park in Nottinghamshire.

Hannah and George Dennison, together with their children, had exchanged 'the harsh rhythm' of the knitting frame and the cramped framework knitters cottage for the peculiar gurr of the Cape 'tiger' and the nightly howl of the Hyaena, 'truly horrible',[2] in a dangerous but challenging new land.

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[1] The Diary of Elijah Pike of Clumber, Albany District.

[2] T. Pringle, Narrative of a Residence in South Africa. pp. 38 and 65.

CHAPTER TWO

The Early Settlement

It is possible that if Dr. Calton had not died at Algoa Bay, fuller records of the early settlement of the Nottingham party at Clumber would have survived. No systematic reports to the Nottinghamshire Emigration Committee have so far been discovered.[1] Ms Afr. S.4 at Rhodes House Library has a letter of protestation signed by 35 of the original party, and addressed to the Duke of Newcastle.[2] It assures the Duke of Newcastle that the Clumber people were innocent victims of unprovoked attacks by the Xhosa in the war of December 1834, supports the policy of Sir Benjamin D'Urban and protests against the policy of Stockenström. It throws no light on conditions in Clumber, though the signatures show, for instance, that George Dennison, junior, was then domiciled at Clumber. Two letters, one dated 16 June 1827, and the other 20 June 1861, have been found in Nottingham newspapers, and parts of the 1861 letter re-appeared in the Graham's Town Journal of 25 May 1870. Interviews between Sir George Cory and Elijah Pike and his sister, Mary,[4] children of William Pike, help to throw further light on the early history of the Nottingham party.

The Nottingham party arrived at Clumber on 25 July 1820, after a jolting journey of ten days from Algoa Bay. Once the wagons had been unloaded, the Dutch drivers bade the settlers farewell and departed. As an old man, Elijah Pike could still recall for Sir George Cory, the strangeness and isolation they all felt when the wagons went away : 'It seemed very lonely to us when the waggons went away and left us all alone among the thorns and bushes...'[5] Elijah was six when the

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1 Letter from J.M. Golby to Prof. W.A. Maxwell. 2nd August 1968.

2 Rhodes House Oxford. Ms Afr. S.4 Folio 189. Copy in possession of Prof. W.A. MAXWELL.

3 James Hiscock to the Nottingham and Newark Mercury (16 June 1827) and Edward Tims to the Nottingham Journal (20 June 1861)

4 Commemoration Brochure to Honour the Centenary of the 1820 Settlement p.48 and Cory Ms 78.

5 Commemoration Brochure to Honour the Centenary of the 1820 Settlement p.48

settlers landed : his sister, Mary, was four. She, too, had a story to tell, and remembered that 'while the waggons were being unloaded, prompted by curiosity, I ran down to look at the small river which was near and on my return I found my mother sitting on a large box and crying. On asking her what was the matter she said she was afraid, she thought the tigers and wolves would come that night and eat us up.'[1] There are many similar reminiscences either set down in writing at the time or in retrospect,[2] or collected by investigators interested in oral traditions. The theme of desolation is common to all. This seems to be the psychological moment when newcomers realised that the country was theirs to make: there was certainly little time for idling and repining.

According to Edward Timm, of the original party of 158 settlers, 145 arrived and settled at Clumber, 52 of them were men: there were 23 women and 69 children.[3] John Sykes had died on the voyage out,[4] and Thomas Calton and Edward Brantford died at Algoa Bay.[5] Thomas Calton's wife and six children returned to England[6] and it is possible that John Sykes' wife did likewise. Possibly the remaining two of the 13 settlers who did not arrive at Clumber had changed their minds at the last moment at Liverpool. It is, of course, impossible to establish how accurate Timm's list of arrivals[7] is, but it does with a few exceptions, tally with the 'Return of settlers proceeding to the Cape of

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1 Cory Ms 78.

2 cf, e.g. William Shaw, The Story of My Mission, and Ayliff, The Journal of Harry Hastings.

3 G.T.J. 23rd May 1870 p.3, column 3.

4 Notts. p.57.

5 G.T.J. 23rd May 1870. p.3, column 3.

6 Notts. p.63.

7 T. Sheffield, The Story of the Settlement [p.298] lists 55 men. Discrepancy between official sailing and official arrival lists is common stemming from e.g. last minute withdrawals and additions of settlers and errors of transcription. [See Hockly, p.202.]

Good Hope...' dated Liverpool 30 January 1820.[1] After pitching their tents in their new country which 'to look... for a hundred miles around was to see it just as nature had left it,'[2] the Clumber party set about the task of dividing the land allotted to them. A meeting was held and four men were elected to subdivide 'certain pieces of land so that the party might be as close together as possible for mutual defence.'[3] In terms of the agreement drawn up by the Nottingham Emigration Committee,[4] each man was allotted four acres. The total area of land allotted to the Nottingham party would be a hundred acres per man in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Colonial Office cirular of 1819. Presumably, then, the balance of the party's land was set aside as commonage to graze the party's livestock while the land grants were to be cultivated for the personal use of each family or single man. According to Edward Timm, the division of land was temporary 'for if any man did not like his lot, he could go and choose anywhere else on the party's land which some did.'[5]

The Rev. William Boardman, the Anglican minister of religion, attached to Willson's party, located in the neighbourhood of Clumber, described, in a letter to his son, Thomas, what it was like living in a tent in the Cape winter: 'altho' the midday heat is equal to that of the hottest at Midsummer in England, yet the nights are intensely cold, and a hoar frost is often found on the ground before sunrise; as we live in tents these changes from heat to cold affect us more severely.'[6] Hence construction of buildings more substantial than tents was imperative. A motley of houses mushroomed at Clumber. The more energetic and

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[1] Notts. pp. 43-48.

[2] Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal. 20 June 1861.

[3] ibid.

[4] Notts. p.42.

[5] Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal. 20 June 1861.

[6] Records. Vol.13. p.246.

enterprising cut poles, wattles and reeds for constructing 'basket-work' houses which were then plastered with mud. Some dug holes in the hillsides which were then roofed over. Others built with sods and a few houses enjoyed the luxury of a properly constructed chimney. Instead of glass, calico was used to cover window-holes and rush mats were used for doors. This building activity went on for some time 'and it was a frequent occurrence as soon as men had built a house, that they would alter their minds and choose another place.'[1]

Using the implements purchased from the subscriptions of their Nottinghamshire sponsors, supplemented by others issued by the government against their deposits, the Nottingham settlers began the unfamiliar task of digging their acres, sowing wheat and vegetables in the early spring. They were probably spurred on by their 'delightful situation, resembling much a park, the air and water are good, and the soil apparently fertile...'[2] This must have been a refreshing and perhaps painful change for men 'who had been brought up all their life to a frame.'[3]

As originally designed the settlement failed. The land granted was not suited for agriculture and individual holdings were too small for pastoral farming. Blight, rust, drought and floods merely hastened the realisation that there could be no 'little England' in the Zuurveld. Lack of capital, and the irrelevance of such experience as they had,[4] left many of the settlers with no alternative but to resort

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1 Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal, 20 May 1861.

2 William Boardman to his son, Thomas. Records Vol.13. p.246.

3 Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal. 20 May 1861.

4 Edwards [pp.171-175] puts the figure of non-agriculturists as high as 45% but Clapham has shown that a clear distinction cannot be drawn between an agriculturist and a town labourer, many of whom supplemented their income with agricultural pursuits [J.H.Clapham; An Economic History of Modern Britain - The Early Railway Age. 1820-1850. pp.66-67.] It is also clear that many framework knitters in the villages of Nottinghamshire cultivated small plots of ground and kept livestock on a small scale. [R.A. Church, Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town. Victorian Nottingham 1815-1900. p.39.]

to barter, to trade, or to try and create employment for themselves either in some government post, or at the military centre in Grahamstown.

The underlying and constantly re-iterated theme of the British government at this time was the need for economy. As the military secretary, G.J. Rogers, put it in a letter to the Assistant Commissary General on 2 April 1820: 'The leading principle of the Regulations of His Majesty's Government is that after landing the new Settlers are to be no expense to the Mother Country. Whatever they receive they must pay for.'[1] Rations were issued to the settlers until they could reap their first crops. Blight hit the first wheat crops and the issue of rations had to continue. The crops failed a second and a third time and, despite financial stringency, further expense was incurred by the Colonial Government to save the settlers from famine. As early as September 1820, the balance of the settlers' deposits had been used up and by 31 December, Robert Johnstone, the Deputy Assistant Commissary General had issued a 'List of Balances due on the Accounts Current of the Settlers located in the District of Albany for Provisions etc issued on the Frontier,' which showed that a total amount of Rds 210,470.1.3 1/60 was owed by the settlers. Of that amount the Nottingham party owed Rds 8,155.3.0½, the fourth highest amount after Baillie's, Sephton's and Willson's parties.[2]

Distress and suffering after the third crop failure resulted in the opening of 'Distress Funds' in Cape Town, which drew support not only from the Colony but also from Great Britain, India and even St.Helena.[3] Distress accelerated the drift of settlers away from their locations which had begun almost from the start of the settlement. The drift away began with the natural tendency of those emigrants who were not agriculturists to seek to follow their trades.[4]

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1 Records. Vol.13 p.100.

2 Records. Vol.14 pp.240-241.

3 C.H.B.E. Vol. VIII p.245.

4 Edwards. p.65.

The movement gained increasing momentum with each crop failure, especially after the disastrous flood of October 1823. At first the Colonial Government tried to keep the settlers on their locations through a set of pass regulations, which eventually had to be abandoned. By May 1823, of the 1,004 adult males settled on the land, only 438 remained on the locations.[1]

Within the first year of the settlement at Clumber, men began to leave. 'Some went to Graham's Town brick-making, and some among the Dutch, and the few tradesmen we had went and got employment. Thus it went on for some years.'[2] But in 1837 there were 35 men at Clumber[3] and Timm claims with some pride that, although the remaining 35 of the 52 settlers originally settled, 'may seem a small proportion, ... I would venture to assert that there were more in proportion remained on the location in the Nottingham Party that came out in 1820' and by 1870 'there are but two strangers entered the Party, whose names are Wood and Hulley; except these two, the whole of the Party's land is still occupied either by the original settlers or by their sons.'[4] For those that remained life was fraught with hardship. James Hiscock, a carpenter, was one of those who weathered the first few years and as he put it, 'we endured many hardships from the failure of our crops.'[5] Their clothing wore to rags and ironically it was Edward Timm, son of a framework knitter, who wrote: 'As for stockings it was a rarity to see a pair; and even shoes, I have known men to be months barefooted, and it was not uncommon to see women in the same plight.'[6] Some

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[1] Records. Vol.16. p.40.

[2] Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal. 20 May 1861.

[3] Rhodes House Oxford Ms Afr. S.4. Folio 189.

[4] G.T.J. 23rd May 1870. p.3. column 5.

[5] James Hiscock in a letter to the Nottingham and Newark Mercury, 16 June 1827.

[6] Edward Timm, Nottingham Journal. 20 May 1861.

managed to scrape enough money together to buy stock which was 'cheap at that time, for we could get an ox for £1.10s, a cow for £1, and a sheep for 6s'[1] But there was a shortage of money among the Nottingham men. '...the greater part of us had not five shillings each when we arrived on the locations. I question if there were two hundred pounds in the whole party.'[2] This lack of capital was probably quite widespread among the settlers yet the 'Return of Settlers on location' in May, 1823 shows that the 438 adult males remaining on their locations, owned a total number of 6,173[3] cattle or, roughly, fourteen cattle per head. How, then, did the settlers acquire cattle? Probably, like John Stubbs, they turned to illegal barter with the Caffre tribes, not only for cattle but also for ivory.[4] In his Reminiscences, John Stubbs junior, said of his father '... the only chance to get cattle was to go to Caffreland at the Fish River, and trade for Beads and Buttons... on their last trip Edward Driver came from the Nottingham party and joined my father for it...'[5] Moreover John Stubbs senior resorted to illicit trade in liquor. Many other settlers did likewise as the number of convictions for smuggling shows.[6]

The gradual accumulation of stock by the settlers had the concomitant of increasing Caffre 'depredations'. The Caffres entered the settler kraals at night and made off with numbers of their cattle. Although there were fourteen years of official peace between the Fifth (1819) and Sixth Caffre Wars (1834-5), it was a period punctuated by cattle stealing on the part of the Caffres and settler retaliation in the form of the patrol-reprisal system. Indicative of this situation was a letter written by a settler on 23 January 1823. 'The Caffres are

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1 ibid.

2 ibid.

3 Records. Vol. 16. pp. 40-41.

4 R.T. McGeogh, The Reminiscences of John Stubbs 1820-77. p.2.

5 The Reminiscences of John Stubbs I, 28, published in McGeogh's thesis.

6 R.T. McGeogh; The Reminiscences of John Stubbs 1820-77. p.5.

very troublesome; they lately stole 24 head of oxen from me; but misfortune has so long been my companion that we begin to get reconciled to each other.'[1] A further letter written by Captain Campbell of Thorn Park on 3 November 1823 summed up the causes of settler distress in these exasperated words '... dust, storms, Caffres are enough to discourage the stoutest of us, if not try the patience of a saint...'[2]

In one way the Caffre tribes contributed to the failure of the Albany settlement, paradoxically, in another way they proved to be the salvation of the settlers, for when agriculture failed, many turned to trading for a living and while some of the trade was with the Dutch inhabitants, the bulk of it was with the Caffre tribes. Initially the settlers were forbidden to trade for ivory and cattle with the Caffres because this violated Lord Charles Somerset's conception of the 'Neutral Territory'. He advocated complete segregation between the races, separated by a broad strip of theoretically uninhabited land between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers. Sir Rufane Donkin, Acting Governor of the Cape since December 1819 in the absence of Lord Charles Somerset, relaxed this prohibition by establishing an annual fair on the banks of the Keiskamma River on 20 July 1821.[3] His action was rescinded on 30 November 1821, with Lord Charles Somerset's return to the Cape. Proclamations issued by Lord Charles Somerset on 13 September 1822 and again on 28 November 1823, proved ineffectual.[4] As a result of the failure to stop clandestine trade, it was legalised in 1824.[5]

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1 Cory, Vol. II. p.138.

2 Thomas Pringle, Some Account of the Present State of the English Settlers in Albany, South Africa. p.64.

3 Records. Vol.14. pp.56-58.

4 Records. Vol.15. p.49 and Vol.16 p.449.

5 Cory, Vol.II. p.177.

George and Hannah Dennison and their children seem to have taken part in the general settler drift from their locations, for by 28 February 1825, they were living at Graaff-Reinet,[1] then a small village in the Karroo which in 1786 had been proclaimed a drostdy.[2] William Shaw described Graaff-Reinet in 1822 as 'situated in a kind of bay or basin, formed by a curve in the range of mountains, called the Sneeuwbergen, or Snow Mountains, which stretch away on its northern side from west to east. To the southward and westward there are vast plains of Karroo Veldt; a kind of country very deficient in grass, but everywhere abounding in succulent shrubs and bushes, which form a very nutritive pasture for sheep and cattle, although the general aspect of a district of this kind appears to an European eye dreary and barren in the extreme '[3] - Indeed a contrast to the attractive Nottinghamshire countryside or the rolling green hills and wooded kloofs of Albany. But Graaff-Reinet was a pleasant, attractive town with its Dutch-style buildings, neat gardens watered by the Sunday's River which arced round the town, and wide, well-laid streets edged with lemon trees. Shaw estimated the population of Graaff-Reinet in 1822 as approximately 3,000, about 1,000 of whom were European, largely Dutch and German.[4] It was situated about 142 miles from Grahamstown.

How George Dennison earned a living after leaving Clumber is difficult to establish. George Dennison junior was still officially domiciled at Clumber. It is to be assumed, then, that the land grant was confirmed in November 1823.[5] A total amount of 2,768 morgen and

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1 L.A.C. Vol.I. p.75.

2 Almanac. 1831. p.196.

3 William Shaw, The Story of My Mission. p.71.

4 ibid. p.71.

5 Records. Vol.16 p.441 and Vol.17 p.78. The titles were granted to the Heads of parties, who, in turn, subdivided the land among the remaining members of each party.

282 roods of land was granted to the Nottingham party.[1] It is known that some of those whose land grants were established did not remain permanently domiciled on them.[2] Land often remained the home base when men left to take up a trade or raise money by smousing. George Dennison could not ply his trade as a framework knitter and had no other skill. It seems logical to infer that he became a wagoner especially as his son, George, later earned his living in that manner[3]. This might also explain why at some point before 1834, the Dennisons moved again, this time to Grahamstown, which in the decade after the settlement was rapidly developing into an entrepôt for trade with many opportunities for wagoners, whether honest or dishonest as the following notice in the Graham's Town Journal seems to imply : 'the undersigned [William Cock and others] having suffered considerable loss by the practice of some of the Drivers of Transport wagons, between Graham's Town and Port Elizabeth, in changing of the skins, substituting others of less weight, as also in cutting the larger Hides so as to enable them to subtract one or more skins from the load, give this Public Notice of their determination to prosecute with the utmost vigour of the Law, all who may be in any way concerned in such practices...'[4]

The legalisation of the Caffre trade in 1824, which was extended in 1830 when traders were allowed into Caffre-land to establish trading stations,[5] stimulated the development of Grahamstown. The geographical situation of that town made it an excellent entrepôt for for trade, both transfrontier and within the Albany district.[6] Trade

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1 Records. Vol.17. p.78.

2 G.T.J. 23 May 1870. p.3,column 5.

3 See E.P.H. 12 August 1848,p.4, and G.T.J. 27 August 1853,p.4,column 5.

4 G.T.J. 16 March 1832 p.1 column 3.

5 C.H.B.E. Vol. VIII p.311.

6 K.S. Hunt, The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope with special reference to Grahamstown 1827-62. p.153.

with the interior was an unstable but highly lucrative trade for adventurous traders who could exchange worthless articles such as beads, brass-wire etc for valuable ivory and hides, as well as useful commodities like gum.[1] Trade with the Albany farmers was steadier. Many trekked to Grahamstown with their farm produce and returned to their farms with manufactured articles made both locally and imported, mainly from Great Britain. The considerable volume of wagon traffic is shown by the fact that between 1 October 1829 and 30 September 1830, for instance, 1,402 wagons entered the Grahamstown market laden with produce.[2] The Commissariat also served to stimulate the commercial development of Grahamstown.[3] There are frequent advertisements in the columns of the Graham's Town Journal inviting tenders for the supply of goods and services, particularly for wagoners. Individual soldiers, too, sometimes made large purchases from the merchants. For instance, James Collett sold 842 Rix-dollars worth of goods to Sergeant Sands of New Post in 1831.[4]

This trading activity together with the re-establishment in 1822 of Grahamstown as the capital of the Eastern districts, which made it an administrative centre, ensured the rapid growth of the town. By 1830, it was second only in importance to Cape Town.[5]

Population grew rapidly with the influx of Settlers from the locations. In February 1820 Grahamstown was a village consisting of ten or twelve houses and the military barracks.[6] By 1830 more than 417 buildings had been erected,[7] and the civilian population stood at 1,715.[8]

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[1] ibid. p.153.

[2] Almanac 1831. p.184.

[3] Hunt, op.cit. p.153.

[4] ibid. p.153.

[5] ibid. p.149.

[6] ibid. p.149.

[7] Almanac 1831. p.176

[8] Almanac 1831. p.176.

In December 1831, the first edition of the Graham's Town Journal appeared. The editor, Louis Meurant, stated in his first editorial that, 'the importance of Graham's Town as a Commercial station alone, seems sufficient to entitle it to a Local Newspaper... the Commercial and other interests of Albany will afford sufficient matter for the support of his paper...' and added that 'its exports and imports approach Two Millions of Rix-dollars annually; its Traffic with the Tribes in the Interior is boundless in its extent, and promises to afford ample employment to an increasing population and an enlarged capital; and the direct Trade to England has been established on a permanent basis...'[1]

Before 1834, then, the Dennisons lived in the bustle of a growing town, where tentative attempts were also being made to meet the educational, spiritual and cultural needs of the community, although in pre-municipal days[2] some discomfort was caused by the rutted streets, even High Street had a swamp, and no lighting at night when the peace was often disturbed by the barking of jackals attracted by carelessly disposed butchers' offal.

Hannah Dennison's marriage to George was not a happy one. In a letter written from Graaff-Reinet to her daughter, Charlotte, on 26 March 1838, she referred to him as 'a bad father and a worse husband.'[3] He drank, a habit which Hannah could not abide. As she wrote to Charlotte, 'I could not endure it.'[4] He was irascible, ill-tempered and often violent and his drinking undermined his health. Both Hannah and the children suffered. Later she reminded Charlotte of how he had ill-treated his second youngest son, William, who seems to have been a retarded child. 'what did he do with william that poor child will have reason to remember long as he lives you know how he was when

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[1] G.T.J. December 1831. p.2. column 2.

[2] In 1837 Grahamstown elected Municipal Commissioners.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 26 March 1838.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

I broght him first home and if you have not forgot the remark I made that we must not be harsh with him as I was aware that in time he would see the difference and (understand)'[1]

Hannah's consolation lay in her children whom she deeply loved. Between 1820 and 1834, five more children were born to her, bringing the total to nine. Sometime between 1820 and 1824 Charles was born, followed by Elizabeth (born 14 December 1825),[2] Sarah Ann (born 1 September 1828),[3] William (born C.1829)[4] and Richard Samuel (born 28 August 1830).[5] Most settler families in those days were large for it was not unusual for families to lose one, two or even three and more children when midwifery practices were rather primitive and measles and dysentry, killer diseases. Sometime during these years, too, the Dennisons revisited England for in later letters, Hannah reminded both her son, George,[6] and her daughter, Ann,[7] that they had had measles on board ship while sailing to England.

Hannah Dennison's letters written after 1834 reveal her to be a woman of strong religious beliefs. That she did not hold these beliefs all her life is suggested by the fact that four of her children were not baptised as babies but at various intervals during

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

2 Methodist Church Records, Colesberg: Information supplied by Rev. K.A.V. Thomas (Superintendent Minister De Aar - Colesberg (E) Circuit).

3 Compiled by E. Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy.

4 Inferred from a letter written by Hannah Dennison to Ann - Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

5 Methodist Church Records, Colesberg.

6 Hannah Dennison to George, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

7 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

1843.[1] Moreover she admitted that she too 'often indulged in a glass of wine now though I could not endure it in another yet such was my propensyte that I could not leave it off'[2] Perhaps during the years before 1834, Hannah became converted and joined the Methodists, a religion which preached temperance. Temperance was in the air during the early 1830's at Grahamstown with the formation of the Temperance Society on 21 December 1831, the activities of which were widely reported in the columns of the Graham's Town Journal. When an opening for a midwife seemed apparent at Graaff-Reinet, and because she was not a stranger to the town having lived there, Hannah seized upon the idea of moving there as 'a good opertunyte to leave off that cursed vice,'[3] and probably also as an escape from an unhappy marriage. As she explained to Charlotte 'that was the reason I did not like to live in grahams town I feared the base idea of becoming a comn drunkard.'[4] Although it meant parting from all but two of her children, a fact which cost her 'many a tear,' her 'flight'[5] to Graaff-Reinet was

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1 Sarah Ann was christened at Salem by the Rev. J. Richards on 19 March 1843 [G.T.J. 27 April 1843, p.4, column 5].
Charlotte Dennison was baptised at Graaff-Reinet by the Rev. Andrew Murray on 23 June 1843. [Charlotte Dennison's baptism certificate 23 June 1843, Cory MS 7409].
Elizabeth and Richard Samuel were baptised on 12 November 1843 at Colesberg by the Rev. G. Bingham [Methodist Church Records, Colesberg].
It is interesting to note that the Revs. J. Richards and G. Bingham were Methodists [Almanac 1845 pp. 184-5] and the Rev. Andrew Murray was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church which was the only Church in Graaff-Reinet when Hannah first lived there.
[Only a Dutch Reformed Minister is listed in the information given for the District of Graaff-Reinet : Almanac 1831, pp. 194-195].

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1st September 1839.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

4 Ibid.

5 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

a 'cause for thankfulness (that) I was not left to follow the evil desire'[1] The break with her family was difficult as was her attempt to become an abstainer. 'I did not begin as I ought to have done no I still tasted the sweet morsel under my tongue but blessed be god I have now broken through the snare that has so long held my soul in fetters as it were.'[2]

Probably when George was away on a wagoning trip, Hannah made the arrangements for her 'flight'. She borrowed money to tide her over until she could become established as a midwife in Graaff-Reinet and to pay for the wagon which conveyed her first to Somerset and then to Graaff-Reinet.[3] By this time, George, who would be about nineteen years old,[4] was probably earning his own living. The letter written by the Nottingham Party to the Duke of Newcastle shows that at least by 1835, he was living at Clumber.[5] Her daughter, Ann, had married Charles Scanlen[6] in St. George's Church, Grahamstown, on 5 August 1833.[7] Her letter to Ann, written from Graaff-Reinet on 29 March 1834, shows that the Scanlens went to live at Waaiplatz near Grahamstown soon after their marriage.[8] Henry Dennison was apprenticed to Joseph Richards, a Grahamstown shoemaker

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

2 ibid.

3 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

4 He was 5 years old when the Nottingham Party first settled at Clumber. (Notts. p.44).

5 Rhodes House Oxford, Ms Afr. S.4. folio 189.

6 See Infra, Appendix C, p. 243.

7 G.T.J. 15 August 1833, p.4. column 3.

8 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

in March 1833.[1] Charlotte was boarded with Mrs. Ellen Nichol,[2] a widow and storekeeper who lived in High Street.[3] It is conceivable that Charles and Sarah were also boarded with Mrs. Nichol.[4]

At some point, early in 1834, Hannah left Grahamstown with her two youngest children, William and Richard, to begin what was, perhaps, the most remarkable period in her life.

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[1] G.T.J. 26 September 1833, p.2, column 3.

[2] The letters written to Charlotte between 8 January 1838 and 6 September 1840, are addressed to her at Grahamstown and occasionally the qualification 'at Mrs. Nichol' is added to the address.

[3] Almanac 1838 - Grahamstown Directory. It is possible that Mrs. Nichol was the widow of Andrew Nichol, who was Commissariat/Issuer at Grahamstown. His death as a result of suicide is recorded in the Graham's Town Journal of 6 February 1834 [page 1, column 1.]

[4] A letter written by Henry Dennison to his sister, Sarah, on 25 May 1837, is addressed to her at Mrs. Nichol.

CHAPTER THREE

Hannah the Pioneer, Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg

'if I could think if all my Dear children were provided for my buisnesse her[e] must be finished.'[1] These words of Hannah Dennison reveal the driving force behind the remarkable phase of her life after 1834. Although she was a pioneer in the sense that she was the first English midwife in Graaff-Reinet, the first woman to conduct trade in Colesberg, and the first district midwife on the Bechuana Missionary Circuit - all on the periphery of civilised settlement in mid-nineteenth century South Africa - she did not consciously regard herself as such. George Dennison supported neither herself nor their children after the parting and Hannah was left with no alternative but to seek work where she could find it. George's attitude provoked a tirade from Hannah in a letter to Charlotte:

> 'what is the use of our having the name of husband and wife how is he a husband to me a husband is one that maintains his wife and does he do that answer me what has he done for [the] children since we parted and what has he done for me ... why he is your father he has means what does he do with them does he in any measure contribute to the support of his family' [2]

Underlying all Hannah Dennison's activities was the idea that, as soon as she had enough money to repay the debts incurred by her flight, and had secured a legal separation from George, she would then return to Grahamstown or its environs, the centre of her family and friends. Comments bearing this out are scattered throughout the letters. 'if all things were settled I should rejoice to live in Grehams Town or near it,'[3] she wrote to Ann. Her moves, in her eyes, were temporary only. As she wrote to Charlotte,

> 'when I first came to Graaff [at] it was not with the intention of staying and yet there I was stayed and now I come here I certainly did not intend to remain.' [4]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Sarah, Colesberg, 7 October 1843.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December, 1838.

On another occasion Hannah stated 'if I move again it will be either to the grave or Grahams T.'[1] Yet her fight against debt continued for the rest of her known life and provoked her moves first from Graaff-Reinet to Colesberg, and later across the Orange River to the scattered mission stations of the Bechuana Circuit. She never realised her dream of returning permanently to Grahamstown although she often visited her children there.

The loneliness of a woman on frontier outposts, cut off from the bulk of her family except for the occasional visit, is a constant theme of the letters. Postal communications were often slow.[2] This was aggravated by the fact that her children were not, it seems, regular correspondents. To Charlotte she complained,

> 'I have waited untill my patiance is tired and no letter can it be that you forget you have a Mother or is it that you think her beneath your Notice not to write for so long a time... I have written to george but no answer so that it seems general among you to slight me.' [3]

On another occasion she wrote, 'I feel greeved at your neglect'[4] and this complaint is often voiced in the sequence of her letters. Her children even seem to have been remiss in claiming their letters from the Grahamstown post office. In a list of unclaimed letters published in the Graham's Town Journal of 1 September 1842, three were addressed to Charlotte, and two to Charles Dennison.[5]

Hannah's sense of isolation was enhanced by the fact that death was a constant factor in her life. Childbirth was a hazardous ordeal for frontier women and Hannah often described the tragic deaths of young women or their babies or both. For instance, young Mr. Klingbiel of Colesberg and his wife 'were looking forward with Joy in the passion of

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 4 February 1839.

[2] cf. Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839, and G.T.J., 5 September 1839, p.4, columns 1 and 2.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 8 January 1838.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 26 March 1838.

[5] G.T.J., 1 September 1842, p.3, column 5.

youth and prospect of doing well but o how sudden is their Happyness Blighted.'[1] Soon after giving birth to her daughter, she died leaving her husband 'inconsoleable.'[2] Aware of the risks involved in childbirth, Hannah herself an expert midwife, was prevented from being present at the birth of her first grandchild, by distance and financial stringency. 'i could do more for you if you were near me (and) could help in many ways that i cannot do now you are so far of'[3] She showered her daughter, Ann, with anxious advice and concluded 'only a few that now better than me.'[4]

Measles epidemics, too, often brought death in their wake. In 1839 a measles epidemic struck Grahamstown and later Colesberg. The progress of the epidemic, week by week, was reported in the Graham's Town Journal, which was probably anxiously scanned by Hannah. - 'it was a source of great uneaseness to me when I thought of you all so far away.'[5] Moreover Hannah had to endure being cut off from her own children and grandchildren when they were sick and dying. News of Henry's illness provoked the following anxious query in a letter to Charlotte,

> 'as to Henry I am deeply concerned do pray let me know th[e] truth is his constution bad O what can be amiss do pray write quick you know the distance that parts us and if I could fly I would be with you in a short time.'[6]

When Charlotte was ill she wrote,

> 'as to my part I never have you out of my mind and when I heard you were ill I thought if Charlotte thinks att all it will be now she cannot see me or hear of me I hope you still continue to be comfortable you must be carefull as we know not what a day May bring forth.'[7]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839.

[6] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[7] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

Her daughter, Ann, died of dysentry on 18 July 1843,[1] and the fact that she was unable to be present at her deathbed struck Hannah deeply. As she wrote to Sarah, who was there, 'o my Dear you were highly privlged to be present in your dear sisters last illness.'[2]

By Settler standards, Hannah was already old at forty-four, when she left her husband, and the state of her health was a source of constant complaint in her letters. This made her acutely aware of the 'uncertainties of life.' When Charlotte was contemplating going to the Bay[3] to work, it provoked an almost hysterical reaction in Hannah, not because it was a 'cess-pool of infamy',[4] but because it would take Charlotte ever further away from her and she feared that she might never see her again.

> 'I thought if you were gone to the Bay to live then farewell for ever in this world O what a pang none but a Mother can Judge ...(that) scare of it due not doupt but the uncertainty of life and my own delicate state of health made me fear O my Charlotte when you left me it cost me many a tear and since I have often thought that our parting seems as if we were never to meet again on this side of etornyte.' [5]

Yet there seems to be an almost fatalistic acceptance of death in the letters. When Gideon de Villiers' wife died of the measles in Graaff-Reinet as well as 'many others that we both knew', Hannah wrote to Ann, 'we can only say the lord gave and he taketh away and blessed be his Holy name.'[6] When Mr. Walker lost his son and daughter in rapid succession, Hannah commented, 'I was with it to the last one goes and another comes thus does this World continue.'[7]

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[1] Charles Scanlen to Charlotte, Grahamstown, 20 July 1843.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Sarah, Colesberg, 7 October 1843.

[3] Port Elizabeth.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December 1838.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

[7] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 June 1844.

As Hannah's attempts to get out of debt were attended with very slow progress and her desire expressed in these words, 'nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be once more surounded by my daughters and sons ',[1] receded ever further from her grasp, she made constant attempts to draw her children to her instead. For instance, by early 1839, Henry had completed his apprenticeship with Joseph Richards, the shoemaker, in Grahamstown.[2] In Hannah's view, Colesberg offered the ideal opportunity for a shoemaker - 'sober people they would (do well) here there is neither shoe maker nor taylor.'[3] To Ann she wrote,

> 'I asure you that a shoe maker like if he had a small captall here to sett up a ready made shop would in a few years realise a desent sum the demand for shoes is very great and no one here seems to have thought of it there is no shoe maker here.'[4]

When hints fell on deaf ears, Hannah channelled her requests through other people such as Mr. Wentworth.

> 'Mr Wentworth will write this post to Henry if he comes here there is a good opening for a shoe Maker and we want useful young men here.'[5]

On 22 June 1837, George Dennison jun. went into partnership with C.P. Webber jun. and J. Green as 'tailor and habit maker',[6] taking over Charles Webber's business on his retirement. In that same year, George Dennison probably also married Mary Webber.[7] But their business did not prosper and apparently George went bankrupt.[8]

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, [1841].

2 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839; G.T.J. 26 September 1833, p.2, column 3; and G.T.J. 21 February 1833, p.1, column 3.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December 1838.

4 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg 17 February 1839.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 5 September 1840.

6 G.T.J., 22 June 1837, p.1, column 4.

7 Letter from Mr. Webber to his children, Cory MS 7408.

8 George Dennison, senior, to Charlotte, Fort Beaufort, 5 November 1839.

Hannah greeted the news thus,

> 'Just got a letter from poor George I am very much greved on his acount do my dear if you have any infulence try to perswaude him to come here.'[1]

Many requests were made to Charlotte, too, to join her, particularly as Charlotte would be useful to Hannah in her business enterprises in Colesberg. As she wrote to George,

> 'if she wishes to come here there is every encouragement for young people and particluar such as ch should she accept tell her to bring plenty of ribbons and cheap lace coulourd and white as also muslin or any thing in the Millinery rang.'[2]

Only a few letters survive to tell the story of Hannah's four years in Graaff-Reinet and there is a regrettable gap for the momentous years between 29 March 1834 and 8 January 1838, which embraced both a full scale frontier war and the Great Trek. Some picture of what life in Graaff-Reinet was like during this period can be culled from the columns of the Graham's Town Journal. On Christmas eve, 1834, the eastern frontier flared up in the Sixth Caffre War, as the Xhosa, goaded by drought and the grievance of stolen land,[3] poured over all points of the frontier in devastating raiding parties. Graaff-Reinet was not immediately affected but on 10 February 1835, the Municipal Force of Graaff-Reinet was organised for fighting on the frontier.[4] Among those who volunteered to fight were Hannah's friends e.g. Charles Lennox Stretch and Charles Spiller. It must have been a particularly anxious time for Hannah especially when her principal source of news was probably the Graham's Town Journal with its alarmist reports of death and devastation. Graaff-Reinet, too, was caught in a fever of martial fervour when the town's Civil Commissioner, W. van Ryneveld, and the burghers returned on leave. A correspondent in the Graham's Town Journal gave a vivid

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 3 November 1839.

[2] Hannah Dennison to George, Colesberg, 10 July [1840].

[3] R.T. McGeogh, op.cit., p.9.

[4] G.T.J., 13 February 1835, p.2, column 3.

description of their return. Mounted townsmen rode out to meet them and to escort them to a feast prepared by the Graaff-Reinet ladies. On the outskirts of the town the cavalcade was met and led in by the Amateur Band of Graaff-Reinet playing 'the Campbell are comin' ' to the cheers of a multi-racial throng which crowded the streets. Volleys were fired, speeches made, and the men returned to their homes.[1] The Graaff-Reinet inhabitants, on the whole, seemed to share the general frontier opinion about the war - the wickedness of the Caffres and the wrongs of the colonists - for instance, they were incensed by the reporting of the South African Commercial Advertiser and decided at a meeting

> 'on account of the repeated falsehoods, base insinuations, and general misstatements contained in the late numbers of the South African Commercial Advertiser regarding the affairs of the frontier; and for the inhuman and scurrilous manner with which the Editor of that publication sports with the feelings of our fellow colonists, that this paper be forthwith discontinued in the library for the present' [2]

It was from Graaff-Reinet, too, in August 1836, that Gerrit Maritz, a leading wagon-maker of the town, and a large party of Trekkers joined the Great Trek from what E.A. Walker has called the 'tumultuous frontier districts.'[3] The causes of the Great Trek, and its origin, is still a subject of active research and debate. It cannot be claimed that the letters of Hannah Dennison make any contribution to/learning in this field. What they show, however, is the development of group friction as between the English and the Dutch in Graaff-Reinet. Hannah rarely indulged in sweeping generalisations except on religious topics, but her comments on Graaff-Reinet in later letters from Colesberg show in the minutiae of social frictions within a frontier town, the way in which major issues reacted on the private life of the individual. In Graaff-Reinet Hannah felt an 'aperrant

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[1] G.T.J., 13 March 1835, p.2, column 3.

[2] Ibid. See also J. Frye, The South African Commercial Advertiser and the Eastern Frontier 1834-1847 Introduction i.

[3] E.A. Walker, The Great Trek, p.98

dislike to every thing english.'[1] Moreover Hannah was not welcome in Graaff-Reinet as she was in competition with the Dutch midwives:

> 'there was not in all Graaff reinett a more bitter enemy than old Mrs Hiemaad you know she had no reason but the contrary the reason that I was english and she hated every thing that was english far as in her lay did all in her power to prevent anyone from having me even when I was engaged.' [2]

Graaff-Reinet, too, was not a good place for Hannah's soul.[3] She apparently could not understand Dutch and the Dutch Church was the only church there at the time. Yet the Rev. Andrew Murray was a kindly and Godly man and it was he who later baptised Charlotte in June 1843.[4] She was not, of course, ostracised. Her work involved her on occasion in the social life of the town. She tended the sick when needed, went to weddings, the conduct of which she observed with a critical eye,[5] and remarked on the amazing feat of old Mrs. Wahlstrand marrying a man at her age - 'now I am sure no old woman need dispair.'[6] Yet sometimes she complained of long winter nights with no companion.[7] Sometimes life was tinged with melodrama as when Mr. Malan's wife stabbed his arm with a clasp knife. His arm must have turned gangrenous for 'it mortified he lived Just 20 days after', leaving his wife 'the picture of Madness' not from remorse but from fear of the consequences. Hannah and her friend, Mrs. Spiller, nursed him for two weeks, an arduous task, 'for the time we never undressed or went to bed but just catch a nap as well as we could had it lasted longer I think we should have both been ill.'[8]

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 4 February 1839.

2 Ibid.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839.

4 Charlotte Dennison's Baptism Certificate. Cory Ms 7409.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 8 January 1838.

Hannah, too, seems to have been something of a busybody. She was appalled by the conduct of Graaff-Reinet's merry widow, who could think of 'nothing but drink dress and courting', and as for her poor children 'they are so neglected.'[1] Perhaps what shocked Hannah more than anything was that the widow had tried to get Lennox Stretch[2] into her clutches. She exclaimed to Charlotte, 'what do you think of lennox trying for her' - a concern intensified by the fact that Hannah was hereself staying with Mr. and Mrs. Stretch in Graaff-Reinet.[3] With the Rev. Murray and Mrs. Spiller, she attempted to remonstrate with the widow 'but all to no purpose O What can be done.'[4]

By 16 April 1838, Hannah wished to legalise her separation from her husband, George.[5] George appears to have shown no concern about his wife's 'flight' and made no attempt to get Hannah back or to contribute to the support of his family. His failing health provoked Hannah's alarm, for she might be made liable for his debts if he died

> 'I do not wish to trust to (uncertainty) any longer and if it does not cost to much it would be much better that it took place and then I should have some securyte for future... in the event of any thing happening [to] him you are all aware that I then stand at the mercy of his credeters and by not being free be obliged to be as it were allwayes on the shufle or making excuses wich you know is a thing I cannot bear... I wish it to be understood that I give my claim on him entirely up for ever and only want him to do the same by me.' [6]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[2] It is to be assumed that the 'lennox' to whom Hannah refers, is Charles Lennox Stretch. He was commonly known as Lennox Stretch for he often signed himself as such. [cf. G.T.J., 3 November 1836, p.3]

[3] cf Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 3 November 1839 and Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

The type of separation sought by Hannah seems to have been an extra-judicial notarial contract of separation a mensa et thoro. As Hannah wrote to Charlotte,

> 'if he (George) chuses he can cause it to be little or no expence by consenting for that reason I wished George to get some one to speak to him on the subject before it must [be] to the lawyer I know the deed must be drawn up by a lawyer and signed by witness.' [1]

Such a contract could provide that neither of the parties concerned would hold themselves responsible for each others debts. Potential creditors could be informed of this through notices placed in newspapers.[2] No such notice concerning Hannah and George Dennison can be traced, but it is possible that Hannah adopted other measures to make the separation known. Also the fact that Hannah and George Dennison were clearly living apart from one another, could also provide sufficient warning to creditors that a link no longer existed between the two.[3]

In one of her first letters from Graaff-Reinet, Hannah told Ann, 'I have not been able to save money to send as yet but as soon as I can I will and be glad to get once more out of debt.'[4] Four years later she wrote to Charlotte, 'I think I am as much engaged as you though not profitably.'[5] Perhaps because of the hostility of old Mrs. Niemand and others, or simply because there was not enough business for her there, Hannah did not prosper well in Graaff-Reinet. Something had to be done. Colesberg seemed to offer wider scope for her skill and it is possible that Hannah had previously gone there as mid-wife to attend at confinements. There were, in any case, links between

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

2 e.g. the notice inserted by George Jarvis, Notary Public, concerning the separation of Abraham Carel Cryling and Martha Cryling. [C.T.J. 11 May 1852, p.1, column 1]

3 Information supplied by Professor A. Kerr of Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

4 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 26 March 1838.

Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg which probably would excite Hannah's imagination about the town. For instance, until a resident pastor was appointed at Colesberg in 1836,[1] the Rev. Andrew Murray went there quarterly each year to conduct Nagmaal for the farmers of the district.[2] In his wake followed a host of Graaff-Reinet traders to take advantage of the Nagmaal trade. The Graham's Town Journal, reporting on the laying of the foundation stone of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1832, referred to 'The shopkeepers from Graaff Reinet' who 'had their stalls erected along the Main Street, and every article from a silk ribbon to a bucket of tar was there to be obtained...'[3] Some of the traders stayed on and others opened branches of business there. Hannah, moreover was friendly with John Norval, a Colesberg resident, who on occasion visited Graaff-Reinet.[4] Previous to settling at Colesberg on 1 January 1834, as hat-maker and auctioneer, Norval had lived at Graaff-Reinet for five years (1828 - 1833).[5]

The village of Colesberg was established in 1830.[6] In 1829 Sir Lowry Cole, Governor of the Cape, had granted a large tract of land, 18,138 morgen in extent, on which was to be built a Dutch Reformed Church. The land in the vicinity of the church was to be sold by the churchwardens, the proceeds to go towards the building of the Church. The village thus established grew in importance and promised to outdo Graaff-Reinet as a frontier source of supplies.[7] The reason for this was that the village straddled the main road leading to the usual fording places on the Orange River,[8] and in effect was a

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1 Almanac, 1846, p.347.

2 ed. P.R. Kirby, The Diary of Dr. Andrew Smith 1834-1836, Vol.I, pp. 62-68.

3 G.T.J., 27 April 1832, p.2, column 3.

4 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 8 January 1838.

5 John Norval's obituary notice in the Colesberg Advertiser, 23 October 1875, p.2.

6 G. Botha, Place Names in the Cape Province p.128.

7 E.A. Walker. op.cit. p.29.

8 Almanac, 1846. p.348.

gateway to the no man's land of Transorangia where drifted Griquas, native tribes and the trekboere, some periodic, some permanent. Whether the farmers had merely crossed the Orange River to seek grazing, forced by the exigencies of drought, or whether they stayed there permanently, Colesberg still remained for them a focal point. It was there that they paid their taxes and it was there that they went to church four times a year for Nagmaal, baptisms and weddings. As P.J. van der Merwe put it,

> 'die dorpie Colesberg ... was die enigste skakel, wat die trekboere met die Kolonie verbind het ... Hulle het geheg gebly aan die Kerk; hulleself beskou as lede van die Colesbergse gemeente; en herhaaldelik hulle predikant gesmeek om vir hulle in die wildernis te kom preek.' [1]

The trading opportunities offered by a growing frontier town attracted an increasing number of people there and a large proportion of the trade was conducted by people of British extraction.[2] Some of them were British Settlers e.g. Thomas Plowman, an Irishman and member of Baillie's Party settled there ±1830.[3] His house built in 1835, still stands in Colesberg. Edward Gibbon, who came out with Damant's party arrived in 1836.[4] Thomas Draper, son of the Thomas Draper who had led the Nottingham Party in 1820, came to Colesberg ±1837 from Port Elizabeth[5], as the representative of the firm Heugh and Fleming which had established trading stores throughout the frontier towns. William Cock, too, found his way there.[6] At some point between 16 April 1838 and 11 October 1838, Hannah Dennison removed from Graaff-Reinet to Colesberg.

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1 P.J. van der Merwe, Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek 1770 - 1842. p.349.

2 Almanac, 1843. p.453.

3 E.G.A. Appleton, A Family Tapestry. (privately published, 1848) / p.90.

4 F. Gutsche, The Microcosm. p.68.

5 Thomas Draper's Obituary Notice in the Colesberg Advertiser, 23 October 1875, p.2, column 5.

6 In 1840, William Cock became a Municipal Commissioner of Colesberg. Evening Post, 21 September 1968

Situated about 15 miles from the Orange River, Colesberg was then a small village caught in a narrow valley between clumps of koppies. All around were the dreary wastes of the Karroo. As Hannah described it in her own vivid language,

> 'you never saw such a place so wild and Barren green is quite a novelty here a quarry of stones hudled together and there another lot in the same state you must be struck with the absence of green a little shrub here and there the town very small at present but the people building fast as they can.' [1]

In 1839 there were 73 houses in Colesberg. There were 13 retail shops, two butcher-shops and two bakeries. Of all the families in the village, 24 were English.[2] A correspondent in the Graham's Town Journal complained 'we have to pay exceedingly high for both bread and meat.'[3] J.J. Freeman, Home Secretary of the London Missionary Society, who visited Colesberg in 1848, remarked, 'the town is one of the most expensive for living in which the colony contains. All provisions are high in price, and wages also extremely high.'[4] High prices for such commodities as bread and meat were a natural result of a country 'nearly wholly pastoral from necessity - corn cannot be grown without irrigation.'[5] To this was added the periodic visitations of drought and locusts. Sheep cost between 4 and 5 Rds each and flour, when available, was sold at between 30 to 40 Rds per muid. [6]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

[2] G.T.J., 31 January 1839, p.1, column 5.

[3] Ibid.

[4] J.J. Freeman, A Tour in South Africa. p.222.

[5] Almanac, 1841. p.398.

[6] Ibid.

Because it was a frontier town, prohibition was imposed on Colesberg by Ordinance 23 which forbade the selling of contraband, including liquor, to the natives.[1] According to Hannah,

> 'notwithstanding those who are devoted to [wine and spirits] will use other means such as odclogne and other things though they might as well drink as much poison.'[2]

On the consumption of Eau de Cologne, a correspondent in the Graham's Town Journal commented with horror,

> 'will you believe it, a single individual expended in this detestable drink, procured as a substitute for brandy, no less, in one week, than £5 and that at another period, in three weeks, his account for the same article amounted to Rds 114?'[3]

This consumption of Eau de Cologne must have been quite phenomenal for an advertisement in a Graham's Town Journal of 1842 put the price at 10d per phial.[4] The Cape Almanac of 1841 put the matter more soberly,

> 'it is certain that more "eau de cologne" is imported than in fairness can be supposed to be exhaled in perfumery.'[5]

In addition to the government regulation prohibiting the sale of liquor, there was a special clause prohibiting the sale of spiritous liquors on property rented or sold by the Dutch Reformed Church, which held the monopoly of land at Colesberg.[6] When Backhouse, the Quaker, visited Colesberg in 1839, he conducted a much needed temperance meeting on 17 June 1839 for the people of Colesberg 'are far from being universally temperate.'[7]

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1 cf. G.T.J., 20 July 1837, p.2, column 3.

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December 1838.

3 G.T.J., 3 January 1839, p.3, column 1.

4 G.T.J., 20 January 1842, p.1, column 2.

5 Almanac, 1841. p.398.

6 A Book of documents containing records of the sale of D.R.C. Church property in Colesberg, housed in the town clerk's office, Colesberg.

7 J. Backhouse, A Narrative of a Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa. p.344.

For Hannah, Colesberg had another kind of drawback. It lacked 'a sunday school and a faithfull english preacher.'[1] It was a sentiment shared by other of the English inhabitants of the town. 'the people say the[y] would be very glad if some such person would come and reside among them.'[2] But given the often lawless conditions of a frontier town, such a man

> 'would have much to bear and many trials according to all appearance but no cross no crown it seems to me that the infidles are allowd to multiply and no notice taken of them wile the heathen are cared for the english heathen are forgoten they wont go to church because it is dutch and they do not like the parson it is quite grievous to hear them at times.'[3]

The fact that Thomas Reid, resident minister of Colesberg since 1836,[4] would not preach in English was a source of grievance to many of the English inhabitants of Colesberg. As one writer in the Graham's Town Journal put it :

> 'We have much to complain of in this village on the score of spiritual instruction. We are here an English community, and very few understand the Dutch language, and yet our worthy clergyman will not preach in any other. We consider this an extremely hard case, as the Rev. gentleman has sufficient leisure and ability to do so. It is a matter of surprise that none of the Missionary Societies have established a branch here. Were they to do so, it would be well received.'[5]

A further letter stated that

> '... it is to be regretted that nothing can be done to procure religious instruction in the English language. Of this we most sensibly feel the want.'[6]

Despite his refusal to preach in English the Rev. Thomas Reid and his wife were close friends of Hannah. 'Mrs Reid and her very kind partner ... have done all in their power to make me like C B'[7] When she first

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1 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Almanac, 1846, p.347.

5 G.T.J., 1 November 1838, p.2, columns 2 and 3.

6 G.T.J., 3 January 1839, p.3, column 1.

7 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December 1838.

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arrived at Colesberg, they found her a house near to their own in the vicinity of the church. On 1 September 1839, perhaps due to the constant prodding of Hannah and the pressure of public opinion, the Rev. Reid preached his first English sermon.[1] Sometime in 1839 the prospect brightened with the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Wentworth, also British Settlers of 1820.[2] Of their arrival Hannah said 'I have some hope that they will prove a blessing to this place and if a few more lights were to come it might be made a bethel.'[3] Mr. Wentworth opened his house for Sunday school and Hannah made plans for prayer and class meetings.[4] Hannah hoped for more

> 'as the Banner Begins to be unfurled to see a altar erected here and that we shall have the advantages of Grahams Town for why should the Bread be given in one place and not to others.'[5]

In Hannah's opinion, the Wesleyans should separate more,[6] and they did for on 23 May 1840, a Methodist minister, the Rev. W.C. Holden, arrived at Colesberg which was attached to the Bechuana Missionary Circuit.[7] No longer need Hannah write 'sunday eving ... no preaching this is dull.'[8] Instead she could describe sermons such as

> 'a fine discourse (on) straight is the gate and wide is the way that leads to distruction Mr H was plain and as he in genral is grand'[9]

With the Rev. Holden's arrival, a fund-raising committee for the erection of a Wesleyan chapel was set up. Fleetwood Hawthorne,

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

2 Hockly, p.300.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839.

4 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 B.C.M.(d) p.57.

8 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

9 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 5 September 1840.

resident magistrate and Civil Commissioner of Colesberg, since its establishment as a separate district on 6 February 1837,[1] was one of the Trustees of the fund. On 17 June 1841, the foundation stone of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Colesberg was laid. The Rev. W.C. Holden conducted the ceremony and Fleetwood Rawstorne laid the foundation stone. In his speech, Fleetwood Rawstorne referred to the combined efforts of the Methodists, members of the Established Church of England, of which he was one, and members of the Dutch Reformed Church, which had made the erection of the chapel possible.[2] On 7 November 1841, a structure 40 feet long and 22 feet broad was completed at a cost of £420.[3] The Chapel was opened by the Rev. R. Giddy of Thaba 'Nchu.[4] It is interesting to note that in his speech, Rawstorne stated that before the arrival of a Wesleyan Minister, there was only one Methodist family in Colesberg. He was probably referring to the Wentworth family. This suggests that Hannah was not formally allied to the Methodists and there is no evidence to show that she actually took such a step. Moreover it was only on 12 November 1843 that both Elizabeth and Richard were baptised by the Rev. G. Bingham,[5] Holden's successor as Methodist minister at Colesberg.[6] Yet Hannah undoubtedly gained strong spiritual sustenance from her religion and it was probably her 'prop',[7] as she called it, which carried her through times often difficult. As she put it simply 'I have reason to bless Sunday schools and Methodism for me and mine.'[8]

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1 P.J. van der Merwe, op.cit., p.384.

2 G.T.J., 24 June 1841, p.3, columns 1 and 2.

3 B.C.M.(r) p.59.

4 G.T.J., 25 November 1841, p.2, column 3.

5 Methodist Church Records, Colesberg.

6 B.C.M.(d) p.57.

7 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

8 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 3 November 1839.

As far as her employment was concerned, Colesberg offered far better prospects for Hannah than Graaff-Reinet did. To Charlotte she wrote, 'I have abundance of work and that good every prospect of doing better here than at G.'[1] She included in her connexion the 'nobs'[2] of Colesberg - Mrs. Hawsterne, Mrs. Norval and Mrs. Reid.[3] Colesberg was a small village at this time with a population increase hardly sufficient to sustain a full-time widwife. But Hannah's activities extended to beyond the Orange River. She was often sent for 'over the river' to assist at the births of missionary children, primarily those of the Methodist Bechuana Circuit. Hannah seems to have been under some sort of obligation to the Bechuana Missionary Circuit. In a letter to Charlotte she referred to her 'employment in the socity.'[4] Moreover the records of the Bechuana Circuit show that trips to Grahamstown for confinements, were, by 1840, discouraged :

> 'It is to be understood that the Brethren deem it very undesirable that any Preacher in this District should visit the Colony for the purpose of his wife's confinement at Graham's Town or elsewhere. And should any preacher resolve on so doing it is to be distinctly understood that nothing can be allowed him for his travelling or other expenses incurred by such a visit.'[5]

Hannah was probably paid a maximum sum of three guineas for the confinement of each Missionary wife she attended on the Bechuana Circuit.[6] She also had contact with Mrs. Murass of the Lutheran Missionary Society at Bethany on the Riet River.[7] On 17 February 1839, Hannah wrote to

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

2 The word was in common parlance in the Eastern Cape. cf. S. Bingham to Charlotte, Colesberg, 14 October 1843.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

4 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 28 January 1842.

5 B.C.M.(d) p.27.

6 B.C.M.(d) p.27.

7 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839 and Almanac, 1841, p.285.

Ann,

> 'tell my Grandson that if I should have to cross the great Orange river and I think I shall be sent for I will bring him a plume of black feathers or a prety cross.'[1]

Sometimes the wives of missionaries came to her at Colesberg,

> 'I have now Mr and Mrs Giddy and famiely with me bording it happened very opertunytly there being a house next to mine to lett Mrs G came for me but so very feeble that she is not able to attend house concerns and I have undertaken it for a month.'[2]

Often these ties were irksome. As she remarked to Ann, 'it is a shame I should be so bound',[3] especially when opportunity of visiting her children in Grahamstown offered.

Although her midwifery prospects were brighter in Colesberg than in Graaff-Reinet - 'you must know that I never had so good Opertunyte of doing well as I now have,'[4] it was not enough to live on, let alone to save.

> 'I do not know what this place will do when I am gone (though) it is not enough to live on at (present) yet it is a great deal better than Graaff was and is encreasing.'[5]

Hannah had always kept a weather eye open for ways of making money. When in Graaff-Reinet she observed that the farmers 'can get wood enough to suport them if they will take the trouble to bring it in.'[6] To George she wrote,

> 'Let me know [how] oranges are selling as I am promised a half waggon load and say if you think I can get any thing to bring back the expence of waggon hire is so very great.'[7]

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1 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839. 'Cross' in this quote probably means Kaross.

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, [1841].

3 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

4 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 February 1841.

6 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Graaff-Reinet, 29 March 1834.

7 Hannah Dennison to George, n.p. [1842].

The quarterly Nagmaal visitation of the Dutch farmers and ensuing lively trading activities must have caught Hannah's calculating eye. As many as 300 wagons[1] raised the dust and enlivened the atmosphere of Colesberg as they disgorged their occupants and potential customers, the Dutch vrouws. By 19 August 1839, Hannah had opened a millinery shop 'for a person'[2] to supplement her income from midwifery. Among Hannah's potential customers, too, were her clients 'over the river.' As she later remarked to Ann, 'I have a correspondence over the river and am often enquired of for many things that we fetch.'[3]

Hannah obtained her initial stock from shopkeepers in Colesberg and Graaff-Reinet. Dixon gave her £25 worth of goods 'at her own time' and Bedford as much as she would take.[4] Thereafter she obtained her stock from Grahamstown, mainly via Charlotte, and there are constant requests for various articles of millinery throughout the letters after she had embarked as a tradeswoman after 1839. 'if Charlotte can bring a few things with her it will do me well'[5] Charlotte herself was a milliner[6] and Hannah was particularly anxious for Charlotte to join her in her business in Colesberg.

> 'and now to you a invitation again to come here for a few months you could return in the spring or sooner if you wished and bring if you can some articles of Milenery such as Grecian net and binding for caps and ribon of various coulers the ribon to be smart satin flowers and fancy nett with a few shapes for bonnets ... the name of Miss D arriving from G town with Milinery would set the young ladys flying I do believe if you could come it would do you good and me also for I intend to enter into that line in a small way and have good encouragement to begin your coming with a few articles of that kind would be the begining of better things what you bring of course is your own do not think I invite you to gain by your industry no or to make merchandize of you ... I will contrive it after you leave.'[7]

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1 Almanac, 1841. p.398.

2 Hannah Dennison to George, Colesberg, 19 August 1839 and Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839. I have been unable to identify 'the person.'

3 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 10 October 1839.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 cf. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte, Cradock, 27 October 1842.

7 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, May 1842.

That Hannah relied on Charlotte for advice, before enlarging the scope of her trade, is clear in this comment to Ann, 'thinking it best to try first a little and then when ch is here we can consult about the best way.'[1]

Yet Hannah failed to prosper. Part of the explanation, at least as far as her millinery business was concerned, lay in the fact, as Hannah put it, that 'the place is small but I have what there is as there are none to opose me yet it will take me long to get out of dept.'[2] The main cause of her failure, was, that by diversifying her activities, Hannah had taken on far too much for an ageing and ailing woman. She was constantly on the move over the river, in the district, or to Grahamstown. During her absence, her shop had to stay shut. Hannah realised this difficulty. 'I want some person to take charge wile I am absent.'[3] As she wrote to Ann,

> 'the prospect is good but alone I cannot live the work Is to severe without help what is a child by itself as my Richard is and when I am out people whant me or things I have got no one to give answer to them my loss is great.'[4]

The restlessness attending declining circumstances is evident in the following comment,

> 'I am Just getting comfortable I have bought a feather bed wich cost 5£ and other articles in the house may now [have] to l[e]ave this.'[5]

Some relief was provided by the arrival of Charlotte and Elizabeth at some point shortly before 6 March 1843.[6]

Trouble north of the Orange River in the closing months of 1842, while promoting anxiety in Colesberg, also served to stimulate trade in the village, for a large body of troops was stationed there in face of the threat of a frontier war. Boer, Griqua and native in

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1 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 10 October 1839.

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 3 November 1839.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, May 1842.

4 Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 26 June 1842.

5 Ibid.

6 George Dennison to Hannah, Cradock, 6 March 1843.

Transorangia were warring with each other over land for grazing their cattle. Jan Hooks, a leading Trekboer of Transorangia, returned thither belligerent and aggressive from fighting against the British at Port Natal in May 1842. The Natal boers had succumbed to the British. Backed by the rumoured support of the King of the Netherlands, he resolved to stir up all the boers against the British and at Alleman's Drift on the Orange River, he threatened to proclaim a republic. Contemporaneously Judge Menzies was on circuit at Colesberg. On 22 October 1842 Menzies proclaimed British sovereignty over Transorangia. On 3 November 1842, Napier, Governor of the Cape, repudiated Menzies' action. Turmoil persisted. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Cape, Colonel Hare, marched on Colesberg with a force of nearly 1,000 men. They arrived at the end of December. As Chase put it,

> 'the alleged purpose of this Expedition was to stifle any spirit of disaffection which might manifest itself within the border - to intimidate the Emigrants beyond, and in its vicinage, and even should occasion require it, the marching of troops into the Trans-Gariepine country itself now equally laid claim to by the Griquas and Emigrants.' [1]

For Hannah, life went on as usual amidst tumult. There might have been no threat of a frontier war :

> 'I opened my shop on Monday last and so far have received good encouragement the black serge is all gone and many enquiries for more the p[r]ints took s[o] well that I want a fresh suply of the small paternes as that is the rage here at present blue lilack buff pale pink but no stripes nor runers they are not saleable to the belles of this place.' [2]

The only sign of tension evident in the letters appeared in Hannah's comment to Charlotte,

> 'it still continues very dry and the farmers are in a very u[n]settled state last week some evil disp[o]sed person threw stones at Mr Rawstrons windows and broke several paine of glass greatly frightened Mrs R and her Mother who happened to be there but... no other harm done.' [3]

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[1] J.C. Chase, Natal Paper, Part II, pp 266-7.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 6 December 1842.

[3] Ibid.

After Ann Scanlen's death on 18 July 1843, Charlotte went to Salem to help Charles Scanlen look after Thomas and Hannah, her nephew and niece. Hannah was left alone once more to cope with her numerous activities. To add to her woes

> 'I have got Reumthism and that bad in my hip and back a thing I never had in my life before we have had a good deal of rain wich I cupose is the cause.'[1]

When Mrs. Bingham's little boy was ill, Hannah went to his assistance despite being 'in so much pain' and notwithstanding that it 'rained haild and thunded.'[2] Previously in February 1843, the immediate danger of war had passed and most of the troops were withdrawn from Colesberg. Only a small detachment of the 91st Regiment and 50 men of the Cape Corps remained.[3] Many of them, such as Captain Yarborough and Lieutenant Savage of the 91st became friends of Hannah and the officers were among her customers. 'the Officers wants green tea and still inquiring for colourd neck ruffs.'[5] Yet without capital to replenish her stock, Hannah was struggling. As she put it, 'without show of Money in the house trade is very dul.'[6] The fact that Hannah's business was at best sporadic with her frequent absences, began to tell. Other shops were now competing with her: 'the little trade that I had seems allamost gone adding to that my shop has very little in it.'[7] Some of her debts still stood.

> 'I have settled with Hugh of my first bill all but £3 that is ... Mr Wentworth all but £1 b[e]dford and Cook remains yet.'[8]

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 6 October 1843.

2 Ibid.

3 J.C. Chase, Natal Papers, Part II, p. 276.

4 Almanac, 1841, p. 417.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 6 October 1843.

6 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 7 October 1843.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

Lack of capital and Charlotte's failure to send her stock, particularly when Nagmaal was nigh, added to her difficulties. A letter to Charlotte betrayed her anger, not only in her words but also in the furious downstrokes of her writing. She berated Charlotte,

> 'you leave me months without a line you were aware how much I stood in need of the thing[s] I sent for you also knew that I had a heavy bill to meet from Graff you also knew that when you left my means were very small it is yet smaller now for the last few weeks I have not taken on a avarage of 2£ per week this is because I have comparativly nothing in the shop Naght Maal is Just here and here am I without good[s] without Money I have paid Montgths but not Walker for I have not been able to make up the sum of ten pounds as I must keep up my stock of sugar and coffe ... you may do Just as you please write or leave it alone I am cross.'[1]

The strain began to tell on Hannah and coupled with her trading woes, was the fact that she had fewer babies to deliver :

> 'my health So very delicate but the least thing setts me crieng like a baby the needle work is to much for me and I cannot do without ... my shop brings me nothing last week I did not take £2 Just fancy my own buisness is still I have deliverd 2 since you left and perhaps before the year is out Mrs Blake may fall to pieces then there are 3 more in febury and then stand still again for a time so that I am obliged to do a good deal to support my self.'[2]

Of Mrs. Murray, she said regretfully, 'no prospect of a famiely by her.'[3]

The main cause of Hannah's financial failure lay in the fact that she had taken on more than she could cope with at her age and on her own. She realised this to some extent.

> 'O my charlotte these are sad days I may date most of my failure to losing you in my Buisness this was not your fault nor mine but so it is.'[4]

Then a more personal sorrow also had material repercussions.

> 'after your sisters fall my buisness dropt off to a more nothing and still continues Many that came before to the shop do not come now for fear of contamination.'[5]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 4 December 1843.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 16 December 1843.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1844.

[5] Ibid.

Her flighty and headstrong daughter,[1] Elizabeth, so susceptible to flattery,[2] had long since been a source of worry to Hannah. As early as 4 February 1839, Hannah had advised Charlotte, 'do not lose any oppertunyte and admonishing her to conduct herself and to be circumspect in her companions.'[3] What precisely was implied by the term 'fall' is not clear: if there was a surviving illegitimate child, no certain trace has been found of it. True, in two letters written in October 1843, Hannah referred to a baby. 'Elizabeth took ill and the babys nurse at the same time.'[4] But this is clearly not Elizabeth's own child.

> 'we have comenced to wean tiberius Kich he is very good with it though if you were to hear him at this moment you would say not very good for he has a temper of his own but at night he sleeps well (and) eats all he sees near and demands his meals when he sees it about.'[5]

Mrs. Kisch had died after childbirth on 5 March 1843, and the baby had been given to Hannah to rear.[6]

To add to Hannah's misfortunes, George Dennison, her husband, prompted by Charles Scanlen, attempted to take Sarah away from her. A rift between Hannah and her son-in-law seems to have developed when Hannah received news of his intended re-marriage, nearly five months after the death of his wife, Ann.[7] -

> 'so soon of course he must please himself ... May the giver of every good give her [Miss Gardner] a heart to be kind to the dear children O my heart achs for them.'[8]

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1 George Dennison to Hannah, Cradock, 6 March 1843.

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1848.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 4 February 1839.

4 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 6 October 1843.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 7 October 1843.

6 See Appendix C, p.239.

7 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 16 December 1843.

8 Ibid. Charles Scanlen married Sarah Gardner on 6 February 1844. [L.A.C., Vol. III, p.23]

Apparently Sarah had stayed with the Scanlens during Ann's illness and death.[1] But Hannah announced her intention of removing Sarah as soon as Charles re-married, which she did.[2] The upshot was, that by June 1844, Hannah was faced with 'a power of attorney to arrest me with funds and to take sarah from me in your fathers name.'[3] That it was Charles Scanlen who had put George Dennison up to it, is evident from Charles Dennison's sarcastic comments in a letter to Charlotte :

> 'doubtless you are quite wrapt up in C Scanlen for his unerring Kindness toward Mother he Certainly shows the most tender and gentle of dispositions toward the mother of his former wife the grandmother of his lovely children.'[4]

That George Dennison alone was incapable of such an action unaided, is clear from a reference to him by his son, in a letter to Charlotte,

> 'as to Father he is living loosening the fibres of his head and ears and is quite insensible to the Stiring world around him.'[5]

Hannah was not only faced with the loss of her daughter, but the impending court case threatened to prevent her from following her calling. Hannah's straitened circumstances had prompted her to accept a salaried appointment as District Midwife to the Bechuana Missionary Circuit.[6] 'I have singed the articles to go over the river but do not know when I will be wanted.'[7] 'should I be prevented from going I am begard for life.'[8] Moreover Hannah seems to have been deceived by the Rev. G. Bingham over some financial

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Sarah, Colesberg, 17 June 1844.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, 16 December 1843.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1844.

[4] Charles Dennison to Charlotte, Grahamstown, 5 June 1844.

[5] George Dennison to Charlotte, Cradock, 5 August 1844.

[6] Supra, p.54.

[7] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1844.

[8] Ibid.

matter, the nature of which is not clear. The minutes of the Bechuana Circuit show that George Bingham was charged in December 1843 by the General Superintendent of the Circuit

> 'with having violated the Financial Regulations of the Missionary Committee and the District in drawing various unauthorized drafts upon him at Grahams Town, thereby involving himself in heavy debt, and acting with reference to pecuniary matters, in a manner highly unbecoming a Wesleyan Minister.'[1]

The Committee 'fully acquitted [him] of any dishonest intentions' but resolved that he be 'put back one year on trial' and be 'peremptorily forbidden to drew any more drafts on the District Treasurer.'[2] The Rev. Bingham probably owed Hannah money which, in turn, contributed to her own straitened circumstances.

> 'I am at this time in very great difficulty Mr Bingham has sadly decived me and many others his name is not worth a farthing in Coles B I was trusting in a measur to him and there I am'[3]

In another letter she said, 'now you must know that Mr Binghams affair is likely to hurt me a little as I quite depended on it.'[4]

While waiting to go over the river Hannah resorted to some expedients 'for to satisfy my creditors.' She held a sale which raised between 200 and 300 rix dollars 'wich answerd present demands.'[5] On Charlotte's advice, she merely sold what she had and did not attempt to replenish her stock.[6] She also sold some of her personal belongings - 'chairs and a table and a washing stand I got made after you left so that and other things helped me

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[1] B.C.M.(r) p.81.

[2] B.C.M.(d) p.81.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1844.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 June 1844. The Rev. Bingham was to receive only a portion of his salary until his debts were cleared [B.C.M.(d) p.81], and was sent from Colesberg to Umpukani [B.C.M.(d) p.88]. By 12 February 1845 he had resigned his office 'as a Wesleyan Minister' [B.C.M.(d) p.91].

[5] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 June 1844.

[6] Ibid.

much.'[1] Further restraints were planned once she was over the river,

> 'no tea very little coffee very little meat no Chattles but what we at present possess this do and have began to act I fear not being able to pay all in a little time but time I must have.'[2]

Mr. Murray extended his credit for yet another year.[3]

Fortunately Charles Scanlen withdrew his action to take Sarah from Hannah and she was left free to pack up when the wagon arrived to take her over the river. Satisfied that the 'vilian', the inner demon which Hannah regarded as the cause of Elizabeth's downfall, was at last conquered,[4] Hannah agreed to leave Elizabeth in Colesberg, where Mrs. J. Campbell had offered to take her on as a nurse for £25 a year.[5]

Prior to leaving for the Bechuana Circuit, Hannah drew half her salary to pay off her debt to Mr. Draper of Heugh's Store. Elizabeth gave her mother half of her own salary. Hannah still owed ±£50 in Colesberg but roughly calculated the value of her remaining stock at £150 'so that I see my way tolerable clear.'[6]

Having 'suffer'd most intensly lately' because of 'money troubles almost insurmountable,'[7] Hannah crossed the Orange River to begin the last phase of her known life.[8]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 15 July 1844.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] She took Richard and Sarah with her. Charlotte was on the point of marrying Joseph Gush of Salem. The wedding took place on 13 ~~October~~ August 1844. [Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy]. It is not clear what happened to William. By this time he had probably left Colesberg and was working as a tradesman in either Cradock or Grahamstown. [cf. Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 10 August 1846.]

CHAPTER FOUR

Hannah, the Pioneer on the Bechuana Missionary Circuit

At some point between July and October 1844, Hannah Dennison finally left 'dry Colesberg' and trekked across the plains of Transorangia, as she had so often done before. The plains then teemed with myriads of springbok, buffalo, wildebeest, hartebeest, zebras and the stately giraffe.[1] The occasional lion hinted at one of the dangers to be faced by Hannah as she galloped on horseback or trekked in the springless ox-wagons to attend a confinement. She passed through the centre of the circuit, Thaba 'Nchu, or Mount Black, so called because of its dark rocks and scanty vegetation, and thence travelled roughly fifty miles further in a north-easterly direction to Umpukane, where she was to take up her residence. Umpukane, approximately four hundred miles from Grahamstown and her children,[2] presented a pleasant view of a cluster of white-washed buildings consisting of the mission-house, chapel and outbuildings, set in a grassy plain surrounded by mountains. Fruit trees grew in abundance in the neatly cultivated gardens. Close by was a hill capped by rock beneath which was a cave strewn with skeletons, a grim reminder of the havoc wrought by the Mfecane in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Whitened bones still strewed the vicinity.[3]

Twenty-one years earlier, in 1825,[4] the first Wesleyan Mission Station among the Bechuana peoples had been established at Maquassa near the present Klerksdorp by the Rev. T.L. Hodgson and the Rev. Samuel Broadbent. They were forced to move after the mission station had been

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[1] See W.W. Collins, Free Statia, pp. 16-17.

[2] The Reminiscences of the Rev. John Edwards. p.77.

[3] J. Backhouse, A Narrative of a Visit to The Mauritius and South Africa. p.408.

[4] S.M. Molema, Chief Moroka, pp. 10 - 13.

attacked and devastated by the Batsung tribe under Moletsani.[1] On 22 July 1826, the missionaries and the Baralong tribe then moved further down the Vaal and established a station at Platberg. By July 1828 a further mission station had been established thirty miles from Platberg at Bootschuanap among the Griquas of Barend Barends.[2] Many natives as well as Griquas settled there and the numbers increased considerably as a result of commotions inland[3] stemming from the raids of the Matabele and Mantatees, as raiding bands were indiscriminately called. Limited land and the drought of 1830-32 forced the missionaries to move yet again, this time to the seemingly empty lands on the northern and north-western periphery of Basuto territory along the waters of the Caledon River. In November 1833 about 12,000 people were moved to the mission site in the area of land round Thaba 'Nchu.[4] On 7 December 1833 an agreement was drawn up and signed by Moshesh and a vassal chief Moseme of the Baromokhele tribe located at Thaba 'Nchu on the one hand, and the Wesleyans Archbell, Edwards and Jenkins on the other, whereby a tract of ground several hundred square miles in extent was granted to the missionaries in return for seven young oxen, one heifer, two sheep and one goat. Two further land grants were made to the Wesleyans first by Sikonyela of the Batlokua on 2 June 1834, and then by both Sikonyela and Moshesh on 17 July 1834.[5] Later these agreements were to be a source of friction:- the Wesleyans claimed it as evidence of 'absolute

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[1] I.S.J. Venter, 'Platberg (Motlhana-wa-Pitse), Die Eerste Wesleyaanse Sendingstasie in die Transgariep, 1826-1833.' Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library (Vol. 22, No. 3, March 1968).

[2] Reports of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society 1829. p.27.

[3] J.F. Midgley, The Orange River Sovereignty (1848-54). p.6.

[4] J. du Plessis, A History of Christian Missions in South Africa. p.180.

[5] The texts of all three land grants are published in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 (pp. 36-44) of W.G.A. Moore, Wesleyan Baralong Mission in Trans-orangia 1821-1884. The original documents are still extant at the Wesleyan Mission Station, Thaba 'Nchu. [W.G.A. Moore, op.cit. p.36]

sale',[1] while Moshesh claimed that he had merely granted the 'usum' of land that was 'the patrimony of the chief.' At approximately the same time as the Wesleyans, in 1833, the missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Society arrived to labour among the Basuto of Moshesh. The rival missionaries tended to act as champions of the tribes among whom they ministered and unwittingly accentuated tribal divisions when what was needed was a solid front to face the encroaching white colonists.[2] Commenting on this when European advance was, by 1845, posing a critical threat to tribal integrity, the Wesleyan missionary, Cameron, seemed to appreciate the danger though perhaps not the cause:-

> 'Their situation [Moroko and his chiefs] as well as that of the aborigines of the country is at the present moment very precarious. No single tribe is able to cope with the Boers and a combination of all the tribes is next to an impossibility. There is no man of mighty genious among them no Washington no Touissant - to combine successfully in the cause of independence. Of course anything of this kind is wholly foreign to the object of missionaries; from them the natives can expect no deliverance, except in the way of engaging the Divine being on their behalf...' [3]

The missionaries tried to settle and locate the restless, migrant peoples. The Baralong under their chief, Moroko, were placed at Thaba 'Nchu close to the Basuto of Moseme;[4] the Coranna under Jan Hanto, and after his death, Gert Taaibosch, at Mirametsu; a small party of Bastards under Carolus Baatje at Platberg, the new station being given the designation of the old.[5] The Griqua group was located at Lishuani. The chain of stations gradually proliferated in the lee of the Drakensberg for in addition to the immigrants, the Wesleyans also itinerated among the Basuto in the vicinity who gradually drifted down from their hiding places in the mountains. A further station was

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[1] These words actually appear in each of the three documents. See also J.S. Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p.92.

[2] J.S. Galbraith, op.cit., pp. 92-93 and p.95.

[3] The Journal of James Cameron 27 March 1842 - 14 August 1859. Cory Ms 15,006. (Methodist Archives) P.232.

[4] G.M. Theal, Basutoland Records, Vol. 2. p.XV.

[5] Ibid. p. XVI.

established at Imparani among the Batlokua of Sikonyela, along the head waters of the Caledon. By 31 August 1837, the Bechuana country was formed into a district under the chairmanship of the Rev. James Archbell.[1]

There was relative peace but as the tribes grew in numbers, augmented by the returning refugees of the Mfecane, territorial encroachments began to take place. In the meantime the traditional three-stage drift of the trekboere - hunter, periodic pastoralist and permanent settler - was taking place into the land between the Modder and Orange Rivers, claimed by the Griquas, and into the Caledon Valley, claimed by the Basuto. Soon their numbers were to be augmented by the militant Trekkers of the Great Trek out of the colony (1836-40). Tensions between tribes exploded into open warfare between the Corannas and the Batlokua. On 17 December 1841, the Rev. J. Cameron wrote from Platberg to the Rev. H. Dugmore: 'This land has been in a state of great confusion.' Sikonyela had attacked Umpukane, threatened to destroy Imperani and to murder mission families.

> 'Ever since then we have had Commando upon Commando, which hitherto have terminated in nothind good. They only serve to inflame and enfuriate the worst passions of the beligerents.' [2]

It was indeed a time 'surrounded with wars and rumours of wars.'[3]

By 1843 the missions of the Bechuana Circuit were reported to be placed 'in very critical circumstances by the proceedings of the Boers, who have extended themselves throughout the country from Natal.'[4] The Trekkers had a tradition of hostility towards missionaries. Shortly after Piet Retief had been appointed Commandant-General and

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[1] B.C.M.(r) p.1.

[2] U. Long, An Index to authors of unofficial, privately-owned manuscripts relating to the history of South Africa 1812 - 1920. p.79.

[3] Ibid. p.79.

[4] Reports of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society 1843. p.98.

Governor of the Trekkers, a meeting was held on the banks of the Vet River in June 1837.[1] Retief was sworn into office at the meeting and 'Nine Resolutions' were passed, the first of which stated that every member of the 'maatschappij' was required to take an oath formally disowning all English missionary societies. According to Agar-Hamilton,

> 'as the clause stands its language embraces English missionary Societies in general and can only be interpreted to imply a deadly enmity to all they represented.' [2]

The Wesleyan stand on the controversial Ncapai affair, which had taken place on 19 December 1840,[3] had served to inflame Boer opinion against missionaries for the attack on Ncapai, followed by Wesleyan representations on his behalf, was 'a final cause of the British re-occupation of Port Natal.'[4] As William Shaw, General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Mission in South-Eastern Africa, put it,

> '... many of the Boers are much embittered against the Wesleyan Missionaries, on account of Ncapai's affair ... we thought it our duty to report to the Colonial Government, at the request of the Native chiefs, the unprovoked attack made by the Boers upon Ncapai, when they carried off several thousand head of his cattle, killed many of his people, including not a few females who clung to the children, whom they ruthlessly carried off with them... I, who am not disposed to take gloomy views of things, see great reason to fear terrible commotions, in which the native tribes will perish unless our Home-Government will turn its attention to some comprehensive and practical scheme for establishing good government over the whole of Southern Africa to the 26th degree of South latitude...' [5]

John Beecham of the Wesleyan Mission House, London, sent a memorandum to the Colonial Secretary, Lord Stanley, citing alleged

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[1] E. Walker, The Great Trek. p.136.

[2] J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers 1838-1858 p.19.

[3] The Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of South Africa, October 1960, Vol. III, No. 4. p. 121.

[4] J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton, op.cit., p.139.

[5] Reports of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society, 1843. pp. 161-2.

> 'outrageous proceedings of the disaffected Emigrant Boers', 'which show that those missions are threatened with destruction, and the persons of the Missionaries and their families are placed in jeopardy.' [1]

The Boer attack on Mcapai threatened his neighbour, the Pondo chief Faku,[2] which in turn threatened the eastern frontier with commotion. Natal was finally annexed to the Cape by Letters Patent on 31 May 1844.[3] The threat to Moshesh and the Griquas was met in a different way - in November and December of 1843, Napier, British governor at the Cape, concluded two treaties with Adam Kok and Moshesh respectively. These treaties were designed both to protect native lands against European encroachment and to regulate black/white relationships.[4] In the negotiation of these treaties, Dr. John Philip of the London Missionary Society, which worked in alliance with the Paris Evangelical Society, proved a useful intermediary for Napier in the absence of a British agent in Transorangia.[5] It was Philip who had suggested these treaties, which he regarded as imperative if the tribes were to maintain their integrity in the face of the emigrant Boers,[6] and Napier, faced with the difficult task of maintaining peace in the turbulent Transorangia country at minimum expense, proved receptive to the idea.[7] Of most immediate importance in the Kok Treaty was the clause whereby Kok engaged 'to preserve order in his

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[1] Ibid. p.165.

[2] D.C.L. Cragg, The Relations of the Amapondo and the Colonial Authorities (1830-1886) with Special Reference to the rôle of the Wesleyan Missionaries. p.68.

[3] W.P. Morrell, British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell. p.146.

[4] D.C.L. Cragg, op.cit. p.74.

[5] J.S. Galbraith, op.cit. p.85.

[6] Ibid. p.93.

[7] Ibid. p.85.

territory' and 'to restrain and punish any attempt to violate the peace of the frontier by any people living within his country.'[1] It was this question of jurisdiction which sparked Boer/Griqua tension into open warfare in April 1845, which 'sputtered' on and provoked British intervention at the battle of Swartkopjes on 30 April 1845. It was a small but significant battle for it marked the first instance of armed British intervention across the Orange River. Tension had meanwhile been aggravated by what Walker has called the Second Great Trek out of Natal back into Transorangia, which had started in 1842. It was prompted first by rumours that Britain was about to annex Natal, and given impetus by the formal annexation in 1844.

Thus the Bechuana Circuit was caught in the pincers of Boer disaffection. As early as 8 March 1845, G.H. Meijer, landdrost of the Boers at Winburg had issued a letter to 'de Eerwaarde Heeren Missionarissen van die Volkstamme van die Opperhooften Mosoes, Hagaanmie, Morocka en anderen', stating that because the Philippolis Griquas had adopted an aggressive attitude towards the Boers and had openly claimed that they had all the other tribes of Transorangia in alliance with them, the missionaries were requested to warn the tribes to which they ministered that hunting by any armed groups was forbidden until the danger of war had passed.[2] Cameron's Journal shows that letters were written by Adam Kok to Moroko, Peter Davids and other chiefs, requesting help against the Boers, but in Cameron's opinion only Peter Davids, captain of Lishuani, was likely to join the fray because

> 'he considers himself and his people as constituting a branch of the Griqua nation, and therefore bound to render all possible assistance in this emergency.'[3]

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[1] J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937. p.53.

[2] The Journal of James Cameron. p.221.

[3] Ibid. p.249.

He quoted Davids as saying 'The great house of the Griqua Nation is in flames We must help to extinguish them.'[1]

The Napier treaty with Kok was followed by the Maitland treaty of 1846,[2] which attempted to solve the land problem of the Griquas by division of their territory into alienable and inalienable land - in the latter territory only missionaries and traders could occupy land. There was inadequate machinery to enforce Kok's treaty and by the time Sir Harry Smith finally annexed Transorangia in 1848, there was 'confusion worse confounded.'

Such was the troubled environment in which Hannah lived and moved. In his Journal for April 1845, James Cameron remarked,

> 'travelling in a wagon or on horseback is just now unsafe. The Boers have expressed their determination to prevent all intercourse with the Colony.' [3]

Notwithstanding this, Hannah visited Colesberg for the purpose of fetching Elizabeth,

> 'I wanted to visit coles berg but did not know by what means yet the lord found me a waggon and a way and kept me safe amidst all the disturbances' [4]

Yet little of these tensions is reflected in the letters. Two domestic crises and the perennial worry over debt overshadowed all. Moreover Hannah's business, which involved constantly being on the move, gave her little time to reflect on the troubled environment in which she lived. As district midwife of the Bechuana Circuit, Hannah was a busy woman. Her first confinement was that of Mrs. J. Hartley, wife of the assistant missionary at Imperani.[5]

> 'Mrs J Hartley was taken sudenly and sent her horse for me at sundown to go a Journey of 4 hours hard riding off I set and wen(t) Just the half when the horse thought it was time to give over and made for

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[1] Ibid. p.249.

[2] C.H.B.E. Vol. VIII. p.341.

[3] 'The Journal of James Cameron, p.231.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

[5] The Journal of James Cameron, p.215.

> a house my not knowing where the house was and triing to keep his head to the road the (horse) got master and throw me down I went and hurt my back very much got a black eye and hurt my hand and in fact got a regluer tumble.[1]

This incident reflected the strenous life to which Hannah, now a woman of fifty-three, was subjected. Tumble notwithstanding, she managed to pick herself up and found her way to the nearby farmhouse of Mr. Prins where she had to go to bed. The next day she found Mrs. Hartley in a bad way.

> 'Mrs H has had a serous bout of it this time have lost her milk it never come and for two days after I come there was very little hope of her but glory to god she is doing well.'[2]

Hardly had Hannah herself recovered when she 'must prepare for Buffels flay.'[3] Sometimes Hannah had to cope with two confinements at once.

> 'I visited Mr and Mrs Bingham she expects in June first as Mrs Cameron[4] what she will do I know not I have invited her to my house and that is awkward at this time still I cannot see her suffer.'[5]

Hannah was prepared to help Mrs. Bingham even though George Bingham's resignation from the office of Wesleyan minister,[6] no longer entitled his wife to the services of the district midwife. On occasion Sarah accompanied her mother,

> 'we are on the eve of leaving home for Mr Charles Robbinson his lady being in want of my services sarah goes with me she seems quite pleased with her reception she meets in every place we are indeed among kind people.'[7]

Life 'over the river' was cheap and offered Hannah good prospects of clearing her debts, as she remarked to Charlotte, 'o my child over the River is the place to live we can live for half what we can on this

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 4 November 1844.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] The Rev. James and Mrs. Cameron lived at Thaba 'Nchu.

[5] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

[6] B.C.M.(d) p.91. See also supra Chapter 3, p.63.

[7] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

side.'[1] The Newlanders and Griquas grew large quantities of wheat which made bread cheap.[2] Hannah kept her own fowls,[3] and with Sarah's help made butter when milk was available from the tribes in the vicinity of the station.[4] The use of groceries was watched with a jealous eye for fresh supplies were not always easily available.[5] By March 1845, Hannah could report some progress in clearing her debts,

> 'I have cleared all but £11 only to Mury an I indepted the old sum with interst and the 11 Pounds is to Hugh all the rest is paid and if I had the will I could carry away all coles Berg so to speak so kind and so willing to trust me but this is not my intention I must begin to pay others now Scanlen comes next and then the rest oh for the time when I shall be free to face all.' [6]

Hannah's debts must have been larger than she was prepared to indicate, for Sarah informed Charles that 'every [penny] is demanded for some dept or other however We are getting out by degrees We have paid off nearly two hundred pounds but there is still more than a hundred pond to pay yet'[7]

Hannah still looked for opportunities of making money by private trading in addition to her midwifery. When she visited the colony she usually returned with articles to sell, particularly for the 'caffre trade.' When Hannah passed through Thaba 'Nchu on her return from a visit to Colesberg, James Cameron made the following entry in his Journal on 4 April 1845:

> 'This has been a day of bustle. The Baralong have been flocking round Mrs Dennison's wagon to make purchases of the goods she has brot (sic) from the Colony.' [8]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 2 March 1845.

[2] Reports of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society 1843. p.166.

[3] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 6 October 1845.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Mrs. J.G. Benson, 'An Account of Early Methodist Missions in South Africa' n.d. Cory Ms 15, 175 (Methodist Archives).

[6] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 2 March 1845.

[7] Sarah Dennison to Charles, Ratabani, 5 April 1846.

[8] The Journal of James Cameron. p.225.

It was a source of regret to Hannah that she had no wagon of her own to extend these activities - 'if I had a wagon it would not take me long to clear [my debts] as it is I must wait with patience.'[1] When making one of her perennial pleas to her children to join her, Hannah wrote to Charlotte's husband, Joseph Gush,

> 'if you would come here it would do you good there is a new chappell to be built at Thaba Nchu[2] and work in abundance you could live with me untill you saw how it would answer and if you could bring up a load of good(s) such as suga tea rice tobacco (variety) [of] ready made shrits of the comonst kind Hand (tools) ... brass wire beads Picks it would pay a hundred small basons or more you would clear all your expences.'[3]

Probably at Hannah's instigation, George Bingham wrote a further letter to Joseph pointing out good opportunities for a carpenter and a trader on the circuit.[4]

In May 1845, Hannah moved her residence from Umpukane to Ratabani. The house she had lived in at Umpukane 'is not finished yet and not worth the expence to finish it.'[5] She wrote a letter to James Cameron, chairman of the Bechuana District, complaining that the house was not fit to live in,[6] and sought permission to live in the vacant house formerly occupied by the catechist, Mr. Sephton, at Ratabani.[7] Ratabani had been established as a circuit station about April 1840 to minister to the restless Coranna tribes.[8] But by December 1845, the Coranna had moved away from the station. The catechist and native teacher were withdrawn and the vacant catechist's house was

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1 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 4 November 1844.

2 B.C.M.(r) p. 104.

3 Hannah Dennison to Joseph Gush, Ratabani, 4 August 1845.

4 G. Bingham to J. Gush, Ratabani, 4 August 1845.

5 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

6 The Journal of James Cameron. p.241.

7 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

8 B.C.M.(s) p.243.

> 'appropriated to the District Midwife and thus the expense of a new house which would otherwise have been indispensable has been saved.'[1]

The move may well have been a hazardous one as this entry in Cameron's Journal seems to imply :

> 'sent off my waggon to Umpukani for the purpose of removing the District Midwife to Ratabani, where she is in future to reside. I had some difficulty in obtaining a driver and leader; and those whom I ultimately succeeded in having, not knowing the oxen, spanned them in wrong, which nearly occasioned the overthrowing of the wagon, and burst one of the rings. I hope no further accident would occur.'[2]

Ratabani remained Hannah's base for the rest of her known life and her move thither is important from the point of view that with the disappearance of Ratabani from the map, so all further traces of Hannah after 1847 also passed into oblivion.

Indicative of Hannah's busy life and perhaps also of the troubled times in which she lived, only ten letters written by her from the Bechuana Circuit, survive for the three-year period of her residence there. The letters revolve mainly round two crises in her life : the reappearance of the 'villian' in Elizabeth and the lingering illness and final death of her son, Charles.

Rather against her will, Hannah had left Elizabeth in Colesberg, where she had two promising suitors, one of whom was Charles Hutton, which offered her prospects of 'being settled' in life.[3] The chances of finding Elizabeth a husband on the Bechuana circuit were dim indeed. But Elizabeth wrote to her mother expressing her wish to re-join her. Hannah's commitments on the circuit prevented her from immediately complying with this request :

> 'as soon as I return I will get leave to go to fetch her this is my intention if the lord spares me but no leave can I get until I return from Mrs Shepstone wich may be febury [1845].'[4]

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[1] B.C.M.(r) p.114.

[2] The Journal of James Cameron. p.225.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 4 November 1844.

[4] Ibid.

By March, Hannah had succeeded in obtaining leave to visit Colesberg but she returned thence without Elizabeth who stayed on until after Mrs. Campbell's confinement in June. Although Hannah was anxious, she thought 'it best she should remain with them as her chance of getting setled would be greater than here.'[1] By August 1845, signs of the re-appearance of the 'villan' were becoming apparent. Elizabeth had written a letter to Sarah which caused Hannah concern, 'the stile of her writing quite alarmed me I began to fear and requested leave to go to Colesberg.'[2] But Hannah's attempts to get Elizabeth were frustrated by various circumstances, among them the difficulty of procuring a wagon and the torrential rains which cut the Bechuana Circuit off from the Colony. Eventually Mr. Allison, brother of the missionary, James Allison, managed to reach Colesberg. It was to him that Hannah had entrusted the task of fetching her daughter. He arrived only to find that Elizabeth had gone. It seems as though Elizabeth had run off with a man, for Sarah wrote to Charlotte,

> 'she has taken a step wich I fear has sealed her doom the agonizing thought that she has become a must I say a kept mistress alas there is no other term for it this is bad enough but I dread the consequences she may turn out worse than that.' [3]

Hannah's heart was broken.[4] Not only was Elizabeth one step away from being a harlot, perhaps even worse,

> 'she has ... had 2 offers of honorable mariage but she chuses to lead that sort of life in preference this is not at all she actually accepted one of them and left the man at CB with the impression that she would mary him on her return.' [5]

Moreover, Elizabeth's 'flighty moment' reflected on her virtuous daughter, Sarah.[6] At least for a while Elizabeth seems to have made

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 February 1846.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

a final break with her family. As Sarah informed Charlotte,

> 'both me and mother wrote to her She answered them but her letters to plainly show the depressed state of her mind She says in one part of her letter to me that she considers herself an ill used person and she is determind not to have any thing to do With her family and she begs them to have nothing more to do with her as she is determined not to change the course of her conduct.'[1]

Elizabeth's behaviour passed beyond Hannah's comprehension.

> 'it is a serious thing to have a child prefer such a course of living and to chose a path s[t]rewd with thorns before a virtuous life seem so strange to me that I cannot fathom it.'[2]

Hannah's deep anxiety was apparent in this comment to Charlotte, 'she has alla most turned my Brains.'[3]

To add to Hannah's grief, her son, Charles, was ill and far from a mother's care. Hannah tried to persuade him to join her, but he, too, was in debt,[4] and hence was forced to stay in Grahamstown. Ailing and in debt, he was also subjected to 'Miss Mags inconstancy' (probably Margaret Gush) and Sarah, probably echoing her mother, feared that 'Elizabeths base conduct will be the finishing stroke.'[5] Ever resourceful, Hannah told her son, a tailor by trade,[6]

> 'I am sure Needles and thread will not bring you out no my son If the lord spares me to see you again unless you will have entered into a Matrimonial engagement I think I will be able to shew you a better plan to pay and yet your living ... you are aware your health is bad to continue your trade is in effect to through away your life.'[7]

Though Charles was ill, Hannah was prepared to face the possibility that he might die :

> 'o my son ... I hope (sickness) does not take you unprepard for tho it pains me to write to you of death and Judgment

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1 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 18 April 1846.

2 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 2 May 1846.

3 Ibid.

4 Sarah Dennison to Charles, Ratabani, 5 April 1846.

5 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 February 1846.

6 Charles Dennison to Charlotte, Grahamstown, 5 June 1844, and G.T.J., 14 April 1842, p.1, column 1.

7 Hannah Dennison to Charles, Ratabani, 5 April 1846.

> I cannot as your Mother do otherwise we know we must die and after death the Judgement then lett us be wise having our lamps trimed and ready that whensoever the bridegroom cometh we come in with that blessed Plaudit well done good and faithful one.'[1]

In March 1846, the Seventh Caffre War erupted on the Eastern frontier. Rumours of the war ran through the Bechuana Circuit. An anguished Hannah wrote to Charlotte,

> 'O my Dear this is a scourge those outbreakings of the caffers continualy I hope you and youre are safe if this should reach you do pray lett me hear as soon as you can how matters stand with you and yours my dear children I am very uneasy still I must bear it patiantly as I have no other resorce I pray continualy for your (safety) it would give me great pleasure to see you all at this moment and Henry Charles I am very anxious about him his health at this period without a Mothers care and perhaps a sisters greives me continualy I know you would be kind to him but how you may be situated in those distressing times.'[2]

Hannah's concern for her children, endangered by war, is clearly evident, too, in Sarah's letter to Charlotte, written in September [1846].

> 'O Charlotte I trust mother Will have streath to bear this heavy trial though I fear she will sink under it you say in your letter mother trusted herself last War you must remember mother Was much stronger then than she is now this War is far more dangerous than the last a going of 400 miles is no trifle in War time though if We possibly could come down We Would but I do not think We Will be able to come down We Will not be able [to] get people if we even got a Wagon and oxen.'[3]

Drought and the dislocation caused by a frontier war not only cut Hannah off from her children but also meant that food was in short supply. In September 1846 Hannah returned from a confinement to

> 'a empty home there not being a bit of coffee or sugar or tea nor any thing in the house nor in the district so that I was obliged to go to pieter mariets Berg for supplyes and a sory Janury I had of it.'[4]

Corn, too, was scarce.

> 'my time as I informed you in a former letter has been taken up entirly this year so much so that I have not been able to get my suply of corn it being scarce this year I have had it brought in abundance to my door so that I have had to refuse on former occasions and now I want it thus it is in this world of care.'[5]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 2 May 1846.

[3] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, n.p. September [1846].

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 4 April 1847.

[5] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 4 April 1847.

For Hannah, the usual solution was for her children to join her,

> 'I do not know how you may be in those fearfull time still I think if you were to leave albany untill things were settled would it not be better here is work and money ways of getting a living with any industry person might apply to advantage.' [1]

Hannah's commitments on the Circuit and the drought-stricken oxen cut her off from Charles who had died by January 1847.[2] His death was expected yet it took Hannah by surprise, as she wrote to Charlotte,

> 'I cannot tell you my feeling on hearing of his death tho expected and at the same time So fast here that to go down was impossiable if there was no other hindrance the Beast were to poor to travel and in may last I was sent for to Mrs Giddy did not reach home until the end of July in august I was at bethulie attended 3 ~~months~~ woman there and did not get home untill september.' [3]

Hannah knew, too, if not from her children, then from the Graham's Town Journal, [4] that George was fighting in the war. Her son-in-law, Joseph Gush, had also volunteered.[5] She had no news of William and Elizabeth - 'do lett me know if you have heard of your unfortunate sister and if you know any thing of William.'[6] To add to her anxiety, her son, Richard, who was with her, was 'ill with fits.'[7]

Far more numerous than Hannah's letters were those written by her daughter, Sarah. Sarah was sixteen years old when Hannah first joined the Bechuana Circuit. At Colesberg Sarah had been sickly and ailing.[8] The change did her health good, and in a letter to Charlotte she referred to herself as a 'tall healthy spirited unyielding creature.'[9]

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1 Ibid.

2 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 18 January 1847.

3 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 4 April 1847.

4 G.T.J., 6 June 1846, p.2, column 5.

5 Joseph Gush to Charlotte, Buffalo River, 4 April 1847.

6 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 4 April 1847.

7 Ibid.

8 Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 June 1844.

9 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 18 April 1846.

Yet it was a lonely life for a young girl cut off from her contemporaries and all but one of her brothers and sisters, in a country sparsely settled with Europeans. Her letters show how deeply the tragedies of Elizabeth and Charles affected her[1] and also reflect her loneliness, for her letters abound in gossip over minutiae, the magnification of trivial incidents into major grievances,[2] and the elaborate descriptions of the few dramatic incidents that served to brighten an otherwise dull existence, such as the 'sad affair Reilys' and the suicide of old man Garner.[3] Sarah's principal source of news about the war and frontier affairs was the Graham's Town Journal[4] and some of her fiery comments, reflect, perhaps, the prejudices of that newspaper.

> 'I fear the Colony Will be ruined unless they act very decisively with the kaffers they are from all accounts murdering and mutilating all the English they meet with O Charlotte When Will the British Government come to their senses can they expect the Colonists to see their friends and relations thus murdered and bear it quietly if they do I think they Will be mistaken I fear unless they put a stop to this War properly the Colony will be Completely destroid what a miserable condition the Colony must be in.'[5]

Anxiety was aggravated by rumour and the Bechuana Circuit itself was threatened with the disruption of war.

> 'We have heard but We dont know Wether it is true that Panda the Zulu Chief is threatening to make war with the British if they dont help him he complains of his people runing away I suppose he expect them to go and search for his runaways pretty employment for English soldiers if it should be true I dont know What Will become of the Colony in fact the Whole Country it is realy dreadful War I hope it may end favourably for at present it Wears a very serious aspect there is a report flying about that moshes

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1 cf., e.g., Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 18 January 1847.

2 cf., e.g., Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Umpukane, 12 April 1845.

3 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 25 August 1845.

4 cf. Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 July 1846.

5 Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 10 August 1846
cf., e.g., 'Summary for the Week', G.T.J., 14 July 1846, p.4, column 3.

> has got the sword stick under him head chief in that case I suspect Moroko and moshes Will not be at peace long[1] Hope it is not true for it will be a very unpleasant concern.'[2]

On 25 July 1847, Hannah Dennison wrote her last extant letter from Ratabani to Charlotte. To Hannah's relief, Elizabeth seemed at last, to use the conventional phrase, to have settled down. - 'no words can describe my thankfulnes that she sees her error at last.'[3] Hannah was forgiving: 'if she will resolve to lead a new life she knows she has a mother who will recive her and pardon her,'[4] By this time Hannah was old and tired. Her strenuous life had taken its toll.

> 'I find this kind of life to trying to me I feel I am no more young nor so supple as I was when I saw you last a great change has taken place in me.'[5]

The end seemed near,

> 'and tho I can by no means account for it the thought that I shall not be long here is continually with me not as a sorrowfull or painfull thought quite otherwise I feel a calm reliance on the lord and feel all will be well.'[6]

But she was still in debt, 'one thing troubles me that is the state of my affairs if they were settled then I could rejoice in my departure.'[7] For the first time Hannah seems prepared to sit back and let the lord take over without her strenuous efforts to help herself :

> 'it seems that these things will be done first oh lord I am in thy hand dispose of me as thou (think) fit thy will be done amen.'[8]

All she wanted now was to see her children once more. 'I have a great desire to see you all once more.'[9] If that was not possible there was

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[1] See Infra Appendix B, p. 225

[2] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, September 1846.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 25 July 1847.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

always a life hereafter

> 'I am at this moment very happy and pray that the lord will bless you all whether I see you or not we shall meet again and that is happyness then lett us so work as to obtain everlasting life amen.' [1]

The history of the Bechuana Circuit after this period is a tale of almost unmitigated disaster. Lack of finance and missionary manpower, drifting of peoples and almost perpetual war put the missions under severe strain and eventually destroyed all but Thaba 'Nchu.[2] It is not surprising, then, to find no further trace of Hannah Dennison after 1847. She probably died in 1850, for Richard Dennison, who had been with her on the Bechuana Circuit, appears to have been on his own during the period 1850-54. He wrote to Charlotte on 20 March 1854, 'it is almost strange that through so many dangers as I and many more have passed this last 4 years'[3] Although Hannah's end is not definitely known, thanks to Charlotte, who preserved many of the family letters, Hannah's letters survive as a perpetual memorial to a woman of great courage, tenacity and enterprise.

Evidence of what happened to Hannah's children after her death is at best fragmentary and is derived largely from an erratic sequence of letters ranging from 1854 through to 1901.

In terms of Hannah's sense of values and ambitions for her children, Charlotte was probably the most successful of her children. Her marriage to Joseph Gush was a long and happy one. She had eight children and eventually died on 14 April 1893. Joseph died fourteen years later on 2 April 1907.[4] George Dennison, Hannah's son, died in September 1861 of wounds he had sustained in the 8th Caffre War of 1850-3.[5] He

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1 Ibid.

2 J. du Plessis, op.cit. p.300. See also Minutes of the Bechuana and Northern Section of the Albany and Kaffraria District (October 1855 to January 1877) [Cory Ms 15,619 (Methodist Archives) pp. 63-64; 77-78; 139; 300-308; 613.]

3 Richard Dennison to Charlotte, Kamastone, 20 March 1854. Cory Ms 7452.

4 Tombstone inscriptions on the graves of Charlotte and Joseph Gush, Salem graveyard.

5 The Autobiography of Major C.G. Dennison.

left his wife, Mary, and six children. Shortly after September 1855, Sarah Dennison had married Edwin Norton and lived with him in Queenstown.[1] She appears to have had at least one child.[2] By 1859, Elizabeth was living with a man named Hall, 'quite a sober respectable man' in the 'Zwart Ruggins'.[3] Perhaps she had lived in sin with Hall, for twenty-one years later Richard Dennison wrote to Charlotte, 'you say Elizabeth is married do I understand by that she was a...'[4] Unfortunately the next page of the manuscript is missing so that the truth will, perhaps, never be known. William Dennison died of heart disease in April 1865 at Queenstown where he had been farming.[5] His marriage to a Dutch woman had been unhappy and provoked this exclamation from Richard Dennison:

> 'you whould say as I Do Day by Day may I be in my coffin before I marry a boers Daughter it is now past he is now free from the curses which he often heard from his wifes friends but his wife will find there are no more William Dennisons.'[6]

Henry Dennison, his wife, Mary,[7] and their children, were by 1880, living in the Transvaal for in a letter to Charlotte he records the losses he sustained as a result of the Transvaal War of Independence (1880-1881).[8] Richard Dennison lived a restless existence as a country

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1 Richard Dennison to Charlotte, Kemenstone, 30 September 1855 [Cory Ms 7452] and Sarah Norton to Charlotte, Queenstown, 1856 [Cory Ms 7436].

2 Sarah Norton to Charlotte, Queenstown, 28 March 1857. Cory Ms 7436.

3 George Dennison to Charlotte, Hard Hope, Bariaans River, 9 August 1859. Cory Ms 7453.

4 Richard Dennison to Charlotte, Doornhoek District, Heidelberg, 27 April 1880. Cory Ms 7458.

5 Richard to his 'dear sister', Hainning, Bariaan's River, 28 May 1865. Cory Ms 7452.

6 Richard Dennison to his 'brother and sister', Hainning, Bariaan's River, 1 May 1865. Cory Ms 7452.

7 Henry Dennison had married Mary Gardner on 21 January 1841. [Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy.]

8 Henry Dennison to Charlotte, Kroonstad, 31 January 1881. Cory Ms 7450.

storekeeper, first at Kamastone, then Harrismith, Frankfort and Heidelberg.[1] His only son, William, had died ±1874.[2] By 1879 his wife, too, had died. His loneliness was pathetic. He wistfully wrote to Charlotte, 'oh happy woman you have children and childrens children and I am alone.'[3]

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1 Richard Dennison to Charlotte, Kamastone, 20 March 1854 [Cory Ms 7452]; Richard Dennison to 'his sister', Harrismith, 5 December 1877 [Cory Ms 7452]; Richard Dennison to 'his sister', Frankfort, 29 May 1879 [Cory Ms 7452]; and Richard Dennison to Charlotte, Doornhoek District, Heidelberg, 27 April 1880 [Cory Ms 7458].

2 Richard Dennison to 'his sister', Harrismith, 5 December 1877. Cory Ms 7452.

3 Richard Dennison to 'his sister', Frankfort, 29 May 1879. Cory Ms 7452.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Ideas, Attitudes and Beliefs of Hannah Dennison

The Dutch historian, Renier, would refer to Hannah Dennison's letters as 'traces' of the past - events or several sequences of events, each of which, when they 'present themselves ... have behind them a whole array of events.'[1] Previous chapters of this thesis have shown how the letters provide material for the study of Hannah's life : they throw light on the trade as well as the turmoil of the frontier zones in which she lived. The letters illustrate the ways in which momentous events such as the Great Trek, and frontier wars reacted on the life and sentiments of one individual and her family. Fear of what might happen probably left deeper scars than the excitement of what did happen. Fear of possible invasion was endemic on the frontier. For instance, in May 1842, Ann, often alone with the absence of her wagoner husband, wrote to Charlotte from Salem,

> 'I have been in A dreadfull state of alarm since tuesday night I sleep tis true, but then I am scared with frightfull dreams: in my sleep I see the horrors of war to perfection; Battle, Murder, and Sudden death. However we have heard some very alarming reports nor am at all soothed by the contents of your letter and the news Mr Rs brings I do not believe we have been unnecessarily alarmed or are yet safe to tell the truth I heartily wish I could get to town. I am laughed at finely by my next neighbours, but they have no little children to look after, and their property tolerably secure inasmuch as they are not living under A thached roof and then there are 2 men living under that secure roof while I am here in a thatched house Defenceless'[2]

It is now suggested that the letters transcribed in the appendix are an interesting and rare piece of Victoriana. They have nothing to say of politics, little of class and virtually nothing of the major movements in history. What they reveal is the mind of an English working-class woman, who was thrust out on her own, into the frontier lands of South Africa, taking with her her principles and her prejudices, and remind us that part of the secret of Victorian strength was the

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[1] G.J. Renier, History Its Purpose and Method. (London 1961) pp.103-104.

[2] Ann Scanlen to Charlotte, Salem, 4 May 1842.

ability of evangelical society to thrust its values as living convictions, deep into the social strata.

Hannah's letters seem to indicate that she was a self-taught woman. The chances of a working class woman obtaining a formal education in the context of early nineteenth century Britain were slim, for the prevailing ideas dictated not only that women did not need education but also that it was not good for them.[1] The letters lack punctuation and capital letters are used in a rather haphazard way. Her language is simple and vivid and her vocabulary derived from words of contemporary currency with an infusion of words used in Methodist hymns and sermons. She probably learnt to write as her daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth, did, by practice and experience.[2] In a letter to Sarah, Hannah offered these words of encouragement, 'I am happy to think you have found courage to write you must often try and it will come easy.'[3]

Letter-writing was a well-established Victorian habit. It served to retain family ties once families had been scattered after growing up. For Hannah and her children, separated by distance and individual interests, letter-writing was essential. If her children were negligent in writing to her and informing her of family news, Hannah was quick to rebuke them and remind them of their duty to her as their mother. She complained to Charlotte,

> 'I have waited untill my patiance is tired and no letter can it be that forget you have a Mother or is it that you think her beneath your Notice not to write for so long a time.'[4]

When Hannah heard via strangers that her son-in-law, Charles Scanlen, was on the point of re-marrying, she told Charlotte, 'now My Dear girl

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[1] G. Kitson Clark, An Expanding Society - Britain 1830-1900. p. 89.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 17 June 1844.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Sarah, Colesberg, 26 June 1842.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 8 January 1838.

pray write to me the particulars why should strangers have to tell me news of the family.'[1]

As the family was the centre of Victorian life, so the family was the centre of Hannah's life and one of the motivating forces behind all her actions. Victorian society decreed 'the exaltation of family life and the feminine character.'[2] In terms of Victorian thinking the father was the unquestioned master of the house and the mother the centre of the home. Her whole life revolved round her family and family relationships were thought of both in terms of duty and of love. Filial obedience was taken for granted. As Janet Dunbar put it :

> 'A certain amount of dignity, formality and courtesy were essential to the accepted idea of home life; and arguments and disputes between parents and children had no part in their ordered existence.' [3]

Much of this pattern is reflected in Hannah's conception of family life. Paradoxically it was the desire to preserve and protect her family, threatened with insecurity by her husband's drinking habits, that prompted Hannah to leave George and scatter her children. This move, although it became permanent, was regarded by Hannah as a temporary expedient only. Throughout her life after 1834, she directed all her actions to re-uniting her family either through the hope of returning to Grahamstown once she was legally free of George and had sufficient money to set up a home of her own, or else by attempting to persuade her children to join her whether at Graaff-Reinet, or Colesberg, or on the Bechuana Circuit.

Hannah demanded and expected her children's respect, and sometimes when it appeared to be lacking, she blamed it on 'a bad father and a worse husband.'

> 'thanks to a bad father and a worse husband or my children would not have dared to treat me with disrespect true I cannot say of all no blessed and praised be his name some

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 6 December 1843.

[2] W. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind. p.341.

[3] J. Dunbar, The Early Victorian Woman. p.31.

> I have that loves and revere me as their Mother I would ask what have I done to you that you use me thus I am sure that wile you lived with me I allways etuded your happyness in preference to my own.'[1]

Hannah felt grieved when her children were negligent about writing to her, not only because, like most mothers, she liked to know what her children were doing, but also because it was a sign of disrespect to her way of thinking.[2] Her daughter, Elizabeth's, disobedience, affected Hannah deeply. Elizabeth's apparently loose behaviour in Grahamstown had worried Hannah so, that by 1842 she had made arrangements for her to come and live with her in Colesberg. Instead, Elizabeth chose to stay with Mrs. Roberts in Grahamstown. Her disobedience provoked this part angry, part anguished, exclamation in a letter to Charlotte,

> 'this has deranged all my plans for my comfort and here also how can it be possiable that she can act s[o] O my God is there no comfort left for me in this world has my children risen up against me is it not enough that I have had so much sorrow but they (must) ad to it by disobudience o elizabeth o elizabeth o elizabeth if you could see the heart you have wounded perhaps you might be sorry have mercy on her farther of mercys my overcharged heart can find no relief god of love keep me I wil try to compose myself to the care of the lord hoping that he will enable me to keep my reason that I do not go out of my mind.'[3]

In another letter to Charlotte, Hannah calculated Elizabeth's disobedience in cash terms, not because she was mercenary, but because money was the means to the end of re-uniting her family.

> 'if you come bring Elizabeth with you her not coming with Richard is at this time five pounds loss to me to say the least of it it is more but I wish to think it is small as I can that it may not grieve me more than it does.'[4]

In this same letter, Hannah, the loving mother overcomes Hannah, the stern,

> 'tell E not to be alarmed or afraid to meet my anger is soon over and now I wish very much for her and am quite

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 26 March 1838.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 8 January 1838.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 16 May 1842.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, May 1842.

> anxious for her to do her good it is not often that a Mother pleads in Vain with her own children and those that have been children of so many prayers.' [1]

Hannah's ideal was a family united by love. As she wrote to Ann, 'it gives me some comfort to think that the lord still binds us together in love.'[2] That Hannah frowned on disagreements within the family is apparent in her comment to Charlotte and is also reflected in Charlotte's fear of her mother's wrath:

> 'in your last you mention that all is not right between you and your Brother and you think me in passion of the Occurance ... we were a family that dwelt in love why my dear girl is it not so now you say you forgive then if so how is it you are not friends I am sure you cannot be happy if you speak not O(how can)you meet each other on earth and not speak do think but for a moment if you were both called to meet your God and not on friendly termes with each other how would you then feel let me entreat you to forgive one another as you hope to be forgiven.' [3]

Elizabeth's fall and 'fast' behaviour and the reactions it provoked in her family, throw interesting light on Hannah's conception of family relationships. Victorian thinking put a premium on chaste behaviour and the ideal Victorian maiden was 'innocent and inexperienced.'[4] Despite the shock that her daughter was the mother of an illegitimate child, Hannah took her and her baby under her wing, contrary to the Victorian prototype of stern parents sending the fallen daughter out into the cold. As long as Elizabeth was prepared to fight and conquer the 'villian', Hannah was prepared to forgive. What was expected of the young Victorian girl is evident in George Dennison's letter to his mother,

> 'E wants a little more civilising though she has been in the midst of civilization her[e] but has unfortunately been cast with the worst of barbarians however She is not too old to learn and I hope by your united example and precept she may be induced to put off that acquired roughness

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 26 June 1842.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 11 October 1838.

[4] Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians, p.264.

> for it is not natural and to adopt more of those emiable qualities which so much adorn the female character.' [1]

Yet Elizabeth continued in her flighty way, violating the Victorian ethic of purity.[2] Once a woman had rejected the accepted notions of sexual purity, she made herself an outcast, diminishing her opportunity of marrying suitably, and increasing the chance of having to fall on prostitution to support herself. That this might become the pattern of Elizabeth's life, was a constant source of worry to her mother and is captured in these words of Sarah to Charlotte,

> 'how soon are We called upon to feel the most inexpressible sorrow at the conduct of one whom I fear there is no hope of reclaiming oh Charlotte I cannot think what induced Elizabeth to act in such a shameful manner ... she has taken a step wich I fear has sealed her doom the agonising thought that she has become a must I say a kept mistress alas there is no other term for it this is bad enough but I dread the consequences she may turn out worse than that.' [3]

Elizabeth's behaviour not only shocked Hannah but put her in a dilemma. It reacted on the virtuous and modest Sarah.

> 'I (will) now tell you how I have been placed (by) her her flighty momen(t) caused sarah to be spoken about there was no keeping her on (it) Sarahs Modesty was quite a Joke for (her) and she never lett a opportunyte slip by when she could cause her to blush this made (me) very anxious to get out of Coles Berg ... her (conduct) has (shocked) her that the first day or 2 after we entered Coles B she would (not go out at all) I had allamost to force her out she seemd ashamed to show her face you know how Mrs Frush allaways talks.' [4]

Hannah still loved Elizabeth yet she had Sarah to think of,

> 'if I could go in search of her and get her I would be obliged to put sarah out for I could not by any means think of allowing her to communicate her poison to the other this would be to me a trial indeed as I know what the other is.' [5]

Elizabeth's behaviour was a disgrace to the Dennison family. As Sarah put it to Charlotte,

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[1] George Dennison to Hannah, Cradock, 6 March 1843.

[2] W. Houghton, op.cit., p.356.

[3] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 February 1846.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

[5] Ibid.

> 'our trials are perhaps comparitively small to what some have to go through but When I think seriously of the disgrace that is brought on our family through one unfortunate I cannot describe to you my feelings When I think that it Will be remembered against us for generations to come I feel Wretched poor girl What must be her situation at present.'[1]

Not only did Elizabeth bring disgrace through her improper behaviour, her disrespect to her mother was an added burden. To Charlotte, Hannah wrote,

> 'I might lay and die for all she cared such was the treatment I recived from her before had you seen a note she rote to Richard from fort Beufort you would have been surprise at the looseness of her sentmens it would have made you sick (to) read it her letter to me from CB plainly (showed) what she was the language was disrespectfull to te a degree.'[2]

That Hannah had very strong ideas as to what constituted proper and modest conduct, is clear from her comments to Charlotte about the merry widow of Graaff-Reinet. Not only did she have these views, she was prepared to make them known to the person concerned.

> 'she now no more keeps company with Married people it is such as Miss Somers and (luters) and is quite a laughing stock among them we are all exceedingly grieved but can do nothing to help her she will not attend (and) if you can let Mrs Heckly see this and ask that lady to write her a few lines on the impropyte of her conduct the poor children you would not know them they are so neglected she thinks of nothing but drink dress and courting and that with ways for no sensiable man will pay her any attention Mr Murry has spoken and Mrs Spiller myself and many others but all to no purpose O what can be done'[3]

Perhaps one of the most interesting of the attitudes revealed in the Dennison letters, is the attitude to marriage, which in many ways was typically Victorian. It was a widely held assumption that it was right and proper for every woman to marry and be maintained by a husband,[4] and the early Victorian view is epitomised in the statement of the author of a book on feminine perfection, published in 1840,

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[1] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, n.p. 10 August 1846.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[4] Constance Rover, The Punch Book of Women's Rights. p.18.

'A female's real existence only begins when she has a husband.'[1] Spinsterhood was regarded as an ignominious state and marriage as an effective preservative from want. Hannah herself regarded a husband as 'one that maintains his wife.'[2] and, as a corollary, his children. One of George's worst faults, in Hannah's view, was his failure to maintain his family after their parting.

> 'What has he done for [the] children since we parted and what has he done for me ... who has showed themselves a parent he or me you of course say more is expected from me why he is your father he has means what does he do with them does he in any measure contribute to the suport of his family.'[3]

It was the ambition of every Victorian mother to get her daughters suitably 'settled' in life, and marriage was seen by the parents rather in terms of a calculated bargain than in terms of a love-match. The best solution to the problem of Elizabeth was marriage, and despite the danger of the 'villian', Hannah left Elizabeth in Colesberg because suitable marriage offers were in the air. There are several interesting accounts of mothers' views for their daughters in the Dennison letters. Concerning the marriage of Emma Robinson to Sergeant Porter, Hannah wrote to Charlotte,

> 'Emma Robbinson gives this Morning her hand to sergeant Porter to the great grief of her Mother who would have her Marry (the) Bugler Just fancy the dashing girl ending with a (soldier) when (Darthworth) Elizabeth old Rue asked her for her [her] Mother said she had higher views for her this is the end of high views.'[4]

Old Mrs. Privitt of Colesberg was also disappointed in her hopes for her daughter, as Sarah told Charlotte,

> 'the old creature seems to be quite displeased with her daughters Marriage Isabella is married to Mr Padison he was on Collets farm for Two or three years and he now acts for the Collet as Contractor for the Troops directly we got in the old Ladys she began about bells marriage you know Mrs Dennison if she had married a steady man I should have said nothing but he is only a Clerk and those Clerks are nasty stuk up fellows their gentleman

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[1] quoted by J. Dunbar, op.cit. p.7.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 16 April 1838.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 2 March 1845.

> to day and to morrow their beggars and I told her she is not to have him but bell impudent thing She would have him and She said She had always been obedient and She had turned them off when they came to her and you Know Mrs Dennison she could have been married often to respectable young men in Graaffrienett but now she said She Saw the man she liked and She Would have him and there she sits with all my fine clothes wich I have given her and he has not bought her a new thing since She has been Married but she sayes he is a very good husband he has evening and morning prays an[d]only drinks one glass of wine to his dinner I should think the old woman might be very Well satisfied with all those good qualitys.'[1]

That Hannah also wished to exercise a choice of preference as to whom her daughters married, is apparent in this comment to Charlotte about Elizabeth's prospects,

> 'thus stands Matters but I have not told you that it is charles Hutton she had a offer from a very [nice] man Just out of england wich I would rather she had accepted.'[2]

Another aspect of the calculating approach to marriage can be seen in Sarah's letter to Charlotte,

> 'when Mr Hutton was paying his addresses to Elizabeth the old lady wished to perswade Mother [and] E to brake off her engagement with H should young Wimble make her an offer H had just obtained the Market masters Place this Mr W I mentioned I think is a very respectable steady person he is what is commonly called a good looking young man.'[3]

Marriage, too, was something of a race. After her engagement to Arthur Peterson, Miss Privitt sent a comforting message to Elizabeth Dennison,

> 'she sent word by Richard to E that she must not be alarmed she must wait a Little I daresay E thanked her for her message.'[4]

Convention dictated that a suitable interval should be observed after the death of a wife before the husband should be re-married. To Hannah's horror, after the death of her daughter, Ann, in July 1845, Charles Scanlen was, by December of that year, courting again.

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[1] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 15 July 1844.

[3] Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 6 October 1845.

[4] Ibid.

> 'several others say that Charles Scanlen is going to Mary Miss Gardner so soon of course he must please himself yet if he had turned his attention to your friend Miss Gush I should have regarded as it is if the lady in question was not so young it might do ... it must have been a great disapointment to you instead of a broavied brother wanting comfort you encounter a what shall I say I had almost said a gay fellow ... he most certainly loved his dear departed Ann and made her a good husband therefore his conduct seems the more strange.' [1]

Hannah was so incensed at Charles Scanlen's conduct, that a rather unpleasant rift developed between the two.[2]

While marriage admittedly had something of the flavour of a business transaction, yet Hannah expected her daughters to observe an honourable attitude to any prospective partners. For instance, she gently rebuked Charlotte for giving a young man undue encouragement and then rejecting him :

> 'I find by your letter that the young m(an) (was so) unfortunate as to displease you th(ough all of) his friends are sory for it his free and [easy ways are the] last to be considered for it is not (right that such) persons (should) marry but to one above [the heavenly father who] is the only person to be considered (as both) worthy and industress and (the giver) of (all good) consider my Dear girl what you (as a woman) have given him hope and if you (feed) that hope it may be serious to [your hope that you] may mary and get a good hus(band) (one day) you will never be able to (get rid of) the thoughts at the affection (you) have had for him and that alone may (bring) you happyness again my dear (girl I am) concerned what will a world (say) if Charlotte Dennison can treat a (man) in that manner so may I She is (bound to) consider (this) pray consider this may be (it is true) if he loves you he will be glad to see the smile again visit the face on his entrance.' [3]

This attitude is also clear in her comments to Charlotte on Elizabeth and her behaviour.

> 'now Just fancy if you can my disapoin[t]ment she has I have learnt had 2 offers of honorable mariage but she chuses to lead that sort of life in preference this is not all She actually accepted of one of them and left the man at CB with the impression that she would mary him on her return O Charlotte my heart is broken on her account.' [4]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 16 December 1843.

[2] See supra Ch. 3. p. 61.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, [1841]

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 17 February 1846.

One of the most popular of mid-Victorian books, which reflected the dominant social values of the time, was Samuel Smiles' Self-Help,[1] the essence of which can be summed up in the old proverb, 'Heaven helps those who help themselves.'[2] This provides perhaps a suitable description of Hannah's activities in Graaff-Reinet, Colesberg and on the Bechuana Circuit. Although Self-Help was published in 1859, the idea of self-help was current in the earlier part of nineteenth century England and the ideal was enshrined in the New Poor Law of 1834. Hannah epitomised at least three of the qualities deemed by Smiles to be essential to 'character' - energy, prudence and industry,[3] and a fourth quality, that of perserverance, can be added with emphasis. With these qualities Hannah strove to achieve success in life. For her this meant simply to re-unite her family in a comfortable home and also to equip her children with the bases for success in their future lives. For her daughters, the ideal was marriage, for her sons, a suitable trade. When Henry had completed his apprenticeship as a shoemaker, Hannah had this comment to make to Ann, 'hope he will do well and then he will not have to regret his having learnt a trade.'[4] That William was stupid, was a source of sorrow to his mother. As she wrote to Ann,

> 'I am Greved a[s] William has had no taste for learning and where he is he is not made to feel its want it is my opinion he will grow up quite a stupid boy and make a poor trades man if spared ... his want of learning is ... to me ... painful and it is of no use to talke to him as he fancys he is oblidging you to learn not considering that it is himself that must ultimitly feel the loss.'[5]

Moreover Hannah was always on the look-out for opportunities for her children, not merely because she wished them to be near her in their

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[1] J.F.C. Harrison, 'The Victorian Gospel of Success', Victorian Studies, Vol. I, No. 2, December 1957.

[2] ed. A. Briggs, Samuel Smiles, Self-Help. p.35.

[3] ed. A. Briggs, Samuel Smiles, Self-Help, Introduction, p.25.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 17 February 1839.

[5] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

work, but also that they might be successful. In her opinion, for instance, Colesberg offered an ideal opportunity for her son, Henry.[1] There the demand for shoes was great and with no other shoemaker there, he would be free of competition. It was probably Hannah, too, who persuaded G. Bingham to write from Ratabani to her son-in-law, Joseph Gush, telling him of the opportunities for both a carpenter and a trader on the Bechuana Circuit.[2]

The strongest strand making up the pattern of Hannah Dennison's beliefs was undoubtedly religious. Her religious beliefs infused her whole outlook on life and sustained her through years of hardship, almost unremitting toil and personal griefs, whether in the deaths of some of her children, or the degenerate behaviour of Elizabeth. To put it crudely, it was this, apart from her personal sterling qualities, that kept her at it, although little material success attended her efforts - hardly a letter that does not mention either her faith or trust in God. To understand some of the religious comments in her letters, it is necessary to examine the focal point of Methodist teaching current in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Central to the preaching of the early Evangelical movement in nineteenth century Britain, and in particular, the preaching of John Wesley, was the idea of salvation. Wesley's published sermons centred on the 'way to heaven.'[3] Saving faith, according to Methodism, brought the justification or pardon of God, and if a man was pardoned, he was 'loved and blessed by God as if he had never sinned.'[4] In other words, he was 'born again.' The quest for holiness followed justification. A Christian grew in grace, as by faith he conquered sin, defined by Wesley as 'the seeds of pride and vanity, of anger, lust and evil desire,' 'a heart bent to backsliding, or natural

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 30 December 1838.

[2] G. Bingham to Joseph Gush, Ratabani, 4 August 1845.

[3] R.E. Davies, Methodism, p.99.

[4] Ibid. p.102.

tendency to evil, a proneness to depart from God and cleave to the things of the earth.'[1] With the purging away of sin, man grew in love for God until 'God is the joy of his heart and the desire of his soul.' Hence he has attained 'perfect love.' This process was assisted by the 'means of grace' - chapels, class meetings etc. This explains the importance attached by Hannah to the need for a church at Colesberg[2] and why she regarded Mr. Wentworth, who established a Sunday school there, as 'a blessing to this place.'[3] It is interesting to note, too, that her pleas to her children to join her at Colesberg were, after 1841, supplemented with the reminder that Colesberg had at last acquired the 'means of grace.'[4]

The seeking for salvation was put by Henry Dennison, in 'enthusiastic' words, so typical of early Methodism, in a letter to Sarah,

> 'And tell me how you are Geting on in the way to heaven are you still on ful struck for Glory Do You Covet earnestly the Best Gifts O sister set Before You the Glorious prise of perfect Love and rest not till you rest in the rest that remaineth for the People of God on earth ... Doubtless you are frequently found by rapturous contemplation in sight of the New Jerusalem Whence you dwell with Holy Delight upon the Blisful thoughts when on sion thou shalt stand And all heavens host Adore their King I shall be found at thy right Hand. And free from pain thy Glory sings Glory Glory Be to God O let us live entirely for this.' [5]

Salvation moved through four recognised phases - conviction of sin, surrender, conversion, salvation.[6] With Hannah's flight from Grahamstown probably there came her conversion, and in many of her letters written thereafter, she affirms her complete surrendering to the will of God even when it seemed as though he had abandoned her -

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[1] Ibid. p.104.

[2] See Supra Chapter Three, pp. 51-52.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839.

[4] cf. Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 26 June 1842.

[5] Henry Dennison to Sarah, Sharon, 25 May 1837.

[6] G. Kitson Clark, op.cit., p.117.

> 'the lord has a end in view and he will accomplish it his will be done not mine he is able to save me here as any where and I am perswaded will Keep that I have commited to his charge and that I shall ultimatly praise him in that day O may we all be found at his right hand.'[1]

Although her life was difficult, Hannah's faith remained unshaken, probably because she was acutely aware that she had not always lived the life she ought to have lived :

> 'when I look back and consider the past I must Blush to own my ingratitude to the best of fathers and friend and had he dealt with me as my sins deserved I should have long since have been sent to that place when hope never cometh but mercy is his darling attribute o for grace to live more to his honour and glory than I have hitherto done.'[2]

Hannah was confident that, with her faith, she could weather any trials because

> 'the lord fits the Book for the binder and he has promised not to lay more on us than we are able to bear and in my weakness I found his strenth though it was with fear and trembling.'[3]

Life on earth, as George Dennison put it, was merely a 'probationary state.'[4] This idea is constantly re-iterated in Hannah's letters. When Mrs. Roberts was ill, Hannah reminded Charlotte

> 'my Dear this is another spur to us to remind us that this is not our home and if it [were] what a sory one what rest have we in this world of tears pains and griefs glory to God we have a building not made with hands but eternal and in the heavens there he stands our name is writen in his hands we can no longer doupt O my love help me to praise him for I am as one harp out of due season I bless and praise the name of the lord that I [have] no desire to remain here only to fulfill my duty wich I owe to my children yet I am aware that it is him and he alone that has taken care of them hitherto and to him I resign them.'[5]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 4 February 1839.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 September 1839.

[4] George Dennison jun. to Charlotte, Cradock, 5 August 1844.

[5] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 5 September 1840.

Hannah's failure to extricate herself from debt was to some extent mitigated by her faith. As she explained to Charlotte,

> 'I have sufferd most intensly latly but bless the lord as my day was so was my strength more did I find so much comfort in prayer at this time I can say of a truth god is a god of love and mercy O my Dear what should I do if I had not a god to go to in my Money troubles alamost insurmountable yet blessed be his Name with the day so is the strength and each one its comforts as well as its cares.'[1]

Hannah realised increasingly that her financial failure meant that the chances of re-uniting her family became ever remote. Hence she worked for eternal unity in the life hereafter. In other words, her children as well as herself must seek salvation. When Charles was ill, she reminded him 'that we are commanded to make every endeavour that lays in our power to make our calling and our election sure.'[2] After Charles' death, she wrote to Charlotte,

> 'I hope you are in the blessed engagement of Religion it is the best scource and indeed the only one calculated to make us happy here our trials in general are neither few nor small mine seems to encrease but blessed be god I have my comfort under them all Jesus is my hope he is my stay he enables me to trust though I cannot trace him at all times I know you have long loved him and served him your late trial in waiting on your dear Brother has I hope been blessed to you it has been a trial a task though (I) know your kindness would be such as to allamost wish it over again if you could have him near you blessed be god he is happy here is no happyness he now enters into the fullness of his lord we shall join him but he will not return to us nor do I wish it.'[3]

For Hannah, one of the most worrying things about Elizabeth's fall was that she was endangering her chances of salvation and eternal life.

In the early days of Wesley's school, Kingswood, near Bath, the boys were required to see a corpse as part of their education.[4] To see death was to respect life. This rather morbid interest in death was common in Victorian England and by no means limited to the

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 15 July 1844.

[2] Hannah Dennison to Charles, Ratabani, 5 April 1844.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 4 April 1847.

[4] The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley A.M. Vol.III, pp.420-424.

Methodists. Evangelicals of most sects regarded death as a process to eternity; after the good life, there came the godly death-bed, and nothing 'became him like the leaving of it.' As nurse and midwife, Hannah was literally aware that in the 'midst of life we are in death.' But her attitude was not that of the twentieth century professional, but that of an intensely interested and often deeply moved spectator. She witnessed many death-bed scenes and the minute detail with which some are described, shows this strange sort of curiosity concerning death. It was logical enough, for death was of crucial concern to salvation. It was essential that death be faced with due preparation. Hence Hannah wrote to the dying Charles,

> 'o my son ... I hope (sickness) does not take you unprepard for tho it paine me to write to you of death and Judgement yet I cannot as your Mother do otherwise we know we must die and after death the Judgment ... then lett us be wise having our lamps trimed and ready that whensoever the bridegroom cometh we may come in with that blessed Plaudit well done good and faithfull one.'[1]

Henry Dennison described his brother, George's, death-bed scene in September 1861, in these words,

> 'George was quite sensible ... he Spoke of His Death with Pleasure the last time I addressed him on the subject of his Prospect of Eternity I asked the question is Faith in Christ of any use to you now in the Hour of your Extremity though very weak he raised his arms and with a strong voice said I would not give up my Hope of salvation through Christ for Worlds.'[2]

When Mrs. Rawstorne lay ill and dying, Hannah never forgave herself for not telling her that she would probably die and hence should be prepared for death.

> 'death sat on her mouth still no one told her of it as to me I shall never forgive myself while I live I ought to have done it why did I not is a quistion that I can never answer should it please my maker to place me in such circumstances again I hope it will be discharged with greater faithfulness ... O Lord fit and prepare us for that Awful change that must sooner or later take place.'[3]

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Charles, Ratabani, 5 April 1846.

[2] Henry to his 'Dear Brother and Sister,' Grahamstown, 9 September 1861. Cory MS 7450.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 8 July 1839.

In Hannah's view it was a privilege to witness a death-bed scene, for to see someone dying in faith was both a source of temporal sorrow and enduring comfort. A hard life on earth, often short, would be rewarded with an eternal life of happiness. This is apparent in a letter written to Sarah after Ann Scanlen's death :

> 'your information though a Mournfull one was by me very much prised it seemd to me as if it was impossiable that my dear Ann could quit this vale of tears without mentiong me as I know tha[t] she loved me o my Dear you were highly privlged to be present in your dear sisters last illness and may the giver of every good grant that the advice there imparted may be bless[ed] to you in your life ever remember her pious walk and conversation ever keep her in your minds eye and so Folow her as She followed Christ her Dear redeemer with whom she is now set down in everlasting happyness.'[1]

The death scenes, described in Hannah Dennison's letters are not unlike those often described in Victorian novels which depicted death as the flight of a 'beautiful soul' to heaven with some sign of a heavenly vision and reunion with those who have departed to comfort those who remained.[2]

Calvanistic methodism, so popular, for instance, in parts of Wales, did not openly penetrate the South African mission field. The chapels in South Africa were in the full connexion in the days of Jabez Bunting. But the faith in God as omnipresent, and even concerned with such details as Hannah's bookkeeping debts,[3] gave to those who experienced that faith, a calm fatalism. Death was part of the flow or stream of life. When Mr. Taylor was dying, Hannah commented,

> 'this is sad work but in this and every other instance what can we say it is the lord and he knows what is best.'[4]

After Gideon de Villiers' wife's death, Hannah wrote,

> 'we can only say the lord gave and he taketh away and blessed be his Holy name in this and I have lost a friend

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Sarah, Colesberg, 7 October 1843.

[2] Houghton, op.cit. p.277.

[3] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 18 July 1844.

[4] Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 10 June 1844.

> but we must submit to his holy will knowing that while we know not now we shall know him after then let every murmur cease.' [1]

Life went on despite death. When Hannah's grandson, John, son of George, died in October 1842, Ann Scanlen sold a hat intended for him to Mrs. Townsend. 'Mrs Townsend has kindly taken little Jhon's hat charge her for it.'[2] Death, too, was followed by the usual Victorian rituals of mourning. As Ann wrote to Charlotte after John Dennison's death,

> 'now if you wish to put on a little mourning you know I have left at house full trimming for it.' [3]

Memeitoes of the dead were much valued. When William Dennison lay dying in April 1865, he asked his brother Richard to send 'a little of his hair'[4] to his sister. Richard Dennison enclosed the lock of hair in a letter dated 28 May 1865, and apologised that the lock was so small,

> 'I am sorry that I cannot send more it is just the half of the lot given me by Elizabeths[5] sister an old maid of 55 years of age who is so stingy that if she could skin a flea and sell the skin she whould do so.' [6]

The letters of Hannah Dennison take the reader to much of the bed-rock of Victorian civilisation in its plebeian forms. Sturdy individualism and great courage blended with a strong sense of community in church and family. But Hannah would not view herself as a specimen of a type, but as a lone and struggling figure standing erect on the then harsh landscape of South African life. She was a true pioneer whether as midwife, milliner or emous.[7] : whether at Greaff-Reinet,

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[1] Hannah Dennison to Ann, Colesberg, 19 August 1839.

[2] Ann Scanlen to Charlotte, Cradock, 27 October 1842.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Richard Dennison to his 'Dear Brother and Sister', Bariaan's River, 1 May 1865. Cory Ms 7452. cf. also ed. J. Murray, In Mid-Victorian Cape Town p.42.

[5] Presumably this refers to William Dennison's wife.

[6] Richard Dennison to his 'Dear Sister', Bariaan's River, 28 May 1865. Cory Ms 7452.

[7] Supra
See/Chapter 4, p. 74.

Colesberg or Ratabani. But wherever fate dogged her, or she dogged fate, her thoughts went back to Salem, where literally her family came to be centred, but which figuratively meant also peace.[1]

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[1] The Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. X, [New York 1925] p.650 gives the meaning of Salem as 'peaceful' or 'whole'.

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Nottinghamshire Settlers in the Cape of Good Hope. (reprint from the Record Series Vol. XXI of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire.)

GEORGE DENNISON = (born C.1784 at Arnold, Notts. died) C.18

ANN (born C.1813, died 18.7.1843)	GEORGE (born C.1814, died 15.9.1861)	HENRY (born C.1817, died)	CHARLOTTE (born 30.9.1819, died 14.4.1893)
= 5.8.1833	= -1837	= 27.1.1841	= 13.8.44
CHARLES SCANLEN (born C.1810, died 28.10.1871)	MARY WEBBER (born died)	MARY GARDNER (born died)	JOSEPH GUSH (born 4.3.1821, died 2.4.1907)
Children	Children	Children	Children
1. Thomas (born 1834, died 1912)	1. Emily	1. Sarah (born C.1844)	1. George Richard (born 2.8.18 died 23.3.1
2. Hannah (born 1838)	2. John (died	2. Dina (born C.March 1846, died 17.8.1860)	2. Margaret
	3. Charles George (born 21.11.1844)	3. Herbert Purcell	3. Joseph (born January 1850, died 2.7.1850)
	4. Daniel	4. Charles (born C.1849, died 2.2.1873)	4. Charlotte
	5. Lavinia	5. Lette	5. Letitia
	6. Mary Ann	6. Anny	6. Sarah
	7. a daughter	7. Henry	7. Gurney
			8. Priscilla (born 18.11.1863, died 8.6.1950)

NOTES: 1. = signifies married. The underlined date following, is the date of marriage.

2. The information about the Gush family has been obtained mainly from the Gush family tree in the Settlers Memorial Museum, Grahamstown.

GEORGE DENNISON = HANNAH ELIZABETH PUR
(born C.1784 at Arnold, Notts. died) C.1812 (born C.1791, County Limerick, Ireland. died C.1850)

C.1814, 1?.9.1861)

born died)

orge (born 21.11.1844)

HENRY (born C.1817, died)

= 27.1.1841

MARY GARDNER (born died)

Children

1. Sarah (born C.1844)
2. Dina (born C.March 1846, died 17.8.1860)
3. Herbert Purcell
4. Charles (born C.1849, died 2.2.1873)
5. Lette
6. Anny
7. Henry

CHARLOTTE (born 30.9.1819, died 14.4.1893)

= 13.8.44

JOSEPH GUSH (born 4.3.1821, died 2.4.1907)

Children

1. George Richard (born 2.8.1846 died 23.3.1896)
2. Margaret
3. Joseph (born January 1850, died 2.7.1850)
4. Charlotte
5. Letitia
6. Sarah
7. Gurney
8. Priscilla (born 18.11.1863, died 8.6.1950)

CHARLES (born between 1820-24, died C.January 1847)

O.S.P.

ELIZA =

s married. The underlined date following, is the date of marriage.

ation about the Gush family has been obtained mainly from the Gush family
e Settlers Memorial Museum, Grahamstown.

H E L I Z A B E T H P U R C E L L
791, County Limerick, Ireland.
850)

(born between 1820-24, died C.January 1847)
O.S.P.

ELIZABETH (born 14.12.1825, died)
=

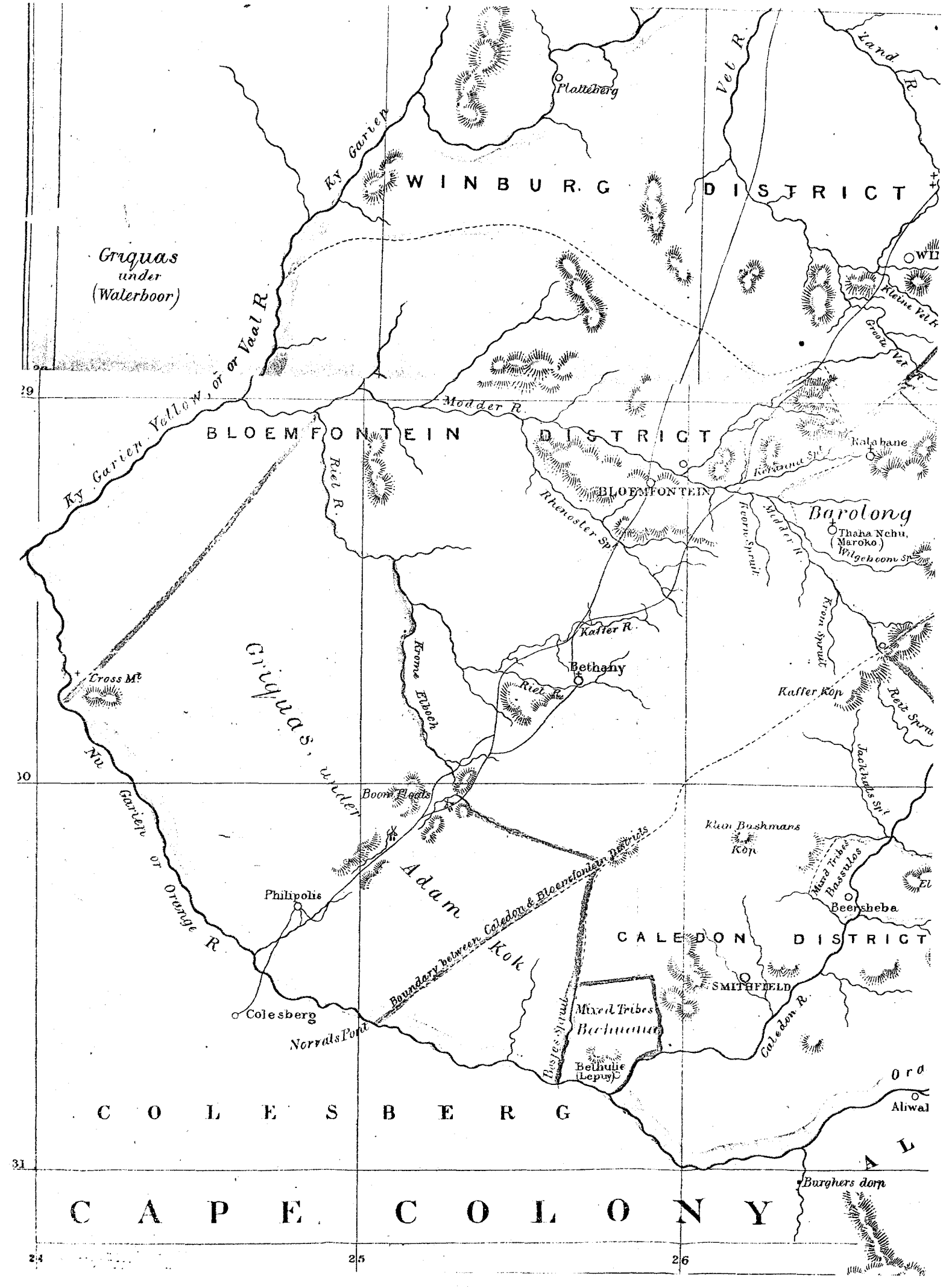
SARAH ANN (born 1.9.1828, died)
= C.1855
EDWIN NORTON

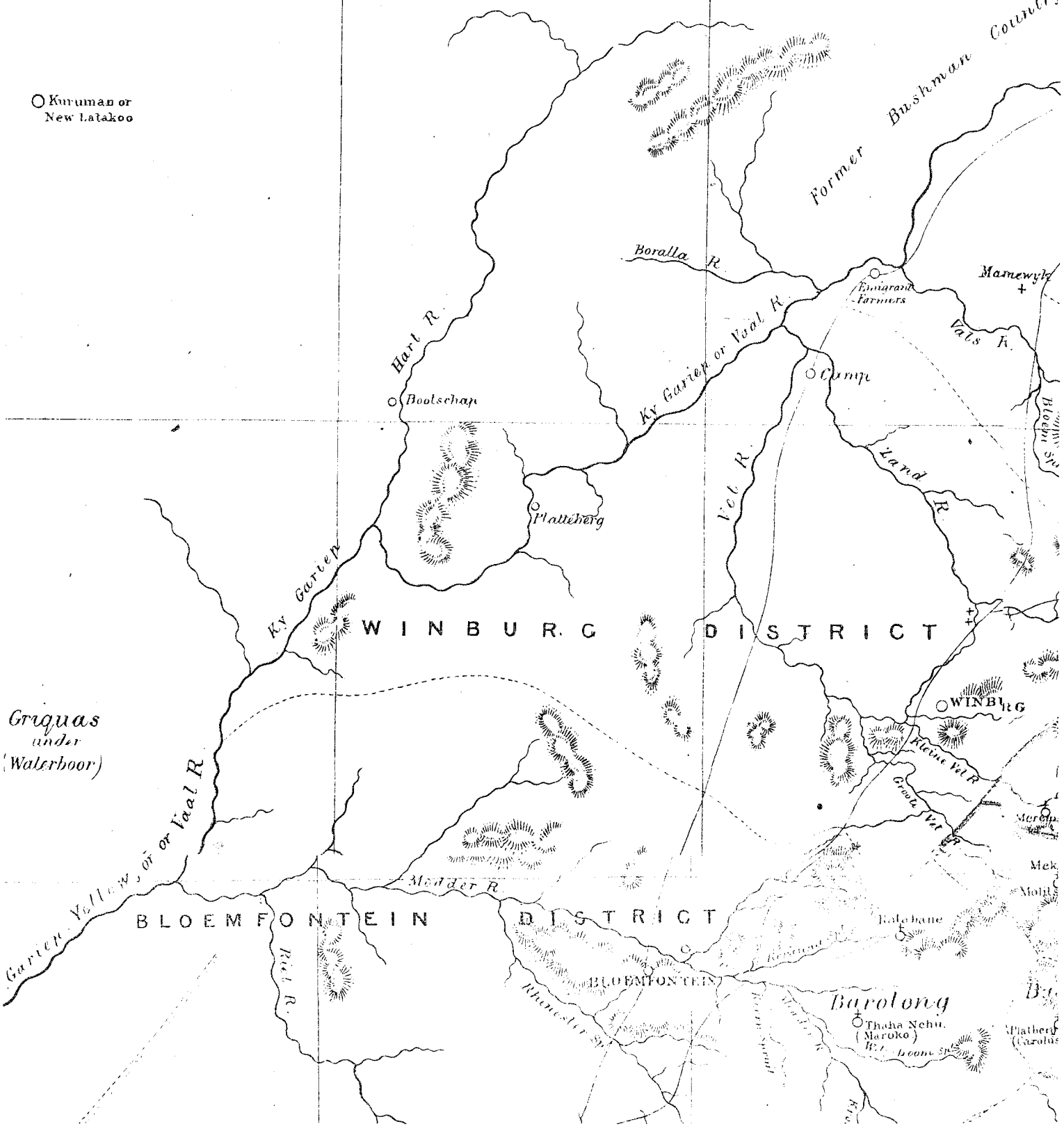
Children
1. a child (born C.1856)

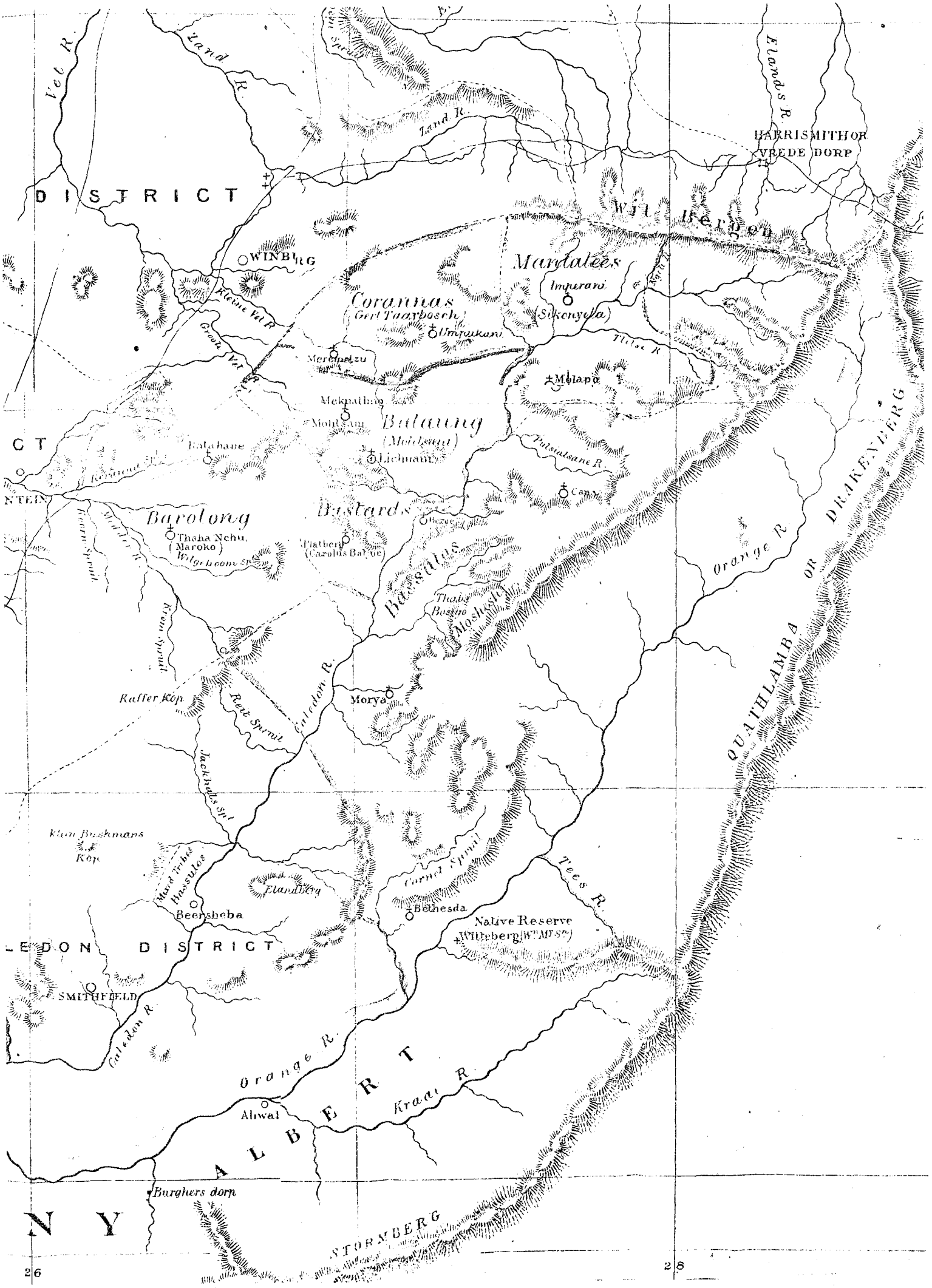
WILLIAM (born C.1829 died Apr.1865)
=
ELIZABETH

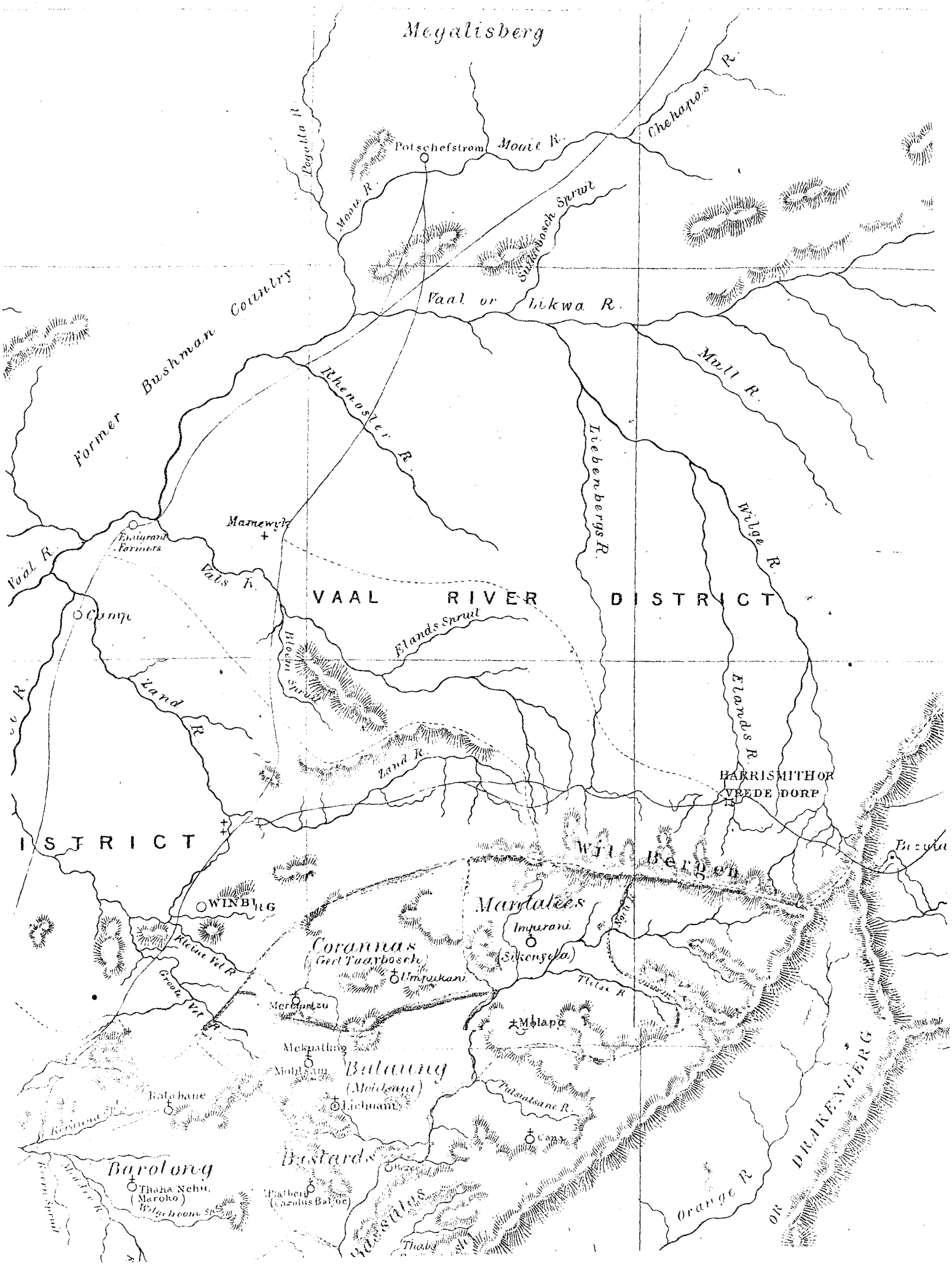
RICHARD SAMUEL (born 28.8.18 died
=

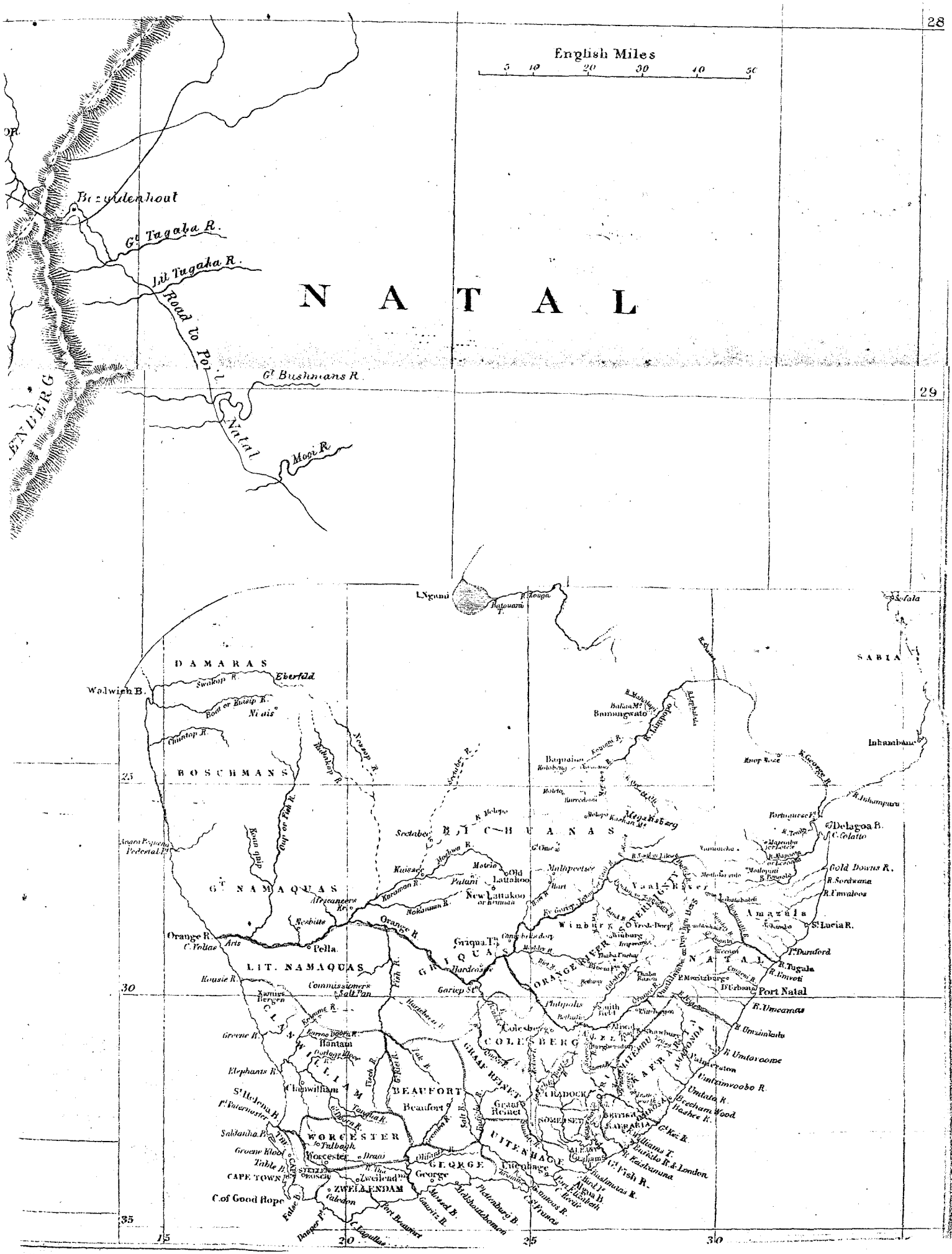
Children
1. William (died ±1874)


Platteberg
Vet R.
Land R.
Ky Garieb
WINBURG DISTRICT
Griquas under (Waterboor)
Ky Garieb Yellow or Vaal R.
Modder R.
BLOEMFONTEIN DISTRICT
Riet R.
Kalahane
Rhenoster Sp.
BLOEMFONTEIN
Barolong
Thaha Nchu, (Maroko)
Wilgeboom Sp.
Modder R.
Kaffer R.
Bethany
Riet R.
Kaffer Kop
Cross Mt.
Griquas under
Boom Plaats
Adam Kok
Philipolis
Na Garieb or Orange R.
Boundary between Caledon & Bloemfontein Districts
Klein Bushmans Kop
Mixed Tribes
Bassutos
Beersheba
CALEDON DISTRICT
SMITHFIELD
Caledon R.
Colesberg
Norvals Port
Mixed Tribes
Bechuanas
Bethulie (Depy)
COLESBERG
Aliwal
Burghers dorp
CAPE COLONY
29
30
31
24
25
26


Kuruman or
New Latakoo
Former Bushman Country
Borolla R.
Hart R.
Ky Gariep or Vaal R.
Bootschap
Platteberg
Ky Gariep
Griquas
under
(Waterboor)
Garieb, Yellow, or Vaal R.
WINBURG DISTRICT
BLOEMFONTEIN DISTRICT
Modder R.
Riet R.
Emigrant Farmers
Vals R.
Vet R.
Land R.
WINBURG
Kleine Vet R.
Groote Vet R.
Rhenoster R.
BLOEMFONTEIN
Barolong
Thaba Nchu
(Maroko)

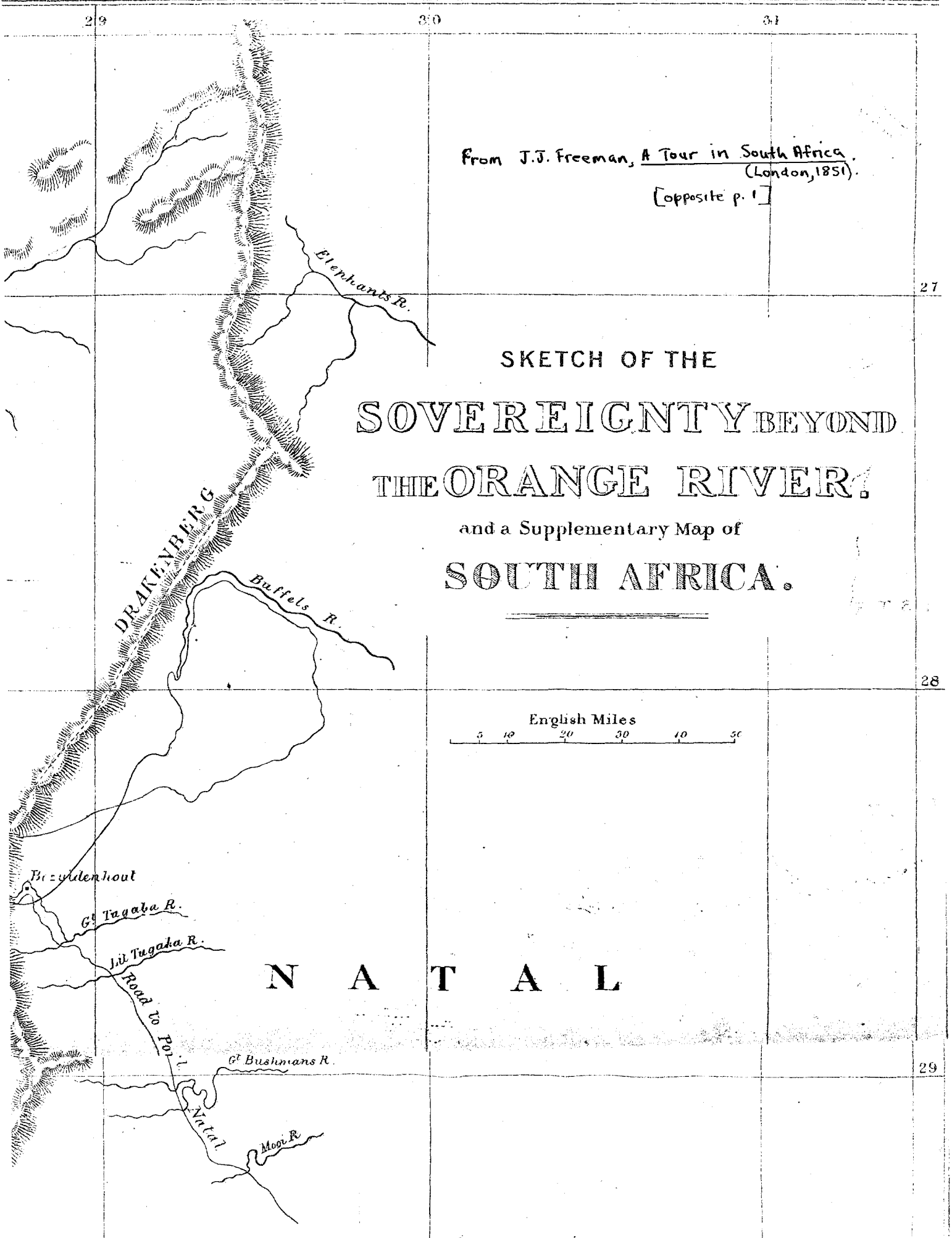

Vet R.
Zand R.
Zand R.
Vals R.
HARRISMITH OR VREDE DORP
DISTRICT
WINBURG
Kleine Vet R.
Groote Vet R.
Wittebergen
Mantatees
Imperani
(Sikonyela)
Coranas
(Gert Taaybosch)
Umpukani
Merephetzu
Tlotse R.
Molapo
Mekpathing
Mohlomi
Batlaping
(Moilwa)
Lichtenau
Batlabane
Pulsiatsane R.
Carr
Barolong
Thaba Nchu
(Maroko)
Wilgeboom Spruit
Bastards
Flatberg
(Carolus Baroe)
Basutus
Thaba Bosigo
Moshesh
Orange R.
DRAKENBERG OR QUATHLAMBA
Kaffer Kop
Retz Spruit
Caledon R.
Morya
Jackhals Spruit
Klein Buskmans Kop
Mixed Tribes
Bassutos
Elandsberg
Carmel Spruit
Tees R.
Beersheba
Bethesda
Native Reserve
Witteberg (W.M.S.)
SMITHFIELD
Caledon R.
Orange R.
ALBERT
Kraai R.
Aliwal
Burghers dorp
STORMBERG
NY


Megalisberg
Potschefstrom
Mooie R.
Chehanas R.
Loggha R.
Suikerbosch Sprut
Vaal or Likwa R.
Former Bushman Country
Rhenoster R.
Liebenbergs R.
Mull R.
Wilge R.
Emigrant Farmers
Vaal R.
Vals R.
VAAL RIVER DISTRICT
Flands Sprut
Zand R.
HARRISMITH OR VREDE DORP
WINBURG
Kleine Vet R.
Groote Vet R.
Coranna's (Gert Taarbosch)
Umpukani
Mandatees
Impuani
(Sikonyela)
Wit Bergen
Platberg
Mekuathing
Moletsane
Batlaping
Molapo
Batlaping
Lichuani
Pulsatsane R.
Barolong
Thaba Nchu (Maroko)
Wilgebooms Spruit
Bastards
Philippolis
Orange R.
DRAKENSBERG


English Miles
5 10 20 30 40 50
NATAL
Boschuidenhout
Gt Tugaba R.
Lit Tugaba R.
Road to Port
Gt Bushmans R.
Natal
Mooi R.
ENTBERG
28
29
25
30
35
15
20
25
30
Ungoni
Batouani
Tougo
DAMARAS
Walwich B.
Swakop R.
Eberfeld
Boat or Kuisip R.
Nitais
Chuntop R.
Kasop R.
Kasop R.
BOSCHMANS
Orange or Fish R.
Kuan qhip
Orange Republic
Federal R.
Sechabee
Kuisaqe
Matcia
Palani
Old Lattakoo
New Lattakoo or Bamaua
Kanaman R.
Nokaman R.
Africaneers Kr.
Gt NAMAQUAS
Orange R.
C. Voltas
Arts
Pella.
Kousie R.
LIT. NAMAQUAS
Commissioners Salt Pan
Xamies Bergen
Groene R.
Hantam
Elephants R.
Chamwilliam
St Helena B.
Pt Paternoster
Saldanha B.
Groene Kloof
Table B.
CAPE TOWN
C. of Good Hope
Faber
Dasige R.
Cape Aguilhas
Port Beaufort
Mossel B.
Gauris R.
Plettenburg B.
Knysna
Prince
Alexandria B.
Port Elizabeth
Algoa B.
Fish R.
Kasknamma R.
Buffalo R. & London
Williams T.
Graham's T.
Umtata R.
Umtamvoobo R.
Umtamvoobo R.
Umzimkulu R.
Umvamas R.
Port Natal
D'Urban
Mooi River
Tugala R.
Umvoti
Tugela R.
Amazula
St Lucia R.
T. Dunford
Gold Downs R.
R. Sordwana
R. Umvalosi
Delagoa B.
C. Colatto
Portuguese F.
Inhambane
R. Inhampura
SABIA
Bamangwato
Bagnalen
Mogalisberg
Matlapeetsee
Yarri R.
Vaal R.
Orange River Sovereignty
Griqua T.
GRIQUAS
Philipolis
Smith field
Hardcastle
Gariep
Colesberg
COLESBERG
Graaf Reinet
GRAAF REINET
Beaufort
BEAUFORT
Worcester
WORCESTER
Tulbagh
Drakenstein
Paarl
Stellenbosch
ZWELLENDAM
George
GEORGE
Uitenhage
UITENHAGE
Cradock
CRADOCK
Somerset
Bathurst
Graham's Town
Alexandria
Kaffraria
Kaffir Land
Amaponda
Umtata R.
Bashee R.
Brentham Wood
Umtamvoobo R.
Umzimkulu R.
Umvamas R.
Port Natal
D'Urban
Mooi River
Tugela R.
Umvoti

From J.J. Freeman, A Tour in South Africa. (London, 1851).

[opposite p. 1]



SKETCH OF THE SOVEREIGNTY BEYOND THE ORANGE RIVER

and a Supplementary Map of

SOUTH AFRICA.

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE LETTERS OF HANNAH DENNISON BETWEEN 29 March 1834 and 25 July 1847

Page

1. CALENDAR OF THE LETTERS

1834

1. From Graaff-Reinet, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, at Waaiplatz, 29 March 1834. (Cory MS 7410). 128

1837

2. From Sharon, Henry Dennison to his sister, Sarah Dennison, at Grahamstown, 25 May 1837. (Cory MS 7450). 129

1838

3. From Graaff-Reinet, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, [at Grahamstown] , 8 January 1838. (Cory MS 7411). 130

4. From Graaff-Reinet, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 26 March 1838. (Cory MS 7411). 131

5. From Graaff-Reinet, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 16 April 1838. (Cory MS 7411). 132,133

6. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 11 October 1838. (Cory MS 7411). 134,135

7. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 30 December 1838. (Cory MS 7411). 136

1839

8. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 4 February 1839. (Cory MS 7412). 137,138

9. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, at Salem Hills, Albany, 17 February 1839. (Cory MS 7412). 139,140

10. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 8 July 1839. (Cory MS 7412). 141,142

11. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her son, George Dennison, at Grahamstown, 19 August 1839. (Cory MS 7457). 143

12. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, at Salem Hills, Albany, 19 August 1839. (Cory MS 7457). 144

Page

13. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 1 September 1839. (Cory MS 7412). 145,146

14. From Fort Beaufort, George Dennison to his daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 8 October 1839. (Cory MS 7453). 147

15. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, 10 October [1839].[1] (Cory MS 7457). 148

16. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 3 November 1839. (Cory MS 7412). 149

17. From Fort Beaufort, George Dennison to his daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 5 November 1839. (Cory MS 7453). 150

1840

18. n.p. George Dennison to his daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 4 February 1840. (Cory MS 7453). 151

19. n.p. Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 22 June 1840. (Cory MS 7423). 152

20. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her son, George Dennison, at Grahamstown, 10 July [1840].[2] (Cory MS 7417). 153

21. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 5 September 1840. (Cory MS 7413). 154

1841

22. n.p. Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, [at Grahamstown], [1841].[3] (Cory MS 7430). 155

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[1] Although this letter is written to Ann Scanlen, it is addressed to Charlotte Dennison at Salem. No year is given in the dating. On internal evidence this letter was probably written in 1839, the year in which Hannah opened her shop in Colesberg. [cf Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 3 November 1839.]

[2] No year is given in the dating of this letter, which consists chiefly of a request from Hannah to George Dennison to persuade Charlotte to join her in Colesberg, bringing with her articles of millinery. Hannah's shop is first mentioned in a letter to George written on 19 August 1839. By 1841, Charlotte appears to have accepted employment at Salem. [Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Colesberg, 1 February 1841.] Hence 1840 seems to be the most appropriate year.

[3] This letter is undated. It was probably written early in 1841 for there is a reference to Henry and Mary travelling together from Cradock. Henry Dennison had married Mary Gardner on 27 January 1841. [E. Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy.]

Page

23. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 1 February 1841. (Cory MS 7414). 156

24. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, [1841].[1] (Cory MS 7421). 157

25. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 4 July 1841. (Cory MS 7414). 158,159

1842

26. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her son, George Dennison, at Grahamstown, [1842].[2] (Cory MS 7421). 160

27. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, [at Salem], 28 January 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 161

28. From Salem, Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 4 May 1842. (Cory MS 7445). 162

29. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, [at Grahamstown], 16 May 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 163

30. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, [at Grahamstown], May 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 164

31. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 26 June 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 165

32. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, at Salem, 26 June 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 165

33. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, at Salem, 26 June 1842. (Cory MS 7415).[3] 165

34. From Cradock, Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 27 October 1842. (Cory MS 7424). 166

35. From Cradock, Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 15 November 1842. (Cory MS 7424). 167

36. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 6 December 1842. (Cory MS 7415). 168

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[1] The dated portion of this letter is missing, having come adrift at the fold.

[2] This letter is undated. The generalised contents of the letter make it difficult to attach a date to it. In a letter written to Charlotte on 4 July 1841, Hannah expressed the hope that Ann was recovering from her illness. In this letter, Hannah noted with relief that Ann was indeed better. This suggests that the letter was written either in the latter half of 1841 or early in 1842.

[3] Letters 31, 32 and 33 are written on the same piece of paper.

Page

1843

37. From Cradock, George Dennison to his mother, Hannah Dennison, at Colesberg, 6 March 1843. (Cory MS 7453). 169

38. From Salem, Ann Scanlen to her sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 12 March 1843. (Cory MS 7425). 170,171

39. [From Colesberg], Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 29 May 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 172

40. From Cradock, George Dennison to his sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 12 June 1843. (Cory MS 7453). 173

41. From Salem, Charles Scanlen to his sister-in-law, Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 5 July 1843. (Cory MS 7447). 174

42. From Salem, M. Gush to Charlotte Dennison, [at Colesberg], 9 July 1843. (Cory MS 7448). 175

43. From Grahamstown, Charles Scanlen to his mother-in-law, Hannah Dennison, and his sister-in-law, Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 13 July 1843. (Cory MS 7448). [1] 176

44. From Grahamstown, Charles Scanlen to his sister-in-law, Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 20 July 1843. (Cory MS 7447). 177

45. From Colesberg, H.E. Atkinson to Charlotte Dennison, at Colesberg, 18 September 1843. (Cory MS 7443). 178

46. From Colesberg, S. Bingham to Charlotte Dennison, c/o Mr. L. Roberts, Grahamstown, 14 October 1843. (Cory MS 7437). 179

47. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 6 October 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 180

48. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Sarah Dennison, at Salem, 7 October 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 181

49. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 7 October 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 181

50. From Colesberg, Richard Dennison to his sisters, Sarah and Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 7 November 1843. (Cory MS 7416). [2] 182

51. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 4 December 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 183

52. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 16 December 1843. (Cory MS 7416). 184,185

[1] Letters 42 and 43 are written on the same piece of paper.

[2] Letters 48, 49 and 50 are written on the same piece of paper.

Page

1844

53. From Grahamstown, Charles Dennison to his sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 21 March 1844. (Cory MS 7451). 186

54. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her son, Charles Dennison, at Grahamstown, 4 April 1844. (Cory MS 7417). 187

55. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Grahamstown, 8 May 18[44].[1] (Cory MS 7417). 188

56. From Grahamstown, Charles Dennison to his sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 5 June 1844. (Cory MS 7451). 189

57. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 10 June 1844. (Cory MS 7417). 190,191

58. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 17 June 1844. (Cory MS 7417). 192,193

59. From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 15 July 1844. (Cory MS 7417). 194,195

60. From Cradock, George Dennison to his sister, Charlotte Dennison, at Salem, 5 August 1844. (Cory MS 7453). 196

61. [From Grahamstown], Charles Dennison to Joseph Gush, at Salem, 3 October 1844. (Cory MS 7451). 197

62. From Umpukane, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 4 November 1844. (Cory MS 7417). 198,199

63. From Grahamstown, Charles Dennison to his sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 8 December 1844. (Cory MS 7451). 200

1845

64. From 'The Retreat', Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, [at Salem], 5 February 1845. (Cory MS 7418). 201

65. From Colesberg, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, (at Salem), 2 March 1845. (Cory MS 7418). 202

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[1] No year is given in the dating of this letter. It was probably written in 1844 for Hannah referred to Charlotte's failure to send her goods for her shop through being 'to late for waggon.' This letter was probably a follow-up to two letters written to Charlotte from Colesberg on 4 December 1843, and 16 December 1843, in which Hannah expressed her anger that her stock had not arrived in time for Nagmaal.

		Page
66.	From Colesberg, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, (at Salem,) 2 March 1845. (Cory MS 7418). [1]	202,203
67.	From Port Fynn, P. Slater to Charlotte Gush [at Salem], 4 April 1845. (Cory MS 7444).	204
68.	From Umpukane, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 12 April 1845. (Cory MS 7427).	205
69.	From Umpukane, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 12 April 1845. (Cory MS 7427). [2]	205,206
70.	From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her son-in-law, Joseph Gush, at Salem, 4 August 1845. (Cory MS 7418).	207
71.	From Ratabani, G. Bingham to Joseph Gush, at Salem, 4 August 1845. (Cory MS 7437).	208
72.	From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 25 August 1845. (Cory MS 7426).	209
73.	From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 6 October 1845. (Cory MS 7426).	210,211
	1846	
74.	From Colesberg, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 1 February 1846. (Cory MS 7427).	212
75.	From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, (at Salem), 17 February 1846. (Cory MS 7419).	213,214
76.	From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 17 February 1846. (Cory MS 7429).	215
77.	From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her brother, Charles Dennison, at Grahamstown, 5 April 1846. (Cory MS 7419).	216
78.	From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her son, Charles Dennison, at Grahamstown, 5 April 1846. (Cory MS 7419). [3]	216,217
79.	From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 18 April 1846. (Cory MS 7427).	218,219
80.	From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 2 May 1846. (Cory MS 7419).	220

[1] Letters 65 and 66 are written on the same piece of paper.

[2] Letters 68 and 69 are written on the same piece of paper.

[3] Letters 77 and 78 are written on the same piece of paper.

Page

81. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 17 July 1846. (Cory MS 7427). 221,222

82. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 10 August 1846. (Cory MS 7427). 223

83. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, September 1846. (Cory MS 7427). 224,225

84. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, September [1846]. (Cory MS 7427). 226

85. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her brother, Charles Dennison, [at Grahamstown], 2 October 1846. (Cory MS 7427). [1] 227

1847

86. From Ratabani, Sarah Dennison to her sister, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 18 January 1847. (Cory MS 7428). 228

87. From Port Elizabeth, Charlotte Gush to her husband, Joseph Gush, at Salem, 15 February 184[7]. [2] (Cory MS 7431). 229,230

88. From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 4 April 1847. (Cory MS 7420). 231

89. From Buffalo River, Joseph Gush to his wife, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 4 April 1847. (Cory MS 7422). 232

90. From Ratabani, Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Gush, at Salem, 25 July 1847. (Cory MS 7420). 233

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[1] Letters 84 and 85 are written on the same piece of paper.

[2] This letter is clearly dated 15 February 1841. It must be an error because it was written from Charlotte to her husband, Joseph Gush. They were married in August 1844. [Morse Jones : British Settler Genealogy]. There is also a reference to Charlotte's son, George, who was born on 2 August 1846. [Tombstone inscription, Salem graveyard]. The breaking up of the Thunderbolt which struck Cape Recife on 3 February 1847 is also referred to. [compiled R.F. Kennedy, Shipwrecks on and off the coasts of Southern Africa, p. 118.

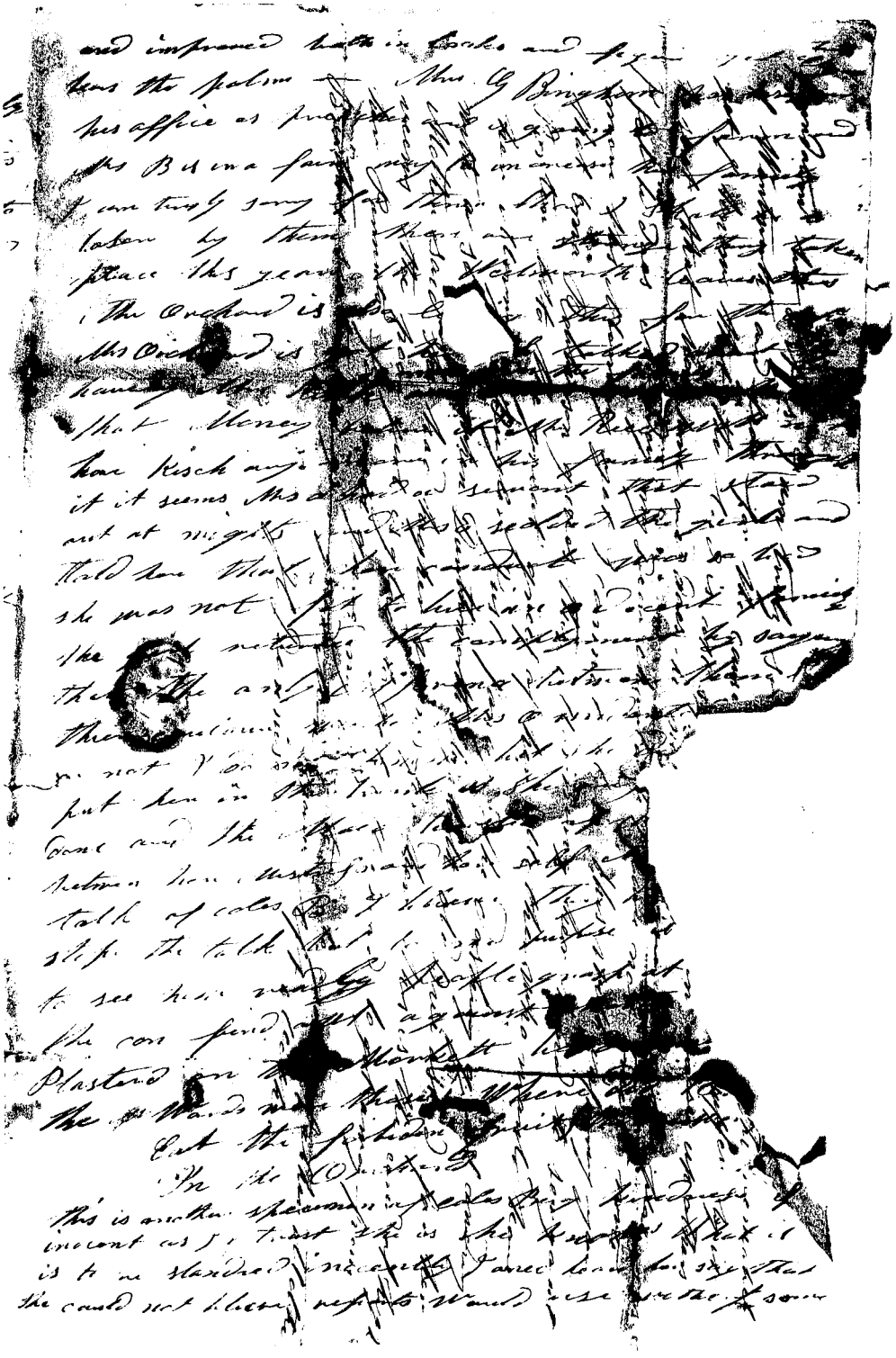
2. NOTES ON THE METHOD OF TRANSCRIPTION

The MSS have been damaged in the post. They seem also to have been stored in bundles, initially without any professional care. (Illustration A, [infra p.124], shows the damaged state of one of Hannah Dennison's letters. Portions of some letters are missing. [see Illustration B, infra p.125]. Some pages are torn or worn at the fold : in some cases there are holes caused by the sealing. [see Illustration C, infra p.126]. At times Hannah's writing is difficult to decipher especially when she is writing in a hurry or when she is short of paper and follows the contemporary practice of turning the page and writing across it. [see Illustration D, infra p.127] . There is no punctuation other than the occasional dash. Capital letters are not always used for names, but they are sometimes used for emphasis. Spelling, especially that of proper nouns can best be described as phonetically based on an English pronunciation of Dutch names. In any case orthography was not her strong suit, and was never allowed to interfere with her vigour or eloquence.

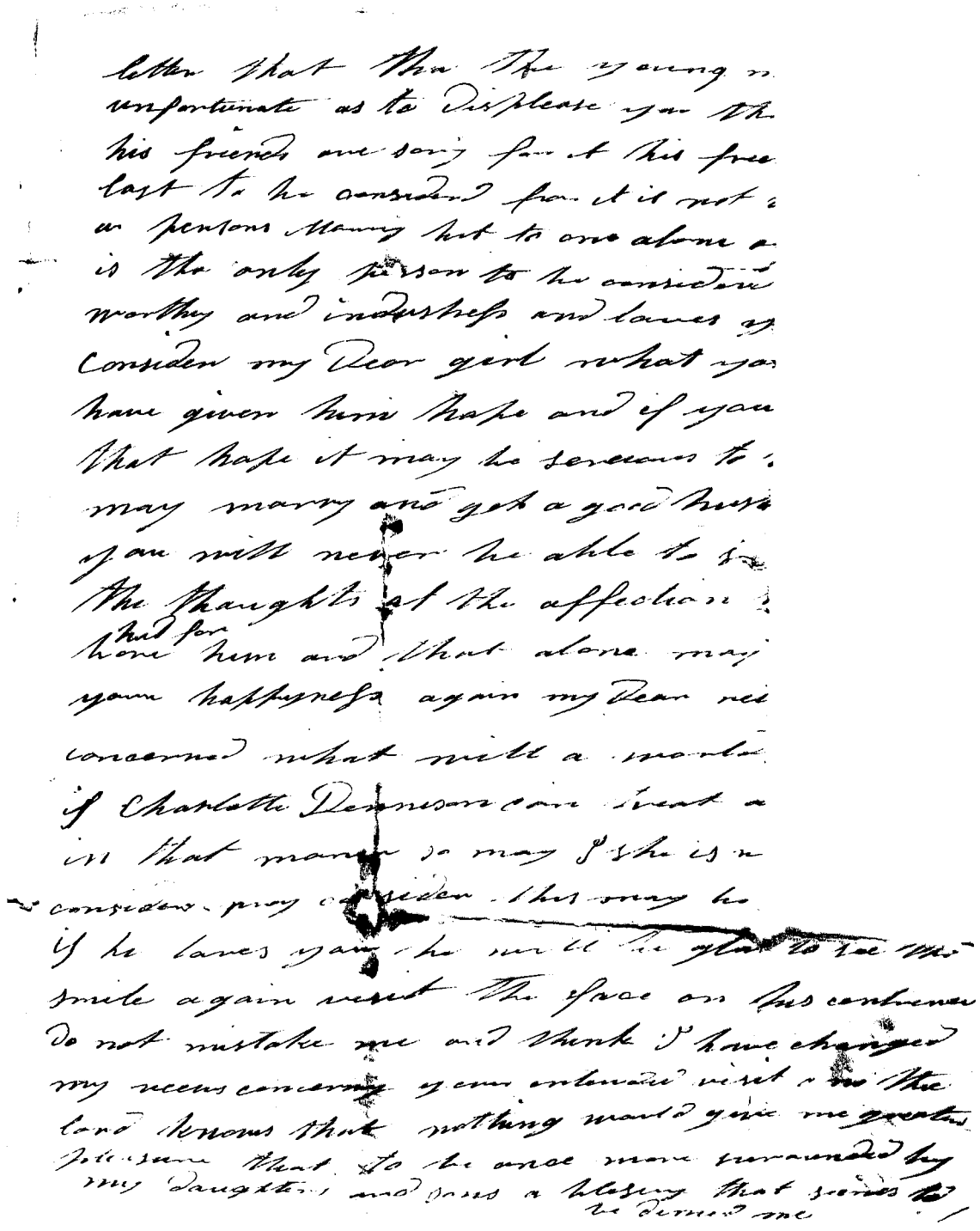
In transcription the following procedures have been followed:

1. Spelling and punctuation have been left as in the original.
2. Substantial gaps in the MSS have been indicated by an asterisk.
3. A conjectural transcription where the writing is faded or one or two words have been destroyed by a small hole or fold, or where the writing is not deciphered, is indicated by brackets. e.g. (boy). Insertions where a word or letter has clearly been omitted, are indicated by square brackets and the word or letter inserted are underlined. e.g. [penny].
4. Major gaps in the transcription have been indicated [.....].

Where it has been possible to identify people mentioned in the letters, such persons have been indicated thus [•] in the transcripts and short notes on each are to be found in Appendix C [infra pp. 234-245].



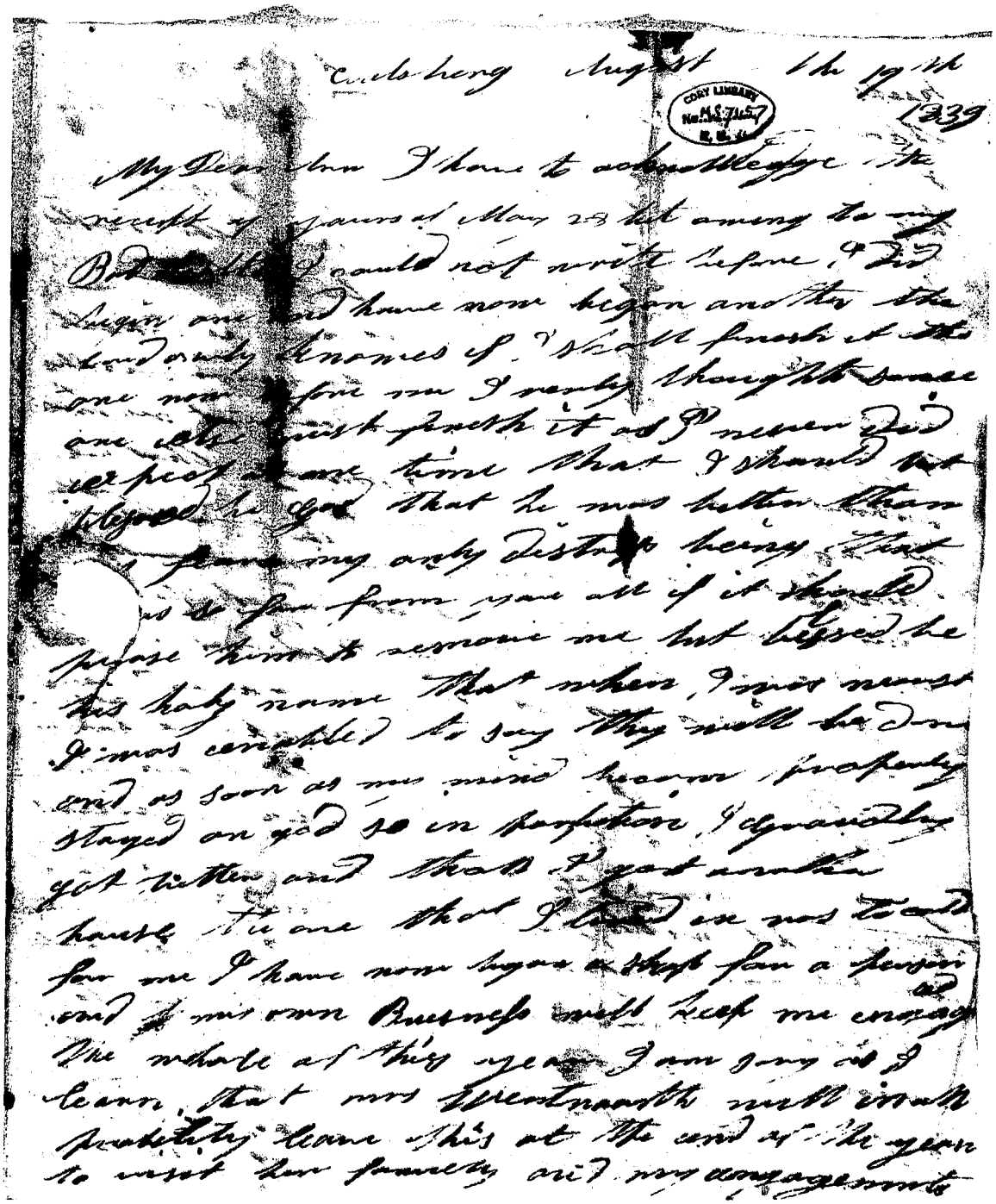
Page two of a letter from Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Cushman, Galesburg, 2 March 1845, shows the damaged state of one of the Dennison MSS. The dark splotches are caused by water marks on the original MS.



letter that Thro The young m
unfortunate as to displease you th
his friends are sorry for it this fre
last to be considered for it is not
a persons blame but to one alone
is the only person to be considere
worthy and industrious and loves y
Consider my Dear girl what you
have given him hope and if you
that hope it may be severe to
may marry and get a good hus
you will never be able to
the thoughts of the affection
but for
have him and that alone may
your happiness again my Dear re
concerned what will a mother
if Charlotte Dennison can treat a
in that manner so may I She is n
consider. pray consider this may be
if he loves you she will be glad to see
smile again reset the face on his countenan
Do not mistake me and think I have changed
my views concerning your intended visit to the
Lord knows that nothing would give me greate
pleasure that to be once more surrounded by
my daughters and sons a blessing that seems to
be denied me

ILLUSTRATION B

Page three of a letter from Hanna Dennison to her daughter, Charlotte Dennison, Colesberg, [1841], shows how a portion of the letter has been lost, having come adrift at the fold.



Colesberg August 14th 1839

My Dear Ann I have to acknowledge the
receipt of yours of May 28th but among so
Bother[illegible] I could not write before, & as
begin one and have now begun another the
shortest only knows of I shall finish it at
one now for me I really thought some
one else must finish it as I never did
expect I have time that I should be
blessed he God that he was better than
my fears & my only desire being that
it was to you from you all if it should
please him to remove me but blessed be
his holy name that when I was most
I was enabled to say Thy will be done
and as soon as my mind became properly
stayed on God so in proportion I gradually
got better and that I got under
hand the one that I had in my Head
for me I have now begun a shift for a dress
and I miss own Business will keep me engaged
the whole of this week I am sorry to
learn that Mrs Ellenworth must in such
probability leave this at the end of the year
to most her family and my engagements

ILLUSTRATION C

Page one of a letter from Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, Colesberg, 14 August 1839, showing a hole on the left hand side caused by the sealing on the letter.

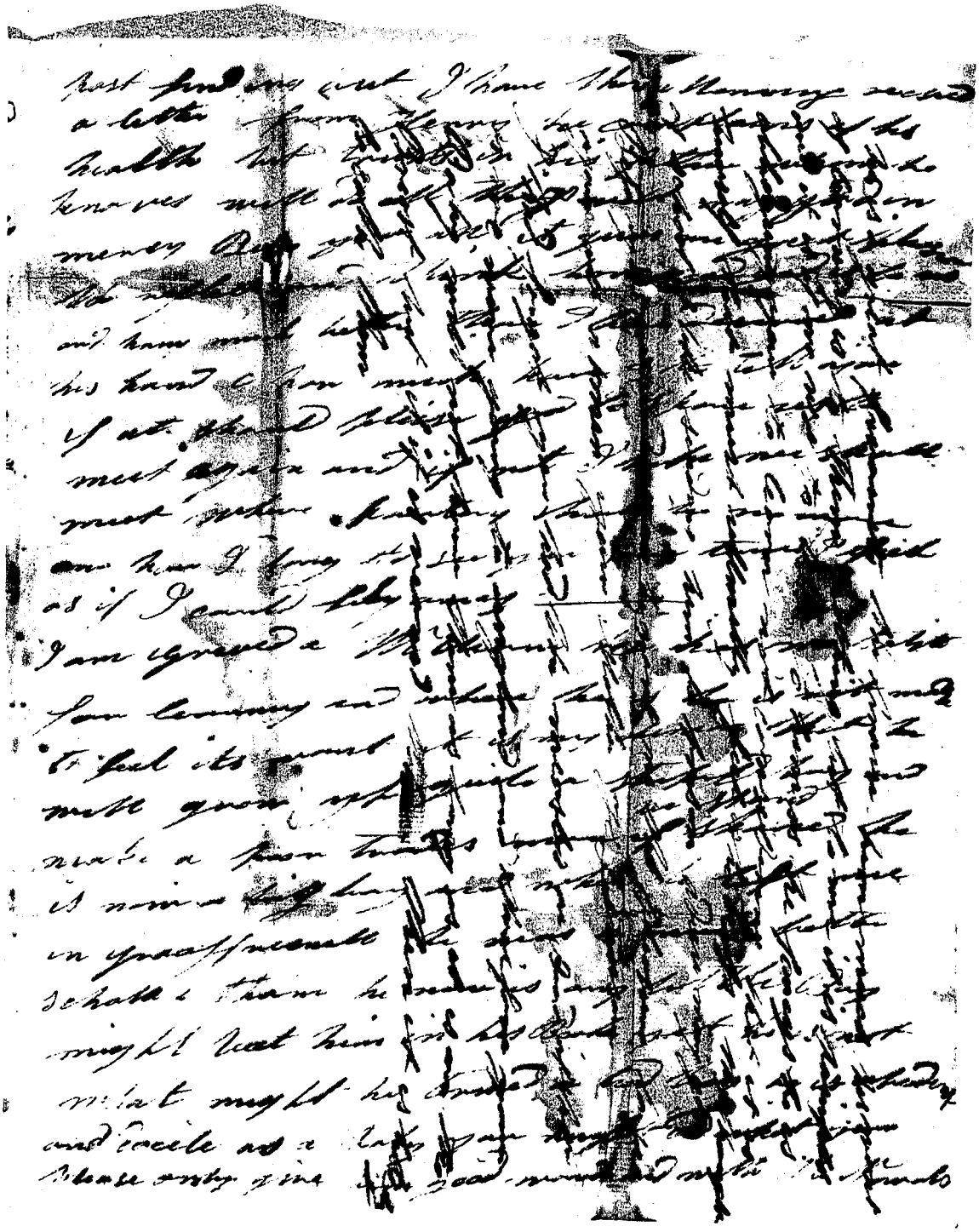


ILLUSTRATION B

Page three of a letter from Hannah Dennison to her daughter, Ann Scanlen, Colesberg, 19 August 1839, shows the practice of turning the page and writing across it.

4. TYPESCRIPT OF THE LETTERS.

1. H Dennison to Ann. Graaffreinet March the 29 1834. Addressed to Mrs C Scanlen Wayplats

My Dear Ann I rote to you soon after my arival here and gave you an account of my flight from grahams Town but as you have not received the letter I will Just tell you that I stopt one week in somerset waiting for a conveance and came to this place in time to bid Mr and Mrs Hall adue they thought that I had certainly left them a present wich they had no Need of having or enough of their own you said nothing in your letter of your father I should like to know how he bore his loss as for me I am very happy with this (occupation) namly working hard for bread for them to eat but bless the lord that hitherto he hath helped me and I have enough and to spare glory be to his holy name o my Dear child trust him in this dark providence that he has afflicted you in your dear partoners[1] health he is able to do more than you can think or ask only commit your care continuly to him he is able to raise him up and make a strong and healthy man of him wich may he do for his name and mercy sake amen would that it had pleased god to direct your steps this way but this will be done here are farmes here that a person might grow vegtables and corn and the [y] can get wood enough to suport them if they will take the trouble to bring it in the town meal at this time is five and six dollars a muid fruit is scarce and has been this summer but that is not always the case I will send you a bit of fine callico and a little piece of muslen I should feel happy if i could do more for you if you were near me (and) could help in many ways that i cannot do now you are so far of I would advise you not to trust yourself to any one but if you can get either Mrs (Mison) or or doctor cambell[c] or if you like it take Atherstone[d] but neglect not to send in time better they wait on you than you (wait) for them you know how you should be treated with respect to your diet and take care of yourself Do not think if it should please god to give you a good getting up that because you feel well that you are out of danger and should it please god to give you a living babe let it be put to the breast about 3 hours after it is born and take care of your bosem keep a piece of new (flaning[2]) in it and it will prevent your takeing cold has that i never had a bad breast in my life nor has any one had a bad breast that I attended only a few that know better than me for to come to you I find is quite impossiable I have tow young children and no one to leave them with and getting up and down is no easy matter the ( ) is not come so that I have not been able to save money to send as yet but as soon as I can I will and be glad to get once more out of debt my love to Charles and tell him that I hope that the lord will restore him to health and strength and if you should be spared to him that he will be a good nurse to you I know that he will adue my dear children may the almighty bless preserve and keep you for ever amen

H Dennison

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[1] Charles Scanlen. [see infra, Appendix C, p. 243.].

[2] 'Flannin' was a dialect form of 'flannel' in the 19th Century. Hannah appears to have been using the word in that form although with slightly different spelling. [Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. IV, p.285].

2. Henry Dennison to his sister Sarah Sharon[1] May 25th 1837.
Addressed to Miss S Dennison At Mrs Nichols Grahams Town.

Deer Sister

As an opertunity presents itself to me for sending you A few lines to Day altho I cannot well spare the time I should not feel Justified if I Did not embrace it you have perhaps heard that I have been to Town this week and I should have caled upon you but I arived there late on wednesday evening and returnod Early thursday Morning (Consequently) I (had) not time I should like much to (hear from) you and (pray) write as soon as you can you will (have) an opertunity (of) sending your letter by W Dugmore on Monday send it to edkinee's And tell me how you are Geting on in the way to heaven are you still on ful struck for Glory Do you Covet earnestly the Best Gifts O Sister set Before you the Glorious prize of perfect Love and rest not till you rest in the rest that remaineth for the People of God on earth but am I preaching again I remember that I am one in the wilderness and you A citizen were you have line upon line and Doubtless you are frequently found by rapturious Contemplation in sight of the New Jerusalem whence you dwell with holy Delight upon the Blisful thoughts when on sion thou shalt stand. And all heavens host Adore their King I shall be found at thy right Hand And free from pain thy Glory singe Glory Glory Be to God O let us live entirely for this let me Know how your health is if you can find out wether Ann and family are Dead or alive tell me for I could hear nothing about them when I was in Town

I am sincerely youre H Dennison

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[1] Sharon appears to have been a small village somewhere between Grahamstown and Salem. In an undated letter written to Joseph Gush, Charlotte referred to Sharon flats through which she passed on a journey from Salem to Grahamstown. [Charlotte Gush to Joseph Gush, n.p. n.d. Cory MS 7435].

3. H Dennison to Charlotte Graaffrienet Jan the 8th 1838.
Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahs Town.

My Dear Charlotte I have waited untill my patiance is tired and no letter can it be that you forget you have a Mother or is it that you think her beneath your Notice not to write for so long a time what ever be the reason I know not be it as it may I hope you are all well and that you enjoy better health than I do at present this being the second time that I have been ill since I rote to you last I have endavourd to crall to Mr Grisbrook[1] this Morning for Medicine hope it will do me good I have writen to George but no answer so that it seems general among you to slight me prahps you think you are right in so doing be it s[o] and may god forgive you be that I shall not live long and as I now feel I am sure it will not do anne (foeier) is coming round a little but she is a compleate skellecton still cheerful often speaks of you - poor Mr Malan Departed this life on the 2d day of this month his wife stuck him in the arm with a clasp knife near to the elbow it mortified he lived Just 20 days after she is now the picture of Madness not knowing what she does I cannot say sorry but afraid that she will be brought to triel that she need not fear as he swore that it was accedental his sufferings was very great and he bore it with amazing patiance you may fancy what Mrs Spiller[2] looks like but to know you must see her she is grief [stricken] indeed Mrs S and me nursed him the last 2 weeks of his life he would not take a drink of (cold) warter from his wife when he wanted any thing we were to give it or he would not have it for the time we never undressed or went to bed but Just catch a nap as well as we could had it lasted longer I think we should have both been ill I hope he is gone to a better world he prayed as long as he could but being a roman catholick and fast bound in his faith it was of little use to say mutch to him as he thought penance could do a great deal for him his last words were god be mercifull to me a siner in the beginning of his illness he one day said Mrs Dennison have you not a daughter that is grown up on my answering in the affirmative he said oh and then a little after he said but where is she his wife interupting answerd in gr town he very sharply said I did not ask you and now again for our selfs Mr Norval[f] has been here says that William is growing a great and good boy and that he improves fast but yet so shy so much so that he often feels ashamed before strangers I must now conclude Wishing you all many happy returns of the year and that each succeeding one may find you better than the last is the prayer of your aft Mother thoug[h] neglected

H Dennison

P S Mrs Hortell[2] is going to be Married to Mr Brink on sunday next

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[1] Mr. Grisbrook was the apothecary at Graaff-Reinet [Almanac, 1859, p.249]. According to J. Dunbar*, for the average middle-class family, the apothecary was the doctor. He provided pills and potions for everyday complaints. More serious complaints were usually treated by the doctor. It is interesting to note that Burrows refers to a 'regular doctor versus apothecary, chemist or plain quack' conflict in the frontier towns. In Graaff-Reinet itself, in 1834, the surgeon, Patrick MacCabe lodged a complaint with the Colonial Medical Committee, that the local apothecary was openly practising as a doctor. [E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa. p.186].

* [J. Dunbar, The Early Victorian Woman, p.35].

[2] This probably refers to Oertel. [cf. Almanac, 1831, p. 194].

4. H Dennison to Charlotte Graaffrionet March the 26th 1838.
Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahs Town.

Dear Charlotte You will be surprised that I should trouble you with another letter before you answerd the last but I did not like to lose the oppertunyti I feel greeved at your neglect since I saw you last I have had tow letters and one of them was partly writen by your sister if you plead engagement I think I am as much e[n]gaged as you though not profitably I am confident you could find time enugh if you improved your time as you ought you are now in a measure your own Mistress thanke to a bad father and a worse husband or my children would not have dared to treat me with disrespect true I cannot say so of all no blessed and praised be his name some I have that loves and revere me as thier Mother I would ask what have I done to you that you use me thus I am sure that wile you lived with me I allways studed your happyness in preference to my own however if you cannot find time to answer this you need not expect to be so troubled again Miss Devillars[1] is now Mrs pleasee[2] end Miss fick Mrs Something mind that is not the name she Makers wife Miss freeman now Mrs Muller from the cape Mrs G De villers was last sunday deliverd of a daughter on the weding day of Miss De villers wich was saturday and the little stranger came on sunday You were often mentiond and she frequently said oh what would I give to see Charlotte The man she Married observed he was sory that any thing was wanting to compleate her happyness but promiseed to do his best for her milk maid we all laugh at Dinner where it was spoken Cahs[3] Bedford is Married to a miss vandemerve that used to visit at mrs heafmary[4] there are a great nu[m]ber more but I have no time to mention them adieu

your aft Mother

H Dennison

Thursday March the 30th in haste

give my love to Henry and Elizabeth and Charles tell them all that I long to see them

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[1] This probably refers to De Villiers.

[2] This probably refers to Du Plessis.

[3] The letters have been transposed. The word should read Chas. i.e. abbreviation of Charles.

[4] This probably refers to Hofmeyr.

5. H Dennison to Charlotte Graeffriemet April the 16th 1838. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte Youre of the 6th I have Just recived and from the tenor of your Brothers hasty letter I fancied you ill but am happy to find it not the case as to Henry I am deeply concerned do pray lett me know the truth is his constution bad O what can be amiss do pray write quick you know the distance that parts us and if I could fly I would be with you in a short time had I had your letter before I would have gone with Mrs S Eidulph instead of Mrs Marsh but as it (is) I must be content I ham happy to hear that Mrs (F)arrington is better hope soon to see her and all of you if all is well and I can get a w[a]ggon you know the difficulty of procurring one and therefore we must only trust to providence and hope the best the enquires after you are many I think if George come here he will do well as many are wishing for him your old intended that was is now a father of they say A fine son as I have not seen it I cannot say (it was) born Just a week after Gideons they are doing well Mrs Greber and famiely (toste) to you she says you are a naughty girl to run away as you did what shall I do this winter long nights and no companion you are very comfortable there and I dare-say never give me one thought I just wish I I could pop in on you unawayre and enjoy your surprise I am glad you get plenty of employment[1] hope you will get rich and then praps I may get a share for you know I never shall - you say you are perswaded your father will not molest me I do not wish to trust to (uncertainty) any longer and if it does not cost to much it would be much better that it took place and then I should have some securyte for future your sister state that your father[s] heal[th] is breaking fast I am sory to hear it but in the event of any thing happening [to] him you are all aware that I then stand at the mercy of his credeters and by not being free be oblidged to be as it were all[w]ayes on the shufle or making excuses wich you know is a thing I cannot bear if he chuses he can cause it to be little or no expence by consenting for that reason I wished George to get some one to speak to him on the subject before it must [be] to the lawyer I know the deed must be drawn up by a lawyer and signd by witness[2] and I wish it to be understood that I give my claim on him entirly up for ever and only want him to do the same by me what is the use of our having the name of husband and wife how is he a husband to me a husband is one that maintains his wife and does he do that answer me what has he done for [the] children since we partod and what has he done for me why then should you all wish me not to do this have you more love for him than me that you all seek his happyness and not mine I should be sory if you did not love him but who has showed themselves a parent he or me you of course say more is expected from me why he is your father he has means what does he do with them does he in any measure[s] contribute to the suport of his family what did he do with william that poor ~~child~~ child will have reason to remember long as he lives you know how he was when I broght him first home and if you have not forgot the remark I made that we must not be harsh with him as I was aware that in time he would see the difference and (understand)

Ap 17 yeterday old Mrs Walstrain[3] was Married to Mr (luter) now I am sure no old woman need dispair you must know I was at the wedding

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[1] Charlotte was a miliner [cf. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte, Cradock, 27 October 1842].

[2] Supra., Chapter 3, p.46.

[3] This probably refers to Mrs. Wahlstrand [cf. Almanac, 1831. p.194].

this is the second I have been at it was conducted very ordily and the next is expected is her daughter with ferdenand Hartzenberg if could see you I have much to tell you what do you think of lennox[1] trying for her I mean the widow she now no more keeps company with Married people it is such as Miss Somers and (luters) and is quite a laughing stock among them we are all exceedingly grieved but can do nothing to help her as she will not attend (and) if you can lett Mrs Hookly° see this and ask that Lady to write her a few lines on the impropyte of her conduct the poor children you would not know them they are so neglected she thinks of nothing but drink dress and courting and that with ways for no sensiable man will pay her any attention Mr Murray° has spoken and Mrs Spiller° myself and many others but all to no purpose O What can be done Adieu my Dear Girl may God grant that I may see you all love to all of you your

Aft mother

H Dennison

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[1] Suora., Chapter 3, p.45.

6. H Dennison to Charlotte Coals Berg Oct the 11th 1838. Addressed to Miss Ch Dennison at Mrs Nicol° Grahams Town.

Dear Charlotte

I feel much oblidged to you I thought that you did indeed forgett me as to my part I never have you out of my mind and when I heard you were ill I thought if Charlotte thinks att all it will be now that she cannot see me or hear of me I hope you still continue to be comfortable you must be carefull as we know not what a day May Bring forth Mr Clin Bill[1] that was in the Hughs° shop Married some time ago to a farmers daughter a very nice young woman and lived very happy with her he and her were looking forward with Joy in the passion of youth and prospect of doing well but o how sudden is their Happyness Blighted she was deliverd of a daughter and for a few day did well at last took cold or some thing els and as there is no docter here she poorthing is lost in a manner of speaking and he inconsolable the poor child is living at present I dare say you recolect a Bastard woman that came with a Mrs Reuch from Cols B and came to me with a message at Mrs stretchs house from Mrs R it was that person who confined the poor unfortunate woman and of course a great deal of Blame is laid to her charge Mrs Rawstone° has got a son and doing well Mrs J Norval° a daughter also well Mrs Reid expecting and I must wait for her - sunday I have not been able to attend church yet so that I can say but little on that head I hear Mr R is conidderd more strict than Mr Murry° poor Mrs frazier°[2] is dead at Boufort and left a femiely of seven children to lament their loss - I cannot see any diffrence in William[3] he appears to me to be Just the same grown of course allamost as tall as me wich is great for his age oh what I would give to see you all again but I must wait patiantly hope the best we often talk of you here Mrs Rawstone°[4] would like to have you as companion and to take charge of the children house and servants in fact to be house Keeper an artickle that she stands much in need of and here she say Charlotte would be able to climbe as much as she liked you never saw such a place so wild and Barren green is quite a novelty here a quarry of stones hudled togother and there another lot in the same state you must be struck with the absence of green a little shrub here and there the town very small at present but the people Building fast as the [y] can and the house of the Magistrate[5] is Built on the improved plan of Mr Griebrook comanding a full view of the town - as it is growing late I must now conclude but o I forgot in your last you mention that all is not right betwen you and your Brother and you think me in passion of the Occurence but I assure you no G did in a (measure hint) that you were (not)

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[1] This probably refers to Mr. Klingbiel. [see infra, Appendix C, p.239]

[2] This refers to Mrs. Fraser [cf. Almanac, 1838. p.109 and see infra, Appendix C, p.237]

[3] Supra., Chapter 2, p. 32.

[4] This refers to Fleetwood Rawstorne's first wife, Eliza Henrietta. [see infra. p. 141, and Appendix C, p. 242]

[5] Fleetwood Rawstorne's house.

on friendly terms but in so slight a (manner) as to leave me quite as Igront as before - and now no letter with one exception we were a famiely that dewlt[1] in love why my dear girl is it not so now you say you forgive then if so how is it you are not friends I am sure you cannot be happy if you speak not O (how can) you meet each other on earth and not speak do think but for a moment if you were both called to meet your God and not on friendly termes with each other how would you then feel lett me entreat you to forgive one another as you hope to be forgiven I need not add pray for one another for I am convinced that you both do to the utmost of your power - once more adue give my love to all friends and the children kiss them all for me tell them I will if spared come soon as I can your aft Mother

H Dennison

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[1] i.e. dwelt.

7. H Dennison to Charlotte Coale Berg December the 30th 1838. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte I resived youre of tow different dates last sunday by this time Henry and ann recived one from me and Charles also you will be acquinted with the news that the latter sent me it made me (very) ill I was not well when I got it and it did not contribute to my health I thought if you were gone to the Bay[1] to live then farewell for ever in this world O what a pang none but a Mother can Judge Mrs Reid did all she could to support my mind tho I did not complain she said that she could see that since I received the last letter I was not so well and why was I so cast down had so little confidence in god as to think he could not protect you even in that (cess-pool) of infamy and (that) scare of it due not doupt but the uncertainty of life and my own d[e]licate state of health made me fear o my Charlotte when you left me it cost me many a tear and since I have often thought that our parting seems as if we were never to meet again on this side of eternyte when I consider how the Lord is dealing with me and how strange my course seems I am led to wonder when I first came to Graaff nt it was not with the intention of staying and yet there I was stayed and now I come here I certainly did not intend to remain here and yet I cannot get out of it I have now sent for my things from Graaff nt and intend if spared to spend a year or tow here how very strange my society alone has determind that you will ask what society can my own Mother have that can influence her so much I will tell you it is Mrs Reid and her very kind partner who have done all in their power to make me like Coale B not alone that but they have by their interest got me a room in a house situated very near their own in one of the best places possiable and if that did not suit me he spoke to another person who was willing to give up his house to me on Mr Reids account (George may possibly remember the) new Brick house near the church on a line with it that is to my ressidence at present

I am very happy to hear Ann is safe over with her little one may the lord continue to bless them it is very much my wish to see them but how to accomplish it I know (not) [.....]* Sober people they would (do well) here there is neither shoe maker nor taylor you must know that it is not allowed that any one vend either spirits or wine not withstanding those who are devoted to it will use other means such as odclogne[2] and other things though they might as well drink as much poison richard is growing a great boy and william is I should Judge by what I can recollect of Elizabeth about the same hight but so clownish and from what I can fancy ever will that is I am aware saying a great (deal) as we know not how he may alter as to pride (he has none but spirit) he has a share however I must bid you adieu as I must write a line to George give my love to all the children and accept the same yourself from your aft Mother

H Donnison

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* The top portion of the last page (recto) of this letter has come adrift at the fold and has been lost.

1 Port Elizabeth.

2 This refers to Eau de Cologne. see supra, Chapter 3, p.50.

8. H Dennison to Charlotte Coalsberg feb 4 1839.
Addressed to Miss Charlotte Dennison grahams Town.

My Dear charlotte I have to acknowledg the receipt of yours of the 7 should have answerd it it long ago but one disapointment and another has hindred me o my Dear Girl how I long to see you all how many things shall we know to say I cannot say that I am settled here but have much more to do than at graff and the people are in general more kind that is they are most english the dutch to here endavour to be more (kind to) us than at graff and in general there is more feeling expressed among them toward us than I ever saw not that aperrant dislike to every thing english[1] yet it is not grahams town I would feel very glad if things were so managed that I could exchang ressidence as it is I must be content the lord has a end in view and he will accomplish it his will be done not mine he is able to save me here as any where and I am persawaded will keep that I have commited to his charge and that I shall ultimatly praise him in that day o may we all be found at his right hand my health is by no means so good as it has been nor can I expect it I am approching towards my 48 year o when I look back and consider the past I must Blush to own my ingratitude to the best of fathers and friend and had he dealt with me as my sins deserved I should have long since have been sent to that place when hope never cometh[2] but mercy is his darling attribute o for grace to live more to his honour and glory than I have hitherto done -

Since I left for gr they are writing for me to return and are quite vexed with them selves for not giving me more encrougement[3] there was not in all Graaff reinett a more bitter enemy than old Mrs Niemand you know that she had no reason but the contrary the reason was I was english and she hated every thing that was english and far as in her lay did all in her power to prevent anyone from having me even when I was engaged but she was at last confuted to her own shame and was obliged to own that the little woman was clever and then did it in a maner that seemed to say she would not say it but could not stop the publick voice for what her own Midwife could not Do with even the assistance of Dr cribs[4] Mrs Dennison did without any other help than that of her own skill and the blessing of god attending her labour however I am now away from them and have no wish to reside again there if I move again it will be either to the grave or grahams T the lord knows wich and in his hand I leave it give my love to Mrs Hockly and tell her that I wish her yet long to live here yet it is pleasant to heare that she is resagned[5] to the will of god he knows what is best for her (if) it is his will I should be very glad to see her once more and if the lord should take her before me oh how should I like to be with her my very heart bounds at the thought that if we meet no more here we shall meet in another and a better world where the inhabitants will not have to

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[1] Supra, Chapter 3, p.43.

[2] Supra, Chapter 2, p.34.

[3] i.e. encouragement.

[4] This refers to Dr. Krebs [Almanac, 1839 p.248].
[See infra., Appendix C, p. 239.].

[5] i.e. resigned.

say I am sick when we shall not have sin nor sorrow but he will wipe all tears from our eyes and we shall see him and know him as we are known adieu my dear in haast the post is going.

Your aft Mother

H Dennison

Give my love to the children tell elizabeth that I long to see her ask Henry what he is doing tell charles that I hope he is improving and when you see sarah kiss her for me I need not tell you to do the same to the infant I long to see elizabeth do not lose any oppertunyte and admonishing her her to conduct herself and to be circumspect in her companions do it gently once more adieu

9. H Dennison to Ann Coals Berg febury 17th 1839.
Addressed to Mrs C Scanlen Salem Hills Albany.

My Dear Ann I recived youre of 8th last sunday it givee me pleasure to hear you are so well and that your famiely (enjoying) good health I should indeed like very much to see you all and hope it will not be denied me you regret my removal to this place I asure you that if all things were settled I should rejoice to live in Grahams Town or near it but as it is I hope I can still say the lords will be done you quite surprised me in saying Henry was out of his time[1] I have not as yet recived a line from him on the subject pray what does he intend to do does he mean to remain with his Master or what I blieve Mr Richards has no daughters to detain him but hope he will do well and then he will not have to regret his heving learnt a trade I asure you that a shoe maker live if he had a small captall here to sett up a ready made shop would in a few years realise a decent sum the demand for shoes is very great and no one here seems to have thought of it there is no shoe maker here we are obliged to wear english shoes and our children must go bare foot when we cannot get them which is very often - sunday eving post not come no preaching this is dull I have this week recived a letter from Mrs Wurgs[2] in which she kindly enquires for you in Town there I blieve she will want me soon you can form no Id[e]a how very badly of the people here for a midwife untill i came there was no one not yet a Dr now we have tow Drs and tow appocthearys[3] so that we are well off if we could add a sunday school and a faithfull english preacher then dry Coals Berg would do but that I fear will not soon take place Mr Boice[4] stopt here for one sunday and gave us a sermon the people say the[y] would be very glad if some such person would come and reside among them they would have much to hear and many trials according to all appearance but no cross no crown it seems to me that the infidles are allowd to multiply and no notise taken of them wile the heathen are cared for the english heathen are forgoten they wont go to church because it is dutch and they do not like the parson[5] it is quite grevous to here them at times but

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[1] Supra, Chapter 2, pp. 35-36.

[2] This refers to Mrs. Wurasa. [W.C. Holden, A Brief History of Methodism, and of Methodist Missions in South Africa, p. 386]. See Infra, Appendix C, p. 245.

[3] One of the apothecaries was Braham Kisch, who had settled in Colesberg †1838. [G.T.J., 27 September 1838, p. 1, column 3]. One of the doctors was Frederich Heinrich Fraenkel (1810 - 1861), who was appointed District Surgeon in August 1838, a post he held for six years. [E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa, pp. 185-186]. It has not been possible to establish who the other two were.

[4] This refers to the Rev. W.B. Boyce.

[5] Supra, Chapter 3, pp. 51-52.

you would wish to know a little of myself in the first place I have abundance of work and that good every prospect of doing better here than at G praps fortune is tried[1] of persecuting me and if so why it is good if not I hope my prop will still sustain me (and) comfort me wile in this vale of (tears) O my dear girl what have I not (suffered) how it is that I am so well is to me a wonder at times last week I was very ill I thought if now the time is come o how shall I depart yet my confidence was that he that had hitherto suported me would not now leave me and I bless his name it did comfort me and restore me in a measur now farewell for the present tell my Grandson that if I should have to cross the great Orange river[2] and I think I shall be sent for I will bring him a plume of black feathers or a prety cross[3] give my love to sarah and tell her I long to kiss her and elizabeth and the little Beauty but I mus[t]close my pen is done and I am tried your afft

Mother H Donnison

ask Henry if he would not like to come here and see me and see the place william would be very glad to see him I think he would be lost here yet I should be glad to see him

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[1] i.e. tired.

[2] Supra, Chapter 3, p. 54.

[3] i.e. kurosse.

10. H Dennison to Charlotte Coals Berg July the 8th 1838.[1] Addressed to Miss Charlotte Dennison Grahams Town.

My dear Charlotte yours of June I have received and should have answerd but prevented by Illness owing to cold by this time you must have recived one from me in answer to your wish to know if I would come to somerset it is to me very strange that letters from you should come here and those that are sent from here take so long in going there must be some neglect some were be it as it may they take care that the (tip) tops do not feel it or there would be some complaint[1] - I am happy to hear that so far the measels[2] have been favourable and hope and trust the great giver of all goodness (will) deal as favourable with the rest it was a source of great uneaseness to me when I thought of you all so far away yet it has pleased him to deal better than my feare you ask for some account of Mrs Rs death[3] my Dear girl I have realy no wish to enter into the Awful subject I saw from the first that she would not recover yet I had not courage to tell her of it her Husband kept so close to me that it was near to impossiable to have any conversation with her alone he poor man was tring his best to keep her here on the thursday before her death she asked me if I ever felt that my whole inside was leaving me I answerd that I had been ill several times but thanked god that he had yet spared me she said yes for what should I now do if you did not come here and look after me who in coals Berg would (have) left a sick house for me but you my Mother for such she called me at times and such she in general looked on me on friday eveing she asked me to pray for her and said she was sure that she would never recover I said I would with all my hearht but that she must pray for her self and that she was in the hand of god that he could restore her if he willed and if not she should pray his will to be done and then she prayed a minute or tow I think if I recollect right O Almighty god Who has laid thine afflicting hand on a poor siner have mercy and o for the sake of what Christ has done and sufferd have mercy on me my Dear fathre there was a few more words but they have escaped my memory at present on sunday death sat on her mouth still no one told her of it as to me I shall never forgive my self while I live I ought to have done it Why did I not is a quistion that I can never answer should it please my maker to place me in such circumstancies again I hope it will be discharged with greater faithfulness that the lost mrs (Reid) told me since that it was understood (by the) town that Mrs R would not recover (yet) they never came to see her these are friends and call themselves lovers of souls O my dear girl what

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[1] cf. G.T.J., 5 September 1839, p.4, columns 1 and 2.

[2] Supra, Chapter 3, p. 39.

[3] Mrs. Rawstorne had died on 20 May 1839. [G.T.J. 6 June 1839, p.1, column 2]. The inscription on her tombstone in the Colesberg cemetery, erroneously gives the date of her death as 23 May 1834. The Death Notice of Eliza Henrietta Rawstorne in the Archives, Cape Town, confirms the date of her death as 20 May 1839, at the age of 23 years, 11 months. [Letter from Mr. I. Dekenah to Dr. Thelma Gutsche, 7 December 1968].

reason have the[y] spared to say O Lord fit and prepare us for that Awful change that must sooner or later take place I hope you have no grounded reason for saying that you will not live long take care of a murmuring sprit lenth of day are on his hand and he gives where he will it is not right for us to think that our lives are to be short when we know not his will in this respect sufice it that he knows what is best and those that trust in him will never be confounded I see that I have writen up my paper before I was aware of it and as usal began the wrong end of it farewell my Dear may God in Mercy help and preserve you all give my love to my elizabeth tell her to trust in god it will yet be well with her and if I am spared she has a home to come to where she will be recived with open arms this is not Graaff rienett no blessed be god it is not but a better place to my soul Mr and Mrs Wentworth has arived here I have some hopes that they will prove a blessing to this place and if a few more lights were to come it might be made a bethel[1] there are many english here without god in all their ways these creatures have soule oh what a pity to leave them to themselves stand up for our deliverance o my God adieu my dear may God in mercy bless you and all of you is the prayer of your Mother

H Dennison

give my love to all and tell them I long to see them

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[1] Bethel literally means the 'House of God.' [M.S. and J.L. Miller, Harper's Bible Dictionary (New York 1952), p. 68]. cf. also Genesis, Ch.28 vs 18-22.

11. H Dennison to George Cals Berg August the 19th 1839. Addressed to Mr G Dennison Jun Grahams Town.

My Dear George you must excuse me I should have writen long ago but could not being so very ill thank god I am better all your clothes that were made of cloth are sold[1] except one frock coat and either waistcoat or trowersers I know not wich the sumer things are all that are on (hand) Norval[o] and framesley are over (the) river gone to gett in depts and to sell goods William is with them I am realy sory for that Boy a scholar he never will be and what is (more) he has no wish to learn there (is) nothing [I can do] about it poor [boy] [.....]* of his health and does not like cape at all I am not suprised at that as to a quit mind cape town is very disagreable O I had allamost forgoten you and Ann have had the measles on bord of ship when we were going to england so you need not fear on that subject I hope the (next) I hear that your litle one and wife are well if Mary had the Measels her Baby will not have them as long as it is on the Breast but if it was weaned then it is liable to catch them Mr Wentworth[o] have opened a sunday school and at present it is in a (prosperous) state and Mr Reid[o] has promised to speak english[2] so we are (making) (some) progress in Coals B and I [.....] Indulge in such Happyness I wish you would tell Charles[3] that I should like to hear from him and also tell them both that if she cannot write to get ch to write for her I long to see you all but yet I must submit to my fate and say thy will be done I have a shop and my own Buisness together keepe me employed Richard is improving fast and like myself wanting to see you all if he wishes to raise envy in another child he tells them they are not rich as he is in Brothers and sisters poor fellow I wish for his sake that I lived in grahams town farewell [.....]*

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[1] George Dennison jun. was a tailor. See <u>supra</u> Chapter 3, p. 41.

* The lower portion of the first page of this letter (<u>recto</u> and <u>dorso</u>) has come adrift at the fold and has been lost.

[2] See <u>supra</u>, Chapter 3, p. 51.

[3] Charles Scanlen, see <u>infra</u>, Appendix C, p. 243.

* The lower portion of the last page of this letter (<u>recto</u>) has come adrift at the fold and has been lost.

12. H Dennison to Ann Coalsberg August the 19th 1839.
Addressed to Mrs C Scanlen Sallem Hills Albany.

My Dear Ann I have to acknowledge the receipt of yours of May 28 but owing to my Bad health I could not write before I did begin one and have now began another the lord only knowes if I shall finish the one now before me I rerly thought some one else must finish it as I never did expect at one time that I should but blessed be God that he was better than (my) fears my only distress being that (I) (w)as so far from you all if it should please him to remove me but blessed be his holy name that when I was worst I was enabled to say thy will be done and as soon as my mind becom properly stayed on god so in porpotion I Graudly[1] got better and than I got another house the one that I lived in was to cold for me I have now begun a shop for a person and my own Buisness will keep me engaged the Whole of this year I am sory as I learn that mrs Wentworth will in all probability leave this at the end of the year to visit her famiely and my engagements keeps me fast to January it is a shame that I should be so bound but so it is and I must be content - by this time Charlotte knowes of Gideion De Villeron wifes Death she died of the measles and many others that we both knew we can only say the lord gave and he taketh away and blessed be his Holy name in this (and) I have lost a friend indeed but we must submit to his holy will knowing that while we know not now we shall know him after then let every murmur cease Mr wentworth have Opened a sunday school and at (present) it is doing well and Mr Reid has (promised) to give us a english sermon now and then but he has not began yet o what a happyness would it be if some one would from time to time preach here how highly (priviledged) you are down there to what we are here it might with Justice be said of the english here that no one cares for thier soule and here arise some Bad ones and that to among the respectable as they call themselves o if our god was as indiferent to our wants as Mars is what would become of us but his mercy is above all and his goodness past finding out I have this morning recived a letter from Henry he complains of his health but trusts in his father whom he knowes will do all things wich may god in his mercy Bless you all it gives me great pleasure to reflect and think how (good god) is to us and how much better than I have deserved at his hand o how much have I to tell you if it should please god to spare us to meet again and if not I hope we shall meet where fretting shall be no more and how I long to see you some times I feel as if I could fly away - I am Greved a[s]William has had no taste for learning and where he is he is not made to feel its want it is my opinion that he will grow up quite a stupid boy and make a poor trades man if spared ( ) he is now a big boy and when (he) left me in greaffreinett he was a much better scholar than he now is (any bottle Boy) might beat him in his Books yet he is not what might be termed a bad boy he is obedient and docile as a baby you might do what you please only give him good words and with the Norvals he is a great favourite the praise him much his want of learning is to them nothing but to me it is painful and it is of no use to talke to him as he fancys he is obliging you to learn not considering that it is himself that must ultmitly feel the loss the thought of school is like sending him to prison adieu may god Bless (you all and may) he grant me the pleasure to see you all amen your Mother
H Dennison
I had forgot you had the measles on Bord of ship as we were going to england and therefore your Baby will not have them as long as he is on the Breast but if it is weaned then it is likely to catch them
I am Happy to say that I am quite well that is to say as well as old woman can feel

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[1] i.e. gradually.

13. H Dennison to Charlotte Colee Berg - septem 1st 1839.
Addressed to Miss Ch Dennison Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte Youre of august 7th I have this day recived as I came from church and as the contents are so serious I will not dalie in answering I did not know that your health was in such langor my dear the Journey if you could have taken it would have done you good the weather was very sever it is true and praps it is as well that you did not since I wrote to your brother I have been at deaths door nor did I ever think one time that I could recove[r] but B[l]essed be god I am now better my suffering for the time (was) great and add to that I had no servant (and) only Richard to do any thing for me however the lord fits the Book for the binder and he has promised not to lay more on us than we are able to bear and in my weakness I found his streath though it was with fear and trembling - my dear you are mistaken when you say no chapel true but we have to day had our first english sermon and Mr Wentworth has opened his house for sunday school I hope to have prayer meeting and class meeting and more I hope as the Banner Begins to be unfurled to see a alter erected here and that we shall have the advantages of Grahams Town for why should the Bread be given to one place and not to others[1] as of now the Gospel is to spread and difuse it self untill it covers the earth as the warters do the deep then the Weslens are the most industrious in the common acception of the word they should separate more and not keep so close I own to I have not done what I could but praps I have hindred by my example in times past may the father of mercies forgive me and I trust he has o for grace to praise him as I ought you must know that I never had so good Opertunyte of doing well as I now have and I do not think it would be right to leave here altogether but if the lord spares me and all thing can be made right I will come with Mr Wentworth as I long to behold you all I have heard from Henry - ( ) before I close this I will get you a recipt wich you must begin to use and soon as you can[2] I will now bid you good night it is late -

Monday morning my Dear how could you say dont chide me when did you know me to be cross with sick people true I was so with you often and some times very unjustly but o what are we pray forgive me and pray for me that I may be able to hold on my way in the faith of our Lord and savour you know that I to often indulged in a glass of wine now though I could not endure it in another yet such was my propensyte that I could not leave it off and when this offerd I thought it a good opertunyte to leave off that cursed vice yet I did not begin as I ought to have done no I still tasted the sweet morsel under my tounge but blessed be god I have now broken through the snare that has so long held my soul in fetters as it were that was the reason I did not like to live in grahams Town I feared the base Idea of becoming a comn drunkard o what cause for thankfulness (that) I was not left to follow the evil desire (nearest) my own heart my Dear if I am (spared) (and) permited to behold you again I have (such a) tale to tell you give my love to the (others) and to all friends you must begin with the prescription imediatly and leave

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[1] See supra, Chapter 5, p.98.

[2] According to J. Dunbar, one of the functions of the Victorian mother was both to know what remedies were required for treating minor ailments, and how to prepare the remedies.
[J. Dunbar, op. cit., p.33].

the rest to a all wise providence if it is his will he will bless it to you and O that it may is the prayer of one who if I had wings would fly imeadatly to you I lament that I must wait so long theare is a missionary lady coming here for me to attend her and I must wait untill it is finished so that it will praps be 2 Months before I leave this I have seen Mr Ried and his precept you must put in practice it has brought more than 40 females round in one year now may the father of mercies bless and help you is the prayer of your Mother H Dennison

14. G Dennison to his daughter Charlotte Fort Beaufort 6th Oct^{r} 1839. Addressed to Charlotte Dennison at Mrs Nicolls Grahams Town.

D^{r} Charlotte

Having heard that Henry has gone to Cape Town : provided you have had a not[e] from him pray send me the particulars by return of Post : has I am not certain of remaining here any length of time -

Pay best respects to all the Children I hope they are all well -

I am recovering from illness occasioned by cold -

Yours

Most affectionately

G Dennison

15. H Dennison to Ann Coles Berg October 10 [1839]
Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Ann it is with regret that I now must state that it is imposniable for me to come down with Mrs Wentworth° there being women coming out of the country for me to attend this is what I chiefly want as there are a great many that would come but have no place to lodge in now convenient to me is a room and as it is accessable it is an inducement for them you cannot think what a disapointment it is to me yet such as I must submit to now if you please to instruct Elizabeth to come and if (Charlotte is not) married tell her to (come too) [.....] * I had aranged every thing to go down you can fancy how disapointed I am yet buisness must be attended to if Charlotte can bring a few things with her it will do me well I think in a former letter I have stated a few articles wich would suit this place and as time is short will leave it to charlotte what to chose I would wish a few ells' of french white satton and some Grecian net for caps a few fancy collars all must be of the cheapst sort bordering and card for piping gloves the open sort and others for sumer Mrs Giddy has bespoke some of the sattin I have a corrospondance over the river and am often enquired of for many things that we fetch [.....] Mr Dixon has offered me 25£ pound goods out of his shop at my own time Mr Bedford° as much as I will take and the others the same if it had been possiable for me to have goone down there were a person wh[o] was to have lent me fifty £ on interest to buy a few things as I (sell) best but I have not taken it thinking it best to try first a little and then when ch is here we can consult about the best way if she is not intending to mary lett her (come) here she will not repent I am certain dolls with leather bodys marble toys of various sorts I cannot say how soon Mrs W will leave this all her children have been ill I have better and before she comes I will have [.....] *your aft mother H Dennison

I rote to Charles a long wile since but the Gent has not answered me Mr and Mrs Orchard° is arived

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* The lower portion of the first page (recto and dorso) of this letter has come adrift at the fold and been lost.

* The lower portion of the last page (recto) of this letter has come adrift at the fold and been lost.

1. See infra p. 157.

16. H Dennison to Charlotte coals Berg tuesday Nov the 3rd 1839. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahams Town.

My Dear charlotte you will begin to think I have forgot but I have a deal to attend to first I have a shop to look after and then my own business and my health is by no means good on Monday last I was taken very Bad so that those about me thought me dead but blessed be God he has sent me back a little longer and O may he grant that the residue may be spent to his Honour and glory I answerd the same day that I got yours recived one from Henry and now I have one from Ann now I have a fine lott to answer at one time you ask why I will not come to Gr T it was my intention but the lord has orderd it otherwise that is you know when I gave up Mrs Stretchs house I did not intend to remain in Graff yet by som mean I could not get away and it is Just so here the other day there was a (stopt) Monday ( ) Just got a letter from poor George I am very much greved on his account do my dear if you have any influence try to perswade him to come here they may not like to come here on the acount of there being so few english but they are increasing and Mr Wentworth is a Blessing to the place if there were a few more such lights in this place it would be good for it I am happy to say that since the sunday-school has been established here Wm bogins to learn H is learning fast and it is different here to Graaff the people here send their children and seem glad he likes sunday school there seems a kindred feeling in it I have reason to bless sunday schools and Mthodism for me and mine I have a shop to attend and my own Buisness beside that is not much as the place is small but I have what there is as there are none to opose me yet it will take me long to get out of dept Miss (Riadiasm) wishes me to state that she do not like to attend to some letter that was sent to her (concerning) dept the Lady is very ill at (present) and cannot be spoken with (so I) cannot give you any particulars give my love to Elizabeth and charles and the rest when the lord will lett me go to your town I know not as if I am ever to be so priviledged is what I do not know at present farewell may the giver of all good bless you all and keep you with his word of grace wich is able to make you wise unto salvation amen

Your Mother H Dennison

I see I have mentioned my shop in tow places excuse all Blunders

17. G Dennison to his daughter Charlotte Fort Beaufort 5th Nov 1839. Addressed to Charlotte Dennison at Mrs Nicolls' Grahams Town.

D^r Charlotte

I recd your Kind note, and have to acquaint you that my health is Something better, we have nothing new here; Pray let me know how George came on with the Sale, my Kind respects to the Children I hope they are all well in haste -

Your very

affectiontly

G Dennison

18. G Dennison to his daughter Charlotte n.p. 4th February 1840. Addressed to Charlotte Dennison at Mrs Nicolls' Grahams Town.

D^r Daughter

I received your Kind letter and was glad to hear about William and Richard particularly : of course the others also; with regard to your employment I cannot interfere you are Old enough to act for yourself I hope you have not been hasty

No doubt you would all wish to see me, but that cannot be for the present, I should be glad if Richard could remain in Town but it is probable he will begone ere you receive this. My kind respects to all the children

I am D^r Daughter

Yours affectionately

G Dennison.

19. Ann Scanlen to her sister Charlotte n.p. June 22nd 1840. Addressed to Miss Dennison Grahamstown.

My Dear Charlotte

last week I heard that Mrs Roberts was ill but at first thought it was old Mrs R I was afterwards told it was Hannah[1] but that she was recovering it was not till Sunday however till I saw Mr fencham that I heard how very ill she had been I must say I felt and do still feel very much hurt to think among the many in town who claim Aliane to me not one could send me word that she was ill had she died there are some in town whom I think I never should have forgiven for had I been aware of her illness you would have seen me in town long ago be it remembered I am not A 100 miles[2] distant (but I do not blame you) I also heard by accident and was thankfull to hear it altho by accident that Henry was in town but I suppose that must do me till duty sends him past my door as I live so far away - if you have heard any news concerning Chas[3] you will oblige me greatly by letting me know be it whatever it may I have been on the lookout now ever since thursday -

Please do let me know how Mrs R is how you are and whether mary is any better also if Henry is well

Give my love to all our friends and accept the same from your affectionate

sister Ann

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[1] Ann Scanlen's sister-in-law, Hannah Scanlen, had married Samuel Roberts on 4 June 1832. [G.T.J., 8 June 1832, p. 4, column 3].

[2] Salem was 16 miles from Grahamstown. [Almanac, 1845, p. 291].

[3] Charles Scanlen appears to have been a wagoner among other activities. [cf. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte, n.p. [1841], infra, p. 155].

20. H Dennison to Georg coals Berg July the 10th [1840]. Addressed to Mr G Dennison Jun Grahams Town.

My Dear Georg it was not my intention to write but Mr Rawstorne called on me this Morning to ask if your sister Charlotte would wish to come here on a visit there is a lady leaving grahams T for this place and wants a traviling companion Mr R will refer the Lady to her (she) can use her own pleasure if she wishes to come here there is every encouragement for young people and particluar such as ch should she accept tell her to bring plenty of ribbons and cheap lace coulourd and white as also muslin or any thing in the Millinery rang this is only if she [wants to] give my love to your wife and to all the children and accept the same yourself I have not time to write or I would send a long letter I write by this post to charlotte but at that time did not know of this

Ever your Mother

H Dennison

I hope you have heard from Norval

21. H Dennison to Charlotte Coals Berg Sep tem 5th 1840. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahams Town.

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youre of 20 inst I with pleasure acknowledge I could not form any idea why you should not write I called to mind all that passed when in town and then thought it must arise from want of time or it might be that there was something that you would not lett me know I am very sorry to hear that Mrs Roberts has been so ill much more so to hear that you are so but my Dear this is another spur to us to remind us that this is not our home and if it [were] what a sory one what rest have we in this world of teare paine and griefs glory to God we have a building not made with hands but eternal and in the heavens there he stands our name is writen in his hands we can no longer doupt O my love help me to praise him for I am as one harp out of due season I blese and praise the name of the lord that I [have] no desire to remain here only to fulfill my duty wich I owe to my children yet I am aware that it is him and he alone that has taken care of them hitherto and to him I resign them Saturday Morn Mr Wentworth will write this post to Henry if he comes here there is a good opening for a shoe Maker and we want useful young men here should it be that he accepts the invitation and you come with him it will do me good there is now no excuse as we have the means of grace and again you could get a good living here and be very useful in this place Mr Holden will be very glad of Henry for the Native he has not opened a school yet for them for the want of teachers I commit it to the lord and feel perswaded he will do what is right and lett his will be done o my Dear what a comfort when we feel resigned to do his will we have then a shield that the adversary cannot fight against I must bid you adieu it is Just 6 O clock and I must open my shop

7th Just recived letters from Ann (and) Charles now I feel a little better I hard this evening a fine discourse (on) straight is the gate and wide is the way that leads to distruction Mr H was plain and as he in genral is grand o may the lord follow with his blessing the word adieu I must write this post to George give my love to elizabeth and charles the rest your Aft Mother

H Dennison

22 Ann Scanlen to Charlotte n.p. [1841].

Dear Charlotte

I am glad to hear from you but very sorry to find you are so poorly I am happy to hear that Mr (and) Mrs Roberts are getting better I hope the change of season will prove favourable for them - I am not very well I have caught cold I hope to be better tomorrow - poor S Gardnor is ill indeed her mother went to town last week and kept her at Hezekiahs in bed they returned on friday and found her worse, on Sunday JS told me he should try and take her to town the following day he said he had long wished to do so accordingly they carried her from her bed to the waggon on monday and brought her here the change did her much good she slept with me that night and the next morning dressed herself and walked out to Breakfast 10 o'clock they started when on how they got to town I do not know for the rain set in that day our Sarah is with them last night I recieved A letter from Charles he intends being home to night if possible Henry and Mary[1] are with the waggons and will be here next week they left cradock last monday - I send you another letter from mother which came to hand last week Mrs Wright is now in Salem having returned from reed fountain and looks charming -

Yours very affecionately
Ann

H.G[2] - not know last Sunday whence was his appointment he had no plan

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1 This probably refers to Henry and Mary Dennison. Henry Dennison married Mary Gardner on 27 January 1841. [E Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy].

2. This probably refers to Hezekiah Gardner, brother of Mary and Sarah.

23. H Dennison to Charlotte coals Berg feb 1st 1841. Addressed to Miss Ch Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

Dear Charlotte Your of the 5 inst with H of the 4th I received last post wich was the 25 so do not begin to quaril with me for not answering you sooner there are a good many here that would quaril with you if you were here for taking your Mother from them I do not know what this place will do when I am gone (though) it is not enough to live on at (present) yet it is a great deal better then Graaff was and is encreasing and with the shop makes me tolorable easy yet I see with you that when a thing like this is offerd[1] it is duty to accept it as it plainly appears to come direct from god and who am I that I should wish to have my own way no my Dear the Lords will be done by me on this earth wile he lends me breath and oh may I never live to do or think my own again it is my only wish to live to the honour and glory of god and as to where I am to spend the rest of my days I lave that with him who knows what is best for me hitherto he has taken care and will I am sure do what is best I shall if spared see you all soon I shall make that an appology for not writing more so adieu give my love to all the family wich is getting to large to particularize by name your aft Mother

H Dennison

I am glad that Ann is better

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[1] cf. George Dennison to his daughter, Charlotte, n.p., 4 February 1840. [Supra, p. 151.]

24. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Borg [1841]. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte I (have received) yours of June 8 you see how [long it takes] A letter to travel here thro neglect of post or what els I know not now for buisness first shoes I will not requir till I come but the silk if you can match it do get 3 or 4 ells[1] of it and keep it till I come Mrs Wentworth has made up her mind that she will in on town the end of september leave this in that case I shall in all probilyte be at liberty to go with her I have now Mr and Mrs Giddy and family with me bording it happend very opertunytly there being a house next to mine to lett Mrs G came for me but so very feeble that she is not able to attend house concerns and I have undertaken it for a month you can form an idea how I must be situated [I have not merely] to attend to my own [shop business] and needle work all [of which have to be] done to get a living and then (I must co)mbend with a unkind world but glory to God my strength is with him who will bring me out of this unkind world in his own time tho lett it frown or smile it is Just the same to me I have in this place many foes and frinds some the lord has humbled so that they were obliged to come to me to beg my pardon o what fools doth envy make of Mankind in general my prosperity in my calling is the grand cause why the[y] hate me and would take it away if they could I cast my self with my care on him who has hitherto sustaind me and know he will not lett me be opressed above measure I cannot now be more explicit but when I see you will if the lord spares me explain all Dear charlotte I find by your letter that the young m(an) (was so) unfortunate as to displease you th(ough all of) his friends are sory for it his free [and easy ways are the] last to be considerd for it is not (right that such) persons (should) marry but to one above [the heavenly father who] is the only person to be considerd (as both) worthy and industress and (the giver) of (all good) consider my Dear girl what you (as a woman) have given him hope and if you (feed) that hope it may be sereious to [your hope that you] may marry and get a good hus(band) (one day) you will never be able to (get rid of) the thoughts at the affection (you) have had for him and that alone may (bring) you happyness again my dear (girl I am) concerned what will a world (say) if Charlotte Dennison can treat a (man) in that manner so may I she is (bound to) consider (this) pray consider this may be (it is true) if he loves you he will be glad to see the smile again visit the face on his entrence do not mistake me and think I have changed my views concerning your intended visit o no the lord knows that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be once more surounded by my daughters and sons a blessing that seems to be denied me Mrs T Halems is brang here I confined her last week she has got 3 children 2 daughters and a son now the last being a daughter give my love to Ann and Sarah and kiss the little ones for me and if you please give the reconciling kiss to the poor discarded lover your Mother

H Dennison

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[1] An ell was a measure of length varying in different countries. The English ell = 45 inches. [The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford, 1897). Vol. III, p. 92.]

25. H Dennison to Charlotte Coale Berg July the 4 1841. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte I did not intend to write untill I heard from one of the nine or ten of you but now I am sent for to Mrs Cameron[1] and must go tho at a great risk I am bound to appear at the next circuit against a maid that thought proper to steal some of my things wile I was at grahams town and if I cannot be back at that time I shall lose 25£ as well as the fine that the Judge can lay on me for contempt of the court the above sum is securyte ~~given~~ for me it being known that I was going over the river to live and should it happen that I cannot come in time the moment that the authorites can lay hand on me to prison. I must go no Bail will then be taken Just look at me oh that I had never had any thing to do with over the river concern it is not in my power to state the grief that I have had and to mind the matter I have not given sattisfaction to mr and mrs Holden owing to their own impatience and ignorance of what a woman may sufer in labour it appears to me that they had set a time for Mrs H to be deliverd and never thought that it was to be as the Lord would have it[2] but as they wished and that Mrs H could not suffer more than they thought possiable yet the lord has shown them that he can give strenth to the weak as well as the strong their barbarity to Mrs Reid[3] has spread it self far and near to think that one woman Just delivord and after a sharp labour would deny to another the help within her reach and that without doing an inconvenss to her self seems hardly possiable yet it is so it is Just 3 months since I was in town and I have not had a line from any one of you strange very strange I see by the grahams town Journal Mrs Penny has an addition to her famioly of a daughter[4] I hope that if I ever should have the happyness to see that there will be a host of grandchildren about her she seems so fond of them it will be no trouble to her to have them I hope Ann is better tell her that we forgot the caffee untill I arived here and then it was to late her tea also was left behind as it is yet in the same bag untoched do not neglect to write as the letters can be(forwarded)to me from

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[1] At Platberg. [B.C.M.(d) p. 57]. She was the wife of the Rev. James Cameron.

[2] Elizabeth, wife of the Rev. W.C. Holden, Wesleyan Minister at Colesberg, had given birth to a son on 6 June 1841. [G.T.J., 10 June 1841, p.1, column 5].

[3] The Rev. Holden's period of residence at Colesberg was a short one, perhaps because of ill-feeling in the town. He had arrived at Colesberg on 22 May 1840 [B.C.M.(d), p.54]. By December 1841 it was resolved at the Annual District Meeting of the Preachers of the Bechuana Circuit, 'that Br Holden be placed at the disposal of the General Superintendent,' and that Rev. Bingham should succeed him at Colesberg. [B.C.M.(d) p.57].

[4] This refers to the marriage at Salem of Mrs. Penny's son, Charles Penny, to Ellen Walker, eldest daughter of Richard Walker, of the Beka, Wesleyan Mission Station in Caffreland, on 8 June 1841. [G.T.J., 24 June 1841, p.1, column 5].

this place and as useal give my best respects to Mrs and Mr Gardner I regret (that) I had not the pleasure to see her when I was with you hope I shall yet see her and all of you my sprits bear me up yet I am now and then cast down sometimes would give any thing for a good cry and when I begin I am sure to have some one come in on me and chide me for my foly I am stoping in the house of Mrs Norval° they are very kind to me as are many more in this place may the lord reward them how glad should I be if I could get a little advice from charles scanlen[1] at this time but that is impossible farewell May the Lord Bless and keep you all in love and in his favour wich is better than life amen is the wish of Your Mother H Dennison

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[1] Charles Scanlen must have had some knowledge of law because by 1849 he was mentioned as being 'in legal practice at Uredoek'. [A.P. Hattersley, A Victorian Lady at the Cape 1849-51. p. 79].

26. H Dennison to George N.P. (1842.)
Addressed to Mr G Dennison Grahams Town.

My Dear George I surly thought you before now would have writen to me but I find I must take up the pen if you can Let me know oranges are selling as I am promised a half waggon load and say if you think I can get any thing to bring back the expence of waggon hire is so very great I hope you are well I long to hear do pray write by return of post tell charlotte that all the people here is anxious to see her every day some one or other inquire when will ch come and when I say praps never the[y] say impossable can she throw away her Mother so but but as in casting away one parrint she has found another and that a heavenly one I cannot complain seeing as I plainly do that I am still to wade through deep warters I had placed to (much) confidence in flesh it was (right) that the Almighty should take away my Idols I hope I trust I never will be found loveing the creature more than the creater it cost me many a pang to part with her and many tears have been shed on her acount wich I hope will never be the case again if there must be tears oh may the[y] be to a much better purpose now I feel that burden that weighed me down removed and a happy state of mind may the lord continue his work in my heart and I trust the remainder of my short life to be spent in praising my god and king as I hope to see you soon (I) shall reserve what I have to say till then being in haste your

aft Mother
H Dennison

I have opend the Letter March is arivd says Ann is better thank god for all his Mercys Amen

27. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg Jenary the 28th 1842.

My Dear Charlotte I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of two pieces of letters from you you see I am back here and if I could stay am very much wanted yet I cannot as I am engaged to cross the river again on the beginning of March I was happy to hear that it went well with Mary[1] hope she is quite recovered you seem in your remarks to me to be in expection of my being down that cannot be for as soon as I arived here I was made fast so that I could not leave if I would the poor womin are so glad that the[y] can get sight of me once more and as to the case of elizabeth my Dear I will not lett her go out again she can come and live with me if I have little she will share that if much it is the same - I had given up my employment in the socity yet if another cannot be got I am willing to remain that rests with them should they not keep me it is my intention to take up my ressidence in cradock or somerset I am not as yet decided you by this time is if not quite settled I should think pray lett me know and where you will be settled - I have often wished that you could have seen some of the grand sights that are to be seen on the other side of the river a few days before I left the Mantatee[2] station I with Mr and Mrs Taylor[3] assended a very high Mountain to behold the dragga Berg[3] wich for Grandeur surpasses all you ever saw the hight of the Mountain that we were on is considerable greater than those of Graaff rienett[4] and the view on all sides grand indeed I quite enjoyed it Monday last feb I find time will not permit me My Dear to write more as I have many notes to write by the waggon to different persons over the river you may prahaps see me in May or June or you will know the reason in haste

give my love to all friends your Aft
Mother H Dennison

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[1] This probably refers to Mary Hannah, Joseph Gush's sister, who had married Philip Amm. [see infra, Appendix C, p 234].

[2] (Imperani) This could refer to one of the four 'Mantatse' Stations under the supervision of Rev. Francis Taylor - Imperani, Sevumelo, Umpukani or Moting. [B.C.M.(d) p. 69].

[3] The Drakensberg.

[4] The Sneeuwberg Mountain Range.

28. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte thursdnight Salem May 4th 1842. Addressed to Miss Dennison Grahams Town at Mr I,C, Wrights.

My Dear Sister

I this evening received youre by Mr Richards, I am exceedingly sorry to hear of your recent severe illness but thankfull that you are better I have been in A dreadfull state of alarm ever since tuesday night I sleep tis true, but then I am scared with frightfull dreams: in my sleep I see the horrors of war to perfection; Battle, Murder, and sudden death. However we have heard some very alarming[1] reports not am at all soothed by the contents of your letter and the news Mr Ro brings I do not believe we have been unnecessarily alarmed or are yet safe to tell the truth I heartily wish I could get to town. I am laughed at finely by my next neighbours, but they have not little children to look after, and their property tolerably secure inasmuch as they are not living under A thached roof and then there are 2 men living under that secure roof while I am here in a thatched house Defenceless Mrs B told me I have no faith, I confessed I had not, either in the word of a kaffir or that of the British Government she said she did not believe that the kaffirs would ever kill the Salem people[2] I hope her faith will not be in vain but told her I thought I should live to see the day when she would sing A Different note Give my love to all friends and to Elizabeth and Mrs Wm Roberts

Your very affecttionate
sister Ann Scanlen

I here James has returned but have not seen him Philip Penny intends to say something to you for making words between him and his sister About the basins I think its A pity you should have said any thing about it, because its making yourself enemies and beside its medling with what does not concern you I intend writing to Chas Scan[lon] next week if I Do not Get [to] town.

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1 The Grahams Town Journal (28 April 1842, p.2, column 3) referred 'the turbulent proceedings' of the Caffres on the frontier which probably provoked Ann's fear and anxiety.

2 During the Sixth Caffre War (1834-5), Richard Gush, later Charlotte's father-in-law, faced, unarmed, 500 Caffres in the neighbourhood of Salem. He gave them bread and they went away. [The Life of Richard Gush, an African Emigrant]. This gave rise to the belief that the Salem people would never be killed by Caffres, and it was true, although their livestock was often stolen.

29. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg May the 16th 1842.

My Dear Charlotte I have Just recived a letter from George wich informs me that Elizabeth have contrary to my wish gone to grahams town and that she is with a Mrs Robberts this has deranged all my plans for my comfort and here also how can it be possiable that she can act s[o] O my God is there no comfort left for me in this world has my children risen up against me is it not enough that I have had so much sorrow but they (must) ad to it by disobedience o elizabeth o elizabeth o elizabeth if you could see the heart you have wounded perhaps you might be sorry[1] have mercy on her farther of mercys my overcharged heart can find no relief god of love keep me I will try to compose my self and resign my self to the care of the lord hoping that he will enable me to keep my reason that I do not go out of my mind

your aflicted Mother
H Dennison

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[1] cf. supra, Chapter 3, p.61.

30. H Dennison to Charlotte coles Berg May the 1842.

My Dear Charlotte as there has been no post last week I now write by the wagon and now to you a invitation again to come here for a few months you could return in the spring or sooner if you wished and bring if you can some articles of Milenery such as Grecian net and binding for caps and ribon of various coulers the ribon to be smart satin flowers and fancy nett with a few shapes for bonnetts should you be able to bring a few cariage (shalls) the[y] would be sell here and the name of Miss D ariving from G town with Milinery would set the young ladys flying I do believe if you could come it would do you good and me also for I intend to enter into that line in a small way and have good encouragement to begin your coming with a few articles of that kind would be the begining of better things what you bring of course is your own do not think I invite you to gain by your industry no or to make merchandize of you having understood by George that you are yet unmaried I thought if you would come here for a few months it would be good for bothe me and yourself again if you come bring Elizabeth with you her not coming with Richard Is at this time five pounds loss to me to say the least of it it is more but I wish to think it is small as I can that it may not greve me more than it does should you come Elizabeth can come with you I will send a lamb skin sewed up in a bag if you do not or cannot come it may be possiable that E will not like to come alone though she might as the driver is a very good man with you she would feel quite safe last monday I was with Mrs Bingham° Mrs B has a daughter I left a little Maid in the house to look after it but no sooner than I left she was off and left the house open to all that might chose to enter with so much^of other peopls goods in it is no small hindrance to me to be without some one to mind things wile I am absent Just fancy how I must feel after a hard days work to have to make fire and cook what I want when I return and you know that I am at no time over fond cooking this I would have no need to do as I can get plenty of Maids but I want some person to take charge wile I am absent and to direct them Charlotte do not Misunderstand it is not my wish to prevent you from being married but if it is not to take place so soon you might as well come here till the spring and then you can return I will arange to return with you I rote to charles to come here you will know what he means to d[o] to stay in town I do not think is right and I think that your needle work is backward bring it with you and here you can make ready much better than in the house of a stranger do not lett me send in vain for you both or all three you need not be frightened my house is large enough and in church street I know you will be surprised when you see how I am situated - I send a piece of silk for you to match get me five ells of it and one or 2 pair of double sole shoes no 2 pr if you can should you not come send them by the Waggon with a bill and I will pay Mr Wentworth° get you a order on Mr King for the Money poor James (Meiring) is thrown into great distress by the suden death of his young and buesatyful wife he is left with one child they had scarcely been maried 2 years she had prepard to come here to me to attend he[r] but the lord thought otherwise - I am quite certain if yo[u] can come here with about ten pounds of goods such as I have described in the former part of this letter it will do you good and be the means of establishing me as I will contrive it after you leave if this is full of blunders it is to be excused as it is writing chiefly by night give my love to all friends tell E not to be alarmed or afraid to meet my anger is soon over and now I wish very much for her and am quite anxious for her to do her good it is not often that a Mother pleads in Vain with her own children and those that have been children of so many prayers nor do I think that I will plead in vain with you adieu may god bless you all is the prayer of your Mother

H Dennison

31. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg June the 26 1842. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte

I have to acknowledge the recipt of youre as also Anns which I have this day got I thank God that I feel much better than when I last rote Anns letter gives me some concern on your acount but as I am not in possession of any particluers I can say nothing yet I had hoped you had a prospect of being comfortablely setled in life of course you are the best Judge of the affair you are aware that I am at no time pleased with any person who plays with the feeling of another put it to ourselves and then we can Judge how we like it should this business of youre take an unfavourable turn come with me when I come to town and here you can be a help as well as company and quite your own Mistress I do not invite you as a child but as a companion you can get plenty to do here and your earnings will be your own should it not suit you you can but return it is quite different to Graaf reinet as you will find when you see it should you again come here are the means of Grace with A most agreeable Minister[1] and his lady Many other things that make it pleasant do make the trial yet I hope you will make it up and get Married[2] if not you must come the change will do you good as I am pressed for time and will conclud wishing you all the happyness you stand in need of your Mother H Dennison

32.

My Dear Ann I have Just received youre and Sarahs it gives me some comfort to think that the lord still binds us together in love you say if I were near you it was my intention to go to town but was over perswaded to remain where I was and the prospect is good but alone I cannot live the work Is to severe without help what is a child by itself as my Richard is and when I am out people whant me or things I have got no one to give answer to them my loss is great I am Just getting comfortable I have bought a feather bed wich cost 5£ and other articles in the house hold may now have to leave this those things would be sold at a loss again I assure you I have a very prety house in the Main Street the rent is 21 rd per Month with premises only to keep a Milliner shop no other will my charitable landlord grant because he keep one himself I must bid you adieu give my love to the children excuse haste Your Mother H Dennison I hope to see you soon

33.

My Dear Sarah

I am happy to think you have found courage to write you must often try and it will come easy I have delivered your Message to Dick and he says he gave the Book to your Brother C Scanlen and he left it at Henrys but he says that H promised to send it to you I hope your news is not true with regard to the ( ) as you are pleased to call ( ) person adieu with love to all ( ) little ones Richard sends his love to ( ) pretty hannah ( )

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[1] Supra, Chapter 5, p. 98.

[2] It has not been possible to establish who Charlotte's 'intended' at this juncture was.

34. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte thureday Bradock Oct 27th, 1842. Addressed to Miss Dennison Salem.

My Dear Sister,

I am happy to tell you that we arrived here safe and sound last night, we had A pleasant journey and no accident I have been very well nearly all the way I now feel tired I hope you are better leaving you poorly has given me much uneasiness Mary and Emily are well but poor little Aviline[1] is very ill with Dysentry I saw Father at Mr Trolips very well but very deaf quite sober and as Stif as ever - our passenger from England is no cockney he has been brought up to farmer is good looking and inteligent I think he has had what we call A good Education he bids fair to turn out A good colonist at all events he will not scruple to shoot kaffirs when they Deserve it I saw Mr Bonnin in Gstown and he was quite vexed at Sarahs leaving home I supose he is home by this time Hannah[2] and Emily are quite happy and seem well pleased with each other Ee bonnet will do, Johns hat is large I have not yet been out so cannot say any thing about Mrs Townsends but you had better send me bill of her work for realy I have forgotten all you told about prices of the hats and bonnets by sending me A bill you will furnish me with the means of setling with Mrs T for you comfortably A Dueth woman at whose house we stayed some hours yesterday was quite taken with my traveling bonnet and wishes you to send her two like it by Charles C sold my accordeon to the same people.

Monday

Dear Charlotte

I have only time to add that poor Jhon[3] died yesterday morning 7 minutes past 4 Mary bears it very well I hope she will continue to do so perhaps it will save her from getting ill she thinks of accompanying me to albany. now if you wish to put on A little mourning you know I have left at house full triming for it bonnet which I wore for Mr West it is at your service if worth accepting I do not know what to say about sarah if she can make that black check muslin that is in the big box she may have it. then a bonnet could you do any thing in that way with the silk I gave her for A tippet or do the best you can there is plenty of black ribbon and A little crape please to put A band on thos a hat and wine if you can (narrow for both)[4] How do what you can with whatever you find in the shape of Mourning there are two small Gauze Hand chfs and a tippet trimmed with crape take them between you and you are welcome I am sorry there is not more - poor Mr Standen - I long to hear how S__ G__ and Mrs B__ gets on pray give my best love to them all not forgetting the Pennys

really good bye your

effect sister Ann

love to sarah

Mrs Townsend has kindly taken little Jhons hat chargo her for it

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[1] Mary, Emily and Aviline were George Dennison's children. (Hannah's grandchildren.)

[2] Hannah was Ann's daughter.

[3] George Dennison's son. (Hannah's grandson).

[4] These brackets have been inserted by Ann Scanlen herself.

35. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte Cradock Nove 15th 1842. Addressed to Miss Dennison Salem care of Mr S Roberts Grahamstown.

My Dear Sister

I have to acknowledge the recpt of youre of 2nd inst and thank you I am thankfull to find from the general tenor of your letter that all were well at home you will see by the size of my paper that I do not mean to write A long letter - I was just going to tell you about the affliction of Mrs Hocklys family when the girl - I have just returned from assisting Mrs Hockly in laying out little Tom Mahony. O it was a distressing scene - last Friday he was A beautifull healthy looking baby I saw him. the first thing we heard on satturday morning was that he was ill with Dysentry, Mary went to see him, and came home with ah he is Just like my poor John was his heart is affected I did not take any notice of that, however she was right he has died of the same disorder and the same Dr attended him Maria Hockly is very very ill with Dysentry and Maryann Townsend also, both cases attended with fevr Mrs Mahony has also got it Alfred has got over it several Black children have died with it and many persons both black and white are now ill Thank God we are all well at Present those of our household that were ill are now through the divine Blessing and Dr Monros skill restored. old Mr Monro is getting better - he was almost gone so you see I have come for the Bennifit of my health into the midst of disease and death However I am better upon the whole and I must now exoersise faith and hope [in] all things. I heard from Mr White that mother is on her way up give my love to Charles, and the children, remember me kindly to all the Salem friends I Promised Fanny H some flowerseeds Please to send me the bag by Chas Farewell

I am youre very affect. sister
Ann

be carefull how you write I must show your letters.[1]

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[1] Presumably the letters had to be shown to George and Mary Dennison.

36. H Dennison to charlotte Coles Berg December 6th 1842. Addressed to Miss Charlotte Dennison salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear charlotte I am hapy to say I arrived safe a little more then a week ago found all well as regards my own concerns but not so with my patiants the 2 women I left were well over their confinement one was gone to her hous in the country the other was delverd Just 2 day before I came and a Mrs Rutman that I left poorly but not near her time Miscaryed and had a narrow escape for her life and James Bedford wife Miscaried and died this is the 2d woman that has died in childbed in this place since I have been here but blessed be god that I was not With either I am pleased to hear that no fault was attached to the person that attended her it was a dutch Midwife Mrs B was on a (risk) for her health and when I left was much better and preparing to return to Graaff[rnt] and they say the oxen were not to be found until friday and then Mrs B the Mother perswaded them to remain untill Monday or sunday (evening) they that is Mr and Mrs J Bedford walked down to the burying ground and returned still quite well but on Monday she was taken ill and about 12 oclock at miday delived the child lived one hour still there were no danger aprihinded she appeard doing well of course every attention that could be paid was not untill tuesday eveing did any one think but that she was doing well and then the Dr was sent for but all in vain she could get no relief it was at this period that many bitter complaints were made against me for not being at home yet I could have done her no good if the Dr and all the old wifs could not help what could I do - I opened my shop on Monday last and so far have received good encouragement the black serge is all gone and many enquiries for more the p[r]ints took s[o] well that I want a fresh suply of the small patermes as that is the rage here at present blue lilack buff pale pink but no stripes nor runers they are not saleable to the belles of this place it still continues very dry and the farmers are in a very u[n]setled state last week some evil disp[o]sed person threw stones at Mr Rewetrone[2] windows and broke several pains of glass greatly frightend Mrs R and her Mother who happend to be there but blessed be God did no other harm done.[1] I am not able to inform you when the waggon will be down as Mr W[2]waits for rain but pray do not let elizabeth engage again with Mrs Simpson Mr and Mrs Hayton kindly ofered to let her remain with them untill she could come up to me I hope that will be soon and hope to see you with her I hope and trust that Ann is better give my love to Sarah and the child

Adue in haste
your Aft Mother
H Dennison

Dear Charlotte how glad I shall be to see you And Elizabeth kiss sarah and Hannah Give my love to sister Ann

Ei Dennison

he wishes you to be one of his sponsers

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[1] Supra, Chapter 3, pp. 57-58.

2. Mr Wentworth.

37. Geo Dennison to his Mother Cradock March 6th 1843. Addressed to Mrs Dennison Coles Berge.

My Dear Mother

I Reed your kind letter pr Gardener and Es present for Emily for which Giver her my (Sunday) thanks on behalf of E : (She) had started for Grahan Town the day before Gardener arived It gives me much pleasure to hear that Charlotte is so well pleased with Coles Berge and that you are comfortable with your 2 daughters C is a kind hearted creature and will I know do her utmost to make you happy E wants a little more civilizing though she has been in the midst of civilization her[s] but has unfortunately been cast with the worst of Barbarians however She is not too old to learn and I hope by your united example and precept she may be induced to put off that acquired roughness for it is not natural and to adopt more of those amiable qualities which so much adorn the female character above all make her work dont let her have her own way.[1] She has had that too long as to your enquiry how I Get on I can only say as well as can be expected last year was one of trial and loss and although I have no cause to complain yet I am not so forward as I thought I should have been. I have a vast run of Buisness and it is a source of Pleasure to know that My work Gives General Satisfaction.[2] My customers are continualy increasing one heavy draw back I have that is house rent £48 per annum is no trifle to pay for the Privilege of living in a house You Say Orchard[3] is Getting on well if you can Judge for appearences I hope he is but appearances with them are no criterion they are all show no Substance.. in Grahs.[s] Town directly after his Goods were sold they were Stalking about the Town in appearence equal to the Greatest man there in fact it was too Great an appearence that brought him to the buisness - as far as I can Judge My Stand here is preferable to Coles Berge and I think I Should be doing wrong were I to remove unless it were for a <u>certain</u> better Prospect having waded over the roughest part of the road[3] and Get My self established I will now Stand and try what can be done - to morrow morning I Start for Somerset and on my return if possible leave immediately for Grahams Town My intention is to be there next Sunday I dont Know whether I shall (weekend) so far Give my love to Charlotte when she returns to Elizabeth and Richard and remember me Kindly to Mr and Mrs Read[s] Mrs Bingham[s] and (Mrs) Gilmer and <u>old</u> Mr Goodair[s] my old friend Goodair = accept the kind love and best wishes of your affectionate Son

Geo Dennison

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[1] <u>Supra</u>, Chapter 5, pp. 90 - 91.

[2] George Dennison was a wagoner. <u>Supra</u>, Chapter 2, p. 30.

[3] cf. <u>Supra</u>, Chapter 3, p. 41.

38. Ann Scanlen to Charlotte Salem, March, 12th, 1843. Addressed to Miss Dennison Coles Berg Kindly favourd by Mr Gardner Jun.

My Dear Sister

I received your favour by Mr Short and suppose you have ere this got mine by post written previously I am extremely happy to hear you are once more happy, and in favourable circumstances the reverse of all that was the case with you here of late, and why? not because you deserve it. but because you were among false, Sister, I can pray for their final salvation and forgiveness but can scarce forgive them myself - I find you have been to graafrienet I dare say you missed many old faces and saw many new ones: - we have all ways something or some body to laugh at M G. got our letter, and we the news of James going to Colesberg about one time and although we knew right well his' going was purely accidental that was nothing he went and you was gone. Joseph and Margret laughed and I could not help it. - you will be surprised to hear that Mr Bonnin has returned to finish his days in Salem I am inclined to think they are but few.[1] he has been much worse up the country than he has been here since his return he has got so far better as to be able to sit up A little -

I have had a letter from Mrs Green she hopes should you come back, you will favour her with a visit not waiting for any further invitation. She tells me that when the little Stranger[2] will come she does not know, but will be glad to see it, for it is as usual a great deal of trouble to her Mrs Richards desired me to remember her very affectionately to you : she gave Wm Pikes' persuasives Mr R still Suffers A little from his leg. and I am afraid will while he lives I forgot to mention in my last what it would perhaps be well for you to know, Mr J.C.W** has been obliged to meet his Creditors they have given him 4, 8 and 12 months if you have not settled with him I would advise you to do so as early as possible - I have not had any hint though I take the libirty of giving you one -

now Lotty A little advise for yourself you express yourself as being quite pleased with the people of Colesberg and I doubt not but they are worthy good folk but be care full how you place confidence in strangers remember how you have been Deceived Persons whom you have thought Highly of and who placed confidence in you and thus recured yours and then ill used you let the past suffice wherein you have acted foolishly in this respect for the future strive to be wise as A Serpent and harmless as A dove let not the confidence placed in you tempt you to trust any one, you do not know well and even then be carefull, - you will say What now? well, I very much suspect that Mrs J,C, Wri____[3] was not quite so innocent as we thought her - I have received safe and sound the presents sent by Mother Richard and Elizabeth to the Children they were all highly Delighted but Hannah was nearly in an extacy she took her doll by the hand walked the room and Declared the doll could walk she next examined it and was delighted with every feature if I had such pretty blue [eyes] as them mama would I be pretty too? my hair does curl. fancy her conceit poor little Dear, she is now suffering from severe cold and bad cough I should be sorry to be bound to pay you all the

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[1] Mr. Samuel Bonnin died on 4 April 1843. [G.T.J., 13 April 1843, p.1, column 5].

[2] This word used in this sense was in common parlance in the Eastern Cape. [cf. Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Graaff-Reinet, 26 March 1838].

[3] Mrs. J.C. Wright.

** Mr J.C. Wright.

kisses she gives me for you. I must realy conclude now for my paper is full and I have got to write to mother yet give my love to E and H - also to Mrs Wentworth°

I am your affectionate
Sister Ann

You see I have written you A long letter dont grumble if I do not write again for 6 months - by the bye the <u>comet</u> have you seen it and what do you think does it Portend fire, sword or water.

Mrs Croft thinks we may have war, but she is not much alarmed She does not think it will be anything worse. Mr C says very gravely but the world is to be burned up by A comet Mr Anne and Charles thinks the old Gentleman might as well give us A lecture on the subject.

39. H Dennison to Charlotte Monday May 29 1843. Addressed to Miss C Dennison at Mr J C Wright' Grahams Town by favour Mr Wentworth' wggon (If Miss Dennison is not in Town please to send this back again).[1]

I blive[2] no post as yet and as I must close this I beg in (respect) of your sister not coming you will send the bag back as I shall want it in the spring if I live so long do not send it open as the people might use it and that will not be pleasant the silk if you can get and shoes put in the (bag) give (thought) not to lett wet come near

once more (adieu) (your)

Mother H Dennison

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[1] This letter appears to have been a hasty additional scribble to another letter, which has been torn off.

[2] 'I blive' is written near the top right hand corner of the page. There is a large gap then 'no post...' follows.

40. Geo. Dennison to Charlotte Cradock June 12 1843. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Coles Berge.

Dear Charlotte

Recd yours of the 27th of last month and thank you for all your good wishes I fully agree with you that my circumstances might have been better than they are if I could have dispensed with the Doctor but as that has been utterly impossible my having never employed that Gent until it was absolutely necessary I think you are very much out of place in writing on that Subject it is not long Since I was compeled to employ a Doctor in behalf of my dear little boy[1] for whose Death every pore of my heart Still bleeds Scarcely had I closed his Grave when it became again absolutely necessary to call in the aid of that Gent in behalf of myself without whose assistance humanly speaking I too should have been consigned to the Silent tomb = (now) what can you think where my falings on reading your letter. I looked back on the last 5 years of my life I saw the Sea of trial and affliction through which I have been led much more than any of my brothers or Sisters have ben caled on to endure = these I can bear: but to be lectured by the more fortunate branches of my family is unbearable I have the Satisfaction to know that no unnecessary expence is ever incured in my family I am compelled to incur expences which many are not : but my misfortunes ought to draw from my family Sympathy and not rebuke = where you the first of my kin who had lectured me about Doctors bills I should think little of it but this is not the only time I have been told about employing the Doctor = your letter is intended for Mary personaly not me = I would have you to understand that with M. I have lived happy ever Since our mariage[2] and from her family I have received Kindness Such as I never received any one of my own and that no attempts on the part of any person Shall cause a disunion between us in future allow me the privelige of Spending my money as I think proper = the other part of your letter I cannot comply with as the coppy which I have of canaan is imperfect or you should have it Kind Love to Mother and accept the same from your affect[nt] Bro

Geo. Dennison

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1 This refers to his son, John, who died of dysentry on 30 October 1842. [supra, p. 166.].

2. George Dennison had married Mary Webber ± 1837. [supra, Chapter 3, p.41.]

41. C Scanlen° to Charlott Salem July 5th 1843 -
Addressed to Miss C Dennison Colesberg.

Dear Charlott

Your letter to Ann with an inclosure of Eighteen Pounds Eighteen Shillings. Draft on Mr Shaw° came safe to hand you no doubt expected an answer from Ann herself But at Present it has pleased God to Order it Otherwise And it is Him only who Knows if ever her hand will address you again. I Fondly Hope it may be so But Charlott it is Only hope with what different feelings did I write to you but a few weeks ago when I Said that her health so much Better than it had been for Some years Previous But how vain were our hopes how soon has the prospect Changed About a fortnight ago She had an attack of her old complaint which brought her very low when the dessentry came voiclently on and S[t]ill remains Tomorrow by the advise of Dr Cambl[e][1] I Shall endeavour to remove her to Town as Camble cannot attend here at Present I cannot write much if it was the loss of All that I have been for years working for it would hardly cost me five minutes though But at Present I cannot controul my feelings. You may expect a line next Post When May it Please God to grant that I shall be able to Say my dear Ann is Better Which is the Sincere desire of your affectionate

Brother

C Scanlen°

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[1] This refers to Dr. Campbell.

42. M. Gush to Charlotte Salim July 9 : 1843.

dear Charlotte

I doubt not but you will be suprised to received a letter from me before you have answered my last but it is of necessity I write you thease few lines I am sory to inform you that your dear Sister Scanlin is ill of discentry she has now been bad for the last three weeks your Brother S came home on the 4 and finding she did not get any better we went for Campbell and as he could not attend her in Salem he thought it advisable to take her to Town you dear Sister left heare on the 7 she requested me to write and inform you of her illness with her best love to her dear Mother Sisters and Brother I hope My dear Lotte will not be alarmed as I do not think you have any cause for fear She wished me to inform you that she received your Mothers letter but was to poorly to answer it you must excuse my Saying any more as it is Saturday but as I thought an opportunity might afford of sending it tomorrow I have crawled thease few lines

I shall inclose the above and send it to your sister word if she is any better she will state Your loving Friend
M. Gush[1]

[1] Margaret Gush, Joseph Gush's sister.

43. C Scanlen to his Mother and Sister Grahams Town July 13 - 1843. Addressed to Miss Dennison Colesburg.

Dear Mother and Sister

I have just rec[d] your Kind letter. And what Shall I Say in answer the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away Blessed be the name of the Lord. What the Lord hath Joned togeather it hath Pleased him to part asunder from the time I wrote to you up to the present I never left My Dear Anns Bed Side Night or Day altho we had many Kind freinds. But She cant bear me out of her sight a moment. Neither take Medicine or nourishment except from my hand Dr Gamble did his Best And I fondly hoped while we had grounds for hope. She Still Breathes (Thursday 3-oclock)[1] Just as your letter came gamble informed me he could do nothing more. her pain is ceased and She is now Sinking into the Arms of her Saviour Dear Charlott you were uppermost in her thoughts. Accept her dying Love the Same to Mother and Elizabeth I cannot write much at present I never Knew what Trouble was before Ere you had these few lines the Happy Spirit will have taken its everlasting flight to Join that innumerable throng before the throne of God

I Remain your afflicted Brother

and Son. C Scanlen

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[1] These brackets have been inserted by Charles Scanlen himself.

44. C Scanlen to Charlott Grahams Town July 20 1843
Addressed to Miss C. Dennison Colesberg.

O What is death But Lifes Shore
Where pain and Sin Exists no more

Dear Charlott

In answering your letter of the 16th I Know that I am writing to those who can Shed with me the tear of Sorrow O the Scene the agonizing Scene which I have been called to witness Since I wrote to you last Week after I had written My Dear Ann revived alittle which once more raised my hopes But it was like the calm before the Storm which Soon blights all My fond hopes the inflamation in the Bowels returned again and Bid defiance to all medicine She Suffered Much up to about fourteen hours before her death when morification took place She was relieved from pain and a little before Eleven oclock on the night of Tuesday the 18th her happy Spirit took its Everlasting flight and returned to God who gave it tomorrow we Shall follow her remains to the Silent Tomb Shortly before She died she took my hand and Blessed God that ever we were united together few couples She Said lived as we had lived ten long years and not one unhappy day had ever intervened or Jaring word haped between us But now we were called to part She Said for My Sake She could wish to live if it was the will of God. But that She was resigned to his will and hoped I would give up the children She Said She could with confidence leave with me ading perhaps my Dear Sister Charlott will take charge of them. after this no words thought or care ever crossed her Mind for my own part I am worn down in Body and Distressed in mind for fifteen days and nights except one night that I was taken with voiolent vomitting did I remain at her Bed Side watching with anxious care every change of the disorder wheather for the Better or worse
Nor Could I Be Perswaided to leave her untill I had witnessed the cold Swet upon her Brow and closed her Eyes in Death She constantly floats Before my mind. I cannot Bear to turn my thoughts towards my own Happy home which is no longer home to me as for her Dying request that you would take the charge of our Dear children which I can asure you would give me great happiness I Shall leave entirely to yourself think it over and let me know what you think. The tie is Strong on either Side your poor Mother would feel it much parting with you especially now therefore I Shall leave it to you Own Judgement

Dear Sister I remain
Your Afflicted Brother
C Scanlen

My love to mother
and Elizabeth and
little ritchard

45. H.E. Atkinson[1] to Miss Dennison Colesberg Sept. 18th/43. Addressed to Miss Dennison Colesberg.

My dear Miss Dennison,

As Elizabeth will bring you a few eggs to eat on the road, I must again wish you a safe and prosperous journey. Parting with your dear Mother will be a severe trial to you both, but the belief that you are in the path of duty, and the consciousness that you are making this sacrifice for the good of others, will help to alleviate your grief. The trials we meet with in our passage through this vale of tears, plainly say that this is not our "Rest," happy those who are looking forward to one to come; this is your delightful privilege, therefore under all the painful separation in this world, you can anticipate the time when through the merits of your blessed Saviour, you will meet those you love in that world of bliss where farewells are sounds unknown. Once more farewell, may the Lord be with you (and) bless you, may the light of his countenance ever be lifted up upon you and may he make you exceedingly useful in that sphere to which he has called you, then will you be happy and contented wherever the bounds of your habitation may be fixed.

Believe me my dear Miss Dennison
Your Sincere friend and well wisher
H.E. Atkinson.

1. She was probably the wife of the Rev. Theophilus Atkinson.

46. S. Bingham to Miss Dennison Colesberg - October 14th 1843. Addressed to Miss C. Dennison To the care of Mr. L. Roberts Boot and Shoe Warehouse Grahams Town.

My dear Miss Dennison/

I sit down to write to you Last Eveing or rather I should say last Tuesday Eveing, but was taken very poorly and was obliged to send for your Mother in the night and continued for two day's and night's But I am thankful to say that I am much better though I still feel weak. I hope you are much better in health then when I last heard of you. I was afraid when you left that you was going to be poorly. John dear Mother is looking much better than she was a week back. I was very glad to hear from my sisters letter that you had such an obliging driver. I do not know that I have anything of an interesting nature to communicate to you. We have had a temperance meeting since you left.[1] Mr Ross one of the London Missionaries attended the meeting and made a grand speech. All of the nobs of Colesberg was there the sick lame and ( ). Mr and Mrs Intosh[2] continues to attend being regular the week Eveing Services Also I have sent the list I hope it will not be given you to much trouble to attend to it if there is any thing that Mr Shepperson's has not got, then please try at Mr Walkers pleased to tell them that they must [be] packed in a strong case. My dear little Boy is growing a fine fellow Caroline is quite well. - I hope you will write me a few lines in answer as soone as you can make it Convenient and tell me all the newes you scrape together. I missed you very much (and) was alway expecting you when (anyone) came to the door - that morning (you) left I could not fancy you was (left) for good. - Mr Bingham wishes (to join) me in kind love to you -

I remain Yours Most Affectinately

S. Bingham

P.S. In haste
Saturday morning.

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[1] Supra, Chapter 3, p.50.

[2] This probably refers to Mr. and Mrs. McIntosh.

47. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg Oct 6 1843. Addressed to Miss Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte

You have by this time hard that I have not been well as Mrs Bingham tells me that she Mentiond it in her sisters letter I do not know when I had so sever a bout of it and the day that I was some what better Elizabeth took ill and the babys nurse at the same time but blessed be God we are al well no I am not quite so for I have got the Reumathism and that bad in my hip and back a thing I never had in my life before we have had a good deal of rain wich I supose is the cause Mrs Bighams baby grew a fine boy throve and was to "apperance very healthy but on thursday last he was not quite so well on fridy they sent for the Dr Saterday he was very bad so much so that the [y] ( ) did not think it would recover Mr B came for me and I in so much pain that I thought I never could reach his house it rained haild and thunded but I went with his assistence and am pleased to say it is better though not well I am yet here and wanted at home my hip is a little better so that I can walk without a Stick - so far last night now my Dear Charlotte do not Giove nor think that if you were here I might be better attended though it should be so Elizabeth is good and attentive as well or better than We might expect o blessed be god I have Still some comfort and hope you know I do not eisley dispair you are where to all appearence Where god would have you - I hope charles is better as I have not heard though henry rote me last week he does not seem to know much about him if I had not heard from you and eD I should from the tennor of HDs letter be frightened but I hope it is better than all my fears wich have already cost me a fit of illness god is good in him is my trust and on him is my hope he will not treat a brused read no quinch the smoking (flare) therefore will I trust in his mercy praise him for all that is past and rely on him for what is to come I hope my Dear you will send me the thinge as soon as you can ther [e] is a very great Demand for fringe of all coulers a [n] d Mrs Mury wants white boll furniture fringe the Officers[1] wants green tea and still inquiring for coulourd neck ruffs Cap[tn] Yarbaurgh still enquires after you do pray if you can name a few her [e] dont think I mean the officers when you write as so many ask after you it is over old friends Mrs Klingbill as others Mrs (M) one eve last week come and sat in your chair looked round the shop and then sudenly said I wish Charlotte was here I replyed as soon as I could that she was not the only one that wished she would buy the (linen) ( ) Wool D lins[2] if I had fringe to Match (I am) att this moment at Mrs Binghams and yet the pain is still in my back and hip I cannot lift any thing not even the sick baby he is better I should say out of dange [r] bless the lord o my soul and praise his name do my Dear lett me hear from you soon Elizabeth and Richard Join in love to you and Dear Sarah give my love to the Dear children and to Charles and your friend Miss Gush and her dear Mother and all friends Mr and Mrs B love to you and your Brother CS I now adieu my Dear

Your Aft mother
H Dennison

tell Sarah I will write to her next week

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[1] Supra, Chapter 3, pp. 58 - 59.

[2] This probably refers to 'delaine,' a light textile fabric for women's dresses. The word first came into currency in 1840 and was short for muslin delaine from the French 'mousseline de laine' which literally meant woollen muslin. [The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford 1956) p.473].

48. H Dennison to sarah Coles Berg Oct 7th 1843.
Addressed to Miss sarah Dennison Salem near
Grahams Town.

My Dear sarah your information though a Mournfull one was by me very much prised it seemd to me as if it was impossiable that my dear Ann[1] could quit this vale of tears without mentiong me as I know tha[t] she loved me o my Dear you were highly privlged to be present in your dear sisters last illness and may the giver of every good grant that the advice there imparted may be bless[ed] to you in your life ever remember her pious walk and conversation ever keep her in your minds eye and so folow her as she followed christ her Dear redeemer with whom she is now set down in everlasting happyness my health is by no means good of late it is breaking fast and if I could think if all my Dear children were provided for my buisenees her[e][2] must be finished yet with that I know I have nothing to do as the promise is as my Day is so shall they strentch be then O lord thy will be done amen

your Aft Mother
H Dennison

49.

My Dear charlotte long before you get this you will have received a letter by the post inform you of most particluars the day your letter come I recived one from Mr Mury this for his 500 and 61rd without show of Money in the house trade is very dul the 2 (leds) are in the house that Mr Gordon has for Mr Mengthes[3] and Harding has opend a store so that the little trade that I had seems allamost gone adding to that my shop has very little in it yet with all I have paid him and can say bless the lord o my soul I have settled with Hugh of my first bill all but £3 that is ( ) Mr Wentworth all but £1 B[e]dford and Cook remains yet may the lord enable me to meet them with charles Mr gordons thing[s] are arived at the bay and will soon be here - we have comenced to wean tiberius Kich he is very good with it though if you were to hear him at this moment you would say not very good for he has a temper of his own but at night he sleeps well (and) eats all he sees near and demands his meals when he sees it about (just boss) In my late illness I experienced the greatest kindness from all partys the Officers where every day asking after me Mr Band your old friend (and) Captn yarbourgh Captn savage now is very particular in his enquires after you Mr Kich say he has a very great respect for you though you ar[e] somwhat particluar in your views if you were a weak mind my opietal would be dangerous thoug as it is I know it will not effect you I think I must say goodby for to tell you all that is said of you here is quite needless the people that know you wish you would come or that you would soon return

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[1] Supra, Chapter 3, p. 40.

[2] Supra, Chapter 3, p. 37.

[3] This probably refers to Mr. Meintjies.

Colesberg 7 Nom 1843

My Dear Sarah

as you are the only one that i have yet wrot to and as i have but little time now i cannot say much but the next time i hope that i shall let you re[ceive] more to read of it but if Miss gilmer is yet there pray kiss for me and Dear hannah and charlot and tell miss gilmer not to say now well im sure for the kiss i sent her for if she does not I am here and she in salam. Elizabeth say you must send her some (flower) seeds and a nice acortment. and sends her love to all give my love to thomas and tell him i will be glad to se him and recive the same from your br

R Dennison

My Dear Charlott Genna says that i must tell you that tiby[1] as gott tow teeth and can slides on his bottom and sends a kiss for his old sweet heart

R Dennison Coles berg 7 nom 1843

Elizabeth and myself sends love to Miss Gilmer you will see Dick quite orignel yet he seems to fancy it well don adue your Aft Mother

H Dennison

[1] Tiberius. cf. Supra p. 181.

51. H Dennison to charlotte Coles Berg December 4th 1843. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

Dear charlotte it is with feelngs of regrets that I take up my pen to address you it is now nearly five monthes since you left us and I have received 2 letters one from cradock and the other from Salem Directly after you arived now if any one had told me that you would have so deliberatly neglected to write I most certainly would not have blived for how could I when you were here so impatiant if you did not hear every 2 or 3 weeks yet you leave me months without a line you were aware how much I stood in need of the thing I sent for you also knew that I had a heavy bill to meet from Graff you also knew that when you left my means were very small it is yet smaller now for the last few weeks I have not taken on a avarage of 2£ per week this is because I have comparativly nothing in the shop Naght Maal is Just here and here am I without good without Money I have paid Mentgths[1] but not Walker for I have not been able to make up the sum of ten pounds as I must keep up my stock of sugar and coffe I told Mrs Bingham last night I would not write but I cannot refrain I sent by Mrs Pantry who left this last Month but it pleased the lord to remove her she died at cradock of a brain fever I am told now I shal wish you good by you may Just do as you please write or leave it alone I am cross

Your Aft Mother
H Dennison

Elizabeth Joins in love to you (and) Chas Miss Gilmor wh I hear is stil with you
if you please to kiss the dear children for me and give my love to them and ask Charles if he is also cross never writes to me I most sincerly hope he is quite recoverd Mr Shaw told me he was much better hope it is so

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[1] This probably refers to Meintjies. cf. Supra, p. 181.

52. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg December 16 1843. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte you will say what a strange Mother I have one week she writes like a Mad woman and another beging forgiveness if you were here and to see me you would excuse me I know and as it is I know you will I am very much straitend this in a measure would have been avoided if my thing[s] had been here last month they are not yet arived but C Charlotte how could you forget flowers pins needles taps and pipeing cord ( ) and black lace these were esentials - if you had not said in your last that you were in love I should not have known what construction to put on your account my Dear I fear you have had a sorry tim of it there are strange reports here yet as you do not mention any thing in your letter I am at a loss what to think Mr Nelson Mr Pascoe** and several others say that Charles Scanlen is going to Mary Miss Gardner so soon[1] of course he must please himself yet if he had turned his attention to your friend Miss Gush I should have regarded as it is if the lady in question was not So young it might do May the giver of every good give her a heart to be kind to the dear children O my heart aches for them it is my intention to remove sarah as soon as it takes place[2] as charles house will be no long[er] a home for her - what was the use of Charles writing to you to go down when he intended to marry so soon you gave up a good business and plenty of kind friends to serve him and he not wanting you it must have been a great disapointment to you instead of a breavied[3] brother wanting comfort you encounter a what shall I say I had almost said a gay fellow now My Dear girl pray write to me the particulars why should strangers have to tell me news of the famiely Mr Kich° about a Month ago told Elizabeth that ch was going to be Married but of course we denied it for my part I thought it a libel on him he most certanly loved his dear departed Ann and made her a good husband therefore his conduct seems the more strang my dear he need not bleme you of writing to me as it is not from you but strangers that the news reached us Miss Gilmer wrote to her sister about it but Mrs Bingham° did not like to tell me Mr Shaw° did not mention any thing and I could not ask him I wanted to talk to him but my heart was to (full) my health so very delicate that the least thing setts me crinng[4] like a baby the needle work is to much for me and I cannot do without I wish I had staid over the river now tell Charles Scanlen° that I should like to have my bill as I must try to pay as far as I can my the ( ) of (owing) good bles you and may he prosper you in your undertaking give my love to the Dear children and to your friend accept the same from HD
Elizabeth and Richard Joins in love to you Eze says that she Just thought you wer in love but thought it was Jenny instead of another last week was her birthday it was kept Mr and Mrs Atkinson° Mrs Murry Mrs Bingham° Mr being away Mrs (P) was present to tea and wished you were among them Mrs Murry often wishes you were here as do many more adieu my pen is brok - it was my intention to give you account of my hea[l]th but have not been well nor can I get well some

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[1] After the death of Hannah's daughter on 18 July 1843. The 'Miss Gardner' referred to was probably the sister of Mary Gardner, Henry Dennison's wife. The Scanlens later lived at Cradock and it was at their house that Henry and Mary Dennison's daughter, Dina, died on 27 August 1860. [G.T.J. 1 September 1860, p.1, column 8].

[2] Supra, Chapter 3, pp. 61-62.

[3] i.e. bereaved.

[4] i.e. crying.

** This probably refers to Mr Paskin°.

days I feel better then again I am down the needle work is to much for me and I cannot do without it my shop brings me nothing last week I did not take £2 Just fancy my own buisness is still I have deliverd 2 since you left and perhaps before the year is out Mrs Blake' may fall to pieces then there are 3 more in febury and then stand still again for a time so that I am obliged to do a good deal to support my self - tibby[1] is not so well as he was he is weaned and has got 4 teeth trys to talk you would laugh to hear him his nurse is left Jannsha is also gone over the river My Dear you forgot Mrs Murry huckaback[2] she asks why and very naturly says you must be in love if there is such a thing before Marriage she has been very ill but is better no prospect of a famiely by her she is as yet quite genteel send her love to you Mrs Atkinson and her good man' love to you little lido whants the flower seed you promised them and Elizabeth whants to send you a pair of doves but I tell her they cannot go so far there she seemd distressed

Mrs Klingbill' love to you and asks why you do not return - Charles Hutton' Still continues to sneak after your sister there is another that seems as if trying now you will say who is it I am not at liberty to mention names yet she is a bit of a coquet I think Our Minister is away yet we have Mr Wentworth' in the morning and Mr Atkinson' in the evening so that we are not left blessed be god another year is nearly gone O my dear what a year has it been to me yet glory to god I can say his will be done not mine glory and Honour be unto his name' forever and ever amen and amen - if I may blive reports your brother in law is Married by this time is it so I rote to Henry by poor Mrs Party but as she died on the road I do not know if the letters were dliverd or no they were directed to the care of Mrs samuel Robberet' now my dear good by you can tell C Scanlen' as much of this as you think will agree with the iratable state of his mind

Your aft Mother
H Dennison

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[1] Tiberius.

[2] A stout linen fabric used for towelling. (Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford 1901) Vol. V, p. 433).

53. Charles Dennison to Charlotte Grahams Town March 21 - 1844. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salim

Dear Charlotte

I am not going to Say much so dont Strain your Eyes by looking for it I am in such a flurry I can hardly hold my pen However to come to the point at once - I have accomplished my End Eliza is mine John Cramond has the Pack I can assure you it is a very neat piece of Business Last Thursday Evening John Erislin and I were taking a walk in the Early part of the Evening and as it was drawing towards 9 o-clock I proposed to J B_ to take a walk up to the East Barracks[1] and hear the 91st Band however he declined so we went as far as the meadow Just beyond the Old Baptist Chapel there we stood listinning to the Band we had not stood there many minutes however Before we saw Several young women and girls walking down the green with the same motive in their noddles as ourselves I very soon found out who they were Eliza - Matild Jenkinson the Miss Millars etc and as I did not see the form of the Enemy among them I went and spoke to Eliza it appears that John Cramond had concealed himself near the place Where we were standing and as our conversation was Rather more free than he liked he held out until sunday then told her that he could plainly See that he was not the object of her desires and that he thought it most adviseable to leave her to her own Choice her answer was that she was very glad indeed to hear it it was the very thing she wanted thus they parted

I must conclude as it is late I dont Know when I shall visit Salem again the loadstone is very attractive

I Remain your most affectionate

Brother Charles Dennison

Remember me to the Sarahs to Miss Croft and Charles and all friends.

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[1] Fort England. (D.H. Thomson, A Short History of Grahamstown. p.7).

54. H Dennison to charles Cole Berg April 4 1844.
Addressed to Mr C Dennison Grahams Town
favourd Mr C Scanlen.

My Dear charles as I have not heard from you for a long time I take it for granted you are busy or perhaps so taken up that you cannot find time to write do if you can get me a place to lodge in for 1 or 2 days I will either bord my self or pay for bord Just as is convent to the person with whom it may be my lot to stay with you will oblige me much if you will do this when I see you I have mutch to say with you are anticapating having heard no doubt of your sister misfortune Charles Scanlen is here and will take charge of this I must bid you adieu give my love to all friends

Your Mother
H Dennison

55. H Dennison to charlotte Coals Berg May the 8th (1844). Addressed to Miss C Dennison Grahams Town.

Dear charlotte I have writen to you tow or three times have not recived any answer I cannot tell the reason and the things that I sent for I hear you was to late for the waggon but if you get this in time please to send them by Mr Wentworths Waggon and send toow or more doz of babys shoes I mean (kidd) ones and ask Mr Townsend for a Book for the accordance and tell him that there wanted a tea spoon to make up the doz of those that I brought with if he will forwarded it with the price of the forks that he sent when you send those things send a bill with them and I will see that you get your Money No More Delay if you mean Me to write Again in Very Great Haste on account of the post

Your Aft Mother
H Dennison

56. Charles Dennison to Charlotte Grahams Town June 5 - 1844. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salim favord by W Wedderburn.

Dear Charlotte

You would greatly oblige me by taking a copy of the things that Mother wants from Shippersone as I cannot clearly make out all that She has mentiond and if She has put any thing in the list which you might think rather foreign to my notions of haberdashery have the Kindness to Explain it and if the Bearer cannot wait until you have written it be sure and send me word by this weeks post as I must get the things and send them forthwith doubtless you are quite wrapt up in C Scanlen for his unerring Kindness toward Mother he Certainly shows the most tender and gentle of dispositions toward the Mother of his former wife the grandmother of his lovely Children Enough however upon this Score what is already done cannot Be Recalled I should have been down to Salem on Sunday had it not Been for a very severe could which I took last week and it still hangs heavily upon me I have left Mr Lamonts[1] and am again at the old shop Lamonts was too drunken in the Shop altogether for me remember to Joseph and all Enquiring friends if there are any - I must now Conclude as I am in haste

I am your Most affectionate Brother
Charles Dennison

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[1] Charles Dennison was a tailor. (Supra, Chapter 4, p.76).

57. H Dennison to Charlotte Coles Berg June 10 1844. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem Near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte I received last week you very kind letter wich gave me pleasure to read but o my child you must have a better example to coppy that your poor porcuted Mother would you blieve that at this moment there is this place a power of attorney to arrest me with funds and to take sarah from me in your fathers name but you know that he never would have done it if not put up and supported by some one[1] now my dear What am I to do she will not leave me nor is it reasonable to expect it that she would george is become my securyte for my payment on apearing before the Judge this of course will prevent me from folowing my calling and in that case put it out of my power to pay him on my own else I have singed[2] the articles to go over the river but do not know when I will be wanted I am ready with this exception that without some assistance from Charles Dennison and Henry I fear it will be unpleasant you can speak to both for me and let me know their minds but you must not yet tell them untill you hear again from me I am at this time in very great difficulty Mr Bingham[3] has sadly decived me and Many others his name is not worth a farthing in Coles B[3] I was trusting in a measur to him and there I am now my dear the contents of this letter must be kept a secret untill I get over the river and then I have my plans but should I be prevented from going over I am begard for life o my charlotte these are sad days I may date most of my failure to losing you in my Buisness this was not your fault nor mine but so it is after your sisters fell my buisness dropt off to a mere nothing and still continues Many that come before to the shop do not come now for fear of contamination ah may the[y] be saved from every harm your dear Brother William has under a rough outside a heart of Gold he had heard of Elizabeth Misfortun he told her not to mind he Would When out of his time Build a house and she was to come and be his house keeper this was encouraging to her to think she was not quite cast out the Villian has tried every scheme to get her but so far in Vain Bless the lord o my soul for this with every other Mercy he is pleased to bestow on me unworthy me she does not seem to deserve a further (acquaintance) with him - Mr and Mrs Taylor is here he poor Man is very ill[4] I do not think he will get over it She with her lame son and hourly expecting another this is sad work but in this and every other instance what can we say it is the lord and he knows what is best adieu My Dear (girl give my love) to your friends tell them I pray for them (it) is all I can do God only knows if I am ever to see them on this side of eternyte (or) not Elizabeth and sarah Join in love to you and your

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[1] Charles Scanlen.

[2] i.e. signed.

[3] Supra, Chapter 3, p. 63.

[4] Rev. Francis Taylor died of 'pulmonary consumption' on 17 November 1844. [B.C.M.(r) p.89.]

dear Joseph E wishes she could plaige him a little as to sarah
she treats with contempt all ( ) oppertunity to gain
her from me C[1] is trying to be very civel but he to all appearance
might Just as well try to stop the tide or turn the mind O had E
been as indifferent to flatery[2] how much Happyer she be now forewell
my love your Mother

H Dennison

---

[1] Charles Hutton.

[2] In Hannah's view, Charlotte did not have a weak mind, susceptible to flattery. [cf. Supra, p. 181].

58. H Donnison to charlotte Coles Berg June 17 1844. Addressed to Miss Donnison Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear charlotte before this you will have recived a letter from me in wich I think I have given you some account on my affairs When I returned home I found that I must do something for to satisfy my creditors now as nothing else appeard likely to do as a sale I tried one and with that the taking care not to lett the things go at a sacrifice I raised betwen 2 and 300 rd wich answerd present demands now you must know that Mr Binghams affair is likely to hurt me a little as I quite depended on it I have got the lease of Murys Money for another year after this wich will help me as to Mr Shepperson I esure you that he sold me the prints at 10^s and 7^s6^d wich appears in the Bill wich I sent to your Brother Charles he has now 3 letters from me answerd do pray get the Bill and send it to me with regard to my being (minded) here it is no such thing I am behind hand Just now but they know that not me but Many others are the same trade is and has been very dull I am Just doing What you advise selling all I can and not buying any thing the things I sent for was in consequence of the difference that them appeard in the bill of Mr S now I would not have bought the Prints of him at that Price for here I can get plenty I have sold my chairs and a table and washing stand I got made after you left so that and other things helped me much it is a Pity I went to town when I did as I lost a good deal by it but it is done now sarah health is not good change may benifit her it appears to me that if not taken care of she will not make a Woman she does not complain but there is a continuance of her courses that must weaken her constution this I mean to try what a certain herb[1] will do for her it is not for want of exercise nor is she to all apperance a weak girl it may be in consequence of growing so fast I have not spoken to Kish about it Drs Make a Joke at these things but they are serious in themselves - Mr Walker has lost his son and the present Mrs W has presented him with a daughter the child has not been well for a long time it died last thureday I was with it to the last one goes and another comes thus does this World continue and will untill he shall swear in his Waroth[2] that time shall be no longer and if at that moment we are found at his Right hand how small and insigfent will those trials appear less than grain of sand in the balance O my Charlotte this and this only comforts me God even our god does and will bless us now though CS[3] has acted as he has bless the lord I feel no Malice nor desire for revenge all I wish for is the day when I can look him in the face and thank the giver of every good that I owe him nothing Mr Wentworth was so surprised that he could not speak for some Minuits he at last ~~he~~ said that he could Just (as) soon (have) used his Wife so as he could have used his Mother as CS used me he will get no (good) by it[4] O that he may repent and turn to the lord sarah says she will try to write next post to you E and her write coppy every evening I wish I was safe over the river and then we have pland to put ourselves under restrants wich will help us a

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[1] cf. J. Dunbar, The Early Victorian Woman, p.33. [Supra, p.145.]

[2] i.e. wrath.

[3] Charles Scanlen.

[4] Supra, Chapter 3, pp. 61-62.

little no tea very little coffee very little meat no Chattles
but what we at present possess this do and have began to act
I fear not being able to pay all in a little time but time I
must have may the lord help me my Dear pray give my love to all
your friends and those kind people with whom you reside not
forgetting Joseph the girls I am in love to you - your Aft Mother
H Dennison

I pay the postage of this as I am troubling you with more letters
than you can afford to pay for
Ask your Brother CD why he does not write and send me back my Rid[1]

[1] i.e. Richard, who was presumably staying with Charles Dennison.

59. H Dennison to charlotte Coles Berg July 15 1844. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem near Grahams Town.

Dear charlotte I recived your last with your acount of the conversation you had with Henry and also about the withdrawing of scanlen I assure you I do not know if it is true or no this I know that the Waggon is here and I must begin to pack up to day your sister E is remaning with Mrs J cambell° at 25£ a year to take charge of her baby and as if fortune was determined to bless her for her sufferings she has had 2 offers one of wich she is inclined to accept but she will see you in october and then you will have all the particluars[1] - now for my affairs you got speedly the news of my drawing half my salary it was for Mr draper° at Hughs store I am in this place in dept about 50£ my stock at a rough stock about 100 [and] 50£ so that I see my way tolerable clear Mr Murry has alowed his debt to run another year from next January so that with my sallry and shop I think I shall get out of dept dear Eazy[2] let me draw the half of her sallery to help me along I have sufferd most intensly latly but bless the lord as my day was so was my strength more did I find so much comfort in prayer at at this time I can say of a truth god is a god of love and mercy O my Dear what should I do if I had not a god to go to in my Money troubles alamost insurmountable yet blessed be his Name with the day so is the strength and each one its comforts as well as its cares I never should have thought of leaving your sister but she has perswaded me and I think that there is now no fear of her with regard to the Vilian as she seems to hate his neme o that detestable Miss G that was it is Just as I thought she planed your sisters ruin it is coming out bit by bit o that I was a man Wednesday Morning in the greatest hase[3] my dear I sat down to write a few lines to you last evening your dear sisters spark came as usal in the yard for he has not enterd the house nor had he spoken to me but as I was about to learn this I thought it my duty to speak to him this was under existing (circumstances) a painfull (thing) but a nessary one therefore I gave him to understand that she could When her time Was up with Mrs cambell° return to me he said that he had writen to his Mother and that the next Week he should hear but that he wished to follow her advice as long as she lived this Was reasonabil and looked Well but I answerd as she was (unprocted)[4] it made me (uneasy about) her he assured me that as far as he was (concernd there was) but little reason that as soon as he (heard) from his Mother he Would pay me a visit thus stands Matters but I have not told you that it is charles Hutton° she had a offer from a very [nice] man Just out of englend wich I Would rather she had accepted but soon as the other knew that he stept up in a Minuit and made sure calling her his amor stricken Dear you must know the other rote her a letter in Verse wich appeard quite origanal and (we) shewed it to Ch he rote in the (same) some more Verses I am all packed up waiting for the oxen I have writen to o scanlen° not to distres your dear Brother but if so

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[1] cf. Supra, Chapter 5, p.93.

[2] Elizabeth.

[3] i.e. haste.

[4] i.e. unprotected.

disposed may the lord forgive him for that may the Lord bless you and keep you is the prayer of your aft Mother

H Dennison

Your sisters and Brother (are in love) to to you I am quite tired of answering the question is Charlotte Married yet ( ) make an end of it for better or worse and if you dont lizzy will be before you give my love to Joseph and his parents sister and the rest and particlury to Mrs and Mr Slater once more farewell

60. Geo Dennison to his sister Charlotte Cradock August 5 1844. Addressed to Miss Charlotte Dennison Salim.

My Dear Sister

Yours of the 24th of July we received on the 3rd of this month therefore you See it is utterly impossible to comply with your wish although quite in accordance with my own as I could not possibly make arrangements to leave home for so long a time as the journey would take at so short notice = to morrow this will leave Cradock therefore ere it reaches you you will no longer be Charlotte Dennison were I to leave emediatly I should be too late it is therefore a case of utter impossibillity on that score you must excuse me = William has been working out of Town for some time past : therefore I cannot tell him so that he might go there in time = as to Father he is living loosening the fibres of his head and care and is quite insensible to the Stiring world around nothing gives me greater pleasure than to hear that [you] are on the point of mariage[1] and as it is the most important event of your life so I hope it will prove the wisest and happiest but although you enter into the maried State you will not thereby escape the troubles and trial incident to our humanity you merely take a partner to assist you in bearing them so my Dear Sister in this life we must expect troubles they form a part of our nature and are utterly inseperable from it here perfect bliss can nere be found the honey mixed with Gall in this world we may have earthly riches and in what the world calls happy but Sollid happiness is only to be found in union with him who is the way the truth and the life Such an union will enable us to live above the trials of this probationary State = dont forget the advice of a Good old Man = Bear and forbear one with another = Mary joins me in a whole lot of Good wishes to yourself and intended Husband as I intend to Visit Grahamn Town in a few months time = Should you still be residing in these parts I will call and see Mr and Mrs Gush and ( ) remember me to all friends if any there be I am Sorry that I cannot be present at your wedding but I cannot = therefore you must take the will for the deed we hope you continue in Good health as to Gd Spirits of course you have them we are tolerably well at present Emily sends her love to her Aunt Charlotte M joins me in love to you

your affectnt Brother
Geo Dennison

this contains my Brother Charleys Hair[2]

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[1] Charlotte married Joseph Gush on 13 August 1844. [E. Morse Jones, British Settler Genealogy].

[2] This was probably written by Emily, George Dennison's daughter.

61. Chas Dennison to Joseph Gush n.p.
3/10/44. Addressed to Mr J. Gush Salem.

Dear Joseph

have the Kindness to let the Bring bring Blue in as I particularly want him to morow morning I am very sorry to have to send on Sunday for him however I have no time to think now as the Bearer is waiting - I must conclude Give a good lot of Respects and love and that to Charlotte and my good old friend Margaret[1]-

I Remain your Most
Affectionate Brother
Chas Dennison

I will write to you next week and let you know how things are in town.

---

[1] Margaret Gush.

62. H D to charlotte Impukana Nov 4th 1844. Addressed to Miss C Dennison Salem Near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte

I received youre at umpukana in the end of oct as you may Judge how greived I was to think it came so late for you may rest asured that had I been in coles B if it was the last Money you should have it but relenting of is of no use now - I have at last began my work and began with a mistress Mrs J Hartly was taken sudenly and sent her horse and sadle for me at sundown to go a Journey of 4 houre hard riding[1] off I set and went Just the half when the horse thought it was time to give over made for a house my not knowing Whore the house was and trying to keep his head to the road the horse got master and threw me down I went and hurt my back very much got a black eye hurt my hand and in fact had a regluer tumble but blessed be god I am much better I was obliged to stop that night at the Retreat Mr W Prins neither of them were at home but at Mr H[2] how I got to bed I know not it is ten days since Mrs H has had a serous bout of it this time have lost her milk it never come and for two days after I come there was very little hope of her but glory to god she is doing well so far - now I must prepare for Buffels flay[3] Sarah is at umpukan with mr and Mrs B[4] she was quite well when I left and I have heard from Elisabeth She was not so well now My Dear I assure you it was against my will I left lizzy in coles but she would stay there in hope of being settled how it will be I know not yet in her note to me she wishes to be with us again and as soon as I return I will get leave to go to fetch her this is my intention if the lord spares me but no leave can I get until I return from Mrs Shepstone wich may be febury I have hopes that this side of the river will suit me with regard to my Buisness and that I shall be soon out of dept this hope sustains me if I had a wagon it would not take me long to clear it as it is I must wait with patience I have not heard from George for a long time do not know how CS[5] have dealt with him one thing I am certain I have put the poor man under obligety wich I would have spared of if I could may the lord sustain her and enable him to steer a steady course is the prayer of your mother H D

for fear of doing wrong I will direct this for Miss Dennison it will find you out if you have changed your name if you have may

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[1] Hannah probably had to ride to Imparani. The Rev. Hartly ministered to three stations - Imparani, Sovumelo and Moteng. Of these, Imparani was the largest and he probably lived there with his family. [B.C.M.(d) p.88].

[2] Presumably at Mr. Hartly's house.

[3] The present Aliwal North. [W.W. Collins, Free Statia p.11].

[4] Mr. and Mrs. Bingham.

[5] Charles Scanlen.

the lord bless [you] Should you have plighted your troth to [Joseph] for better or worse may the lord grant that your life may be one of happyness and that each year of your spared lives may find you more devoted to god than the past this and only this is the road to rich and substantial happiness give love to your friend the Slaters and to the Cuohs° and when you have opertunyte kiss Dear little Hannah for me lett me hear from you as soon as you can I will write again from Mr Shepstone[1] if Spared to go there god bless you my love

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[1] William Shepstone was stetioned at Kumastone. [B.C.M.(d) p.88].

63. C. Dennison to Charlotte Grahams Town Dec^{r} 8 - 1844. Addressed to Mrs C. Cush Salim.

Dear Charlotte

I Received yours of saturday Evening from Mr Hockly and have acted according to request with the letter Elizabeth Requested me to write to you for her as she has not a moment to spare and true Enough she has not for Mrs Campbell[1] is now packing up to start to Colesberg she starts to morrow - (monday)[2] Morning. she has given me a scarf for you But I cannot think of troubling Mr. H. to take it he might think it Rather too much of a good thing I have given him a letter for you from Mother - Thomas Prynn was the Bearer of it - well now I think I have said Enough to you at present so good night

I am Wag + it[3] Go/d Morning Old Swaar[4] - how is Evry Bit of you I hope you are all quite well I thought of paying you a visit last saturday night But my work detained me - I suppose Margaret has not lengthened her surname yet - however if she has Im not going to be bashful. I must give her My Best Respects - I must now conclude

I am your affectionate Brother
C. Dennison

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[1] Supra, p.

[2] These brackets have been inserted by Charles Dennison himself.

[3] This probably means 'wag n bietjie.'

[4] Joseph Cush.

64. H Dennison to charlotte the Retreat[1]
feb 5 1845.

My Dear charlott

I have in my leter wished you get the Money of the oxen but have Alterd my mind you can get What you Want and the rest thr W. Prynn will want to Purchase the things I have sent for I am now on A visit here and hope in A week from here to be on my way to town GB I mean (once) More Adieu my love give my (love) Sarah love all friends acept the same from your Aft

Mother
H Dennison

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[1] The farm of Mr. W. Prins (Pryan) [cf. Supra p. 198].

65. S Dennison to Charlotte Colesberg Sunday 1845 2 march. Addressed to Mrs J Gush (Salem) near Grahamstown.

Deare Mrs Guish

( )

My Dear Sister we have at last obtained permission to visit the Colony we arived at Colesberg on friday miday and I should be very glad of it you would answer this letter by next post as we will not leave till monday week for the waggon is to be repaired and tell Mrs Slater to kepp to her promise because I have wrote to her and she has not answerd my letter Mrs Cambell° wishes Elizabeth to stay with her untill she is confined so we will not see her in the betcuana Country untill July I am very sorry for it because it would be much pleasenter if she was there for she is so very lively there are a great many new buildings erected since I left and Colesberg is beginning to look quite populous Mr (Nettlig)[1] has moved into his new house it is the finest in colesberg there are a great many rooms in it 7
fryday evening (and) it is now settled about Elizabeth and she is to stop untill Mrs C is confined it will not be very long before she comes up we are to start on tousday when we came in last week I did not care about Colesberg at all but now should like to stay you must not then beleave I wish to stay that there is any particular charm[2] for if you are you are quite mistaken Elizabeth has told me that you have got her Vale if you see Mrs Prynn in town will you have the kindness to ask her to bring it with her she is v kind good hearted creature and I know she will do it give my love to hannah and thomas[3] if you see them and remember me to all my friends at Salem Give my love to Mrs G and Miss Gush and remember me Sarah Ann to Mrs Bonnin' poor old lady I now bid you good bye I remain yours ever

S Dennison

66.

My Dear Charlotte[4]
as I have not heard from you I scarcely know What to write yet I cannot lett this opertunyte pass by without I line well to begin how are you and how are you setled these questions you can answer I know we reached this last friday week and should have left before this but we are waiting for the waggon repairing it will be finished I think by tuesday - now you would wish to know how I am getting on I have cleared all but £11 only to Mary am I indepted the old sum with interst and the 11 Pounds is to Hugh° all the rest is paid and if I had the will I Could carry away all coles Berg so to speak so kind and so willing to trust me but this is not my intention I must begin to pay others now scanlen comes next and then the rest oh for the time when I shall be free to face all - Elizabeth does not leave this at this time Mrs cambell° is again in a Certain way and wishes her to remain until it is over wich will be in June I have agred and she is to come up with old Pretorius a good old Man with whom I have long been acquanted I shall be at

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[1] This probably refers to Mr. Neethling.

[2] in the form of a prospective husband.

[3] Hannah and Thomas Scanlen.

[4] The last page of this letter has been extensively damaged. [See Supra, Illustration A, p.124].

tabu unchu at that time with Mrs Cameron - o my child over the River is the place to live we can live for half what we can on this side again it is so healthy I assure you that you would scarcely know sarah she is so grown and improved both in looks and figure yet bears the palm - Mr G Bingham has resigned his Office as preacher[1] and is going to farm and Mrs B is in a fair way to increase her femiely I am truly sory for them that I shall be a loser by them there are strange things taken place this year Mr Wentworth leaves this Mr Orchard also (leaving) this for the cape Mrs Orchard is got herself talked about by having Mr Kiech[2] so much in the femiely and what ( ) that Maney belive it Mr Reed will (not) have Kiech any more in his femioly (though) it seems Mrs O had a servant that staid out at nights and Mrs O scolded the girl and told her that her conduct was so bad she was not fit to live in a decent femiely the girl returned the complyment by saying that the Only difference between them (was) thier coulour whether Mrs o understood (her) or not I do not know but she (decided to) put her in the tronk as she (ought not to have done) and the Maid boasted of the (quarrel) between her Mistress and her self it (was the) talk of Colos B I blieve they [tried all they could to] stop the talk but to no purpose (it is unbelieveble) to see how readily people grasp [at gossip they look for all] the[y] can find out against another (and left it) Plasterd on the Market bord [for all to see] the Words were these / Where did (Adam)

Eat the forbiden fruit/ the (answer)
In the Orchard

this is another specimen of colos Berg kindness (for) inocent as I trust she is she knowes what it is to be slandred inocently[3] I once heard her say that she could not blieve reports Would rise without some foundation but so it (is) I am truly sorry [.....] of Wentworth and fear for the cause [.....] by it yet I know that the lord is all [.....] he sent that man hence and doen he [.....] this place yes I feel he does Monday my Dear Charlotte I have not time to write more this Morning yet I cannot close this with [out] informing you that Ann Robbinson gives this Morning her hand to sergant Porter to the great grief of her Mother who would have her Marry (the) Bugler Just fancy the dashing girl ending with a (soldier) when (Darthworth) Elizabeth old Buc[4] asked for her [her] Mother said she had higher views for her this is the end of high views the poor girl is glad to get Married to get away from her Parrents farewell give my love to your father Mother Brothers sistere and your good man

Your Aft Mother
H Dennison

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1 Supra, Chapter 3, p.

2 Mr. Kiech's wife, Cornelia, had 'died as she lived' on 5 March 1843, at the age of thirty. [Tombstone inscription, Colesberg cemetry.]

3 Elizabeth's misbehaviour had reacted on the innocent Sarah and Hannah was well aware what pernicious effects false rumour could have.

4 Beau.

67. P. Slater to Mrs Gush (Charlotte) Fort Pym
April the 4. 1845.

My dear Mrs Gush

I received yours of the 13th Feb[y] and haste to assure you that it was most welcome I am sorry Mrs Ann[1] has been so ill hope she has recovered but you did not mention the cause of her being at your house. I had several times been thinking of giving you a good scolding but the date of your letter excuses you I should like to Give you a long letter but assure you am stealing the time just now being in the midst of bustle and confusion as the Vessel is here discharging her Cargo and our house is full the store not being quite finished. don't neglect to write and give me all the news you can I am sorry I am not able to assist you with your extra work. Give my love to Margarette tell her to be sure and write I don't understand her with regard to the ducks she certainly can't mean the young duck has layed. with respect to Mrs Neil your information confirms my worst fears please remember me to her when you see her also the rest of the family especially Eliza[2] tell her to write if she can that I may sympathise with her if can do anything else I am truly grieved for her.

I must give you a true and particular ac'nt of dogs cats poultry etc in my next Sophie has got a pet monkey who has been assisting me to write which will account for the blots Mr S is well but too busy almost to eat with kind regards to Joseph and all our friends.

I am ever affectionately

Your P. Slater

tell Margaret[3] if it will not harm her feelings I should like to know a little of the ins and outs of her history

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[1] Charlotte's sister-in-law, Mary Hannah Ann.

[2] This probably refers to Elizabeth Gush. Later, in 1855, she married the Rev. J.S. Thomas. He was killed at Ncambela Station in 1856. [U. Long, An Index to Authors of Unofficial, privately-owned Manuscripts Relating to the History of South Africa, 1812-1920. p.417].

[3] Charlotte's sister-in-law, Margaret Gush.

68. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Umpukane
April 12 1845. Addressed to Mrs Gush Salem.

Dear Charlotte

I sit down this evening to write to you an account of Miss Pennys note poor Creature she has nothing to amuse herself and so she has turned upon me I have just received a note from her by Mr Giddy in wich she tells me she is very sorry to hear that I should tell Wm Wood that she should say that when she was in the Bay her uncle gave her old blankets to sleep on I never thought of such a thing and ( ) that sombody else told me that I would not give up her name and that if I did not tell who told me I should be sorry for it I suppose she wrote this in a spiteful way but she is the fool herself when I first sat down to write to you I did not know what to think of it but I now think it is because she wanted to have a bit of fun at my expence but she is mistaken for (before) I came to understand it I was laughing to think that she should quarrel with me in this quiet country listen to her nonsence I have writen to her severel times lately and have never received any answer do pray write and let me know how your getting on in Salem Miss P is to be married soon[1] how are all the Salem maids pray give my love to Miss Gush and Mrs G and remember me kindly to your good Tant I have seen Mrs Cameron and I like her very much she is a very diferent person to what she was reported to me I have seen Mrs Bertram[2] she is a much pretier person that I expected to see she has such beautiful hair I never saw any to surpas it I do not know that I have seen its equal I expect that you will find fault with me because I always write such stupid nonsence it is because I realy have no news to tell you so I must now bid you adieu

I remain yours ever
Sarah Ann Dennisen

PS
I have looked at Miss Ps note and have relooked at it but I consider it such a piece of nonsence it is unworthy of notice[3]

69.

My Dear charlotte I am disapointed in not reciving any intelligence by Mr Giddy as I fuly expected it he tells me he never saw you I hope you are well I have reason to bles (God) I am our sarah is wonderfuly recoverd you would not know her the people in coles B were surprised at the alteration in her appearance I am at last set down in a place of my own though it is not so comfortable[4] as I should wish it is better than paying rent I should wish to hear of you how you are getting on we are on the eve of leaving home

---

1 No record of Miss Penny's marriage in 1845 can be traced in the Graham's Town Journal.

2 Mrs Bertram was the wife of Johan Petrus Bertram, assistant missionary, stationed at Platberg.
[B.C.M.(d) p.99].

3 cf. supra, Chapter 4, p. 81.

4 supra, Chapter 4, p.75.

for Mr Charles Robbinson[1] his lady being in want of my services Sarah goes with me she seems quite pleased with her reception she meets in every place we are indeed among kind people and ( ) (in getting your sister) this time and now it seems that the Boers is again at Variance with Griquers[2] and if she will be able to get to me in July or august I shall be glad of it is more than I expect but this I do know that it is in the lords hand he will order all things right I wanted to visit coles berg but did not know by what meano yet the lord found me waggon and a way and kept me safe amidst all the disturbance praise to his name

May 18 Just returned Mrs R was delverd on 29 of April I left her doing well I am now to hold my self in readyness to attend Mrs Cameron[3] and to remove to Ratabana[4] the place Mr Sefton has just left this house is not finished yet and not worth the expence to finish it Miss Sarah Sefton was Maried to Mr Giddy on 1st of May[5] they are Just left for Plat berg we were not at home to see when (it took place) I am wel but Sarah is not so well she has a sever cold - on my return from Mr Robbinson I visited Mr and Mrs Bingham[6] she expects in June first as Mrs Cameron what she will do I know not I have invited her to my house and that is awkward at this time still I cannot see her suffer

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1 Mr Robinson was the Catechist at Merumetsu. [The Journal of James Cameron. p.222].

2 supra, Chapter 4, pp. 71-72.

3 At Thaba 'Nchu. [B.C.M.(d) p.99].

4 supra, Chapter 4, p.75.

5 The marriage service was performed at Umpukane by the Rev. James Cameron. [The Journal of James Cameron, p.252].

6 supra, Chapter 3, p. 63.

70. H Dennison to Joseph Gush[e] Ratabana August 4 1845. Addressed to Mr Jos Guish Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear son

having wrote to Charlotte I (think) 5 letters and nt receiving any answer to any of them I begin to think that some thing serious is the cause if so I beg and entreat that I may be made acquanted with it what ever may be the consequence it is so usual[1] with her to neglect me that I fear she is ill now I hope you will not lose a post but with the earliest send me the cause if you do not know to send your letters Mr Green[e] or whoever is pastor of salem can inform you pleas to give my love to your Parents[2] and to accpt the same from your anxious Mother

H Dennison

sarah send love to you and her sister and accpt of mine

Since writing I have ben favourd with a visit from Mr Bingham he wishes me to say that if you would come here it would do you good there is a new chappell to be built at Thaba Nchu[3] and work in abundance you could live with me untill you saw how it would answer and if you could bring up a load of good[s] such as coffee suga tea rice tobacco (variety) [of] ready maid shirts[4] of the comonst kind Hand (tools) (and) brass wire beads Picks it would pay a hundred small basons or more you would clear all your expences and you would be able to Judge how it would answer in (comerce) would be very (grat) and so (should) I in haste

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1 'Unusual' seems to fit the context better but it is true that Charlotte was not a regular correspondence. cf., e.g., Sarah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 25 August 1845, infra, p. 209 .

2 Richard and Margaret Gush[e].

3 supra, Chapter 4, p. 75.

4 i.e. shirts.

71. G Bingham to Mr. J. Guish Ratabane
August 4/1845. Addressed to Mr. J. Guish
Salim near Grahams Town.

Dear Sir,

I have often thought since I have heard of your marraige with Miss Dennison[1] that it would be a very good thing if you would come up here into this country, as I do assure you all the Mission Stations are in the greatest distress for a Carpenter and many other persons as well as the Missionaries require a person of thy trade you might also Keep cattle, sheep, and horses and also a store, so that I think it would answer your purpose very well.[2]

I would just say the sooner you come up the better, for if you delay the whole country will be taken up.

It is possible that you may have heard that the Government has fixed the line between the Boers and the Native tribes.[3] A native chief is at liberty to sell or hire, or give a place to Tradesman, but to no one else. Most of the places will be given.

There is only one carpenter in the whole country, and he is a deserter from the army

Youre truly

G Bingham

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[1] Joseph Gush married Charlotte Dennison on 13 August 1844.

[2] supra, Chapter 4, p. 75.

[3] This refers to the treaties negotiated by Sir Peregrine Maitland, governor of the Cape, at Touwfontein in June 1845 with Adam Kok and Moshesh, whereby their territory was to be divided into alienable and inalienable territory. In the former, land could be leased to Europeans. In the latter only missionaries and traders in addition to the tribes could hold land. Only Adam Kok signed the treaty, formally ratified in February 1846, as Moshesh would only consent to having the undisputed portion of his frontier marked out. [E.A. Walker, A History of Southern Africa, p. 224].

72. S A Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani August 25th 45. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahamm Town.

My Dear Charlotte

I now sit down to write to you I reurly do not know what to Say to you Some thing I must say I think you are very negligent I have writen to you several times and have not recived an answer to one of my letters I suppose you have heard of that sad affair Reilys if you do not know I will toll you it seems by the acount we last herd was from a person named Lester he was on his way to natal he said that Mr J Reily had Just returned from the British camp and wanted to go on a Journey and was sadly in want of a sadle he asked his wife if she had not mony by her she told him she had not and he knew it well he said he must have one by some meane this Gentleman was unpacking his portmentou Old Reilly saw some blank warrents among his clothes and asked him for a couple of them to go and in the (seziere) on the Moore with the other thought he was Joking and let him have them he went from there to Mr Gillfilens while there the concern took place but he said he did not think Reily intended to harm the man as he did not fire (with it he saw) the muscoll the gun pointed at him then R said Mother it looked very suspicious that he should go armed and that with pistoles yes he replied with face like crimson I am afraid these pistolls where mine because when I returned for my luggage I found one of them were discharged he told us that the other person the name of Boll he was murdered soon after this affair took place[1] he had been to Colesberg and informed against him and soon after he returned he was killed it is said that a Bushman has done it but nobody knows there had a sad concern taken place latly an old man the name of Garner with two little girls were living at Mr Danniels station he was taken ill and went out of his mind he got out and went away they searched evry were and did not find him untill the next morning they brought him back he staid untill the Monday morning he started off very erly the children were told to come and pack them up the moment he left but they did not do it when he asked why they said that he would come back again when he was hungry they searched for him ery where but could not find him and did not find him untill friday they found him in a cloef at the foot of an imence crance of wich he had thrown himself it was a long time before they could get him out of the place he had fallen into they searched his pockets for his things but they were empty someon that was on the top found them piled up in a heap about twenty yards from where he threw himself down Mother has got care of the children he was caried and buried Adieu

give my love to Mrs Gush and daughters and except the Same

from youre affectionally

S A Dennison

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[1] A letter in the Graham's Town Journal of 25 September 1845 described the murder of Mr. Benjamin Spiller Bell by a bushman on 23 July 1845, at 'Washbank, near Caledon River, across the Boundaries of the Colony'. (page 2 of the Supplement, column 2). This Mr. Bell was probably the same Mr. Bell mentioned by Sarah as is suggested by the geographical and time context. It has not been possible to trace the circumstances surrounding the 'Reilly affair'.

73. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani Monday October 6 1845. Addressed to Mrs Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My dear Charlotte

I am very happy to hear that you are comfortabl we have just recieved your Letters I Suppose by this time you have moved into your house and expect by this time you have an addition to your family[1] pray what kind of a little creature is it of course I expect to hear it is a fine little Babe I trust you will be even happier with this adition to your famioly than you were before we have recieved a few lines from Elizabeth she is quite dissatisfied with you because you do not write to her she expects to go down to Town this month I am to start with Mr and Mrs Allison on the 10 of this month for Colesberg he is to bring some things for mother and I am going down on buisness also I suppose you have not heard the wonderfull news Miss Privott is engaged to Athr Peterson lately from England the old lady is quite taken with him he is from Elizabeths account a very gentlemanly looking Person only think she sent word by Richard to E that she must not be alarmed she must want a Little I daresay E thanked her for her message E[2] says that if he should disappoint her she thinks she would brake her heart for they think so much of him when Mr Hutton was paying his addresses to Elizabeth the old lady wished to perswade Mother [and] E to brake off her engagement with H should young Wimble make her an offer H had just obtained the Market masters Place this Mr W I mentioned I think is a very respectable steady person he is what is commonly called a good looking young man tall and slightly made he has the most beautifull set of teeth I ever saw and fine blue eyes but what spoils all he has a Lions red hair I could join with these such in their opinion of him were his Hair a different couler but who can call a man handsome when he has red hair such a detestable couler I have not had the pleasure of hearing from Charles though I have writen to him several times we have only heard from him once since Elizabeth was in Town you say you were troubled last year by those pet creatures of the Gushes I realy think Charlotte if you were here you would not only pronounce sentence against Mothers foules but you would carry it into efect I have tried this month to raise a few flowers but I fear it is of no use as soon as the illfated plants make their appearance they are nipt off by those detested foules they realy are enough to try the patience of Job I have often put on the black and pronounced sentence against them but for the want of executioner their lives are spared but if they do not mend I shall myself turn Hangman pray how [are] Henry and his family I have written to him I do not know whether he will answer my letter I suppose as I am only a sister as E calls me I can wait a little please tell Mrs J Slater she is very clever at breaking promises she promised me if I would write to her she [would] answer my letter but she was to

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[1] This baby of Charlotte and Joseph Gush probably died in infancy. A tombstone inscription in the Salem graveyard gives the date of birth of their son, George, as 2 August 1846. Two letters written subsequently (Charlotte Gush to Joseph, Port Elizabeth, 15 February 1847; and Joseph Gush to Charlotte, Buffalo River, 4 April 1847 (infra, p. 229 and p. 232.)), imply that by 1847 they had only one child, who was George.

[2] supra, Chapter 5, p. 94.

begin; the correspondence and when I left she I suppose never thought any more about it I wrote to the little hussy Just after she was married but she never answered my letter you can tell her I would pay her off if I could get beside her we are churning to day for the first time this year Mother wishes she had some of your butter as we have been out of butter for several weeks the Corrannas have milk now and we succeeded in making a little at last I do not think I mentioned in my last letter the birth of Mrs Binghams child we have just heard of its death it will be a sad trial for poor Mrs B it was the finest child I have seen for a long time he was so fat Mrs Camerons little boy is a little fellow when I first came here I heard a very strange account of Mrs C but since I have seen myself I think her a very nice little woman very different from the account I heard of her please give my love to Miss and Mrs Gush and except the Same from yours affectionally

Sarah Ann Dennison

when you write give me a full account of your little infant tell me wether its eyes are like its Pappas firey eys I should not like such a pair to be fited in my face like he was in Passion

74. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Colesberg February 1 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahamstown.

My dear Charlotte

how soon are We called upon to feel the most inexpressible Sorrow at the conduct of one whom I fear there is no hope of reclaiming oh Charlotte I cannot think What induced Elizabeth to act in such a shamefull manner I am sure she had no reason to complain of Mrs Campbells' treatment for I am sure she [was] very well treated by them but she has taken a step wich I fear has sealed her doom the agonizing thought that she has become a must I say a kept mistress alas there is no other term for it this is bad enough but I dread the consequences she may turn out Worse than that[1] Mother intends writing to her by this post though it is a chance if ever the letter reach her but still it is our duty to try We have just recieved letters from the post poor Charles is in bad health I hear I wish he would come up into this country I am sure he would get better the air in this country is very dry far better than Albany I am sure if I had remained in the Colony I should not in all probability have been alive today try and purswade him all you can to come for I am quite sure he will get better O how I should like to see him for I should feel his Company conducive to our own as well as his happiness I fear that Miss Maggs[2] inconstancy has given him the first blow and I fear Elizabeths base conduct will be the finishing stroke O Charles my Brother are we to lose you in the prime of life in the very flower of your age O Charlotte the base idea of losing Charles at times it is almost too much O Charlotte this is indeed a World of sorrow for We know it by experience Will you be so kind as to let us know how Elizabeth got away from Charles for We heard she was with him and Wother she is still in Boufort unfortunate girl if she does not know What Sorrow is now she Will very soon[3] much as I blame her I cannot help feeling pity for her for she was the only sister in the family that I could converse freely with may I hope Charlotte that if you Write to her will write kindly as well as faithfully pardon me for giving you advice hoping you and family are well I now bid you adieu my kind love to Mrs Gush and family and receive the same from yours sincerely

Sarah Ann Dennison

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[1] supra, Chapter 4, pp. 76-77, and Chapter 5, p. 91.

[2] This probably refers to Margaret Gush.

[3] cf. supra, Chapter 5, p. 91.

75. H Dennison to charlotte Ratabana
feb 17 1846.

My Dear charlotte

I have left answering your letter until now hoping to have something to write about after I had visited Coles B I will endavour to be as concise as possible - in the first place I sent last July to cols B by a Mr Alison brother to the assistant Missionary** it for your sister Mrs campbell was Just confined and could not spare her at that time and up to that time thier opinion of her good conduct was such as to make them not wish to spare her he in consequenc rote me a letter giving her a excelent carracter and reminding me that it was best she should remain with them as her chance of getting setled Would be greater there than here[1] my mind was at rest untill about august when we recived a letter from her to sarah the stile of her writing quite alarmed me I began to fear and requested leave to go to coles Berg but it was so I could not get a waggon fit to travel in and at that time could not meet with any one to go for me untill september then the same person Namely Mr Allison came to me to know I I had any errands to coles Berg as he was again comissioned him to bring your sister up if possible this was a good opertunyte as his wife intended accompaneing him sarah was to bear them company all was aranged and she ready when one of those unforseen circumstances occured to prevent it and Mr A told me his wife could not go but there would be 2 waggons Miss D was to have one to herself if she would avail herself of it now observe one Month had passed it was now september again another circumstance takes place he is again prevented from going down untill the midle of october and Just as he was ready to start the rain comenced and continued for about 3 weeks with very little intermision at last he got off and arived the very day in the evening on wich Mr and Mrs Campbell left coles B in the morning now Just fancy if you can my disapoinment - she has I have learnt had 2 offers of honorable mariage but she chuses to lead that sort of life in preference this is not all she actualy accepted of one of them and left the man at CB with the impression that she would mary him[2] on her return O Charlotte my heart is broken on her account I (will) now tell you how I have been placed (by) her her flighty momen[t] caused sarah to be spoken about there was no keeping her on (it) sarahs Modesty was quite a Joke for (her) and she never lett a opportunyte slip by when she could cause her to blush this made (me) very anxious to get out of coles Berg thoug I was glad to leave it I was sorry to leave her in it not did I with my whole heart she never dared to cross the Boundry and in fact said she never would - must I say of my own flesh she is gone from us because she is sick of us must I say as she has made her bed so she must ly on it she must have her fill of her wicked course - this is a sever affliction my prayer to god is that it may be scantefied[3] to all our souls we are indeed humbled and our pride is brought down may the lord have mercy on her before it is forever to late I cannot leave this yet for a year if I could go in search of her and got her I would be obliged to put sarah out for I could not by any means think of allowing her to communicate her poison to the other this would be to me a trial indeed as I know what the

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[1] Supra, Chapter 5, p. 93.

[2] Supra, Chapter 5, p. 95.

[3] i.e. sanctified.

** Rev. James Allison.

other is in cases of sickness I might ley and die for all she cared such was the treatment I recived from her before had you seen the note she rote to Richard from fort Beufort you would have been surprise at the loosoness of her sentmens it would have made you sick (to) read it her letter to me from CB planly (showed) what she was the language was (disrespectfull) to a degree - I see sarah is so full (of) Mrs Padiason[1] marage as to forget her sister her (conduct) has (shocked) her that the first day or 2 after we entered in Coles B she would (not go out at all) I had allamost to force her out she seemd ashamed to show her face you know how Mrs Prush allaways talkes yet it is nothing new her belle[2] is Maried much against her will and to all appearances very comfortable the little lady do not forget to tell you she has lost nothing by waiting she is now 27 years old and her husband 29 he looks the youngest of the too - I send you a order on Mr Talbot Jun for 18[s] please to get Sarah 3 pairs of shoes No 6 they must not be less she has such a long foot that a 5 is to short for her we send a frock to your son but you must finish it it is begun but not finished please do not forget the shoes She has none to wear this is a shocking country for shoes there are none to be got we brought 2 pairs from town they are unriped from toe to heel now she is for want of shoes again my Dear charlotte you will be tired of reading this scrawl I sent to Mrs Jubber° at fort Beufort a letter for that unfortunate girl and requested Mrs J to deliver it to her if possible perhaps you may have some means of finding out if they reached her if you can pray lett me know and when you write direct your letter to Coles B Mr Wentworth° will recieve my letters and forward them to me this he has promised me to do so if you have any advice pray give it my mind is allmost distracted the only view I have is to leave her untill she feels her need lett me hear how your father[3] is Oh that Charles would be perswaded to come here it would do him good[4] in hopes thathe will be perswaded I have left 2£ with Mr Wentworth° for to help him on the Journey and now my Dear charlotte adieu may the lord bless you and yours please to give my love to Mr and Mrs Gush° and to your better half and please to kiss your baby for me

Your Aft Mother
H Dennison

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1 This refers to Mrs. Paddison°.

2 This refers to Mrs. Privitt°'s daughter.

3 This could refer either to Charlotte's father, George Dennison, or her father-in-law, Richard Gush.

4 cf. supra, Chapter 3, p. 41.

76. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani
Sunday Feb 17 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush
Salem near Grahams Town

My dear Charlotte

I embrace this opertunity of adressing a few linen to you hoping this will find you and family in good health We arivd home last Thursday and I can assure you I was very glad to get home again for Whatever Charmes Colesberg might have had for me it has none now I suppose Charles is now at Cradock I hope he is better I suppose it is of no use to try and get him to to come over the river I recieved a letter from him this week in wich he says we might as well think of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem I mentioned that we have been to Coles berg well we have seen old Mrs Privett[1] and the old creature seems to be quite displeased With her daughters Marriage Isabella is married to Mr Padison he was on the Collets farm for Two or three years and he now acts for the Collet as Contractor for the Troops directly we got in the Old Ladys she began about belle mariage you know Mrs Dennison if she had married a steady man I should have said nothing but he is only a Clerk and these Clerks are nasty stuk up fellows their gentleman to day and to morrow their beggars and I told her she was not to have him but bell impudent thing she would have him and She said She had always been obedient and She had always turned them off when they came to her and you know Mrs Dennison she could hav been married often to respectable young men in Graffrienett but now she said She Saw the man she liked and She Would have him and there She sits With all my fine clothe wich I have given her and he has not bought her a new thing since She has been Married but she sayes he is a very good hus band he has evening and morning prays and only drinks one glass of wine to his dinner I should think the old woman might be very Well satisfied with all these good qualitys as to isabella She lets (not) oppourtunity slip of praising her husband and realy my dear lot although there is something amusing yet there is something very sickening in such frivoulous nonceence you seen tire of such nonceence I have not told you one half of What the old Woman said indeed I cannot You know I never was a clever take off so you must not expect anything from me Colesberg is now much improved there are a great many new buildings it is a pretty little village and now farewell give my kind love to all friends and recieve the Same from yours affectionatly

Sarah Ann Dennison

PS I should feel obliged if you could get three pair of buckskin shoes made for me by Mr J Scanlen if you possibly can I will enclose an order on Mr Talbot and if you can possibly get them made by Mr S you must for his is the best I have ever had ask Mrs Sephton if she will be so kind as to bring them up if she can't I know Mrs Bingham will

farewell

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[1] This refers to Mrs. Privitt.

77. Sarah Donnison to Charles Ratabani april 5 1846. Addressed to Mr C Donnison Grahams Town.

My dear Charles

I received your letter dated 9th of feb a few weeks ago I am very sorry to hear so poor account of your health and I see plainly by the tenor of your last letter you never intended Coming over the river so I suppose We must give this up as a lost case I expect we Will see you at the end of the year for I should very much like to see you all but next February seems to be a long way off I wish my dear Charles that you would tell Charlotte when you write to her that she is out of my good books had she a family of six children I could excuse her but she has but one child I think she might have found time since last September to Write had she been disposed I shall not spare her When I see her I suppose by this time the Frontier - Mr Bingham has Just returned from the Colony he told us that the Caffers were still hostile but there was apperant danger when they left the colony you say you know not where Elizabeth has gone alas We too Well know Where she is oh What misery and trouble has she brought upon us it seems to pray on mothers Spirits very much Such a disgrace on once family is enough to send any one to the grave I know Charles that it is of no use to try any longer for you are resolved not to come I quite aprove of your reason for not leaving the colony I should not like to leave the colony myself in dept and if I had in my power to assist you With mony I Would do it even if you Would not come over the river but every penny is demanded for some dept or other however We are getting out by degrees We have paid off nearly two hundred pounds but there is still more than a hundred pond to pay yet

78.

My Dear charles your sister began this but being poorly she cannot finish it I am Sory you have such an insuperable objection to traveling I am sure a Journey to this part would do you good every way and as to your being in dept I am sure Needles and thread[1] will not bring you out no my son if the lord spares me to see you again unless you will have enterd into a Matrimonial engagement I think I will be able to shew you a better plan to pay and yet your living now do not shake your head and say no Mother I fancy I can enter into all your difficultys and can Judge allmost of your feeling you are aware your health is bad to continue your trade is in effect to through away your life now you know that we are comanded to make every endeavour that lays in our power to make our calling and election sure this must be done but by our attending to our health as well as duty for as long as we are well (and) are able to work but let sickness and (weakness in) and then we are done o my son this ( ) I hope (sickness) does not take you unprepard for tho it pains me to write to you of death and Judgement yet I cannot as your Mother do otherwise we know we must die and after death the Judgement then lett us be wise having our lamps trimed and ready that whensoever the bride-groom cometh we may come in with that blessed Plaudit well done good and faithfull one may the lord give thus to all our family

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[1] supra, Chapter 4, p. 78.

[2] supra, Chapter 5, pp. 100-101.

is the prayer of your afectionate Mother

H Dennison

Sarah and Richard Joins me in love to you may the lord bless
you and sustain you now and ever more amen and amen
do pray lett me know if you hear any tiding of your sister

79. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Natabani
April 18 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush
Salem near Grahamstown.

My dear Charlotte

We have receivd your letter for Tarka post[1] and am very sory to hear that you are in such bad health you must not my dear Charlotte alow Elizabeths base concern to distress you so much Remember you have a husband and child that calls for your assistance and besides you can do her no good both me and mother wrote to her She answerd them but her letters to plainly show the depressed state of her mind She says in one part of her letter to me that she considers herself an ill used person and she is determind not to have any thing to do With her family and she begs them to have nothing more to do with her as she is determined not to change her course of conduct after such a declaration I fear there is little hope it is quite evident no one can do her any good to us she is lost for ever but I must drop this strain I feel very anxious concerning Charles I receivd a letter from him last February Just before he left Cradock for Town the acount he gave me of his health Was very poor I am very much afraid I will never see him again the thought of never again meeting him in this World at times completely overpowers me oh Charlotte to be parted from two I so ardently loved Elizabeth is lost and degraded she is no longer as one of our family and Charles my dearest of brothers Will soon to all appearance be no more known in this World oh charlotte this seems at times insuportable I feel as if I cannot give him up but if it is the Will of the almighty I must submit With patience and resignation for God alone knows What is best for his creatures therefore it is our duty to submit With patience to every trial

I hope my dear loty to see you at the end of the year I dont think any ever gave me more pleasure than the thought of soon seeing you and the rest of our family you Will then see instead of a sickly broken hearted Little girl that left you three years ago a tall healthy spirited unyeilding creature that cannot bend to anything[2] but dont be afraid I am neither a sulk or a grumbler I should like very much to see Hannah and Thomas poor little things it may go very Well for the first year or two but I dont put much faith in her kindness[3] but still We must hope for the best you have never told me loty Wether Miss Gush is maried yet if I am not mistaken I have often mentioned it in my letters to you but still I should be very much obliged if you Would gratify my curiosity by letting me [know], in your next letter to me or Mother give my kind love to Mrs emm and tell her I should be very glad When the time comes When I will be able to visit Salem give my love to Miss Gush and Mrs also to Henry and Mary and accept the same from yours affectionately

Sarah Ann Dennison

Mr Atkinsons post boy has just returned from The Colony for it and

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[1] Tarka Post was a military camp.

[2] supra, Chapter 4, p.80.

[3] Miss Gardner's kindness. supra, Chapter 3, p. 61.

says that he Was told by the soldiers told him there was a shocking concern[1] We hear that soldiers from Colesberg are on their way to join the troops at the frontier[2] I cannot vouch for the truth of this assertion pray Write me all the particulars as I am very anxious to know Wether you are safe or no toll me any nowe my dear Charlotte In your next letter Wether you are safe

PS We have not received your letter from Colesberg yet We expect it daily farewell

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[1] This probably refers to the incident which took place in March 1846 when a Caffre charged with the theft of an axe, was escorted to Grahamstown. He was rescued by a party of Caffres. In the process they killed a Hottentot to whom he had been manacled. This sparked off the 'War of the Axe', for the colonial forces retaliated by marching into Caffreland. [C.H.B.E. Vol. VIII p. 344].

[2] A report from the 'N.E. Boundary' - 'Haslope Hills , May 3rd, 1846' in the Grahams Town Journal, recorded the expectation of 300 troops from Colesberg to help man the border from Winterberg to Klaas Smits River. [page 4, column 4].

80. H Dennison to charlotte Ratebani May 2 1846
Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

Dear charlotte

before this you will have recived a letter or letters and a parcell I was in hopes you would have had time to send the shoes by Mr Sephton Waggon I have not heard from them yet so do not know all the reasons I only fancy that you were not in salem when it arivd and of course did not know untill it departed a way we are often served but now my dear Charlotte you must take care of your self I fear you are gardening and getting wet feet this you are not able to stand and should not do rather lett your garden grow to nothing if it can than kill your self remember your poor sister[1] for what did she labour as the scripture saith one soweth and another reapeth so is in her case she pinched and savd and hurt her health and for what - you will say she is safe and we know that he doeth all thing well still I allways think we should do all in our power to perserve our health now my dear if I have not guessed wrong you must forgive me and place the same to my ignorance of your manor of living - with regard to your sister Elizabeth I shall not enter into particluers about her when I see you if the lord spares me and you we can both talk matters over she has alla most turned my Brains all I now can do for her is to pray for her and that I do I may say continualy hope and pray that the lord may forgive her and that she may repent the thought of visiting town is on my mind continualy and sarah is full of it May 11 My Dear Charlotte I am informed you were not in salem when the waggon arivd therefor we must wait untill opertunity offers we hear strange tales here about the war O my Dear this is a scourge those outbreakings of the caffers continualy I hope you and yours are safe if this should reach you pray lett me hear as soon as you can how matters stand with you and yours my dear children I am very uneasy still I must bear it patiently as I have no Other resorce I pray continualy for your (safety) it would give me great pleasure to see you at this moment and Henry Charles I am very anxious about him his health at this period with out a Mothers care and perhaps a sisters greives me continualy I know you would be kind to him but how you may be situated in those distressing times is a quistion I often ask how diversified is the lot of some people I often wonder wile some seem to go in silver slipers others have to wade in mud and mire to get through this world but O what unspeakable mercy that we have a hope that maketh not ashamed yea a hope that cheers our path and fills our Souls with Joy wile my heart bleeds for one stray sheep my confidence is strong tho he slay me yet will I trust him[2] I can not give her up I still think he will recall her to a sense of duty and o may he grant it it is a serious thing to have a child prefer such a course of living and to chose a path s[t]rewd with thorns before a virtuous life seem so strange to me that I cannot fathom it[3] my dear charlotte when I see you if I can we will have a long talk o may he grant by that time she may have chosen a beter path and now my dear Charlotte I must conclude wishing you a great deal happyer than I fancy you and that the time may speedily arise when we shall behold one another face to face and be happy is the prayer of your Mother H Dennison

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[1] Ann Scanlen, who died on 18 July 1843.

[2] cf. supra, Chapter 5, p. 97.

[3] supra, Chapter 5, p. 90.

81. S A Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani July 17 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My dear Charlotte

It is a long time since We heard from the Colony I hope you Will Write as soon as you can for I am very anxious to hear from you We have just recieved a paper of June 9[1] in Wich I see they are cuting the kaffirs down by Wholesale I hope this War Will soon be concluded for I think the Colony must be very much impoverished by it the troops are behaving themselves like men now and had they behaved With equal promptitude and decision in the beginning of the War they might have prevented much mischief in the case of Captain Bambrick[2] and Mr Norden[3] it was cruelty to leave them in the hands of those ( ) savages I should never have thought it possible that any one belonging to the British army Whose very name is terror to many nations should have fled at the sight of a few naked savages creatures who know no more about fighting With Britans than the Bushmen of the Desert Captain Bambricks party Whore Englishmen I presume had they been Irishmen or Scotchmen they Would not have fled so soon the Boers have had another taste of the Cannon[4] there are some two or three

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[1] This refers to an 'Extra to the Grahams Town Journal of Saturday, June 6, 1846.' The 'Extra' is dated 9 June 1846. Sarah is commenting on a battle between the British troops and the Caffres at the kraal of the Caffre chief Stock. The Caffres were defeated with an estimated loss of 300 to 500 men. [page 1, column 1].

[2] Captain Bambrick of the 7th Dragoon Guards was shot and killed at Burn's Hill by Caffres. Captain Bambrick had been on an expedition with his troop. He had penetrated the bush ahead of his men. They were unable to find his body 'which the Kaffirs carried away and stripped, brandishing his sword at the troops on the hill.' [G.T.J., 18 April 1846, supplement one, p.1, column 2].

[3] Mr. J.D. Norden, Field Commandant and Captain of the Yeomanry, had led a mounted force to scour the bushy ravine near Grahamstown where a considerable body of Caffres had allegedly been seen. A skirmish ensued and Mr. Norden was shot. Immediate attempts to recover his body were rejected as too hazardous. It was later recovered in a mutilated state. [G.T.J., 2 May 1846, p.3, columns 3 and 4].

[4] This probably refers to an incident stemming from the boer Jan Kok's refusal to take the oath of allegiance commanded by the British resident in Transorangia, Captain Warden. Warden attacked the insurgents, eighty of whom took shelter in a trench. The trench was shelled upon which the men surrendered their arms. Sixty men, including Jan Kok, fled. Two boers, Waltman and Viljoen, were killed and three were wounded. Seven British soldiers were killed and one was wounded. [G.T.J., 1 August 1846, p.2, column 3].

killed and a few taken prisoner Mother is still at Umpukani I dont know when she will be home perhaps if the Kaffer War is over in February you may see us in Town pray let me know how Charles is I should be very happy to hear from him you must Write as soon as you can my Lotte I must now conclude give my kind love to all friends and relations

Your affectionate Sister

S A Dennison

82. S A Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani August 10 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My dear Sister

We have Just received news from thabanchu concerning the kaffers I fear the Colony Will be ruined unles they act very decisively With the kaffers they are from all accounts murdering and mutilating all the English they meet With O Charlotte When Will the British Government come to their senses can they expect the Colonists to see their friends and relatives thus murdered and bear it quietly if they do I think they Will be mistaken I fear unless they put a stop to this War properly the Colony Will be Completely destroid what a miserable condition the Colony must be in[1] the last news We heard from the Colony was rather promising but this has deprived us of all hope I should think Mr Scanlen is almost tired of this War if it deserves the apalation I should very much like to see you all pray tell me When you Write how Charles is I fear I Will not see him again When he last Wrote one he Was no better he seems To be fast hastening to the grave o Charlotte the thought that I Will never see him again it Wrings my heart With agony there is something So gloomy in the thought of death I cannot endure the thought our trials are perhaps comparitively small to What some have to go through but When I think seriously of the disgrace that is brought on our family through one unfortunate I cannot describe to you my feelings When I think that it Will be remembered against us for generations to come I feel Wretched poor girl What must her situation be at present perhaps down and outcast I cannot feel otherwise towards her than pity perhaps this War Will be the cause of doing her some good but adieu to this painful subject[2] I hope you Will When you Write give us a full acount of the War an[d] Wether you are Safe I here that the kaffers have been taking the salem peoples cattle but we also [hear] that they Were retaken[3] I have not heard from the Colony since last march I hope you Will Write as soon as you can tell me if you do Wither William is in this War I do not think I should know him When I do see him for it is 10 years since I saw him it is not possible that I should know him but I must now conclude give my kind love to all friends and relations

Your affectionate
S A Dennison

Ps have the kindness to let me know When you Write Wether you recived a parcel Wich Was sent down by the sephtons Wagon and deliverd of at a Mrs Dixies in Grahams Town

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[1] Similar sentiments about the ruination of the colony and the tardiness of the British government in dealing with frontier problems are reflected in the columns of the Graham's Town Journal. [cf. e.g., G.T.J., 11 July 1846, p.4, columns 3 and 4].

[2] Supra, Chapter 5, pp. 90-91.

[3] On 29 April 1846, ± 2,500 of the Salem people's cattle were led out to graze under an armed guard, which was attacked by a party of about 300 caffres. 1,700 head of cattle were carried off. Salem men, Fingoes and other natives mustered and went in pursuit of the stolen cattle. First 700 cattle were recaptured by a group of men, of whom Joseph Gush was one, and eventually the remaining 1,000 were retrieved. [G.T.J., 9 May 1846, p.3, column 5].

83. Sarah Ann Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani Sept 1846. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My dear Charlotte

I once more take up my pen to Write you a few lines I hope We shall hear from you soon We have just recievd a letter from Henry in Wich he gives us a Wretched acount of Charles[s] health poor Charles I fear he is fast hastening to the grave o Charlotte there is something so awfully gloomy in the thought of death that I cannot endure the thought that he is dying that he is leaving us forever. there is a kind of Wretchedness you feel in the idea of loosing your friends and perhaps best of brothers and an unwillingness to give them up that is far easier concievd than discreted give my kind love to Charles and tell him if it were possibelle for us to (come) down We Would but the Country is in such a state that it is impossible for even to get even a little Coffee in Coles berg[1] there is nothing to be got We intend going to natal We Will be able to get supplies there.[2] if We go I Will try and get you some nice bulbs[3] for I have heard that it is a beautiful country an[d] abounds With Wild Flowers of the most beautiful kinds We are not more 11 days from it so you see We are not far from natal When I come back I Will Write you a long letter and tell you all the news I see in one of the papers they have given Mr Scanlen What he calls a Checker Wether he deserved it or not I cannot tell but however they have told him in plain language What he Was last war I Wonder how he bore it how mortified he must have felt[4] I dont think his pride Would have suffered him to bear it calmly pray When did you hear from Cradock last When you Write again Let us know Wether you have heard from George and how little Hannah and Thomas is for George never mentions them in his letters We have heard but We dont

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[1] Drought and the dislocation of war had made provisions scarce and expensive especially because of transport difficulties. [cf. G.T.J., 8 August 1846, p.4, column 3]. Colesberg, which in turn was supplied by Grahamstown, was the main source of supplies for the Bechuana Circuit.

[2] Supra, Chapter 4, p.79.

[3] Charlotte was an avid gardener. [cf. Hannah Dennison to Charlotte, Ratabani, 2 May 1846, supra p. 220 , and Sarah Norton to Charlotte, Queenstown, 28 March 1857. (Cory MS 7436)].

[4] This comment probably refers to a letter by Charles Scanlen published in the Graham's Town Journal of 6 June 1846 [p.2, column 4], in which he states that 'attempts have been made to throw discredit' on his account of a 'desperate engagement at Farmerfield' published in the Graham's Town Journal of 16 May 1846. [p.4, column 2]. He was the leader of a group of men including George Dennison jun., who had retaken cattle lifted at Farmerfield by Caffres after a 'desperate engagement'. It appears from the letter, that aspersions, too, had been cast on his conduct in the Sixth Caffre War of 1834-5, for he stressed the fact that he had served throughout the duration of the War under Col. Smith, only to lose all his property and to receive no compensation for it. Letters written by Col. Somerset and a group of men, including George Dennison jun., were published in support of Scanlen.

know Wether it is true that Panda the Zulu Chief is threatening to make War With the British if they dont (help him) he complains of his people runing away[1] I suppose he expect them to go and search for his runnaways pretty employment for English Soldiers if it should be true I dont know What Will become of the Colony in fact the Whole Country it is realy dreadful War I hope it may end favourably for at present it Weare a very serious aspect there is a report flying about that moshee has got the sword stick under him head chief in that case I suspect Moroko and moshes[2] Will not be at peace long I hope it is not true for it Will be a very unpleasant concern but I must conclude for I can find nothing to Write about give my kind love to Mrs Ann and Miss Gush I should feel very happy to hear from them if they thought me Worth Writing to tell Elizabeth Gush I have not forgotten her and I hope When I next see her she Will be les affected than she used to be For there is nothing in creation So hateful as affecta[t]ion.

Youre most affectionatly
Sorah Ann Dennison

kind love to J Gush' Please excuse this blotted letter it Was an accident tell Miss C Gush that Richard is growing very (bright) and good looking she must preserve her heart

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[1] This rumour probably stemmed from a report in the Natal Witness of 24 May 1846, reproduced in the Grahm's Town Journal of 30 May 1846 [p.2, column 4], which stated that as a 'result of the sanguinary proceedings' of Panda's impeys among his subjects, 'a rush was expected to this colony of many desirous of sharing the security and happiness enjoyed by the natives within its boundaries.' Panda had tried to prevent this emigration, according to the report.

[2] The bone of contention between Moroka and Moshesh was that Moshesh claimed that Moroka was his vassal having been allowed to settle in the lands round Thaba 'Nchu on sufferance. Moroka, however, argued that he was independent and possessed full title to that land by virtue of agreements concluded between them in 1833 and 1834. [See Supra, Chapter 4, pp. 66-67].

84. S A Dennison to Charlotte september [1846]. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My dear Charlotte We recieved your letter of the 5 yesterday and the acount you give of Charles health distresses me more than I can tell O Charlotte that I could see him but for five minutes then Would I be at rest but I Will never see him again in this World I feel confident of it O Charlotte When I think of his death I feel as if I could not bear it the idea of never seeing him again of missing him When I do come down it Wrings my heart With agony. We are told that We should have strenth according to our day o Charlotte I trust mother Will have strenth to bear this heavy trial though I fear she Will sink under it you say in your letter mother trusted herself last War[1] you must remember mother Was much stronger then than she is now this War is far more dangerous than the last a going of 400 miles is no trifle in War time though if We posibly could come down We Would but I do not think We Will be able to come down We Will not be able [to] get people if we even got a Wagon and oxen but I must now conclude my kind love to all friends your affectionate

S A Dennison

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[1] The Sixth Caffre War 1834/5.

65. S A Dennison to Charles Ratabani
October 2 1846.

My dear Brother

from the tenor of Charlottes last letter We fear We will never see [you] again O Charles the very thought Wrings my heart With agony but still When I look upon it in its real light I feel how thankful I ought to be [to] the almighty for his unbounded mercy toward us in thus leading you to seek him the savior of sinners When I contemplate the happiness that awaits you in another World the happiness you Will feel in joining our dear sainted Sister in the skies[1] yes my dear Brother although we all feel incosolable in the idea of logsing you yet We know that our loss Will be your Eternal gain When We view the Ways of the omnipotent Jehovah We cannot feel to thankful to him [for his] mercies to us how has his Watchful hand been over our Brothers how often has George been in imanent Peril in this war We cannot be too suffecently thankful to God for his mercies towards us sinful Creatures O Charles I trust you can say With the in[s]pired Writer

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vain delusive World adieu
With all the creature good
Only Jesus I pursue
Who bought me With his blood
All my pleasures I forego
I trample on thy Wealth and pride
Only Jesus Will I know
and Jesus crucified

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this I believe you safely say I believe o Charles I Wish I could see you if it were possible for us to come down We Would but I dont think We Will be able to come before February but I must now bid you goodbie I Wish very much to see you but I dare hardly hope it and now my dearest Charles may heaven protect and guard you and prepare you more fully for another World

Your affectionate Sister

S A Dennison

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[1] cf. supra, Chapter 5, p. 102.

86. S A Dennison to Charlotte Ratahani January 18th 1847. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town from Miss Dennison Ratahani Care of Rev W Shaw.

My dear Sister

We recieved your letter a few days ago in Wich my poor Brothers death is stated o Charlotte I can scarcly believe that my dear Charles is no more it seems to me like an empty dream my heart was so rebelious I could not Willingly part With a Brother I so dearly loved O Charlotte I feel as if I had lost my only Brother I seem indeed as if I had no other solution I feel so desolate but still We ought not to mourn We ought rather to rejoice that he is removed from this World of misery and Woe he is now I trust by the side of his sainted sister far happier than ever he Was in this World it is indeed a comfort to know that he is happy it in some degree makes up for the bitterness of his loss oh Charlotte We can say With truth the Glory of our house is departed my (gurdean) sister is no more our lively and once happy Elizabeth is now no longer one of us (dare) not reken her as a member of our family but still I love her and Would do any thing for her that Was in my power if I could reclaim her I know that there is some members of my family Who Would not take any notice of her now because her Character is irritrevibly gone but with all her faults I love her still I pity her because I am sure she must be miserable I can truly say that I have but one Brother left Its Brother Richard as to the others they are distant relations I once Was stupid enough to Write to them but as neither choose to take any notice of my scribbles in the slightest Way Which ever they need not be afraid that I will ever trouble them again no Charlotte I cannot stand any thing of that kind When my dear departed Charles recieved a letter from me he answerd it in a Brotherly manner he had too much good sense to treat a younger sister like a mere machine alas I will never see his equil again in this World Richard resembles his Brother in some things particularly in countinence which endears him to me more than ever Mother has been With Mrs Hobenson nearly three Weeks[1] I expect her home next Tewsday you must give up the thought of our coming down this year for there are so many ladies to attend this year that She will be very little at home your Richard has grown so much you Will scarcely know him he is quite as tall as Henry if not taller and you know he is not more than sixteen

give my kind love to Mrs Amm and Miss Gush and receive the same from

Youre affectionatly

S A Dennison

PS Will you oblige me by mentioning in your next where my Poor Brother is buried

SD

We were requested to tell you to pay the Postage When you Put the Letter in the Office

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[1] Hannah probably spent ± one month with each of the women she confined. Eli Wiggill, a missionary, records in his Autobiography that 'the nurse, Mrs Dennison, came fifty miles to care for my wife. She stayed with us more than a month.'
[K. Larson, 'The Talbots, Sweetnams and Wiggills,' (Cory MS 6695B) p. 35].

87. Charlotte Gush to Joseph Port Elizabeth Feb 15 18[47]. Addressed to Mr J Gush Salem.

My dear Joseph

I am more sorry than I can well express at not having written sooner But know you will excuse me - our dear little Son has been verry troublesome at first crying after Evry waggon he saw he has Sufferd much with Boils has had five nearly as large as the one on his neck that Broke in Salem I am happy to say that the Last has broke 2 days ago and I dout are any more coming he is very much Better Eats six pence worth of Biscuits Every day and has more flesh on him than when he left home you would be quite amazed to here him when a waggon passes call out Boo Boo and point to the Street if I ask Him wheres papa He looks Mournfully round No make haste papa we Long to see you Margaret is Much Better She thinks the Bathing has been useful I have not Bathed yet I was not well Enough Last week but today the Portuguese Men of War are ready to give us a warning if we dare to venture we have only once had fish owing to the prevalence of the South East winds understand that the Govenor[1] is expected daily He is Coming round in the president But he fear the South Easter will detain Him there same little hope of Getting the thunderBolt[2] off it is ascertained that She Has lost five ft of plank or something in that line and that Lets in Such a Body of water as keeps their own pumps and nineteen 19 others Employed Some of the pumps are verry powerfull it seems a Such pity for her to Lay there and do nothing I have had a verry bad thumb on My right hand and Such a Bad Boil under my right arm that Margaret has had to dress and attend to George for 2 days on the Whole I am Better than When I left Salem we have not yet Been able to go to Utenhague and we shall not Be able to go now I fear for you or william Will Be down soon and I wanted not to Be away when you Come down on my account theres no place Like Home I am surprised that Elisabeth has not written we are verry anxious to Hear How Sister Mary is - Mr Slaters waggon is here waiting for the Govenor. it arrived on Saterday morning I hope you are well and Happy (Poesal) says you are aright freak is it so have you heard any thing from My Mother Since I left pray Let me know I am verry anxious to see you and hope you will neither go to Beaufort nor Cradock But come down here My thumb is getting so painful that I shall not be able to write much more will my Love have the kindness to tell Mrs Ann that I have not been able to get any fish

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[1] Sir Henry Pottinger left Simon's Bay for the Eastern Frontier on 11 February 1847, on board the H.M.S. President. [G.T.J., 20 February 1847, p.3, column 2].

[2] The Steamer, Thunderbolt, struck the rocks and was holed when rounding Cape Recife on 3 February 1847. Barely keeping afloat the ship limped into Algoa Bay. The high seas whipped up by the South Easter washed right over the ship. The pumps were of no avail because the ship eventually went to pieces. The ship had sailed from Simon's Bay to Algoa Bay to fetch the 90th Regiment. [G.T.J., 6 February 1847, p.4, column 3 and 13 February 1847, p.2, column 5; compiled by R.F. Kennedy, Shipwrecks on and off the Coasts of Southern Africa p. 118].

we have Been on the Look out Every day give my Best Love to her and Brother as also to Father and Mother sisters and Brothers if you Cannot Come Soon I hope you will write I feel most anxious to hear from you. farewell Dearest I am

Yours most affectionatly Charlotte Gush.

Give My kindest regards to Mrs Slater I Shall be glad when I get home once more I hope the Kaffirs have not troubled you Since I left

2 oclock PM South East wind verry high have just heard that the Thunderbolt is Breaking up I hope we Shall have no <u>wrecks</u> I forgot to tell you that our Cash is getting low

C G

88. H Donnison to Charlotte Ratabani April 4 1847. Addressed to Mrs J Cush Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte

it is long since I have been able to write to you but do not think if I have not writen I have forgot no you are never a day nor night out of my thoughts we were to have seen you this year but prevented by the ladys I hope now there will be no obstackle in the end of this year I leave home very soon again to go to thatNchu and if mrs Giddy returns she will be next I have had Richard ill with fits but hope he is better my time as I informed you in a former letter has been taken up entirly this year so much so that I have not been able to get my suply of corn it being scarce this year I have had it brought in abundance to my door so that I have had to refuse on former ocasions and now I want it[1] thus it is in this world of care o my dear child how I wish I could only see you and yours but that is denied yet you must excuse me I do not know how you may be in those fearfull time still I think if you were to leave albany untill things were settled would it not be better here is work and money ways of getting a living with any industry person might apply to advantage I know that it is with you a great trial to think of parting with old friends still you must suffer in comon with the rest however I only say what I think as we have not heard for a long time I fear you have been ill wich I hope is not the case or if so may the lord grant to you a speedy recovery my mind now begins to see the dark side of all things I am happy to say sarah is in good health tall and as independent as she is high a sprit I by no meane dispise - and now my dear daughter I hope you are in the blessed engagement of Religion it is the best scource and indeed the only one calculated to make us happy here our trials in general are neither few nor small mine seems to encrease but blessed be god I have my comfort under them all Jesus is my hope he is my stay he enables me to trust though I cannot trace him at all times I know you have long loved him and served him your late trial in waiting on your dear Brother[2] has I hope been blessed to you it has been a trial a task though (I) know your kindness would be such as to allamost wish it over again if you could have him near you blessed be god he is happy here is no happyness he now enters into the fullness of his lord we shall Join him but he will not return to us nor do I wish it I cannot tell you my feeling on hearing of his death tho expected and at the same time So fast here that to go down was impossiable if there was no other hindrance the Beast were to poor to travel[3] with and in may last I was sent for to Mrs Giddy did not reach home until the end of July in august I was at bethulie attended 3 woman there did not get home untill september and then came to a empty home there not being a bit of coffee or sugar or tea nor any thing in the house nor in the district so that I was obliged to go to pieter mariets Berg for supplyes and a sory Janury I had of it dear may the lord bless you and yours do lett me know if you have heard of your unfortunate sister and if you know any thing of William

Your Aft Mother
H Dennison

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[1] Supra, Chapter 4, p. 79.

[2] Charles Dennison.

[3] as the result of drought.

89. J Gush' to Charlotte Buffalo River 4 April 1847.
Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem.

Dear Charlotte

I do not know how to beging to write for this moning is a sad one to me, we have just put poor Edward Blackmore[1] in the grave he was put to death by the Caffers yeasterday the cause of this accident was we heard some fireing and Blackmore with six more went to see what it was and the Caffer fell on them and kill him and A poor dutch man[2] the five others made their escape W Emsle was with poor Blackmore when the Caffers cout him[3] his last words was O God may my last end not be like this I should hav writing before but had no time we have been on horse back ever since we left home the third day we left Peddie we hed a little brush with the Caffers and I Eilmore came up to them first and one fired at us the bal went over our heads we took from them 200 head of Cattle and since that we have kill 3 Caffers I was standing by A dutch man when he shot one I wish the war was over it is bad work tell William not to worrie What ever I am in and if I should ever get out it will be A good one that will get me in again since I left home I have very well in health I long to see you and little Gorge I hope you are all well I think we shall be home by the 18th of the month Give my love to Father and mother

I Remain youre turly[4]

J Gush.

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[1] An account of this incident in the Graham's Town Journal referred to Blackmore as 'Blakemore'. (G.T.J., 10 April 1847, p.4, column 1).

[2] This refers to Mr. Pixter who came from the Bushmans River district. (G.T.J., 10 April 1847, p.4, column 1).

[3] When ambushed by a party of 200 Caffres, Blakemore and Pixter had dismounted, the better to fire their guns. But they were surrounded and killed while the remaining five of the party escaped to their camp. (G.T.J., 10 April 1847, p.4, column 1).

[4] i.e. truly.

90. H Dennison to Charlotte Ratabani July 25 1847. Addressed to Mrs J Gush Salem near Grahams Town.

My Dear Charlotte

I am happy to say we have recived your letter with its good and bad news for poor Henry I am sory I have this day writen to him and gave him a invitation to this country wich I think if he will be advised by me he will not have cause to regret however he must chose for himself - as to your sister Elizabeth no words can describe my thankfullness that she sees her error at last and if she will resolve to lead a new life she knows she has a mother who will recive her and pardon her oh that the lord may grant unto her to see the sinfullness of her ways and then and only then will she be enabled to cast herself at the foot of the cross of her dear saviour who will bless and keep her unto life eternal I have Just returnd home and tho not very well cannot miss this little interval of rest to write to you as I must leave home again very soon I find this kind of life to trying to me I feel I am no more young nor so suple as I was when I saw you last a great change has taken place in me and tho I can by no means acount for it the thought that I shall not be long here is continualy with me not as a sorrowfull or painfull thought (quite) otherwise I feel a calm reliance on the lord and feel all will be well one thing troubles me that is the state of my affairs if they were settled then I could rejoice in my departure still it seems that these things will be done first oh lord I am in thy hand dispose of me as thou (think) fit thy will be done amen - I have a great desire to see you all once more and I do not know but think I shall be premited may the lord grant it I am at this moment very happy and pray that the lord will bless you all wether I see you or not we shall meet again and that is happyness then lett us so work as to obtain everlasting life amen[1] give my love to Joseph and to your children adieu may the lord continue to bless you and to keep you is the prayer of your mother

H Dennison

p s I am sending to mrs Giddy for the shoes as the pair not sent then was acknowledged having then I supose the[y] were forgoten by them as they are yet (coming) My dear I send the inclosed to the 2 ladyes who assisted your sister now you must send it to them as I do not know thier names if you like copy it and send it to them but use your own pleasure

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[1] Supra, Chapter 5, p. 100.

APPENDIX C

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON PEOPLE REFERRED TO IN THE LETTERS, AND IDENTIFIED.

ALLISON, Rev. James.

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, 4 July 1802. He was the son of James Allison, 1820 Settler, who sailed from County Cork, Ireland in the East Indian, with the Irish parties under W. Parker and W. Scanlen. The party was first settled at Clanwilliam, where James Allison sen. died. They sailed for Algoa Bay on 24 July 1820, where the Irish parties were re-settled near Grahamstown. He married Dorothy Thackwray (died 23 June 1864) on 4 January 1827. He had no children by this marriage. In 1831 he became converted to the Wesleyans. In 1832 he joined the Rev. John Edwards as a catechist to the Griquas of Barend Barends at Boetschuap. He took part in the migration of the Baralong, Griqua and other peoples to Thaba 'Nchu in December 1833. (See supra, Chapter 4, pp. 65 - 66). Allison established the mission station at Imperani. In 1839 he was accepted as a candidate for the Wesleyan ministry and in 1843 was received into full connexion. He took part in an exploratory journey to the Raputse tribe in Swaziland in 1845 with a view to establishing a mission there. He took charge of the short-lived mission station, Mohamba, in Swaziland in August 1845. He trekked to Pietermaritzburg on 17 April 1846 with a following of about 1,000 Swazis and in 1847 settled them at Idaleni. He left the Wesleyan Church in 1851, settled at Edendale and by 1861 had sold his share of Edendale to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. He joined the Free Church of Scotland in 1867 and in 1869 founded Impolweni mission. He married for the second time in 1867 to Mary McCarthy Dunn (died 18 July 1897) and had three children by her. During his missionary labours he translated four portions of the gospels of St. John and St. Matthew, and the Wesleyan first catechism into Swazi. He died at Pietermaritzburg on 1 April 1875.

ANN, Mary Hannah.

Born C. 1814. She was the daughter of the 1820 Settlers, Richard and Margaret Gush (infra) and came out with her parents as a member of Sophton's party. She married Philip Ann and died on 10 August 1860.

ATHERSTONE, Dr. John.

Born C. 1792. An 1820 Settler, he came out in Damant's party from Fakenham, Norfolk in the ship, Ocean. He had been resident house-surgeon at Guy's Hospital, London. He was appointed District Surgeon of Uitenhage in August 1820. In 1823, he moved to Cape Town and practised there for some years. In 1828 he was appointed District Surgeon of Grahamstown. He married twice : first to Elizabeth Damant. They had seven children of whom William Guyton Atherstone was the most famous. His second wife was Ann Damant, the widow of T.C. White. They had four children. After his second marriage he farmed at Table Farm, breeding horses among other activities. He served in the Seventh Caffre War of 1846/47. In 1848 he was a member of the Legislative Council. He died on 13 May 1853 as the result of a cart accident.

ATKINSON, Rev. Theophilus.

He was a missionary of the London Missionary Society and was stationed at Colesberg for some years. He first arrived there on 26 May 1840.

BEDFORD, Thomas.

He was one of Hannah Donnison's creditors. He had opened a shop in Graaff-Reinet in 1824 and 'smoused' about the country. By 1836 he had established a shop in Colesberg.

BERTRAM, Johan Petrus.

He was a Wesleyan Missionary and son of Johan Petrus Bertram of Grahamstown. On 24 February 1845, he married Maria Elizabeth Shepstone, born at New Bristol on 6 December 1821 and daughter of the Wesleyan missionary, William Shepstone. The Rev. James Cameron performed the marriage service. He was appointed temporarily to Wittebergen when the Rev. William Shepstone left for Haslope Hills in 1849. He later moved to Morley and then to Lesseyton near Queenstown and Kamastone, where he worked among the Fingoes. Mrs. Elizabeth Bertram died in East London in 1893.

BIDDULPH, Mrs. Simon.

Born C. 1772. She was the wife of the 1820 Settler, Simon Biddulph, who came to the Cape as a member of Bailie's party on board the Chapman. She had three children. She was the only daughter of Thomas Burnet, Captain and Commander in the Royal Navy. She died at Bathurst on 10 February 1844.

BINGHAM, George.

Born C. 1811. Sometime Wesleyan Missionary. His wife's name was Sarah. He was the Rev. W.C. Holden's successor at Colesberg in 1842. By December 1843, he was charged with violating the financial regulations of the Missionary Committee and District. He was censured but acquitted of dishonest intentions. He was sent up to Umpukane but by 12 February 1845, had resigned from the Wesleyan Ministry and went farming. He died at Harrismith on 27 January 1867.

BLAKE, Mrs. Elizabeth Maria.

Elizabeth Maria Bedford, eldest daughter of Mr. Thomas Bedford married John Blake, second son of the late Captain John Blake, H.M. 24th Regiment, on 18 January 1843. (at Colesberg)

BONNIN, Samuel.

Born in 1779. He was an 1820 Settler, member of Sephton's party which came to the Cape in the Aurora. His wife's name was Ann (born C. 1783.) In 1829 he was leader of the Wesleyan Society at Reed Fountain. He resided chiefly at Salem, where he died on 9 April 1843. He had at least one daughter.

BOYCE, William Binnington.

Born at Beverley, Yorkshire on 9 November 1803. He entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1829 and was appointed to the Albany district in the Eastern Cape. In November 1830, he established the Buntingville mission. He subsequently worked at Mount Coke, Wesleyville, Newtondale, and Grahamstown. He advised Sir Benjamin D'Urban during the Sixth Caffre War and in 1838 published his Notes on South African affairs from 1834 - 1838, with reference to the civil, political and religious condition of the colonists and aborigines, which defended the British Settlers. He visited Umpukane early in 1839. He returned to England in 1843 and in 1845 was appointed general superintendent of the Wesleyan missions in Australia. He was secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in London during the years 1858 - 1876. Among his publications were A Grammar of the Kafir Language (1834), a translation of the Gospel of St. Luke into Xhosa, with the help of William Shaw (1833) and An Introduction to the study of history (1864). He had married in 1834 and had four daughters.

BRISLIN, John.

He was a mason and lived at Beaufort Street, Grahamstown.

CAMERON, Rev. James.

He was a Wesleyan Missionary. He was chairman of the Beehuana District during the 1840's. In 1855, he was stationed at Port Elizabeth. He succeeded the Rev. Jesse Pilcher as Chairman and General Superintendent of the Natal District, at Pietermaritzburg in 1864. He died in 1875 after forty five years of service in the Wesleyan ministry. He was the author of the remarkable 'Journal of James Cameron'.

Note:- The 'Campbell' recommended by Hannah to Ann for her confinement (supra. P. 128) could refer either to Dr. Ambrose George Campbell or to Dr. Peter Campbell. It seems clear, though, that the 'Campbell' who attended the dying Ann Scanlen in 1843 (supra., pp. 174,176) was Dr. A.G. Campbell.

CAMPBELL, Dr. Ambrose George.

Born 1799. He was the fourth son of General Campbell who came to the Cape soon after the British Settlers as King's Commissioner on the Eastern frontier. His first wife was Rose Ainswick. He practised at Pimlico, in London before coming to South Africa. He married his second wife, Johanna Sophia van der Riet, daughter of J.W. van der Riet, the civil commissioner of Uitenhage, on 21 November 1837. He rendered distinguished service in the 6th Caffre War, founded the first hospital in the Eastern Province and was the Editor of the controversial publication, Echo. He died in Port Elizabeth in 1884.

CAMPBELL, Mr. J.

He was the son of Major-General Charles Colin Campbell of Barbrek, the leader of General Campbell's party, which came to the Cape in 1820 in the Salisbury. He was appointed Clerk of the Peace at Colesberg on 15 February 1837. In 1838 he was admitted as Attorney in the Circuit Court in terms of the 196th Rule of Court. He went to England and on 1 November 1842, married Sarah West at St. Pancras. He returned to the Cape on 15 December 1842. He was sometime Protector of Slaves at Graaff-Reinet and later Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate at Cape Town.

CAMPBELL, Dr. Peter.

Born C. 1790, at Omagh, County Tyrone, Ireland. Studied medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, and graduated on 14 December 1809. He practised at Great Marlborough Street, London. He came to the Cape in 1820 with Sephton's party in the Aurora. He settled at Grahamstown and practised there until he died on 31 July 1837. He was a Freemason and played a rôle in establishing the first Lodge on the frontier - Albany Lodge 389, in Grahamstown - in January 1828. He married first Miss Sarah Sanderson and had two daughters. After her death on 21 July 1825, he married Mary Anne Cumming, from which marriage, two children survived.

COCK, William.

Born Pa[illegible]ryn Cornwall, England in 1794. Leader of Cock's party which came to the Cape in the Weymouth in 1820. He was a man of multifarious activities - farmer, trader, merchant, harbour-builder, ship-owner and Cape Politician. At the time of Napoleon's imprisonment in St.Helena, he was Government contractor for the supply of salt beef there and at Mauritius. He went into partnership with the Cape Town firm of Heideman, Hodgson and Co., and established a branch in Grahamstown. He was allotted some land at the Kowie River Mouth with the dissolution of that partnership. Using Grahamstown as a base, he traded extensively. In July 1839 he was the member of a committee set up to frame municipal regulations for Colesberg. With his retirement from business he

concentrated on the development of the Kowie River Mouth into a port. In 1847-1853, 1856, and 1865, he was a member of the Legislative Council and a member of the House of Assembly in 1854. He had married Elizabeth Toy (1795-1875) and had ten children, of whom eight grew up. Three of his sons served in the Caffre Wars. He died in Grahamstown on 11 February 1876.

COLLETT, James.

1820 Settler and member of General Campbell's party which arrived at the Cape in the Salisbury. By 24 July 1827, he had left his farm at Barville Park and farmed at 'Pendennis' which he had acquired from James Weeks in the vicinity of Osler's party's location. By 31 December 1827, he had extended his activities to trading in Grahamstown. About five years later, on 15 September 1832, Collett gave up business so that he could live on his farm. On 23 June 1834, he sold his farm on the Mansfield River to Joseph Weakley. He then farmed with sheep in the Cradock district and bought the farm, 'Green Fountain', three miles beyond Cradock. He married Rhoda Ann Trollip, daughter of the 1820 Settler, Joseph Trollip, a member of Hyman's party. Trollip was also a sheepfarmer in the Cradock district. Although he was returned as a member of the House of Assembly for the division of Cradock, he preferred to concentrate on his farming, and forfeited his seat.

DANIEL, John Thomas.

Born in 1824. He was the son of John Nevine Daniel and Sarah March. He married Mary Ann Sephton (born 18 June 1829), daughter of Thomas Hezekiah and Sara Sephton. He worked for seventeen years among the Baralong on the Methodist Bechuana Circuit. He died on 15 June 1888. His wife died on 15 June 1910.

DRAPER, Thomas.

Born at Nottingham, England on 30 August 1812. He was the son of the 1820 Settler, Thomas Draper, who took over the leadership of Calton's party from Nottinghamshire after Calton's death in July 1820. About 1837, he arrived at Colesberg, as the representative of the firm of Heugh and Fleming, from Port Elizabeth. He acted as such in Colesberg until 1850, when he became a partner in the firm. He married Mary Grimmer on 24 March 1852. He went into partnership with Thomas Plewman in 1860, which was to last for fifteen years. He died on 18 October 1875, leaving eight children. His widow, Mary, died on 15 December 1879.

FRASER, Mrs.

She was the wife of the Dutch Reformed Church minister at Beaufort, Rev. Colin Mackensie Fraser. She died C. 1838, leaving seven children. After her death, the Rev. Fraser married Maria Elizabeth Sieberhagen.

GIDDY, Rev. Richard.

A printer by trade, he became a Wesleyan missionary and laboured on the Bechuana Circuit. He married Sarah Jane Sephton on 1 May 1845. This was his second marriage.

GOODAIR, John.

He was sometime gaoler in Colesberg.

GREEN, Rev. George H.

He was a Wesleyan missionary and sometime president of the Salem Bible Association and a Trustee of the Port Francis chapel. He laboured for some time at Salem.

GRISBROOK, Charles Hudson.

He was an apothecary at Graaff-Reinet and sometime Deputy Sheriff of the Graaff-Reinet district. He married Maria Theodora who died at Graaff-Reinet on 28 December 1840 at the age of 28. His second marriage was to Johanna Magdelena Linching on 2 August 1841.

GUSH, Joseph.

Born at Salem on 4 March 1821. He was the son of Richard Gush (infra). He married Charlotte Dennison on 13 August 1844. About 1854 he moved from Salem to 'Woodbury' on the Bushmen's River. He was a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1867 to 1878 and again in 1883.

GUSH, Richard.

Born at Beer, Devonshire on 24 April 1789. He married Margaret Evans (born 4 March 1821; died 2 April 1907). He led a section of Sephton's party which could not be accommodated in the Aurora, and came out in the Brilliant with Erith's party in 1820. A Quaker, Richard Gush never carried a gun, and would harm neither man or beast. He was known as the saviour of Salem when he and Barend Woest, unarmed, faced 500 hostile Caffres in the vicinity of Salem during the Sixth Caffre War (1834/35). He parleyed with the Caffres, gave them bread, tobacco and pocket knives, upon which they turned away from Salem. From this incident sprang the legend that the Salem people would never be killed by Caffres. He was a carpenter by trade. He had ten children, among whom were Mary Hannah (married Philip Amm), Margaret, Joseph (married Charlotte Dennison) and Elizabeth who married J.S. Thomas, a Wesleyan missionary. He (Thomas) was later murdered at Beecham Wood in Caffreland in 1857. Richard Gush died at Woodbury on the Bushman's River on 20 September 1858.

HARTLEY, Jeremiah.

Born C. 1813. He was the son of Thomas and Sarah Hartley, 1820 Settlers, and members of Calton's party from Nottinghamshire which came out in Albury. He married Elizabeth Weeks (born C. 1822). He was appointed catechist on the Bechuana Missionary Circuit in 1839 and in November 1847, at a meeting at Colesberg, he was received into full connexion as a Methodist minister. He died of brain fever at Imperane, near the residence of the Chief, Sikonyela, on 22 November 1848. Elizabeth Hartley died at Cradock on 22 February 1859. They had five children.

HOCKLY, Mrs. Elizabeth.

Born in 1791. She married Daniel Hockly, a goldsmith, on 18 June 1811, and came to the Cape in 1820 on board the Chapman as a member of Baillie's party which was located near the Fish River Mouth. By July 1820, the Hockly's were living in Uitenhage. During 1825 they moved to Grahamstown; lived at Bathurst 1827-1828; and about 1830, they lived at Graaff-Reinet for a short period. They moved back to Grahamstown and about 1833 returned to Graaff-Reinet. Daniel Hockly died on 5 May 1835, and was buried at Graaff-Reinet. Mrs. Elizabeth Hockly returned to Grahamstown and opened a private school there in February 1836. About August 1841, she sold her house and moved to Cradock to open another school. She eventually moved to the farm of her son-in-law, William Dods Pringle, 'Lynedoch', where she died on 2 December 1862. She had eleven children, four of whom died in infancy.

HOLDEN, Rev. William Clifford.

Born in England in 1839. He was a Wesleyan missionary. He was appointed the first Wesleyan Minister in Colesberg in 1841. He established the first Wesleyan church in Durban in 1847. He worked among the Zulus at Umhloti and also helped the Byrne settlers of 1849. He died in 1897. He was the author of History of the Colony of Natal (1855), Past and Future of the Kaffir Races (1866), A Brief History of Methodism and Methodist Missions in South Africa (1877), among other publications.

HEUGH, Mr.

He was a storekeeper and went into partnership with William Fleming, an Algoa Bay colleague. He opened a store in Colesberg.

HUTTON, Charles.

In 1846 he was Marketmaster, Wardmaster and Town Clerk of the Colesberg Municipality.

JUBBER, Mrs.

She was the wife of the 1820 Settler, Mr. Jubber. He died at Fort Beaufort in 1870, at the age of 86.

KISCH, Tiberius Braham.

He was a Jewish 'storekeeper-cum-apothecary' in Colesberg where he arrived about 1838 after living in Grahamstown, and was the nephew of Aaron de Pass, a successful merchant, in Cape Town. His wife Cornelia, died on 5 March 1843 at the age of 30. On 23 September 1846, he was married again by the Rev. Theophilus Atkinson to Jane Harriet Thomson of Elgin, Scotland. In that same year he was appointed temporary district surgeon in Colesberg until a suitably qualified man could be appointed. He held that post until 1866. He identified the O'Reilly diamond, discovered in March 1867, as a topaz.

KLINGBIEL, Mrs.

She was a Colesberg resident and the wife of Joachim Hendrik Friedrik Klingbiel who was born in Germany on 9 November 1809. He died from 'the effects of a dose of patent medicine' on 31 July 1849. She had at least one son, Henrich Friedrick Kasper, born on 1 April 1840 and who died on 5 April 1905.

KREBS, Dr. J.G.H.

He was first Acting District Surgeon of Graaff-Reinet and was later appointed District Surgeon.

LAMONT, James.

He was a tailor and draper who lived in High Street, Grahamstown. He entered into partnership with James M'Master on 15 April 1838. By 15 April 1842, the partnership was dissolved. Lamont continued on his own as draper and tailor in Church Square.

MAHONEY, Elizabeth Ann.

Born in 1815. She was the daughter of Daniel and Elizabeth Hockly. She married Daniel Mahoney (1807-1852) on 9 August 1832. They lived at Grahamstown and then at Cradock where Daniel was a Municipal Commissioner and where he plied his trade as a builder. She was probably the mother of Tom Mahoney who died of dysentry in Cradock. His first name was probably Daniel for Hockly [The Hockly Family in South Africa 1820-1964] lists a child, Daniel, who died in infancy.

MEINTJES, J.J.

He was a partner in the trading firm Neser and Meintjes in Graaff-Reinet. It was probably he who lent Hannah Dennison money for her business enterprises. In 1852, he went into partnership with W.J. Dixon in the firm Dixon and Meintjes. In 1855, he was appointed auctioneer at Graaff-Reinet.

MONRO, Dr. David.

Born C. 1816, he practised medicine for twelve years before his death on 20 August 1850. He was surgeon to the Burgher forces during the Seventh Caffre War (1846-47).

MOROKO.

Born at Lothakane, near Mafeking c. 1795. He was chief of the Seleka branch of the baRolong which was one of the leading tribes of the ba Tswana. When his father Sefonyela died in 1830, he became chief. He took part in the tribal migration to Thaba 'Nchu with the Wesleyan Missionaries, Archbell and Edwards, in December 1833. (supra, Chapter 4, p. 66). He maintained a friendly disposition towards the Voortrekkers. His relationship with the Basuto chief Moshesh, was somewhat strained and at Touwfontein in June 1845, he openly refuted Moshesh's claim that he was his vassal. He assisted the British forces against the Basuto in 1850 and 1851. During the Basuto wars with the Free State, Moroko and his Baralong helped the Republican forces. The Baralong territory round Thaba 'Nchu was annexed to the Orange Free State in July 1884 after Moroko had died at Thaba 'Nchu on 8 April 1880. Despite annexation, it was still regarded as a Baralong Reserve.

MOSHESH.

Born at Menkhoaneng, near Butha-Buthe, Northern Basutoland c. 1786. He was the founder and first paramount chief of the baSotho, an amalgamation of tribes scattered by the Mfecane. He made the impregnable mountain force of Thaba Bosigo, his capital in 1832. In 1833 he invited missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Society to labour among his people. In December of that year, he made the first of his two land grants to the Wesleyan missionaries and allied tribes. The conflict between European and tribal concepts of land ownership ~~were~~ was later to provide a source of friction. For instance Moshesh regarded Moroko and his tribe as vassals on sufferance on his land, while Moroko saw himself as independent (see supra, Chapter 4, pp. 66-67). He died at Thaba Bosigo on 11 March 1870 and the preservation of the Basuto nation and part of its territory in the face of European advance, was in no small measure due to his diplomacy, intelligence, and foresight.

MURRAY, Dr. Andrew (senior).

Born at Clatt, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, on 26 May 1794. He entered the Presbyterian Church and in 1821 received a call to South Africa through Dr. George Thom. The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (which was experiencing a shortage of clergy) was closely allied to the Presbyterian Church. After spending ten months learning Dutch in Utrecht, he arrived in South Africa in July 1822, and was ordained at Graaff-Reinet. His predecessor there was the Rev. Abraham Faure. He served in Graaff-Reinet for forty-five years. In 1824 he had married Maria Susanna Stegmann. They had eleven children of whom Dr. Andrew Murray (junior), also a Dutch Reformed Minister, was the most famous. During his ministry, eight new parishes were formed out of the huge Graaff-Reinet parish, which he nevertheless served even before the division of the parish brought some relief.

NICHOL, Mrs. Ellen.

She was a widow and storekeeper, who lived in High Street, Grahamstown. She kept millinery goods and groceries. Sarah, Charlotte and Charles Dennison stayed with her after their mother's flight to Graaff-Reinet.

NORDEN, Joshua Davis.

Born c. 1803 in London. He was the son of Abraham Norden of London. Jewish by birth, he was an auctioneer, farmer and soldier. He came to the Cape in 1820 as a member of Willson's party in the Belle Alliance. From 1835 he acted as an auctioneer in Grahamstown and played a prominent part in civic affairs. Later he became a farmer. In 1836 he was elected a commissioner for the municipality, was a sworn appraiser to the supreme court and committee member of the

Immigration Association. He played a part in securing the formation of a burgher force for the defence of Grahamstown when the troops were absent on the frontier. This force was named the Grahamstown Yeomanry. Norden was a commanding officer. He was killed on 25 April 1846, at Buffelskloof in a skirmish with Caffres during the War of the Axe (1846 - 47). (see supra, p. 221)

NORVAL, John.

Born ~~at~~ in Glasgow, Scotland, on 22 May 1795. He was one of the settlers who came out with Benjamin Moodie in 1817. He was a comb-maker by trade. He lived in the Western Province for about twelve years. Towards the end of 1828, he moved to Graaff-Reinet and lived there until his departure for Colesberg towards the end of 1833. He married Mary Jane Murray (born 10 January 1810), sister of George Murray of Colesberg. While at Graaff-Reinet, he became a hat-maker, a lucrative trade at that time. He settled in Colesberg on 1 January 1834, where he worked as hat-maker, auctioneer, and field cornet. Late in 1840 he moved to Dapperfontein, on the banks of the Orange River. In 1841 he launched the first pontoon on the Orange River. In 1849, he moved to Roodeport, in the Philippolis district, where he resided until his death on 17 October 1875. His wife died there twenty-three years later on 17 August 1898.

ORCHARD, Henry.

He was a tailor by trade and lived in High Street, Grahamstown. He apparently went bankrupt in 1839, and in that year, he removed to Colesberg.

PADDISON, Henry.

Sometime poundmaster at Colesberg. He married Isabella Russell on 10 November 1845. She died at Colesberg on 15 April 1859 at the age of thirty-six. They had four children.

PANDA.

Also known as Umpande. He was the third of the renowned sons of Senzangakhona. His brother was the Zulu chief, Dingaan, Shaka's successor. After quarrelling with Dingaan, he left Zululand for Natal where in 1839 he received protection from the Voortrekkers, who recognised him as head of the emigrant Zulus. He, together with a commando of burghers fought against Dingaan in 1840. Dingaan's power was broken at the battle of Magonga. Panda was, accordingly, installed as King of the Zulus on 10 February 1840. He had twenty-three sons of whom, Cetshwayo, was one, and several daughters. He died in 1872.

PASKIN, J.

He was a shoemaker who lived in Bathurst Street, Grahamstown.

PIKE, William (junior).

Born c. 1804. He was the son of the 1820 Settler William Pike, a member of Calton's party which came out in the Albury and settled at Glumber. He married Sophia Usher on 2 February 1829. By July 1831, he was domiciled in Grahamstown and by December 1845, had a store there.

PORTER, Thomas I.

He was colour-sergeant of the Grenadier or Captain C. Yarborough's Company, 1st Battalion, 91st Regiment. He married Ema Robinson in 1845. Their son, Henry Ivers, died at Burgherdorp at the age of five years and two months.

PRIVITT, Martha.

Born c. 1792. She was married to Richard Privitt, a coppersmith, who lived first at Graaff-Reinet and then at Colesberg. He died on 9 August 1860, at the age of seventy. She died on 24 July 1860.

PRYER, William.

Born c. 1780. He came to the Cape with Sephton's party on board the Aurora in 1820. He had married Jane Clarke (born 13 May 1781). He worked as a warehouseman in Campbell Street, Grahamstown. His wife died at Lindale, near Salem, on 4 March 1861. They had seven children.

RAWSTORNE, Fleetwood.

Born c. 1791. He migrated to South Africa in 1831. His first marriage was to Eliza Henrietta Emett (born c. 1815), daughter of Captain Edwin Chere Emett. She died on 20 May 1839. On 15 February 1837, Fleetwood Rawstorne had been appointed 'Civil Commissioner, Resident Magistrate and Special Justice of Colesberg'. His salary was £250 per annum. He married Elizabeth Gilfillan Murray, eldest daughter of the Rev. James and Mrs. Murray, on 28 May 1842. After twenty-one years service as Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate in Colesberg, he died on 3 March 1858 at Colesberg after a short illness. He had four children by his first marriage and three by the second.

REID, Rev. Thomas.

Born in 1799 at Huntly, Aberdeenshire, in Scotland. He was a minister of the Presbyterian Church. He came to South Africa in 1836 and was appointed a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Colesberg on 26 March 1836. He ministered there for eighteen years and retired in 1854. He died at Colesberg on 25 February 1863.

RICHARDS, Joseph.

He was a shoemaker and lived in Beaufort Street, Grahamstown.

ROBERTS, Samuel.

He was the son of the 1820 Settler, Daniel Roberts, who came to the Cape with Sephton's party in the Aurora. He married Hannah Scanlen (born c. 1816), daughter of the 1820 Settler, William Scanlen, and sister of Charles, (infra.) on 4 June 1832. Samuel Roberts owned a boot and shoe warehouse in Church Square, Grahamstown. Hannah Roberts died on 19 April 1875.

ROSS, Rev. William.

Born 1802. He was a missionary from Scotland. His first wife had died leaving him with three children. In 1848 he married his second wife, Frances Chapman Hockly, (1820-66), daughter of Daniel and Elizabeth Hockly. (supra.) The Rev. Ross and Dr. David Livingstone, left Scotland together and from 1841, they worked among various Bechuana tribes. Livingstone left for Central Africa. Ross stayed on in Bechuanaland until his death. He was buried at Lokatling (near the present Barkly West.) He had four children by his second marriage.

SAVAGE, Captain Henry J.

He was appointed Captain in the 91st Regiment on 8 July 1843.

SCANLEN, Charles.

Born c. 1809. He was the son of the 1820 Settler, William Scanlen, head of a subsidiary party which came out with Parker's party for Cork, Ireland on the East Indian. The Scanlens originally came from Longford. Their party was located between the Assegai and Hazaar Rivers next to Butler's party. Charles Scanlen married Ann Dennison on 5 August 1833. They then lived on the farm Waay Plaats near the Fish River. During the Sixth Caffre War (1834-35) he went to the front as a member of the Corps of Guides under Captain Richard Southey. The Guides were got up under the auspices of Colonel Harry Smith. He carried on a mercantile business and also seems to have acted as a wagoner. He also indulged in legal affairs. His wife, Ann, died on 18 July 1843. On 6 February 1844, he married Sarah Gardner, daughter of Hezekiah Gardner. He served as a volunteer in the 1846 war and in 1850 served with the Cradock Volunteers. He represented Cradock in the House of Assembly from some time after 1854 until 1869. He had two children by his marriage to Ann Dennison, one of whom was destined to become prime minister of the Cape from 1880-1881. This was Sir Thomas Scanlen (1834-1912). Charles Scanlen died at Cradock on 26 October 1871.

SCANLEN, John.

Born c. 1808. He was the son of William Scanlen, the shoemaker and brother of Charles Scanlen. (supra.)

SEPHTON, William.

Born c. 1820. He was the son of Hezekiah Sephton, head of Sephton's party which came to the Cape in the Aurora and settled at Salem. He was a Wesleyan missionary.

SHAW, Rev. William.

Born at Glasgow, Scotland on 8 July 1798. He married Ann Maw (1788 - 6 July 1854) on 31 December 1817. In 1812 he became converted and joined the Methodists, and was ordained on 25 November 1819. In that year he was chosen by the Wesleyan Methodist Community in London to accompany Sephton's party of 1820 Settlers, as government-supported chaplain. He regarded the whole of the Albany district as falling under his care. Except for this stay in England (April 1833 - March 1837) he spent most of the period 1829 - 56, living in Grahamstown. He planned the establishment of a chain of mission stations from Natal to Delagoa Bay. The chain was started with Wesleyville in 1823. By 1830, six stations had already been established between the frontier and Pondoland. He was appointed general superintendent of the Wesleyan missions in south-east Africa in 1837. While in England, he gave evidence before the Aborigines Committee (1835-36). After a Voortrekker commando's attack on Ncapai, the Bhaca chief, in December 1840, Shaw made representations on his behalf to the British government. This was a vital factor in leading to the British occupation of Port Natal in 1842. Shaw often acted as intermediary between Faku, the Pondo chief and the British government at the Cape. He also had a hand in the Maitland/Faku treaty of 1844. Shaw returned to England in 1856. He married his second wife, Mrs. Ogle, on 12 March 1857 and in 1860 he wrote The Story of My Mission in South-Eastern Africa. In 1865, he was elected president of the Methodist Conference. He retired in 1866 and edited the Watchman in London. He died there on 4 December 1872.

SHEPPERSON, Benjamin Matthew.

He was a linen-draper in Grahamstown. His shop was situated on the corner of High Street and Bathurst Street.

SHEPSTONE, Rev. William.

Born c. 1796. He was an 1820 Settler, a stonemason by trade, who came to the Cape as a member of Holder's party in the Kennersley Castle. He was accompanied by his wife, Elisabeth, and son, Theophilus. They had five more children in South Africa. In 1823, he was sent as assistant missionary to Wesleyville. He was ordained in 1827 and in the period 1827 - 1837, he played a rôle in establishing other frontier mission stations:- Butterworth (1827); Morley (1829); Buntingville (1830). The natives called him 'Sonsion', - the admired. He returned to Wesleyville in 1832, but was forced to go to Grahamstown with the outbreak of the Sixth Caffre War (1834 - 35). In the negotiations between the Caffre chiefs and Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the governor, Shepstone acted as one of the intermediaries. Because he was suffering from asthma he was sent to the drier atmosphere of Umpukane. In 1842, he established the Wittebergen mission. His last mission was at Kamastone near Queenstown - the name being a combination of his own and that of the chief Kama. His first wife, Elizabeth Brooks, had died in 1833. He married for the second time in 1835 to Ann Smith, who died in July 1871. He himself died at Kamastone on 26 May 1873.

SPILLER, C.J.

Born c. 1792. He was an 1820 Settler, member of Greuse's party which came to the Cape on the Nautilus. His wife's name was Catherine and she was born c. 1793. When the Government 'resumed' 575 morgen of land between the Palmiet and the Fish Rivers, Charles Spiller lost 145 morgen. By 20 December 1834, he was living at Graaff-Reinet. He was a member of the Graaff-Reinet Municipal Force of 1835, a churchwarden of the English Episcopal Church, a Commissioner in the Municipality, a Commissioner on the Divisional Board of Public Roads, and a member of the Provisional Committee of the Graaff-Reinet Bank. He earned his living as a merchant. He was assegaied on 13 May 1866.

STANDEN, Jonathan.

He married Emma Wright on 13 February 1838, and was a schoolmaster. in Grahamstown.

STRETCH, Charles Lennox.

Born at Knock Duff, County Cork, Ireland in 1801. He was the son of Captain James St. Leger and Catherine Stretch. He emigrated to the Cape in November 1818, as an officer of the 38th Regiment. He served under Colonel Wilshire at the battle of Grahamstown on 22 April 1819. In that year, he was appointed Assistant Royal Engineer to organise the building of fortifications to protect Grahamstown. He served in the campaign in Caffreland until October 1819 when the war ended. He was employed on a military survey of the colony during the years 1823 - 1827 and thereafter Lord Charles Somerset appointed him Government Surveyor. He helped to rebuild the Enniskillen Pass through the Sneeuwberg Mountains to Graaff-Reinet. He was appointed Secretary to the Agricultural Society of Graaff-Reinet in 1828 which aimed at the introduction of woolled sheep into the district. With the outbreak of war in December 1834, Stretch went to Grahamstown. In 1835, he was acting Commandant of the Native Levies, and was reappointed Assistant Royal Engineer for the construction of Fort Cox and Hereford. He was appointed Resident Agent with the tribe of Gaika on 27 January 1836. He moved to Blockdrift, where he resided until the outbreak of the Seventh Caffre War (1846-47). He again served as Commandant of a Native Levy. Sir Peregrine Maitland, governor of the Cape, dismissed him from his diplomatic post on 5 December 1846. He represented Fort Beaufort on the Cape Legislative Assembly for the years 1854-1858. He was appointed a Member of the Board of Commissioners for Improving the Port and Harbour of Knysna in 1858. During the

yeare 1860 - 1863 he was the Port Elizabeth member of the Legislative Assembly. He represented the Eastern Divisions as Member of the Legislative Council during the yeare 1869 - 1873. He had married a daughter of Robert Hart and died near Somerset East on 12 October 1882.

TAYLOR, Rev. Francis.

Born c. 1816. He entered the Wesleyan Ministry in 1836 and worked for three yeare in Scotland. In 1839 he was appointed to the Bechuana Mission. He arrived there in 1840 with his wife, Hannah. He had to stop preaching because of symptoms of 'pulmonary consumption'. He moved to Colesberg for medical attention in April 1844. He died there on 17 November 1844.

WEDDERBURN, William.

Born c. 1801. He was the son of Christopher Wedderburn, and was an 1820 Settler, member of Smith's party, which came to the Cape in the Stentor. He soon left his party's location, about three miles from Port Alfred near Kabane's River, and started business as a tailor in Grahamstown. He married Martha Patrick (born c. 1807), who was also a Settler. They had thirteen children.

WENTWORTH, William.

Born c. 1785. He was an 1820 Settler and came to the Cape with Clark's party in the Northampton. His wife's name was Frances Maria (born c. 1796). He was sometime auctioneer and poundmaster in Colesberg. He was also Clerk and Sexton of the Wesleyan Chapel.

WEST, Thomas Hermanus.

Born c. 1803. He died at Grahamstown on 12 July 1841 as the result of Smallpox.

WALKER, Joseph.

Born c. 1798. He was an 1820 Settler, member of Smith's party which came to the Cape in the Stentor. He was a shopkeeper in Grahamstown, where, by March 1828, he was living. He had married Margaret Booth, daughter of Benjamin Booth of Reed Fountain on 10 May 1827.

WRIGHT, John Cecil.

He owned a millinery shop in Grahamstown. He was struck dead by lightning on 10 November 1847.

WURAS, Mrs.

Johanna Sass (died 19 July 1849), the daughter of a German missionary in the service of the London Missionary Society, married the Rev. Carl Friedrich Wuras (born in Herzeberg, Prussia, on 9 June 1809) in 1838. He was a member of the second group of Berlin Missionaries which arrived at the Cape in 1836. Rev. Wuras was sent to Bethany, on the Riet River which was the first Berlin mission station in South Africa. It had been granted to the Berlin Missionary Society by Adam Kok II in 1834. There the Rev. Wuras worked among the Coranna and the Tswana until his retirement in 1884. He founded two additional stations in 1847 at Pilgerhütten and Hebron. After Johanna's death, he married her cousin, Elizabeth Every (died 12 July 1890), the daughter of a Wesleyan missionary at Colesberg. He had fifteen children altogether. He died at Hersberg farm near Bethany (the present Wuraspoord) in the Free State on 20 May 1891.

YARBOROUGH, Captain C. Cooke.

He was appointed Captain in the 91st Regiment (Arg.) on 4 January 1833. On 19 May 1845, he was promoted to Major.



CHARLOTTE JOSH, born DEANTSON.

(Copy of an undated photograph in the possession of Captain J. Cush, 7[illegible] Stella Kondt Drive, Sunridge Park, Port Elizabeth.)

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