

A STUDY IN LOCAL HISTORY:
GRAHAMSTOWN 1883 - 1904

A Thesis for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
by
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John Syms Willcox, seven times Mayor of Grahamstown.

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List of abbreviations used in the footnotes.

AMR	Records of the Drostdy and Magistracy of Albany.
<u>AYB</u>	<u>Archives Year Book for South African History,</u>
CA	Cape Archives Depot, Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town.
<u>Cape Hansard:</u>	<u>Assembly Cape of Good Hope Debates in the House of</u> <u>Assembly.</u>
CL	Cory Library for Historical Research, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
CMB	Council Minute Books.
CPP	Cape Parliamentary Papers.
DDNS	Dr. E. Dru Drury's News Scrapbook.
<u>DNB</u>	<u>Dictionary of National Biography.</u>
<u>DSAB</u>	<u>Dictionary of South African Biography.</u>
FCMB	Finance Committee Minute Books.
<u>GDM</u>	<u>Grocott's Daily Mail.</u>
<u>GPM</u>	<u>Grocott's Penny Mail.</u>
<u>GTJ</u>	<u>The Grahamstown Journal.</u>
<u>JAH</u>	<u>Journal of African History.</u>
MCMB	Market Committee Minute Books. This abbreviation is used for the Market, Pound, Police and Sanitary Committee, which had diverse responsibilities.
MOHRB	Medical Officer of Health Report Book.
n.d.	no date.
RM to GD	Resident Magistrate to Government Departments.
TCM	Town Council Minutes. This abbreviation is preceded by a <u>GPM</u> or <u>GTJ</u> reference to a newspaper in which the proceedings of the town council meeting in question were published.
SCMB	Special Committee Minute Books.
WCMB	Water Committee Minute Books.
WLCMB	Works and Lands Committee Minute Books. Until 1917, this committee was more generally termed the Board of Works and Lands.
Unp.	Unpublished.

PREFACE

Local history has but recently come into its own as a popular academic discipline. Hitherto it has been one of the relatively uncharted seas of South African history.

The local historian is confronted with the problem of picking a path through the confusing maze of information available. The challenge is bound up with the choice; his selection of that which he believes to be most relevant to his purposes is both arbitrary and to some extent dependent on his hypothesis. He should sink shafts in selected areas, rather than in every area; while detail is necessary and interesting, the researcher must bear in mind the importance of a broad overview of the period covered. Alternately, he is frequently compelled to build a coherent story on subjects that were neglected or ignored by authorities at the time. The course and direction of the study are subject to continual revision and discipline as new information comes to light.

A recent upsurge in the work done on South African local history is indicative perhaps of a steady, if tentative flowering in this field of research. Two studies of the history of Graaff-Reinet have set a fine example of the kind of standards attainable in local history. C.C. Henning's Graaff-Reinet: A Cultural History 1786-1886, and K.W. Smith's From Frontier to Midlands: A History of the Graaff-Reinet District 1786-1910, cover a vast time-span and synthesise a wealth of detail into comprehensive studies. To date, little has been put out on the history of the larger South African cities, beyond commemorative booklets, publicity pamphlets and photographic collections. Work on the history of Cape Town is being conducted at present, and when completed, should provide insights into the development of this mecca of Western Cape colonial opinion.

A detailed examination of the history of Grahamstown was initiated in 1958 by K.S. Hunt's study of the period, 1827 to 1862. The thesis examines local administration in the early years of its growth, and culminates at the point of Grahamstown's incorporation as a fully fledged municipality.¹ In a recent M.A. thesis, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882, M. Gibbens has not confined her research purely to the local governing body. She has depicted Grahamstown as a typically Victorian city, and examines prevailing political opinions as well as attitudes and developments in the town council. The shorter period covered - twenty years, as opposed to thirty-five in the earlier work - is symptomatic of the growing complexity of the age. The thesis concludes with the General Municipal Act of 1882, the stranglehold of a deepening economic depression and the commencement of construction of the Grahamstown - Port Alfred railway line. It captures the picture of a bustling community at the height of the Victorian era.

The current work must be viewed as a continuation of the preceding theses. It begins at the point where Grahamstown's commercial importance in the Eastern Cape declines after a flourish of hopes in the prospects of the Port Alfred harbour as a means of bringing trade back to Grahamstown. The study concludes when the foundation of Rhodes University College in 1904, provides a new centre of development for the city. This theme is continued in an M.A. thesis in the course of preparation at Rhodes University. N.D. Southey is extending the study of Grahamstown to the year 1918, and his work² should contain

¹K.S. Hunt, "The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, with Special Reference to Grahamstown 1862-1882." AYB, 1961.

²i.e. A Period of Transition: Grahamstown 1902-1918.

interesting observations on the success of Grahamstown's role as an educational centre.

A Study in Local History: Grahamstown 1883-1904 aims to draw into a coherent picture the threads of political attitudes, approaches to racial issues and changes confronting the late Victorians in Grahamstown, particularly in the areas of sanitation, public health and shifting commercial frontiers. The relation of local development to national affairs has been investigated, although attempts to define exactly how the former influenced the latter, and vice versa, would involve one in the proverbial chicken-and-egg syndrome. Let it suffice to say that an understanding of events in the microcosm, or locality, lends clarity to the cross-current of affairs at the national level.

Extensive source material on Grahamstown is available to the researcher. Detailed investigation has been made of two active local newspapers, The Grahamstown Journal and Grocott's Penny Mail, for the period 1882 to 1904.³ The Journal was the first Eastern Cape newspaper to appear daily, between 1880 and September 1886. It was able to hold its own during the economic depression of 1882 to 1886. However, daily issues were abandoned in favour of tri-weekly publications after a successful agreement with The Mail, in terms of which these newspapers appeared on alternate days.⁴ Another attempt at daily issues was made in December 1898 during the Great Exhibition.⁵ The Journal was encouraged by the

³The Eastern Star, active for sixteen years in Grahamstown, transferred to Johannesburg at the end of September 1887, where it became The Star. (GPM 9.9.87).

⁴GTJ 6.2.99.

⁵See below, ch. 3, pp 81-85.

fact that newspapers in East London, Port Elizabeth and even Cradock had succeeded as dailies. The increased cablegram service, improved communications and the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war⁶ were all taken into account, but the project was unsuccessful and had to be abandoned in June 1900.⁷ Thereafter The Journal remained a tri-weekly publication, but was nonetheless as fiery and vocal as it had been in its heyday in the 1860's.⁸

The town council and Committee minute books, surviving journals, ledgers, cash, rate, invoice and letter books and the magisterial records for the Albany district have been thoroughly researched. Reports issued by two municipal employees in particular, the locations inspector and Medical Officer of Health,⁹ were informative, as were those of Albany's Civil Commissioner on the Black locations in the area. The bland, unemotional municipal minute books contrast strongly with the newspaper reports of town council meetings. The painstaking officialese and generous script of the town clerk, W.A.H. Holland, betray nothing of the heated debate which the reporters recorded with obvious delight. Cutting comments and biting insinuations slung across the council chamber were dutifully published in succeeding issues of both newspapers. A matter of particular concern might well be followed up in an energetic editorial. Many a councillor must have blushed to read a report of a meeting, peppered with his own hasty or vituperative comments.

⁶October 1899.

⁷GTJ 30.6.00.

⁸This observation applies only to the period covered by the researcher, i.e. 1883-1904.

⁹Appointed in 1898. See below, ch. 5, pp 120-121.

Other sources provided useful information. Letter books and a ledger relating to the Bacteriological Institute in Grahamstown have been perused. Random issues of The Cape Times and The Cape Argus have been consulted to investigate Western Cape opinion, while The Eastern Province Herald and The Port Elizabeth Telegraph have been examined as further spokesmen on Eastern affairs. In view of the topic, the thesis leans more heavily on the Grahamstown press reports than on others.

All the sources taken together give a most comprehensive insight into the history of Grahamstown in the twenty-two years under review. Unfortunately, time and academic discipline require the paring of interesting, but unnecessary minutiae, save insofar as they illustrate the attitudes and activities of Grahamstonians in a changing society.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: A FRAMEWORK OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

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Victorian cities, writes Asa Briggs, are "... of the railway and the tramway age, of the age of steam and of gas, of a society sometimes restless, sometimes complacent, moving, often fumblingly and falteringly, toward greater democracy."¹ British and colonial cities tasted the heady brew of industrial and technological advancement in the Victorian age. While the metropolitan power affected to some extent the trends of colonial urban development, and reactions to industrialisation and environmental challenges, Cape municipal government was ultimately determined by the specific circumstances of the colony.²

English legislators faced a problem of confusion caused by the multiple administrative units which had been created to deal individually with specific problems like public health, and the provision of baths, sewage systems, libraries, parks and lighting. The two great developments in English administration in the last decades of the nineteenth century involved the extension of principle of representative democracy to the whole gamut of English administration, and the simplification of its complex structure. The former change was wrought by the 1888 Local Government Act, which applied to the counties the principles of local self-government hitherto operative in the boroughs.³ Administrative

¹A. Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 16.

²This has been discussed by K.S. Hunt in, "The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, with Special Reference to Grahamstown 1827-1862." AYB, 1961.

³K.B. Smellie, A History of Local Government, pg 51.

control was decentralised by being transferred from the central government department to the new county councils.⁴ This measure was followed by the 1894 Local Government Act, which cleared the way for the extinction of many "ad hoc" authorities. For example, new rural district councils assumed the powers of the rural sanitary authority and the highway board. The 1894 Act aimed to introduce self government into parishes by creating parish councils. Henceforward British administration outside the city of London was effected by popularly elected bodies, which were controlled by parliamentary departments. Along with the 1888 Act, this legislation cleared the previous confusion of overlapping jurisdiction. It ensured that in the hierarchical control structure, the district of one local authority should fall entirely within that of the local authority next above it.⁵ The 1902 Education Act extended these reforms by transferring the work of separate school boards to local authorities.⁶ Consequently, by the early twentieth century, the chaos in English local government had been improved, and the principle of decentralised control implemented.

These changes were very necessary, because legislators had become aware of the need to involve in administration and government, those to whom the vote had been extended. For this reason, the central reforms in the structure of nineteenth century English local government have been linked to the extension of the suffrage to the middle class in 1832, the urban working class in 1867, and agricultural labourers in 1884.⁷

⁴J. Redlich and F.W. Hirst, The History of Local Government in England, pp 203-204.

⁵Redlich and Hirst, Local Government in England, pp 216-219.

⁶Smellie, Local Government, pg 113.

⁷Smellie, Local Government, pg 27.

In Urban Politics in Victorian England, Derek Fraser has extended this connection between national politics and municipal government, by examining the manifestation of party groupings at the local level between 1830 and 1870. In his view, parliamentary and municipal affairs in England ran in concert; the latter simply mirrored trends in national politics. Fraser sees English municipal reform as a product of a struggle between "rival middle class élites," a view which he maintains is reinforced by an analysis of the social composition of the town councils he has studied. The city of Leeds is a case in point. In Leeds in 1834 and 1835, control of municipal affairs shifted from the Tory middle class to the Liberal middle class.⁸ This development reflected the party political nature of the rivalry for local power, for the groups were socially homogeneous. In 1841, an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner commented that, " 'Party political feeling prevails to a mischievous extent at Leeds, the parties are so nearly balanced and it is scarcely possible to take any step in Leeds Township without exciting strong party feeling' ".⁹ This became a long-term feature of municipal affairs in Leeds, manifest even in issues of town improvements. In 1835, in response to their declining power, the local Tories opposed the Liberal proposal for the provision of a council-controlled public water supply, which would be financed by rates. The Tories wished to secure control of this public utility by granting a monopoly of the supply to a Joint Stock Company, whose income would be derived from the water rates paid by consumers. The dispute led to a compromise a decade later; the new water supply would be controlled by a company with

⁸D. Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England, pg 130.

⁹Fraser, Urban Politics, pg 55. Charles Mott, 24.8.1841 (no further details).

a careful balance of private and public interest.¹⁰

Fraser's studies indicate that in England, the political party that effectively championed parochial interests, would generally be the one to win support both in the municipal and in the national elections. In this and in other regards, clear differences emerge between the trends in English and Cape colonial administration. Political parties were late in developing at the Cape,¹¹ so that in Grahamstown at least, division in the town council was related to parochial disagreement over the provision of social amenities, rather than to party politics. Furthermore, the need for simplification of the structure of Cape local government did not arise between 1883 and 1904, because little provision had been made for the local authorities to cope with urbanisation and its concomitant problems of control of local finance, health, sanitation and public safety.

Conversely, some similarities in trends of development imply that certain problems were faced in common in both countries. In Britain and at the Cape, it became customary for one local authority to assume a multiplicity of responsibilities, particularly in regard to an issue of growing significance: public health and sanitation. In Britain, the urban and rural sanitary authorities were promoted to the positions of district councils in 1894.¹² At the Cape, the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act significantly extended the powers of the local authorities in regard to the maintenance of certain standards of health.¹³ In both

¹⁰Fraser, Urban Politics, pp 155-158.

¹¹See below, ch. 7.

¹²Redlich and Hirst, Local Government in England, pg 216.

¹³See below, ch. 5, pg 120.

places, the development of local government was a continuing process, in the metropolitan power because old powers were transferred and modified, and in the colony because new powers were created to meet changing circumstances.

The course of development of Australian local government contrasts interestingly with that of Britain and the Cape. In nineteenth century Australia, a balance between local and state government was not established with any clarity or degree of efficiency. If centralisation was over-emphasised in Britain, it was not stressed enough in her Australian colony, and the need for a directing principle and strong local administration became apparent.¹⁴ Cape legislation was more precise on this issue; the 1882 Municipal Act empowered the Governor to act over the heads of town councillors, with or without petitions from ratepayers, in enforcing provisions for municipal administration.¹⁵

A legacy left in common to the Australian and Cape colonies by British administration became apparent in the identification of English colonists with British culture and tradition. These emotional ties died hard, but in the 1890's in Melbourne, an economic depression and the removal of financial investment to Sydney provoked the emergence of a distinctive Australian nationalism.¹⁶ No simultaneous development is apparent at the Cape, where the English were a minority group, loathe to relinquish the British connection. The Anglo-Boer war generated the jingoism that swept many colonial towns. Post-war bitterness and English/Afrikaner group division strengthened the British link and

¹⁴Briggs, Victorian Cities, pp 285-319.

¹⁵Act 45, 1882, Clauses 9-14.

¹⁶Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 317.

delayed the growth of an indigenous South African nationalism among most English speakers.

In her colonies, even those in which it was not necessarily practicable, Britain attempted to introduce the elective principle into local government. The task was simplified in areas where concerted white settlement occurred, as in Australia and at the Cape. No such process occurred in the Gold Coast, and attempts to implement democratic principles there met with considerably less success. The elective principle was abandoned in 1861, two years after its initial implementation. Endeavours to revive it in 1878 and 1892 failed, and provoked a compromise in 1894, whereby the local councils would comprise eight government-nominated members: four officials, and four local inhabitants. The difficulty of imparting Western concepts to the native people of the Gold Coast was exacerbated by the steady disintegration of the local tribal culture. Traditionally accepted forms of social control had to be used during this period. These could be succeeded by an elected local government on British lines only once Western principles had been absorbed. The adjustment process was slow, as was indicated in 1924 by an unsuccessful move to fill the breach between municipal councils and old tribal institutions, by an extension of the powers of the former. Plans to give the council an elected majority, and the head chief a right to council membership, were abandoned in view of fears that the latter would clash with the elected Mayor. The elective principle was firmly established only in terms of the 1951 Government Ordinance.¹⁷

¹⁷J.K. .Nsarkoh, Local Government in Ghana, pp 4-6.

Britain had no clutter of administrative units with which to contend in the Gold Coast. However, while local administration had to be developed anew, established tribal traditions could not be ignored. In both Britain and the Gold Coast, the existing control structures were moulded to embrace emergent democratic principles.

The general direction of Cape municipal policy in the period under review, was determined by two Acts; the 1882 Municipal Act, with minor amendments passed in 1885, 1893, 1895¹⁸ and 1896, and the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act. The 1882 Municipal Act extended council powers to the maintenance of public libraries, museums, gardens, washhouses and cemeteries.¹⁹ Regulations for rate collection were tightened. Henceforth, property owners could be sued or have their lands seized, for rate default by the occupiers.²⁰ The town rate chargeable during one financial year was raised from a maximum of 1d in the £ specified in the 1864 General Municipal Ordinance Amendment Act,²¹ to 2d on the value, or 8d on the annual value of rateable property.²² Loans could be raised on municipal credit for public works projects, although the maximum sum of unredeemed loans held simultaneously was limited to ten times the annual municipal revenue.²³

¹⁸Act 30 of 1895 authorised local authorities to introduce curfew hours to apply to their Black populations. It is discussed below, ch. 6,pg 188.

¹⁹Act 45, 1882, Clauses 156-158.

²⁰Act 45, 1882, Clauses 127-143.

²¹Act 13, 1864, Clause 10.

²²Act 45, 1882, Clause 125.

²³Act 45, 1882, Clauses 144-155. Ordinance 9 of 1836 and Act 13 of 1864 contained no provisions for the raising of loans.

The 1882 Municipal Act introduced other reforms. Numbers of municipal councillors were limited to between six and twenty-four,²⁴ and election procedures revised. Councillors would no longer be returned by a majority vote at a public meeting, but by a poll of ratepayers. Continuity in the council was ensured by the replacement of triennial by annual elections for one third of the total number of councillors.²⁵ The amending acts dealt with issues in municipal government that arose with the passage of time. Act 9 of 1885 applied the provisions of Section 22 of the 1882 Municipal Act, concerning the grounds on which the offices of Mayor, Chairman or councillor would be considered vacant, to municipalities which had not yet come under the operation of the 1882 Act.²⁶ Act 22 of 1893 dealt with liability to pay rates, and empowered returning officers to reject nominations of municipal election candidates and the Mayor to declare a council seat vacant. The Act specified procedure in cases of an equality of votes in a Mayoral election, and authorised the council to make by-laws disallowing brothels and regulating the use of sanitary appliances. Act 12 of 1893 enabled councils to prohibit Kaffir beer manufacture and sales, and Africans from carrying offensive weapons.²⁷ Act 20 of 1896 included provisions for drain and sewer construction, land acquisition for town improvement, and for the demolition of unsafe structures.²⁸

²⁴Act 45, 1882, Clause 7.

²⁵Act 45, 1882, Clauses 20, 55-73.

²⁶Act 9, 1885, Preamble, Clauses 1-2.

²⁷Act 12, 1893, Clause 1(a) and (b).
See below, ch. 6, pp 173, 185-186.

²⁸Act 20, 1896, Clauses 1-3, 4(i).

If, as Asa Briggs asserts, "The moral strength of Victorianism often lay in its reliance on amateurs rather than on professionals to get things done.... [and the] delay in implementing legislation was made worse by the tardiness of Victorians to develop the necessary skills for managing growing cities - ... for example ... medical skills,"²⁹ the Cape's Public Health Amendment Act was a triumph over the limitations of the Victorian era. This legislation transferred the bulk of the responsibility for maintaining new and demanding standards of sanitation and public health, to the local authorities. An acknowledgement of the role of the professional was implied in provisions for the appointment of local Medical Officers of Health.³⁰

Cape local government developed along the lines laid down by these Acts until 1904. In addition to this general legislation, measures were passed to meet the peculiar circumstances of urban areas, as was the case with Grahamstown. Four pieces of legislation between 1869 and 1902 provide interesting insights into the growing complexity and general direction of administration in the city; the Grahamstown Municipality Acts of 1869 (No. 23), 1878 (No. 12), 1894 (No. 14), 1902 (No.18), and the Grahamstown Municipal Amendment Act of 1885 (No. 10). Act 18 of 1902 is particularly important in that it completely revised the 1861 Act of Incorporation.³¹

²⁹ Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 21.

³⁰ Act 23, 1897, Clause 4.
This Act is discussed below, ch. 5, pg 120.

³¹ K.S. Hunt, "Grahamstown 1827-1862," pp 218-220.

These Acts had their most important effect in the changes made to provisions for rate assessment and collection. The 1869 Act limited the annual rate charged on property to 1¹/₂d in the £. This was raised to 3d in 1878, and maintained at that level in 1902.³² Church and Crown lands were exempt from liability to pay rates,³³ a provision which was gradually extended to cover all educational institutions.³⁴ Methods of property valuation were specified with increasing clarity as time passed. The 1869 Act provided for the appointment of municipal property appraisers, public inspection of the valuation roll, and the convening of a "court" of town councillors to hear objections.³⁵ The 1878 Act excluded from the "court" councillors whose property valuation was under discussion, and provided for consultation with a second appraiser in the case of a dispute.³⁶ The 1902 Act authorised the access of the valuator to property and empowered him to interrogate owners or occupiers. Owners and occupiers could appeal to the Eastern Districts' Court or the Cape Town Supreme Court against the valuation.³⁷

³²Act 23, 1869, Clause LXXII; Act 12, 1878 Clause XIII; Act 18, 1902, Clause 90. Public meetings could sanction an increase in the rate above this level.

³³Act 23, 1869, Clause LXV; Act 12, 1878, Clause VIII; Act 18, 1902, Clause 88.

³⁴This is discussed below, ch. 2, pp 43-46.

³⁵Act 23, 1869, Clauses LXVIII, LXIX.

³⁶Act 12, 1878, Clauses X, XI.

³⁷Act 18, 1902, Clauses 78 -79, 82. The length of time that the valuation roll was to be open for public inspection was not specified in the 1869 Act. The 1878 and 1902 Acts both set this at one month (Act 12, 1878, Clause X; Act 18, 1902, Clause 80).

The problems experienced by the Grahamstown municipality in regard to rate payment were highlighted by the development of provisions to deal with rate default. Those contained in the 1869 Act soon proved inadequate, for they simply empowered the council to sue the owners or occupiers in default.³⁸ The 1885 Act substantially increased council authority in this area. The council could assume control of, and lease for five year periods, property on which five years of rates were outstanding, in order to recoup the financial losses of default. After thirty years, ownership of the property would revert to the municipality.³⁹ The 1902 Act excluded the application of these council powers to the Coloured and Mfengu locations.⁴⁰ It also removed the requirements, operative previously, that the ratepayer should have paid the town rate fully before he was allowed to vote in municipal elections.⁴¹ In this regard, property qualifications for the municipal franchise were raised from £10 to £100, and those of council election candidates to £250 per annum.⁴² This move was reminiscent of the raised franchise qualifications introduced by the 1892 Franchise and Ballot Act,⁴³ and was probably designed to exclude large numbers of Black people from the municipal voters' roll.

³⁸Act 23, 1869, Clause LXXV.

³⁹Act 10, 1885, Clauses 2-3, 6-7. Three months' notice in writing on the property and in the Government Gazette, was necessary before such an action was undertaken. (Clause 4).

⁴⁰These provisions are discussed below, ch. 6, pp 158-159.

⁴¹GTJ 23.4.03.

⁴²Act 23, 1869, Clause VIII; Act 18, 1902, Clauses 7, 11.

⁴³See below, ch. 6, pp 164-165.

Access to large capital funds is necessary for municipal projects and urban development. The measures provided for fund-raising in the 1869 Act seem to have been sufficient for Corporation needs until 1904, for they were not substantially revised in other legislation passed during this period. The council could raise funds by the sale or mortgage of municipal land, or debentures secured by municipal land. Debenture holders would have their land held in trust by specially selected people.⁴⁴

An adequate and organised municipal financial system is one of the keys to effective local government. In Grahamstown, local administration turned on the hinge of the town rate, because the city had few industrial concerns and financial enterprises.

The 1902 Act merits further discussion, because it introduced interesting changes in the organisation of Grahamstown's local administration. The maximum number of councillors was reduced from twenty-four to sixteen.⁴⁵ This was an attempt to improve the quality of the people involved in local government.⁴⁶ One half of this number would be elected annually.⁴⁷ The Mayor would be assisted by a Deputy-Mayor, who would also be elected annually by the councillors.⁴⁸ The number of wards was reduced from eight to four,⁴⁹ in an attempt to reduce the expense

⁴⁴Act 23, 1869, Clauses XLIV - XLV, XLVIII. No definition was given of the people who would be regarded as suitable holders. See also Act 18, 1902, Clause 108.

⁴⁵Act 18, 1902, Clause 6.

⁴⁶The degree to which this was successful is discussed below, ch. 9, pp 285-286.

⁴⁷Act 18, 1902, Clause 14.

⁴⁸Act 18, 1902, Clause 29.

⁴⁹Act 23, 1869, Clause V; Act 18, 1902, Clause 3.

and organisational difficulties of municipal elections. For the first time in Grahamstown, women could qualify for the municipal franchise.⁵⁰

The 1902 Grahamstown Municipality Act was a new Act for a new stage in Grahamstown's development. The changes wrought are indicative of the plethora of problems confronting the council in the immediate post-Victorian era, and of the extent to which previous legislation had become outdated.

In his study of local administration and politics in Victorian England, Derek Fraser quotes an anonymous character called "Porcupine," to the effect that, "'Politics are the vital element of all elections - parliamentary, municipal, parochial or philanthropic.'"⁵¹ This was not the case in Grahamstown, where local schism related more closely to the thriftiness borne of a chronic shortage of Corporation finance.

"Progressive" and "conservative" groups diverged on the point of whether the council should embark on a course of municipal development at the risk of increasing the Corporation debt, or allow public amenities to become progressively less adequate in meeting the needs of the citizens. However, the greatest effect of disagreement on municipal improvements in Grahamstown, was to delay the advent of necessary utilities, such as the Slaai Kraal water augmentation project, and an efficient sanitary removals scheme. These two issues were debated with particular heat and ferocity, and gave rise to the formation of pressure groups putting opposing opinions. Among the better-known progressive councillors who

⁵⁰Act 18, 1902, Clause 7; GTJ 30.7.03.

⁵¹Fraser, Urban Politics, pg 9. Porcupine, 8.11.1862. (No further details given).

favoured reform and development, were J.S. Willcox, A.E. Nelson, D. Knight and Dr. F.H. Hallen.⁵² The conservative group included R.W. Nelson, H.F. Oliver, J.H. Webber, R.J. Cogan and D. Sampson.⁵³

This particular pattern of group cohesion did not ramify into the wider political spectrum. The fiercely contested 1904 Legislative Assembly elections revealed different combinations. D. Knight united with R.W. Nelson and R.J. Cogan, whom he often opposed in council issues, in support of the Progressive Party candidates, Dr. L.S. Jameson and H.R. Wood. Well-known promoters of local municipal development, Dr. G. Cory, Canon J. Espin and Dr. J. Bays⁵⁴ diverged from D. Knight

⁵² John Syms Willcox and Albert Edward Nelson are discussed below, pp16-17. Daniel Knight had by 1904 served twice as Mayor of Grahamstown. He owned a boot and shoe store. (GTJ 20.9.04 Supplement No. 3). Francis Herbert Hallen was a dentist and a doctor, (Howard and Co's Border Directory, 1901, pg 253).

⁵³ Richard William Nelson was the brother of A.E. Nelson, and was dubbed "Tom Noddy" by local wags on account of his rather ribald sense of humour. He served as Mayor from 1888 to 1889, and was given the Commission of Peace for the City on the death of George Luke in 1888. (GTJ 3.7.06). Herbert Frederick Oliver was Deputy Mayor of Grahamstown from 1903 to 1905. John Henry Webber, a butcher and farmer (not to be confused with John Webber) became a town councillor in 1887. (GTJ 1.10.04. Supplement No. 4). Little is known of Richard John Cogan. He served successfully as Chairman of the Works and Lands Committee between 1900 and 1903 (GTJ 16.7.01) and is listed in the 1905 Grahamstown Directory as a sanitary inspector. (The Grahamstown Year-Book and Directory, 1905-1906, pg 13). David Sampson, a farrier by occupation, served as Director and Trustee of the Grahamstown Building Society for a number of years. He was initially elected to the town council in 1870. (GTJ 16.6.03).

⁵⁴ Dr. George Cory was the first professor of chemistry at Rhodes University College. He is now remembered chiefly for his six-volumed publication, The Rise of South Africa. The Reverend Canon John Espin was the sixth headmaster of St. Andrew's College, and first Tutor at St. Paul's Theological College, founded in 1902. Dr. James Bays was Grahamstown's first Medical Officer of Health, appointed in April 1898, (See below, ch. 5, pg 121).

and H.R. Wood, kindred spirits in town council affairs, in promoting the return of Arthur Douglass, a Grahamstown parliamentary representative since 1884.⁵⁵

However, the development of Cape political parties certainly did not leave Grahamstown unaffected. A growing awareness of the cross-currents in national politics was provoked particularly by the controversial Arthur Douglass's associations with the 1900-1904 Sprigg Ministry, unpopular in Grahamstown once the majority of the electorate had been imbued with the pro-British fervour of the Anglo-Boer war. Douglass did not receive his initial administrative training in the Grahamstown city council, unlike the members of the Wood family. John Edwin Wood, town councillor and Mayor of Grahamstown from 1865-1866, became a parliamentary representative for the division from 1886-1900, serving as government whip for some time.⁵⁶ Joseph G. Wood, also a councillor, represented Albany in the House of Assembly between 1879 and 1886. He was unseated for absence while prospecting for gold in Mashonaland.⁵⁷ Henry Richard Wood served four terms as Mayor of Grahamstown. He remained on the council while representing the city in the House of Assembly from 1902-1907, and was the only one of the three most outstanding leaders in Grahamstown local government between 1883 and 1904, to take an active part in national politics.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Douglass is discussed more fully below, ch. 7, pp 210-211 and Appendix B, pp 304-305.

⁵⁶See below, ch. 7, pp 208-209 and Appendix B, pp 306-307.

⁵⁷See below, ch. 3, pg 69.

⁵⁸GDM 25.7.21; see below, ch. 7, pp 208-209, and Appendix A, pg 302.

Albert Edward Nelson was another leading and colourful local personality. He served as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Grahamstown Volunteer Horse Artillery in the 1870's, and was awarded the Volunteer Officers' Decoration (V.D.) for bravery during the ninth frontier war. During the Anglo-Boer war, he commanded the first battalion of the Grahamstown Town Guard, the city's local defence unit. A.E. Nelson was elected a councillor for Ward 2 in 1884, and occupied this seat uninterruptedly until his death in November 1902. He was the Chairman of the Market, Pound, Police, Locations and Sanitary Committee at the time, a position which he had occupied for more than twelve years. As such, A.E. Nelson was closely involved in the implementation of the far-reaching reforms necessitated by the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act and the 1902 Grahamstown Municipality Act. He was Mayor for three years, in 1895-1896, and 1899-1901, and was renowned for his tact, courtesy, firmness and eloquent and entertaining public speech.⁵⁹

John Syms Willcox was undoubtedly the leading light of Grahamstown local government in the period under review. Until 1878 he was H.C. Galpin's partner in a jewellery and watchmaking business,⁶⁰ and became involved in local affairs in the 1880's. He chaired the Works and Lands Committee from 1883-1885, the Finance Committee from 1896-1899, and both Grahamstown Industrial Exhibition Committees of 1887-1888, and 1897-1898.

⁵⁹ GTJ 13.11.02. See Appendix A, pp 298-299.

⁶⁰ H.C. Galpin and Dr. W.G. Atherstone together confirmed the authenticity of the Hope Town diamond in 1867. For further information, see E. Gledhill, "Henry Carter Galpin of the Observatory, Grahamstown, South Africa." Annals of the Grahamstown Historical Society, 1981, Vol.3 No.3, pp 39-61.

Willcox was elected Mayor of Grahamstown seven times, from 1885-1887, and 1891-1894. He was the man who did most to secure the introduction of gas lighting and construction of tarred pavements in the city, and was the moving force behind the Slaai Kraal water scheme and the purchase of a municipal fire engine.⁶¹ Among the memorable moments of his mayoralty, was the council presentation to him of a miniature silver cradle on the birth of his son and heir.⁶² The preservation of this English custom in Grahamstown was a fine tribute to a man who devoted twenty years of his life in service to the city. He retired from active council participation on 8 May 1901, three years before his death.⁶³

Men such as these would have achieved distinction in any town council, for they were adequately qualified by dedication, public spirit and sagacity to manage the affairs of the city they served. So indeed were a number of members of the Black population in Grahamstown, although they were given no active role in civic administration. Despite - or perhaps because of - the appalling living conditions, grossly inadequate educational facilities and growing white hostility to the presence of Blacks in Grahamstown, some Africans participated actively in politics in the period under review. The politicisation process probably began in the 1880's, with the emergence of the Native Education Association, based in the Eastern Cape. The threat to the Black franchise implied in the raised franchise qualifications of the 1887

⁶¹GTJ 28.5.04.

⁶²GTJ 22.12.92 TCM 21.12.92. Ironically, the firm of J.S. Willcox made the cradle, for lack of a more capable jeweller in Grahamstown.

⁶³GTJ 28.5.04.

and 1892 Parliamentary Voters' Acts, must have stimulated an awareness of the need for organised protection of Black interests. However, in Grahamstown the organisation of a group to promote Black interests came about only after the formation of a pro-Progressive Party organisation, the South African Native Congress, in 1898. Grahamstown's local branch of this Congress, the Native Vigilance Association, operated through recognised channels such as the town council, in order to bring about improvements to the quality of life of Blacks in Grahamstown. The Association had not achieved much success by 1904, because by the turn of the century White fear of Black numerical strength had led to the attempted imposition of oppressive restrictions - such as the curfew - on Black freedom. The Native Vigilance Association failed to draw mass support. By 1908, leaders such as George Nzungu and J.J. Jabavu had left Grahamstown, and the activities of the Association ceased before any reforms of significance had been achieved.⁶⁴

Unlike Victorian cities such as Leeds and Melbourne, Grahamstown was never extensively industrialised. Her earlier, hectic days of commercial activity ended with the troop withdrawal and railway construction of the 1870's, which left the city remote from the newer centres of the Cape economy. However, the opening of the Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line in September 1884 stimulated hope for the revival of the Port Alfred harbour project, and a return of trade to the city. These aspirations faltered, but were not entirely extinguished, when work on the Kowie port finally ceased in November 1886, and the

⁶⁴A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence, 23.4.1983. The names, organisations and Acts mentioned here are discussed below, ch. 6.

Kowie line was closed to traffic, albeit temporarily, in July 1887. The line was reopened subsequently, but the port was never developed, and Grahamstown's ambition to become the commercial fulcrum between the three harbours of East London, Port Alfred and Port Elizabeth was frustrated.

Grahamstown's commercial decline was mirrored by the inability of local entrepreneurs to attract economic investment to the city. The Industrial Exhibitions of 1887-1888 and 1898-1899, were financially successful, but did not give rise to industrial development. That the city had entrepreneurs of ability and business acumen had become apparent in the successful gold mining venture, the Grahamstown Gold Mining Company. The lack of interest in Grahamstown's economic potential related to her distance from the main lines of railway and harbour communication. By the turn of the century, many had accepted the fact that they should seek a growth point for Grahamstown elsewhere.

Proposals that Grahamstown should concentrate on becoming a leading educational centre, were very favourably received. The city had numerous schools of good repute, and tertiary facilities at St. Andrew's College, the Teacher Training College and St. Paul's Theological College for Anglican clergymen. Research institutions existed in the form of the Colonial Bacteriological Institute and the Albany Museum. Taken together, these facilities made Grahamstown a suitable place for the establishment of a university college in 1904.

Despite the fact that 1904 has been chosen as the year in which to conclude this study, 1902 initially appeared to be a more natural culmination point. On the national level, the Anglo-Boer war ended. The death of Queen Victoria in 1901 was followed by that of Cecil John Rhodes in 1902. Their deaths brought the Empire metaphorically

to the brink of a new era. Grahamstown felt this no less than other remote corners of the Empire. At the local level, the British troops stationed in Grahamstown during the Anglo-Boer war were withdrawn, leaving the local University Education Committee free to make final preparations for the opening of a university. Civic administration was revised and streamlined along lines dictated by the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act. The new Albany Museum buildings were opened, heralding further possibilities for expansion and development. The construction of the Victoria Fever Ward, attached to the Albany General Hospital, was commenced, making a significant addition to the facilities there. St. Paul's Theological College opened. Two leading members of the Grahamstown community died; J.E. Wood in 1901, and A.E. Nelson in 1902. Both were active to the last in service to the community, and their deaths were local symbols of the passing of the Victorian age.

More reasons simply than that of the foundation of Rhodes University College, provoked the decision to conclude the thesis in 1904. By then, the Slaai Kraal water project had proved so successful, that in 1904 tenders were accepted for the construction of a second storage dam. The new sanitation and refuse removal system began to operate fairly smoothly after the fierce opposition to its introduction. In the political arena, 1904 brought changes in the city's representation in the House of Assembly. During the Anglo-Boer war, a vigorous dispute had erupted between members of the Grahamstown constituency and their senior parliamentary representative, Arthur Douglass. The issue at stake had been the proposal to suspend the Cape constitution and let the colony revert to Crown Colony status during the war, a move favoured by the loyalist Grahamstonians. They were enraged by Douglass's opposition to this proposal, and his membership of the anti-suspensionist Sprigg Cabinet. Douglass was unseated in the 1904 election, which

brought victory to the Progressive Party candidates, Dr. L.S. Jameson and H.R. Wood. Grahamstown's confidence reached new heights when the former became Cape premier.

1904 was not the dividing line between one period and another in the history of the city. Its importance as the concluding date for this study lies in the fact that by 1904, Grahamstown had finally found the "raison d'être" that would guide her development in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER TWO

MUNICIPAL FINANCE

REVENUE OF THE GRAHAMSTOWN MUNICIPALITY 1880 - 1905

Year	Balance on 1 January	Municipal Water and Taxes	Market Dues	Pound fees and Leases of the Pound Mileage	Proceeds of Pound Sales	Registration and Other Fees and Fines etc.	Licenses to Graze Cattle, Exercise Trades, Fell Timber etc.	Hire of Hall, House and Land Rent, Sale of Land, Lease of Brickfield etc.	Loans Raised	Loans Repaid, Interest Received and Debts Recovered	Loans Repaid	Interest Received and Debts Recovered	Sundries	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1880	5491	5329	2379	147	118	-	10	742	-	454	-	-	1032	10213
1881	-4024	5235	3205	112	117	8	36	2555	-	330	-	-	126	11727
1882	9145	6357	2961	306	127	131	30	1494	11000	198	-	-	695	23299
1883	-5216	6290	2675	170	43	54	28	2184	13000	177	-	-	1099	25720
1884	-4263	7759	2168	172	44	175	43	334	-	-	-	-	386	11081
1885	-6788	7019	1886	100	20	129	20	115	-	-	118	-	225	9632
1886	-3907	5670	1633	87	12	55	46	160	6000	-	44	-	274	13981
1887	694	5227	1190	103	3	5	26	255	-	-	-	242	11	7062
1888	- 12	5171	1376	114	5	190	-	87	-	-	-	-	181	7124
1889	- 429	5718	1647	96	7	15	149	130	-	-	-	26	102	7890
1890	- 737	6558	2205	79	25	208	3	127	-	-	-	-	107	9312
1891	253	5723	1970	101	38	180	-	278	-	-	-	-	128	8418

Year	Balance on 1 January	Municipal Water and Taxes	Market Dues	Pound Fees, Leases of the Pound Mileage and Proceeds of Pound Sales	Registration and Other Fees and Fines etc.	Licenses to Graze Cattle, Exercise Trades, Fell Timber etc.	Hire of Hall, House and Land Rent, Sale of Land, Lease of Brickfield etc.	Loans Raised	Loans Repaid	Loans Raised	Loans Repaid	Interest Received and Debt Recovered	Sundries	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1892	-	6281	2215	74	160	-	307	6000	-	-	-	-	172	15209
1893	2426	6331	2241	111	304	27	635	6000	-	-	-	5	163	15817
1894	-1523	5196	2069	85	149	31	398	4000	-	-	-	-	272	12920
1895	-3096	8021	2061	45	234	67	567	-	-	-	-	-	823	11818
1896	-2648	7328	2119	46	315	-	222	-	-	-	-	-	215	10245
1897	-2604	10497	2302	41	149	167	549	-	-	-	-	-	464	14169
1898	- 779	7657	2741	48	427	-	693	-	35000	-	-	-	1163	47728
1899	-1623	9378	2632	44	160	284	748	-	8500	-	-	20	613	22379
1900	3893	11405	2732	44	100	89	767	-	-	-	-	-	228	15365
1901	-3055	11079	3432	46	426	87	575	-	-	-	-	378	303	16326
1902	-2000	10459	4245	51	328	-	1919	-	-	-	-	-	115	17117
1903	-4615	14887	4074	64	364	56	75	-	1714	-	-	58	347	22320
1904	-2058	13697	3505	51	22	138	737	-	-	-	-	158	503	18811
1905	-5248	14823	2823	85	23	128	952	-	4000	-	-	306	575	23175

EXPENDITURE OF THE GRAHAMSTOWN MUNICIPALITY 1880 - 1905

Year	Salaries and Allowances to Officers and Collector of Rates.	Waterworks, Roads, Streets, Bridges, Materials etc.	Fire Engine Establishment	Debts and Interests Paid	Rent	Contributions in aid of Police	Miscellaneous Including Refunds	Total	Balance on 31 December
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1880	1861	15087	-	1270	465	561	482	19729	- 4024
1881	846	13526	-	1534	180	-	561	16648	- 8945
1882	1561	13386	-	1935	122	1376	989	19369	- 5216
1883	1886	8579	-	13011	-	623	667	24766	- 4262
1884	2149	5278	-	2263	-	958	1061	11709	- 4891
1885	1895	2976	-	2161	-	311	871	8214	- 5370
1886	1961	4576	-	1671	-	575	597	9380	694
1887	1662	2878	-	2129	-	620	479	7768	- 11
1888	1718	2701	-	2223	-	610	287	7539	- 429
1889	1857	2825	-	2513	-	390	586	8201	- 736
1890	2312	2603	-	2109	-	762	538	8324	252
1891	2271	3652	-	2002	-	586	616	9126	- 456
1892	2152	4159	-	5137	-	638	242	12328	2882
1893	2495	4733	344	11061	-	655	479	19767	- 1523
1894	2101	3246	69	6113	-	665	2301	14495	- 3096
1895	2116	4428	80	2435	-	730	1581	11370	- 779
1896	2054	4101	108	2076	-	549	1314	10202	- 2604
1897	2298	5918	62	1954	-	874	1238	12344	- 779
1898	2306	43084	68	1472	-	854	787	48571	- 1623
1899	2386	11415	96	8551	-	946	787	24181	- 3425
1900	1991	6485	68	3972	-	731	1280	14527	- 3055
1901	2865	7296	77	3863	-	606	587	15294	- 2023
1902	2785	10935	84	3822	-	504	1602	19732	- 4615
1903	3469	10437	125	4061	-	-	1669	19761	- 2058
1904	3707	12060	150	4091	15	-	1978	22001	- 5248
1905	2876	17519	66	4464	15	-	2991	27931	- 9464

Municipal Revenue and Expenditure 1880-1905

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
	£	£
1880	10,213	19,729
1881	11,727	16,648
1882	23,299	19,369
1883	25,720	24,766
1884	11,081	11,709
1885	9,632	8,214
1886	13,981	9,380
1887	7,062	7,768
1888	7,124	7,539
1889	7,890	8,201
1890	9,312	8,324
1891	8,418	9,126
1892	15,209	12,328
1893	15,817	19,767
1894	12,920	14,495
1895	11,818	11,370
1896	16,245	10,202
1897	14,169	12,344
1898	47,727	48,571
1899	22,379	24,181
1900	15,365	14,527
1901	16,326	15,294
1902	17,117	19,732
1903	22,320	19,761
1904	11,562	10,627
1905	23,715	27,931

Municipal Indebtedness

Year	Loans Outstanding		Arrear Rates	
	Total Amount 30 June	Whereof Bank Overdraft is:	Arrear Rates 30 June (Due Date 1 May)	
	£	£	£	
1885	34,280	-	680	
1886	32,893	5,458	4,200	

Year	Total Amount 31 December	Whereof Bank Overdraft is:	Arrear Rates 31 December	
1887	32,950	nil	450	
1888	32,424	424	700	
1889	31,769	737	3,150	
1890	31,000	nil	750	

Year	Total Amount Including Bank Over- draft	Bank Overdraft	Excluding Present Year Rates	Including Present Year Rates
1891	30,267	456	15	1,200
1892	29,201	nil	120	1,020
1893	30,110	1,520	2	12
1894	31,078	3,098	947	4,781
1895	31,148	2,648	60	2,020
1896	32,533	2,608	929	2,563
1897	30,429	779	638	1,854
1898	66,520	2,436	313	2,187
1899	47,822	3,893	700	3,317
1900	45,975	3,078	1,008	2,180
1901	63,019	2,023	186	2,324
1902	68,326	4,615	100	2,057
1903	46,122	2,057	362	1,456
1904	66,163	1,085	168	6,371
1905	76,405	9,296	169	1,261

The Grahamstown Town Rate 1883-1904

Year	Rate (d in the £)
1883	2
1884	2
1885	2
1886	1 ¹ / ₄
1887	1 ¹ / ₄
1888	1 ¹ / ₂
1889	1 ³ / ₄
1890	2
1891	2
1892	2
1893	2
1894	2
1895	3
1896	3
1897	2 ¹ / ₂
1898	2 ¹ / ₂
1899	2 ¹ / ₂
1900	2 ¹ / ₂
1901	2 ¹ / ₂
1902	2 ¹ / ₂
1903	3
1904	3

The Annual Salaries of Some Municipal Employees 1875-1904

	1875	1885	1887 (after 10% reduction)	1889 (after 10% increase)	1897	1899	1902	1904
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Town Clerk	250	350	315	350	300	350	495	495
Treasurer	150				100			
Market Master	275	375	338	375	300	240	300	350
Market Clerk					150	120	150	150
Foreman of Works	150	200	180	200	250	275	275	300
Collector	84	200	180	200	200	225	247	247

Pound Revenue and Expenditure 1889-1904

Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Balance
	£	£	£
1889	102.13. 2	72.14. 4	29.18.10
1890	104.17. 1	86.15. 6	18. 1. 7
1891	139. 5. 4	85.17. 1	53. 8. 3
1892	74. 6. 8	90. 0. 8	- 15.14. 0
1893	111. 0. 9	96. 0. 6	15. 0. 3
1894	86. 3. 6	135. 9. 2	- 49. 5. 6
1895	45. 5. 3	130. 8. 8	- 85. 3. 5
1896	46.12. 6	91.11.10	- 44.19. 4
1897	41. 1.11	78. 5. 2	- 37. 3. 3
1898	47.17. 8	85. 0. 0	- 37. 2. 4
1899	43.19. 2	78. 3. 2	- 34. 4. 0
1900	43.17. 6	46. 1. 5	- 2. 3.11
1901	46. 0. 1	35.16. 2	10. 3.11
1902	51. 1. 8	33.11. 9	17. 9.11
1903	63.11. 9	81.16. 9	- 18. 5. 0
1904	51. 2.11	11. 4. 5	39.18. 6

The following is a consecutive list of the sources from which the above figures were obtained:

GTJ 25.3.90, 26.3.91, 14.4.92, 25.3.93, 21.4.94, 25.4.95, 17.3.96, 10.4.97, 19.4.98, 30.3.99, 22.3.00, 13.4.01, 26.3.02, 18.4.03, 21.4.04, 20.4.05.

A detailed analysis is not possible for the period 1883-1888, because no Corporation accounts were published during these years.

CHAPTER TWO

MUNICIPAL FINANCE¹

One of the principal difficulties facing the Grahamstown municipality between 1883 and 1904 was a shortage of money. By 1885 this seems to have become the rule, rather than the exception, for most colonial towns; from that date onwards the Statistical Registers of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, published names and figures under the title, "Municipal Indebtedness."

During the depression of the 1880's debt even burdened cities with active ports like Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The former suspended a lavish town hall project, while by 1887 the latter's municipal debt had risen to £286 000.² In Grahamstown, financial problems were responsible for the shelving of a water augmentation scheme. Even enthusiastic local reformers were daunted by the £34 280 due in outstanding loans in 1885.³ No new source of income relieved the strain on the Grahamstown municipal coffers between 1883 and 1904, for no extensive capital investment took place in the city. Municipal utilities provided one source of funding in the form of pound fees and market dues, but town and water rates remained the principal sources of revenue. The coercive legal apparatus to ensure payment of town and water rates was untried on any large scale in Grahamstown. This, coupled with the council's tendency

¹The figures for the charts indicating Municipal Revenue and Expenditure 1880-1905, and Municipal Indebtedness 1885-1905, are derived from the Statistical Registers of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1880-1905.

²GPM 1.4.87, 22.4.87.

³See above, Chart of Municipal Indebtedness 1885-1904, pg 25.

to sympathise with the difficulties of the working man, made the rate less reliable than was desirable. The local authorities dealt with defaulters delicately and cautiously, although any loopholes detected in the legal provisions were rapidly plugged. By 1904, a fairly formidable network of regulations had been made.⁴

The council derived little of its income from real estate. Annual expenditure was met by rates, levies, loans or bank accommodation, as there were no substantial ground rents or capital investments. Large sums had to be raised to meet current expenditure and reduce debts. In 1888 for example, capital and interest payments amounted to approximately one third of the gross income from all sources.⁵ The revenue derived from market dues increased as the market expanded. That received from the municipal pound fluctuated, growing increasingly less reliable as time passed. In July 1892, Mayor J.S. Willcox defined the council's position with regard to the pound:

"... it's often said that it does not pay - that the returns are not equal to the expenditure.... I find, firstly, that a Pound is much the same as a prison. It is arranged to deter people from wrong doings, without a Pound our commonage would soon be eaten up, and trespasses would be common in gardens and on other private property."⁶

In the 1880's, retrenchment measures were essential in Grahamstown to facilitate loan repayment, reduce the bank overdraft and, consequently, the interest rate on borrowed money. In 1884, the Standard Bank

⁴See above, ch. 1, pp 9-11.

⁵GPM 28.3.88 i.e. About 6s 8d out of every pound sterling paid to the Corporation.

⁶GTJ 7.7.92 TCM 6.7.92.

overdraft reached £4 705,⁷ on which the Corporation paid 8% interest.⁸ The council was unable at that stage to secure a loan at less than the bank rate of 8%, because municipal legislation did not provide for the issue of promissory notes.⁹ Expenditure was met in 1885 by a further £1 000 overdraft.¹⁰ The move provoked serious financial reconsideration. Standing committees assumed responsibility for departmental economy, to facilitate a reduction in the town rate from 2d to 1½d in the £,¹¹ and a consolidation of the municipal debt. The latter comprised the bank overdraft and interest on loans raised previously for public works programmes.¹²

Among other things, retrenchment involved a reduction in the salaries of municipal employees. The Market Committee regarded this as morally unjustifiable in view of the services rendered by the staff.¹³ For several years before 1886, a number of municipal offices had been combined. The market master and town clerk had fulfilled their own duties as well as those of market clerk and town treasurer respectively.

⁷FCMB 10.2.85 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

⁸FCMB 20.1.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

⁹GTJ 30.4.85 TCM 29.4.85.

¹⁰GTJ 21.5.85 TCM 20.5.85.

¹¹GTJ 3.9.85 TCM 2.9.85. The rate was in fact reduced to 1½d for 1886.

¹²GTJ 27.2.86.

¹³MCMB 24.11.85 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

The saving secured was insufficient, and was followed in July 1886 by a general 10% reduction in municipal salaries.¹⁴ The individuals affected must have found the reduction a substantial one, but the move was accepted in good faith. Only in September 1889 were these salaries restored to previous levels.¹⁵

Gradually, however, the position began to improve. In 1886 the overdraft rate dropped 1%,¹⁶ and a Loan Act empowered the Corporation to borrow £6000 at 4½% interest, on the security of municipal debentures and a first mortgage of the town hall buildings.¹⁷ This loan was intended to reduce the bank overdraft, and thereby cut interest payments by a further 2-3%.¹⁸ In December 1886, the council found more favourable banking terms at the Cape of Good Hope Bank. The transfer of the municipal account was motivated by the Standard Bank's insistence that a Corporation loan application should be secured by individual councillors. Council dissatisfaction at this expression of lack of confidence was exacerbated by the need to meet heavy liabilities early in 1887.¹⁹ The Good Hope Bank's offer of a temporary loan of £1000, advanced upon a promissory note and secured by the 1887 water rate,

¹⁴GTJ 11.3.86 TCM 10.3.86. Details are contained in the Chart of Municipal Salaries, pg 27.

¹⁵GTJ 5.9.89 TCM 4.9.89, GTJ 19.9.89 TCM 18.9.89.

¹⁶FCMB 23.2.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3. The chairman of the Standard Bank agreed to reduce the interest rate from 8% to 7%.

¹⁷Act 21, 1886; GTJ 26.8.86 TCM 25.8.86.

¹⁸GTJ 17.4.86.
This would represent an annual saving of £120-£180.

¹⁹GTJ 23.12.86 TCM 22.12.86.

was gratefully accepted,²⁰ and the account transfer completed. These developments placed Grahamstown's consolidated debt on a more satisfactory footing than before. In 1887, £604.10.6 was paid out as interest, and £922.9.2 spent in liquidation of a £13 000 government loan. The Mail cheerfully summed up the Corporation accounts as, "... as good as can be expected, and even a little better."²¹

Successes in the area of loan interest reduction had a minimal effect on the municipal balance of payments. The replacement of the 5% government loan by another at a more favourable interest rate of 3½% in 1888, was designed to save £400 annually,²² but it did not stop the overdraft from mounting to £1168.²³ In September 1890, the council's problems were complicated further by the collapse of the Cape of Good Hope Bank,²⁴ for the latter had willingly sanctioned necessary loans and overdrafts. In October, the municipal account was transferred to the Standard Bank,²⁵ but that arrangement ended when the manager refused to grant an unsecured overdraft.²⁶ The Mayor stressed that the subsequent account transfer to the Bank of Africa was based on the more favourable terms offered there,²⁷ but it is likely that tension had

²⁰FCMB 21.12.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

²¹GPM 22.4.87.

²²GTJ 29.3.88 TCM 28.3.88.

The government loan had been obtained in terms of the 1882 Loan Works Act.

²³FCMB 15.1.89 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

²⁴See below, ch. 3, pg 71.

²⁵GPM 10.10.90 TCM 8.10.90.

²⁶FCMB 18.11.90 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

²⁷GPM 12.12.90 TCM 10.12.90.

crept into relations with the Standard Bank.

The Standard Bank was in fact quite justified in its stance on the overdraft issue. The Grahamstown council was not legally empowered to operate on an overdraft until 1891, when the "Grahamstown Municipal Advances Act" enabled the municipality to raise overdraft advances of up to one quarter of the previous year's revenue.²⁸ This measure was necessary to a Corporation with an income that seemed rarely to meet annual expenditure. The extent to which loan charges continued to absorb municipal income, is illustrated by the Corporation accounts for the 1894 financial year. Much of the £2426.1.8 credit recorded on 1 January 1893 was absorbed into debenture, annual interest and capital redemption payments. By December 1893, a debit balance of £1519.16.6 was recorded. However, The Mail confidently dubbed Grahamstown's municipal debt "a mere bagatelle" in comparison with those of other municipalities, claiming that it vindicated the maxim that, "... while capital makes capital in the form of interest, debt makes debt unless its costs are discharged as they arise."²⁹

Despite these concerted efforts to eliminate Grahamstown's loan liabilities, the town councillors were soon faced with the mortifying prospect of raising another loan for an extensive public works project. By 1896, the Slaai Kraal water scheme could no longer be delayed. The proposed loan was limited to a maximum of £60 000,³⁰ but it threatened

²⁸Act 8, 1891, Clause 2.

²⁹GPM 20.4.94. The figures recorded in the Statistical Registers differ slightly from those given by The Mail. The Registers record a £2426 credit balance in January 1893, and a £1523 debit balance in January 1894. (See above, Chart of Municipal Revenue, pg 22).

³⁰GTJ 26.3.96.

to drain Corporation finances for years hence. A £35 000 loan was sought for the first stage of the scheme. The Standard Bank offered one at $\frac{1}{2}\%$ commission, but it was turned down in favour of a government loan,³¹ which would be secured by the Slaai Kraal plant, waterworks and lands, and the current and prospective water rates, estimated at £4000 annually.³²

Delays occurred in the loan negotiations, and payment of the money into the municipal account. Bridging finance covered the costs of initial operations. This took the form of an £8000 loan at 5% from the Bank of Africa,³³ and two £5000 loans, one at 5% and the other at $5\frac{1}{2}\%$, from the Eastern Province Guardian and Loan Investment Company.³⁴ However, the financial position became increasingly precarious as construction proceeded. No loan instalments had been received by May 1898, despite premier Sprigg's assurance of orders to the contrary. The engineer, D. Gerrand, estimated that £10 700 would be required to meet costs over the next six months. The Grahamstown parliamentary representatives intervened at this point³⁵ and managed to secure the first payment of £7000 by 30 August 1898.³⁶

The Slaai Kraal project was an essential scheme, but a serious financial

³¹FCMB 2.11.97 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³²FCMB 26.1.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³³FCMB 15.1.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³⁴FCMB 22.3.98, 29.3.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³⁵FCMB 3.5.98, 21.6.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³⁶FCMB 30.8.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

burden. By June 1899, the government loan had mounted to £35 138, with a bi-annual interest payment of £819.³⁷ Additional loans of £5000 from the government in 1901,³⁸ and £8000 from the Bank of Africa in 1904,³⁹ were obtained for subsequent extensions to the scheme. This project was undoubtedly the most important public works programme undertaken between 1883 and 1904. Its financial viability is implied in the extensions undertaken so soon after the completion of the first phase of the scheme. The municipal debt of £5248 in 1904 was the second largest in the period reviewed,⁴⁰ but it was a consequence of the substantial additions to public amenities in the form of gas lighting (although here the bulk of the cost was borne by the South African Lighting Association) and the Slaai Kraal project.⁴¹ This money was well spent, and despite the deficit in 1904, Grahamstown's financial position was not precarious.

The town councillors were generally aware of the Corporation's dependence on the reliability of the municipal employees. The 10%

³⁷FCMB 20.6.99 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

³⁸CMB 13.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. The loan was issued on the security of a mortgage bond of deeds of the Slaai Kraal property purchased from G. Palmer. (FCMB 16.4.01 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/5).

³⁹CMB 10.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14. The manager offered to advance £8000 in ten monthly instalments. The sum was repayable within one year. A 6% interest rate would be charged up to £3000, including the ordinary account overdraft (which amounted to £2058 at the beginning of 1904). 7% was chargeable on any amount above that sum. On the strength of this agreement, plans went ahead.

⁴⁰In 1885 the debit balance amounted to £5370. (See above, Chart of Municipal Expenditure, pg 23).

⁴¹Both of these schemes are discussed below, ch. 4, pp 95-106.

reduction in salaries during the retrenchment period of 1886-1889, was not repeated subsequently. Even in 1899, when a campaign to economise was resumed, an alternative to salary reduction was sought so that the services of the more capable officials could be retained. At this point, savings were secured by the combination of offices and consequent reduction of staff.⁴² Outside of these periods of recession, sporadic increases were made to salaries. In 1904, increases were granted the market master and foreman of works,⁴³ moves which perhaps imply the success of the retrenchment policies of preceding years.

Some councillors were over-zealous in their attempts to economise, and obstructed local development. The dispute over the provision of a municipal fire engine provides a good example of this.⁴⁴ Fortunately the issue was resolved before Grahamstown had been threatened by a really serious fire. It transpired that the council paid an average sum of no more than £90 annually until 1904, to maintain the establishment.⁴⁵ The issue was in fact a petty quarrel instigated by the council's unrelenting financial difficulties. It was important, not because the town council would ultimately have been able to refuse to provide a fire engine, but because it indicates the caution of that body in its financial dealings.

Relations between the Grahamstown police department and the local authority were often marred by the councillors' attempts to economise.

⁴²CMB 13.12.99, 20.12.99 CA,3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁴³Fluctuations in salaries are indicated on the Chart of Municipal Salaries, pg 27.

⁴⁴See below, ch. 4, pp 106-110.

⁴⁵The relevant figures are given in the Chart of Municipal Expenditure, pg 23.

A substantial proportion of council revenue was allocated to the police establishment.⁴⁶ Here again, the policy of paring down expenditure was at times applied to the detriment of local welfare. Like other Cape municipalities, the Grahamstown council shared with the government half of the maintenance costs of the police department. In Grahamstown, police salaries were low because of the tight Corporation budget; in 1891, A.E. Nelson claimed that the local constables were the worst paid in the colony.⁴⁷ Consequently, suitable men were seldom attracted to the force, which was too small for the work demanded of it.

The council would not consider any increase in the cost of the service while the retrenchment measures of 1886-1889 were being applied. It aimed rather at more effective management of available resources.⁴⁸ In 1887, when thieving became rife in the town, temporary African policemen were hired at 2s 6d daily,⁴⁹ but no attempt was made to train men whose services could permanently be retained. Although by 1889 order and efficiency had been improved, the conditions in which the men served were most unsatisfactory. On joining the force, policemen received salaries equivalent to those of the municipal carters - £6 per month.⁵⁰ In 1889 the permanent and additional police petitioned for a pay rise.⁵¹ The council adjusted the salary scales in response to public pressure.

⁴⁶ See above, Chart of Municipal Expenditure, pg 23.

⁴⁷ GTJ 20.8.91 TCM 19.8.91.

⁴⁸ GTJ 7.2.89 TCM 6.2.89.

⁴⁹ GPM 20.5.87 TCM 18.5.87.

⁵⁰ GPM 13.5.89.

⁵¹ GTJ 20.6.89 TCM 19.6.89, GTJ 10.8.89 TCM 7.8.89.

Men would receive £72 annually on entering the force. This sum would gradually rise to £82 after six months. The sergeant's salary was raised by a moiety from £110 to £130 annually.⁵² The 1890's brought a number of increments, all of which were inadequate. The salaries of constables rose from between £80 and £100 in 1891,⁵³ to between £90 and £120 in 1897.⁵⁴ Additional problems arose during the Anglo-Boer war, because policemen were drawn into the Irregular Troops by the better payment offered.⁵⁵ In Grahamstown, the council had to resort to temporary appointments at rates of 7s 6d daily. It was well-nigh impossible to attract men to the force with the salary offered,⁵⁶ and in 1899 and 1900, the town council contribution to the local police force dropped from £946 to £731.⁵⁷ In 1902, the government assumption of responsibility for the entire cost of the colonial police force was accepted with relief, for it released a fairly substantial sum of money for other municipal projects.⁵⁸

The council's financial obligations to the local police force were

⁵²GTJ 10.8.89 TCM 7.8.89.

⁵³GPM 21.8.91 TCM 19.8.91. This scale was adopted in response to government recommendations.

⁵⁴CMB 13.1.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁵⁵GTJ 26.11.01.

⁵⁶MCMB 26.8.01 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/9.

⁵⁷See above, Chart of Municipal Expenditure, pg 23.

⁵⁸GTJ 28.11.01; CMB 27.11.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/15.

burdensome, but the relationship generally remained good. Council concern for the adequate care and remuneration of the force was more evident in the unanimous sanction generally accorded motions to increase salaries, than in the increments themselves. These were less than generous only because of the awkward financial position of the municipality.

The elimination of some and the addition of other responsibilities to the municipal budget were ramifications of the increased sophistication of financial management in the period reviewed. Although the town council and Finance Committee coped adequately with the changes, their task was complicated by the absence of a substantial and predictable source of municipal revenue. Heavy reliance was placed on town and water rates, although a number of ratepayers failed annually to pay the levy imposed on them. A shortfall regularly occurred between income and expenditure, which meant that the council incurred a bank overdraft. The blot on the Corporation's financial record angered those who paid their rates promptly.

The depression, drought and contraction of local development as entrepreneurs lost interest in Grahamstown, largely explains why substantial sums due in the form of rates remained outstanding between 1883 and 1904. The councillors strongly identified with the problems of the individual. This much is evident in its reluctance firstly to charge the full annual rate of 3d in the £ permitted in terms of the 1878 Grahamstown Municipal Act,⁵⁹ and secondly to use legal means to enforce rate payment. The annual rate was assessed each February, and was estimated to yield a surplus of revenue over expenditure. The Finance Committee's meticulous efforts

⁵⁹Act 12, 1878, Clause XIII.

in this regard were constantly thwarted by rate defaulters. Despite the problems caused by a shortage of revenue, the council levied the full rate only four times in the twenty-two years under review.⁶⁰

Few appreciated these attempts to limit rate charges to a reasonable level. Anthony Matthews, a representative for Ward 8 between 1868 and 1887, was one of the more vociferous critics of council rate policies. First a gardener, later a policeman and subsequently a farmer, Matthews was not the most eloquent of speakers; as the Mayor pointedly, but kindly remarked on Matthews' death he, "... could make himself understood."⁶¹ Matthews became renowned for his determined protection of the ratepayers' money.⁶² His frequent, oft abusive interjections during council debates were usually motivated by his theory that the principal rate defaulters were town councillors or the wealthier members of the community. The seeming reluctance of the councillors annually to publish the defaulters' list probably fuelled his suspicions, as did occasions on which George Luke⁶³ and John Edwin Wood⁶⁴ were erroneously quoted as defaulters.

Matthews was not alone in his distrust of municipal rate policy. One complainant denigrated the steady rise in his annual rate payment from £4.13.6 in 1887, to £6.10.0 in 1890, particularly because he could find no evidence in the form of public works programmes, of the use to which

⁶⁰ i.e. in 1895-1896 and 1903-1904. See Chart of the Grahamstown Town Rate, pg 26.

⁶¹ GTJ 7.7.87. TCM 6.7.87.

⁶² GTJ 2.7.87.

⁶³ GTJ 11.12.84 TCM 10.12.84. Luke served twice as Mayor of Grahamstown, in 1883-1884 and July-November 1888, when he died.

⁶⁴ GPM 13.1.93.

his money had been put.⁶⁵ The accusation was fair enough, but did not take account of the tremendous difficulties experienced in balancing the budget. By December 1883, the overdrawn Corporation account had mounted to £4263.⁶⁶ The council had to admit that it had fallen seriously behind in recovering arrear rates,⁶⁷ which by October 1884, totalled £2000.⁶⁸ Two test cases exposed the legal problems which reduced the council's effectiveness in dealing with rate defaulters.

In 1884, the council sued Mr. B.B. Attwell for rates due on a property in Fitzroy Street, but lost its case on grounds that Mrs. Attwell was the legal owner of the premises. It was argued with success that her husband was merely there as a boarder! Unfortunately a council majority ruled against testing the judgement in the Eastern Districts' Court.⁶⁹ The second case caused total confusion. In 1896, arrear rates were due on a property occupied by a Mr. Jordan, but jointly owned by members of the firm of Page and Sons. The council mistakenly sued Mr. W. Page (snr.) who, it transpired, was neither solvent nor solely responsible for the property. The case was dismissed. Proceedings were then brought against Jordan, who was assured that he could sue Page and Sons for the amount he would have to pay in arrear rates. Although the Resident Magistrate absolved Jordan from this responsibility, on grounds that proceedings should rather have been brought against

⁶⁵GPM 27.10.90 "Stop Payment" to Editor.

⁶⁶FCMB 26.2.84 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

⁶⁷GTJ 20.3.84 TCM 19.3.84.

⁶⁸GTJ 16.10.84 TCM 15.10.84.

⁶⁹GTJ 18.4.84 TCM 16.4.84.

Page and Sons, the Eastern Districts' Court upheld an appeal against his ruling.⁷⁰ The town council won its case, but it was a Pyrrhic victory, because that body acquired a new moral responsibility to inform purchasers and tenants of arrear rates on properties they were considering.

These examples of action against defaulters are fairly isolated cases. Although the 1885 Grahamstown Municipal Amendment Act provided the local authority with a fairly firm platform from which to act,⁷¹ the first significant attempt to use the new powers seems to have been made only in 1893. In January, the council decided to frame a schedule of derelict and unclaimed lands not yet liable for rates, or on which rates were overdue.⁷² But in 1896, recommendations in favour of town office reorganisation and door-to-door rate collection did not even provoke discussion in the council chamber.⁷³ The Journal subscriber who condemned the Finance Committee and town council for, "... not seeing that their servants do their duty, and perform the work for which they are too well paid,"⁷⁴ was justified in his accusation, because the provisions of local legislation gave ample leverage to ensure rate payment. This was the opinion expressed by the municipal attorney in 1897, when he rejected as unnecessary a proposal for an act to demand rate payment, with a 6% charge on arrears, before land transfer took place.⁷⁵

The division and confusion of the councillors' approach to the issue of

⁷⁰GPM 27.5.96.

⁷¹Act 10, 1885. The provisions are discussed above, ch. 1, pg 11.

⁷²GTJ 19.1.93 TCM 18.1.93.

⁷³GPM 7.2.96 "Progress" to Editor.

⁷⁴GTJ 2.1.97 G.B. to Editor.

⁷⁵FCMB 9.2.97, 23.2.97 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

rate default became glaringly apparent in 1895, when the Mayor, A.E. Nelson, exposed his own opposition to severe measures against defaulters. Nelson condemned a motion in favour of the publication of the defaulters' list, and court action against offenders, although he did not condone default.⁷⁶ In October 1897, the council agreed to take over a derelict property on which five years of rates were due,⁷⁷ but only one month later rejected a motion in favour of legal action against all known defaulters.⁷⁸ However, by 1900, signs of greater determination in approach became apparent in a new requirement that the town collector should produce weekly returns of the amounts received from water and town rates.⁷⁹ The arrear rate position was beginning to improve when certain provisions in the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal bill provoked the resurgence of factional dispute on the rate issue.

The 1878 Grahamstown Municipal Act had specifically excluded Crown, prison, police, hospital, church and school land used for gratuitous education, from liability to the town rate.⁸⁰ The 1882 General Municipal Act had extended rate exemption to land used for mining, for the public benefit in the form of libraries and museums, and to all school land.⁸¹ These

⁷⁶GTJ 8.8.95 TCM 7.8.95. Nelson's chief objection was that people owing the current rate were included in the measures proposed by the motion.

⁷⁷CMB 6.10.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁷⁸CMB 10.11.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁷⁹CMB 2.5.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸⁰Act 12, 1878, Clause VIII.

⁸¹Act 45, 1882, Clause 115.

changes did not directly affect Grahamstown, because the council did not adopt the provisions of the 1882 Act. However, they did indicate the colonial trend towards rate exemption for educational institutions. That Grahamstown might ultimately be affected was implied in the Cape Under-Colonial Secretary's letter to the council in 1899, in which he recommended the application of the principle of rate exemption to all local school properties.⁸² The change was effected in 1902, when Grahamstown's meticulously prepared municipal bill was placed before parliament. During the Committee stage of the reading, an amendment was adopted to the effect that all scholastic institutions in the city, not only those offering gratuitous education, should qualify for rate exemption. Hitherto, those educational establishments not legally exempt, had been subject to rates at about one third of the actual value of the property and buildings.⁸³

The amendment provoked a furore in Grahamstown; a rejection of the proposed change would involve withdrawing the carefully prepared bill altogether. Progressive members of the community - men such as the Mayor, D. Knight, and leading businessmen like J.W. Bayes and R.R. Stocks - generally supported the revision as in the best interests of the city. Their case was a strong one; not only would the loss in rates amount to a mere £40, but Grahamstown's future as an educational centre would rest on the favourable treatment the council was prepared to accord scholastic institutions. Resistance appeared particularly futile in view of rumours that the government intended to

⁸²CMB 11.10.99, 1.11.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸³The Cape Argus 13.10.02, GTJ 16.10.02. "Another Progressive" to Editor.

introduce a bill to exempt all state-aided institutions from liability to pay rates. Despite this clearly logical argument, A.E. Nelson, R.J. Cogan and H.R. Wood managed to rally the majority of the working class in opposition to the amendment. The division of opinion was in fact caused by confusion over whether or not the exemption would apply to school hostels and other buildings not used solely for teaching purposes. The Cape Times had misguidedly claimed that it would, and although this assertion was subsequently denied by the Attorney-General, the damage had been done. The exemption of boarding establishments would have meant a loss in rates of about £500. Herein lies the reason for working class resistance to the amendment; they feared that they would have to make up the difference in the form of increased rates.

Other issues also became involved at this point. A number of councillors feared being unseated by the reduction in the size of the council from twenty-four to sixteen members, and they used the emotion engendered by the rate amendment clause to secure the withdrawal of the bill.⁸⁴ However, Grahamstown was spared a lengthy and bitter dispute over the bill by the fact that it was too late to withdraw it.⁸⁵ Ironically, the controversy had a positive outcome in the great interest it engendered in the rate issue. This subsequently provoked calls for the formation of Ratepayers' Associations,⁸⁶ and the growth of a sense of awareness among the citizens of involvement in the financial affairs of the Corporation.

The rate exemption dispute was not the only reason for the dramatic

⁸⁴GTJ 18.10.02.

⁸⁵CMB 29.10.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁸⁶See below, ch. 9, pp 285-286.

improvement in the arrear rate position over the following few months. Credit for the change is really due to A.H. Will, who replaced E.J. Smith as municipal collector in 1903. He encouraged the town office staff to redouble their efforts in rate collection. By December 1904, all but £33.17. 6 of the £12 375 due in water and town rates that year had been collected. The defaulters' list had been substantially reduced from £435.19. 0 to £99.⁸⁷ By the end of 1904, Grahamstown was on a sounder footing with regard to revenue from town rates than she had been for the entire period between 1883 and 1904.⁸⁸ The water rate similarly became a more reliable source of municipal income as time passed.

The water rate was necessary to maintain and increase municipal water facilities. Between 1883 and 1899, the charge was uniformly levied, and did not depend on the value of the property. The rate was as reasonably low as could be expected. Occupiers of shops, houses and buildings in streets with municipal mains, paid an average annual water rate of £2, whether dependent on the municipal supply or not. Rates escalated thereafter, from £3 for restaurants, £5 for hotels, bakeries, tanneries

⁸⁷GTJ 22.12.04.

⁸⁸The liability of urban dwellers to Divisional Council rates throughout the period covered, caused considerable resentment in most colonial towns. The Grahamstown town council supported several unsuccessful attempts to secure relief for urban areas from divisional rates. (GTJ 29.11.83 TCM 28.11.83, CMB 7.10.03, 21.10.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14). Tolls levied on the approaches to Grahamstown provided Divisional Councils with an additional source of income. The amount raised by the toll effectively reduced the divisional rate in municipal areas, because it provided revenue required for road maintenance. Consequently, the Grahamstown council opposed the abolition of the toll system. (CMB 23.7.02, 8.7.03, 27.7.04, 10.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14). An increase in divisional rates would negatively affect the payment of municipal rates. By 1904, no relief had been found from divisional rates.

and livery stables, to £20 and £25 respectively for the Chronic Sick Hospital and lunatic asylum. Exemptions from water rate payment were granted only to buildings with substantial tank capacities.⁸⁹ The uniform scale of charges drew bitter complaint from members of the working class, but it took the completion of the Slaai Kraal water scheme to motivate a change. The huge debt incurred in the undertaking made an increased water rate essential. All the citizens were affected to a greater or lesser extent by the heavier charges, but the burden of payment was placed on the larger properties and institutions.⁹⁰

The value of a property dictated the water rate, which varied per leading from £2.10. 0 for a £200 house,⁹¹ to £6 for a house valued upwards of £1000, boarding schools, clubs, restaurants, bakeries and livery stables.⁹² Charges imposed on the Chronic Sick Hospital and lunatic asylum were raised substantially to £100 and £150 respectively.⁹³ Even

⁸⁹ GTJ 17.11.83 TCM 14.11.83. i.e. 100 000 gallons for hotels, boarding-houses and schools, 6000 gallons for restaurants and 4000 gallons for other, smaller buildings.

⁹⁰ GTJ 1.10.98.

⁹¹ This meant an increase of a mere 10s for the smallest properties.

⁹² CMB 26.10.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

Other charges were as follows:

Property valuation	Charge per leading
£	£
201 - 500	3
501 - 800	4
801 - 1000	5

⁹³ The charge for the Chronic Sick Hospital was reduced to £50 in the estimates for 1902. (CMB 20.11.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

building contractors using the municipal water supply were required to pay a sum equal to $\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the cost of their building operations.⁹⁴ The reluctance of the builders to comply with this is indicated in the imposition of a £10 penalty for failure to pay, in 1903.⁹⁵

The increases were moderate and justly applied, but the drought in Albany was not broken in time to meet their implementation. The facilities were available, but a substantially improved supply was not. Grahamstonians met the increased charges only with the greatest reluctance. Exemptions from payment were claimed on every conceivable ground. J. Wedderburn, for example, sought exemption on account of sufficient tank accommodation.⁹⁶ C. Fielding simply objected to the excessive charge,⁹⁷ while a dairyman named Wodehouse complained of an inadequate supply.⁹⁸ The Finance Committee dealt wearily, but with admirable patience, with each one in turn.

Certain objections exposed real grievances. The lunatic asylum authorities persisted so tenaciously in their complaints that their supply did not justify the £150 rate charge, that they obtained permission to attach as many leadings to the main as were required for their needs.⁹⁹ A conflict developed along similar lines with the

⁹⁴CMB 26.10.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁹⁵CMB 11.2.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹⁶CMB 22.3.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁹⁷CMB 29.3.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁹⁸CMB 11.10.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁹⁹CMB 30.9.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

military authorities at the Drostdy. They were not satisfied with the town council's assertion that despite the inadequacy of the supply, the £100 rate was justifiable in terms of the costs of bringing water to the Drostdy in the first place.¹⁰⁰ This state of deadlock and tension only ended with the departure of the troops in 1902. Many councillors sympathised with the complainants, but substantial financial obligations meant that the council could not be generous. In 1899, an unsuccessful motion sought to reduce by 25% all tariff charges exceeding those levied in previous years, and to make up the deficit by increasing the town rate.¹⁰¹ A subsequent resolution effectively put paid to any further attempts to reduce the water rate during the year, by prohibiting its alteration except in unusual circumstances.¹⁰² Fortunately, by 1904 the drought had been broken, and complaints ceased as Grahamstonians enjoyed the benefits of a considerably improved water supply.

Grahamstown market revenue declined during the colonial economic depression of the mid 1880's, whereafter it rose steadily until 1904. The town council had a thoughtful and flexible policy which was designed to suit buyers, sellers and municipal financial estimates. It was forced to react when the healthy dues of £3205, £2961 and £2675 between 1881 and 1883, declined substantially for the period 1884-1889, barely reaching £2000 in any of these years.¹⁰³ The council reacted to the

¹⁰⁰CMB 19.7.99, 18.10.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13;
FCMB 1.8.99 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

¹⁰¹CMB 9.8.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁰²CMB 16.8.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁰³See above, Chart of Municipal Revenue, pg 22.

decline in 1884 by levying a 2% sales due in addition to the usual registry fee. The due was set at 1% for ostriches, wool and stock fair sales. An equivalent charge was levied on unsold animals on a scale ranging from 10s for a horse to $\frac{1}{2}$ d for those sheep, goats and pigs over the first 199 animals.¹⁰⁴ In 1886 the due was temporarily reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ % and settled at 1% when a 2% government levy was placed on market sales.¹⁰⁵ 1887 in fact marked the nadir in Grahamstown market returns, when they fell to £1190.¹⁰⁶ However, the sales due was raised to the full 2% only in 1888, when a court case ruled that the government due could not be legally imposed.¹⁰⁷

A levy on meat sales was imposed in 1885. The proposed charge was reduced on demand from 1d per joint to 1d per quarter for mutton, and $\frac{1}{2}$ d per joint for beef.¹⁰⁸ Once the sales had become established, the council raised the charge to 1d per joint.¹⁰⁹ Most levies appear

¹⁰⁴ GTJ 18.12.84 TCM 17.12.84.

Other charges were as follows:

Charge/head	Animal
d	
6	Less than 6 head of cattle or ostriches.
3	More than 6 head of cattle.
1	Less than 200 sheep, goats, pigs.

¹⁰⁵ GTJ 18.6.86 TCM 16.6.86, GTJ 1.7.86 TCM 30.6.86.

¹⁰⁶ See above, Chart of Municipal Revenue, pg 22.

¹⁰⁷ GPM 17.2.88 TCM 15.2.88. The case of Colonial Government v Henry Jones took place in February 1888.

¹⁰⁸ GTJ 27.8.85 TCM 26.8.85, GTJ 24.9.85 TCM 23.9.85.

¹⁰⁹ GTJ 2.8.94 TCM 1.8.94.

to have been applied cautiously; the 1889-1890 dispute between the council and the farmers over dues charged at the stock fair, was the one blot on the council record. It was resolved before too many losses had been incurred.¹¹⁰ Tariff revision policies were again applied in 1891, when the levy hitherto applied to unsold animals was reduced by half, except on the morning market.¹¹¹

The council policy with regard to default of market due payment was simple, but effective. The market master declined to sell the produce of anyone in default of payment.¹¹² The success of this policy is implied in the general absence of debate over outstanding market levies. Once the period of depression in the 1880's ended, the growth of the Grahamstown market proceeded apace until 1904.

The municipal pound provided the council with a regular and profitable source of income until the mid 1880's. It was a public utility necessary for the enclosure of stray ostriches, cattle, sheep, pigs and horses; revenue was derived chiefly from the fines levied on the owners of the stray animals and cattle, leases of the pound mileage and sales of unclaimed animals. In 1882, pound revenue amounted to £433. Fairly substantial sums of £213 and £216 were recorded for 1883 and 1884 respectively, but these dwindled to an average of £77 between 1885 and 1904.¹¹³ These figures become more meaningful when set against the

¹¹⁰ See below, ch. 3, pg 78.

¹¹¹ GPM 4.9.91 TCM 2.9.91.

This concession was in fact granted the morning market initially, but was repealed three months later when some councillors expressed their opposition to charging only half dues on unsold stock. (GPM 11.12.91 TCM 9.12.91).

¹¹² GTJ 29.10.85 TCM 28.10.85.

¹¹³ These figures are all deduced from sums recorded above in the Chart of Municipal Revenue, under "Pound Fees and Leases of Pound Mileage" and "Proceeds of Pound Sales", pg 22.

sums paid for pound maintenance. In 1889, a mere £30 profit was recorded after maintenance payments. In 1892, a £16 deficit had to be made up by the Corporation. The deficit rose to £49 in 1894 and £85 in 1895.¹¹⁴ An additional 3d levy on horses, donkeys and cattle with no registered brand¹¹⁵ failed to make up these losses, although it did encourage branding among farmers.

The marked decrease in pound income between 1885 and 1904 had various causes. The enclosure of agricultural and town properties reduced the number of stray animals, while branding techniques made strays more easily identifiable and reclaimable. The council did not neglect pound improvements, however. In July 1895, a tender for the erection of a dipping tank was accepted.¹¹⁶ The tank was most useful for treating scab-infested sheep. Dipping charges were reasonable, at 3d per head for 100 sheep, or 2d per head for 200-300 sheep.¹¹⁷ These new facilities caused the pound payments deficit to level off eventually. In 1898, an increase in pound activity was signified by a reduction in the deficit to £37.¹¹⁸ The sheep kraal adjoining the dipping tank was enlarged,¹¹⁹ and in 1901 and 1904, the pound recorded credit balances of £10 and £40 respectively.¹²⁰ In 1902, suggestions in favour of a combination of

¹¹⁴More detailed figures and references are given above in the Chart of Pound Revenue and Expenditure 1889-1904, pg 27.

¹¹⁵GTJ 23.3.93 TCM 22.3.93.

¹¹⁶GPM 19.7.95 TCM 17.7.95.

¹¹⁷GTJ 19.9.95 TCM 18.9.95.

¹¹⁸See above, Pound Revenue and Expenditure, pg 27.

¹¹⁹CMB 22.8.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹²⁰See above, Pound Revenue and Expenditure, pg 27.

the offices of poundmaster and location inspector, and the submission of the pound to public auction on an annual lease, were not seriously considered. The amenity was regarded as important enough to be municipally controlled.¹²¹

The task of balancing the Grahamstown municipal budget between 1883 and 1904 was complicated by the unreliability of some essential sources of income. The council managed creditably well, but not without incurring debt. In 1904, more prompt and willing payment of rates, a reduction in outstanding arrear sums and a healthy market income, were insufficient to cover loan redemption and the needs of a developing colonial town. The creation of a local economic growth-point could have overcome this problem. Rhodes University College would fulfil this function ultimately only to a limited extent, and only after some years of existence. One previously assured source of income had become less reliable by the 1880's. Changing trends of development deprived the council of most of its pound revenue. Some attempts were made to adapt the old utility to new functions by installing a dipping tank. This was a boon to Albany farmers, but had fundamentally little effect on the Corporation budget.

The errors of judgement of the Grahamstown councillors might have been made by any other group. Corners were cut too sharply when a water augmentation project was delayed and Grahamstown was deprived of a fire engine. However, excessive caution was understandable in a city which could so easily have been brought to the brink of financial disaster. Grahamstown survived the financially difficult decades at the close of the nineteenth century. The Corporation was not free from debt in

¹²¹CMB 5.2.02, 12.2.02, 26.2.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/14.

December 1904, but the debt that existed had been incurred by carefully considered expenditure on municipal necessities.

CHAPTER THREE

GRAHAMSTOWN'S COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC POSITION

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H.L. Watts has argued that Grahamstown declined economically and commercially between 1884 and 1904.¹ There is substantial foundation for this view; the city was faced with grave difficulties and an uncertain future. A belief that local business would prosper through the completion of the Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line and the Port Alfred harbour, proved unfounded. The two Exhibitions of 1887 and 1898, successful though they were, did not attract business to Grahamstown. The Transvaal goldfields appear to have absorbed most of the capital available for new development; even Grahamstown men speculated with some success on a gold mining venture.² In Grahamstown itself, there were a series of failures. A Manufacturer's Association, formed during the 1886-1887 Exhibition, tried to encourage the foundation of local industries. However even the Victoria Woollen Company, which got off to a good start in Grahamstown, had to close down when it failed to prove commercially viable. A local brick-making company alone appears to have been able to survive.

Grahamstown market activity, however, flourished between 1883 and 1904, despite the concentration of commerce in other parts of the colony. Efforts to stimulate agricultural production in Albany were strongly applauded in Grahamstown, because they would increase the city's market trade. The problem was that the prices of products like wool, mohair and ostrich feathers fluctuated according to foreign demand. Despite

¹H.L. Watts, Grahamstown: A Socio-Ecological Study of a small South African Town. (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1957).

²The Grahamstown Gold Prospecting and Gold Mining Companies are discussed below, pp 66-68.

the fact that Albany was a wool producing area, Grahamstown's role as a wool market centre had been assumed by Port Elizabeth well before 1883. The change had been gradual,³ but continued local interest in the wool industry provoked a Chamber of Commerce proposal in 1890 to re-establish periodic wool sales in the city. The town council wisely rejected the suggestion,⁴ which would almost undoubtedly have failed, because the wool market in Port Elizabeth was already well established.

Experimental agricultural projects were undertaken in the period reviewed. Cotton and tea cultivation failed because of underdeveloped market outlets, transport difficulties, or adverse climatic factors. Investigations into the possibilities of citrus-fruit farming were important features of agricultural development after 1883, but its potential was only fully realised later.

There were three main components to Grahamstown market activity between 1883 and 1904; the ostrich and morning markets, and the stock fair. The business handled by the latter two expanded remarkably in the period covered. A rapid decline in the value of ostrich feathers after 1882 became noticeably, though not alarmingly, apparent on the Grahamstown ostrich market. The town council could not affect the larger demands for agricultural products, but it undertook marketing improvements to provide a better service to local buyers and sellers, and to attract business. Structural and organisational changes were introduced to positive effect.

³M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pp 34-38.

⁴GTJ 2.12.90, GPM 6.2.91 TCM 4.2.91.

In the period reviewed, the Southern African economy as a whole was beginning to change. Hitherto, agriculture and trade had provided the base of prosperity, but the diamond and gold mines superceded this in the latter nineteenth century.⁵ The agricultural market remained important despite the volatile nature of wool⁶ and ostrich feather⁷ prices between 1883 and 1904, but customs' revenue from trade passing through the colony to the interior contributed significantly to the colonial coffers.⁸ Industry brought in very little revenue. Some factories were established in the three chief ports - Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London - but for the most part factories were local concerns. Such industry as there was in Grahamstown aimed, with very few exceptions, at meeting local requirements only.

Railway development likewise failed to foster the interest of Grahamstown. The colonial railways all gravitated from the ports to the diamond fields, and had been functioning for some time before Grahamstown was linked to the network by a branchline from Alicedale in 1879.⁹ After the opening

⁵D.M. Goodfellow, An Economic History of South Africa, pp 178-179.

⁶J.A. Henry, The First Hundred Years of the Standard Bank, pp 81, 104-105, 149.
The downward trend in wool prices began in 1872 and reached their lowest level in thirty-five years in 1885. In the 1890's steady improvements were made in the Eastern Cape in the breed of sheep and quality of wool. Export figures rose until 1899, only to tumble again until 1907.

⁷F. Wilson, "Farming 1866-1966."
Oxford History of South Africa, Vol.II, pp 116-117.
Ostrich feather prices collapsed in 1880, declined dismally until 1895, and fluctuated thereafter. In 1899, the chief Cape agricultural exports were wool, hides and mohair.

⁸Goodfellow, Economic History, pp 178-180, 194.

⁹Goodfellow, Economic History, pp 34-35. The Western line was opened in 1854, and the Midland and Eastern lines were operative by 1876. K.S. Hunt, "When the Railway came to Grahamstown", Contree, No. 6 July 1979, pg 24.

of the Reef goldfields in 1886, the Cape government concentrated all its efforts on extending the trunk lines to the interior to ensure the Cape a major share in the traffic to and from the mines.¹⁰ Consequently, Grahamstown's requests for financial assistance for the privately owned Grahamstown-Port Alfred line were ignored.

Business speculation stimulated an over-expansion of credit and caused stock-market collapses in 1881 and 1889. On both occasions, a number of local banks failed, and years of recession followed. The depression of 1882-1886 was far more severe than that of 1890-1892, possibly because it was coupled with a drought. Once the colony had emerged from the moderate recession of 1890-1892, the economy fluctuated between periods of prosperity and depression until the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war in 1899. During the war, the political situation was too unstable to bring any lasting economic security, although the war itself caused a boom in the Cape economy. The adjustment thereafter was less easy. Despite developments in the gold-mining industry, the years 1903-1909 brought one of the worst recessions yet experienced in South Africa.¹¹

Enterprising Grahamstonians attempted unsuccessfully to bring the city into the mainstream of colonial development. In 1883, the remaining hopes for a commercial revival became focussed in the completion of a railway line to Port Alfred. If trade were drawn to that port, Grahamstown would become the centre through which imports and exports would pass. An awareness that this would deflect business from Port Elizabeth and East London aroused concerted opposition from these areas to any proposed development of Port Alfred.

¹⁰ Goodfellow, Economic History, pp 83-85.

¹¹ G.C.M. Schumann, Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa, pp 112-113 (Tables).

In 1880, the Grahamstown-Port Alfred Railway Company was formed to operate the proposed Kowie railway line.¹² The company was floated on the basis of a £50 000 Cape government subsidy, and £300 000 in shares taken up in England,¹³ and construction commenced. The Cape government's refusal to waive customs dues on imports for the railway line came as a shock, for the dues ultimately amounted to a substantial £10 000.¹⁴ More seriously, the expected revival of Albany commerce did not follow the opening of the line. The passenger service was reduced through lack of patronage from two to one train daily, only five months after the line had been opened.¹⁵ Once the novelty had faded, Sunday coastal excursions were undertaken only by those courageous enough to flout the solemn warning of a local clergyman that such wickedness would lead to "... ungodliness, vice and wretchedness."¹⁶ As far as goods traffic was concerned, the severe colonial depression of 1882-1886 might for a while have accounted for the quietude of the port. However, it soon became apparent that Grahamstown merchants and traders were not

¹²G.D.R. Dods, Nineteenth Century Communications in the Zuurveld. (Unp. M.Sc., Rhodes Univ., 1960), pg 217.

¹³K.S. Hunt, "The Blaauwkrantz Bridge." Contree No. 5, January 1979, pg 27.

¹⁴GTJ 30.8.83.
The case for a rebate was a strong one. The Cape government had previously granted this privilege to the Orange Free State (GTJ 3.8.82), and the Central Railway Company. (GTJ 30.8.83). Furthermore, the £50 000 subsidy, promised on completion of the work, was a mere one sixth of the £319 000 contract. Estimates left only the inadequate sum of £10 000 for stations, fencing, sidings and other requirements. (GTJ 6.8.83).

¹⁵The Port Alfred Budget n.d. as taken up by GTJ 20.3.85.

¹⁶GTJ 6.2.85 N. Abraham to Editor.

using Port Alfred as extensively as had been hoped.¹⁷ In July 1887, the Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line was closed to traffic. The Mail reacted to this written notice with flamboyant hyperbole: "The placard was written in stragglng characters, as if the hand that penned it had trembled with emotion; and several suspicious-looking blots suggested the idea that the writer had been crying bitterly over the announcement."¹⁸ A decision was made to liquidate the Grahamstown-Port Alfred Railway Company.¹⁹ This provoked considerable alarm, coming as it did just before the 1887 Jubilee Exhibition. The problem of a service to Exhibition-goers was solved when the liquidators of the Company allowed special trains to operate during the Exhibition.²⁰ The last of these ran on 5 March 1888,²¹ and although in September 1888 the new Kowie Railway Syndicate undertook to keep the line open,²² it could not contemplate doing so indefinitely. Over the next six years, parliament fought shy of assuming this responsibility, while the Eastern Cape press tirelessly debated the validity of Grahamstown's demands for consideration.

¹⁷ GTJ 11.1.87.

Appeals issued by the Chamber of Commerce met with a temporary response in increased use of Port Alfred facilities. (GTJ 15.1.87).

¹⁸ GPM 22.7.87.

¹⁹ GPM 24.8.87 Bell and Hutton to Editor.

Bell and Hutton were the Attorneys to the liquidator of the Grahamstown-Port Alfred Railway Company.

²⁰ GPM 12.12.87, 2.3.88.

²¹ GPM 2.3.88.

²² GPM 26.9.88, 12.11.88.

H.R. Wood chaired the Syndicate.

The hostility engendered over the Kowie railway issue was most lucidly expressed in the battle of words between The Journal and The Mail on the one hand, and The Eastern Province Herald on the other. Lack of accord generally revolved around Syndicate claims that the line was operating at a slight profit, because the balance sheet was not always published. On these occasions, The Herald would assert that the project was a financial disaster.²³ Greater or lesser profits were recorded when the balance of payments was published.²⁴ Other newspapers entered the fray from time to time. In 1888, The Port Elizabeth Telegraph ran the gauntlet of The Herald's sarcasm by supporting proposals for government purchase of the line.²⁵ On the strength of the 1890 balance of payments, the Queenstown Free Press maintained that the Syndicate was justified in requesting a government take-over.²⁶

Parliament would not easily be moved to Grahamstown's point of view, and several proposals were rejected over the next few years. In 1888 and 1889 parliament rejected a purchase price of £50 000 for the Port Alfred line, on the grounds (apparently unjustified) that it was in a bad state of repair.²⁷ In 1893, the Legislative Council rejected by a

²³GTJ 21.3.89, GPM 22.2.89.

²⁴For example, in May 1889 the balance sheet showed a profit of £603.4.4. (GPM 20.5.89, GTJ 21.5.89).

²⁵The Eastern Province Herald 6.7.88.

²⁶GPM 30.5.90.

²⁷GPM 13.6.88, 14.8.89, 7.10.89.

Allegations of disrepair referred particularly to the Blaauwkrantz Bridge, and were eliminated when the consulting engineer to the Union Steamship Company conducted tests on the bridge, and recorded no signs of strain. This was one reason for Grahamstown mortification when the plan for purchase was rejected by the Legislative Council in 1889 by a majority of one vote. Anger at this move was intensified by the fact that the crucial vote had come from Alfred Ebdon, one of the South Eastern Circle representatives.

majority of one vote, the suggested formation of a new company, backed by a £30 000 government subsidy and £70 000 in shares. The Mail giving full vent to local anger at this decision, condemned the Legislative Council as, "... a costly Parliamentary excrescence, whose abolition would be a welcome God-send."²⁸ Fortunately, the state of uncertainty ended when in September 1894, both Houses sanctioned the formation of a government-backed company to control the line.²⁹ The balance of the £20 000 government loan would be used to keep the line in good working order, while an additional £70 000 would be raised by debentures.³⁰ The new Kowie Railway Company Ltd. had a local directorate and took over the management of the line on 1 September 1895.³¹ Thereafter, it operated smoothly. Traffic increased in 1896, so that revenue covered working expenses, loan interest payments and left a monthly profit of £100.³² The Kowie Railway rendered valuable service in 1897-1898, when wagon traffic was brought to a standstill in Albany during the rinderpest epidemic.³³ For 1899, a £2180 balance was reported after working expenses, despite difficulties like increased coal-prices consequent upon the Anglo-Boer war, and a diminution of farm production caused by locusts and drought.³⁴ In 1903, the Transvaal Leader recommended state acquisition of the Kowie line as

²⁸ GTJ 31.8.93, GPM 6.9.93.

²⁹ Act 33, 1894.

³⁰ GPM 6.8.94, GTJ 16.8.94.

³¹ GPM 11.9.95.

The directorate comprised H.R. Wood, J.E. Wood, T.H. Grocott, the Hon. A. Wilmot and H. Putt (Traffic Manager). A.S. Hutton became the Secretary.

³² GTJ 16.6.96.

³³ GPM 6.4.98.

³⁴ GTJ 7.4.00.

"... such a good business proposition that it will almost certainly commend itself to any Government,...."³⁵ The line was ultimately taken over by the South African Railways in 1913.³⁶

The Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line had failed in two respects to meet expectations. Firstly, it initially proved non-remunerative and secondly, it did not bring prosperity to Albany. The Kowie railway issue indicates considerably more than the sum of its parts, however. It highlights the trend away from commercial activity in Grahamstown, the determination of a number of local entrepreneurs to defend Grahamstown interests, the extent of the rivalry between Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, and the struggle for primacy that lay beneath it. Most significantly, the parochial loyalty manifest in attempts to keep the line operative represents a triumph over trends of commercial development and a frontier that had moved and left Grahamstown behind.

Port Alfred was similarly peripheral to the Cape economy. The effects of the 1882-1886 colonial recession were felt at the Kowie in two ways in particular; in decreasing government construction subsidies and harbour activity. Total imports and exports declined from £137 110 and £26 796 respectively in 1880, to £80 712 and £684 in 1884. After a sharp rise in 1885 to £160 876 (imports) and £1356 (exports), a development probably attributable to the opening of the Kowie railway line, the decline continued until 1890, when a new low of £2865 in imports and no exports whatever, was recorded.³⁷ Furthermore, construction procedures had slowed to a minimum by the 1880's.³⁸ Dredging was needed to lower

³⁵ Leader n.d. quoted by GTJ 26.5.03.

³⁶ Hunt, "Blaauwkrantz Bridge," pg 30.

³⁷ Dods, Communications in the Zuurveld, pg 147.

³⁸ Dods, Communications in the Zuurveld, pp 142-143.

the sandbar across the mouth of the Kowie basin, but a government dredger was not made available. In 1884, the Port Alfred Landing and Shipping Company collapsed after a steady deterioration in business,³⁹ for the next three years, the traffic was carried by a small number of tugs and lighters.⁴⁰ In 1886, harbour construction activities were suspended,⁴¹ and in 1888 the resident engineer was removed to East London.⁴² In 1888 the Kowie Railway Syndicate's reopening of the line, the formation of the Enterprise Boating Company,⁴³ and the £4500 government grant for the completion of minor works,⁴⁴ revived local enthusiasm, but had little long-term effect on port activity. By 1890 the Enterprise Boating Company had become defunct⁴⁵ and the proposed £1500 for use of a dredger at Kowie was withdrawn from parliamentary estimates.⁴⁶ No further attempt was made to revive the port until 1900.

³⁹ GTJ 12.1.84.

⁴⁰ Dods, Communications in the Zuurveld, pg 151.
Between 1887 and 1897, only two coastal steamers traded with the port.

⁴¹ GTJ 30.9.86.

⁴² GTJ 21.1.88.

⁴³ GPM 25.9.88, 19.9.88.

⁴⁴ GTJ 9.8.88, 11.8.88.
The sum was sufficient to complete the work on the piers and to deepen the river at the wharfs. Spirits rose even further when two shipping companies, Donald Currie and Co. and the Union Company, indicated their willingness to serve the Kowie port. (GPM 3.12.88, 5.12.88). However, little seems to have come of this.

⁴⁵ GTJ 22.11.90 "A Well-Wisher" to Editor.
The writer suggested the formation of another Boating Company, but nothing came of the suggestion.

⁴⁶ GTJ 12.8.90, GPM 19.11.90.

a time when another major undertaking, the university college project, was coming to fruition, and attention could be diverted to a scheme which ultimately met with success.

On occasion, Grahamstown entrepreneurs seem to have achieved more further afield, than in the Albany district. The best example of this is the success of a number of local businessmen in 1886, in a speculative

The Kowie development project was reinvestigated when the Sprigg government responded to agitation by ordering a survey of the port.⁴⁷ In his report in 1901, marine engineer C.W. Methven recommended an extensive £200 000 development scheme, maintaining that interest on this outlay would be covered by income from the harbour. He had considered proposals to reopen Port Alfred, firstly as a fishing centre, secondly for local or coastal trade, or thirdly, as a fully developed harbour. Methven recommended the plan for full-scale expansion.⁴⁸ However, the Sprigg government was reluctant to implement the programme without a second opinion, which, when given in 1903, was discouraging. A.C. Hurtzig, Agent-General to the Cape government on Kowie harbour improvements, admitted the feasibility of the Methven project, but rejected it on two counts. Extensive seaworks and a dredger would be necessary to lower the bar to a depth greater than twenty-one feet. These would be expensive, but unavoidable undertakings. Also, more traffic than the harbour seemed likely to obtain would be necessary to make the project remunerative.⁴⁹

The Hurtzig report seems finally to have put paid to surviving plans for Kowie harbour development. Luckily for Grahamstown, this came at

⁴⁷GTJ 23.8.00.

⁴⁸GTJ 29.8.01.

Methven maintained that obstacles presented by the narrow

The working capital of the Gold Mining Company was limited, but prospects were said to be excellent. Personal inspection by a newspaper called The Standard suggested that the property of the Grahamstown Company was one of the richest on the Reef.⁵³ An adjoining mine of Kimberley's Jubilee Company yielded significant deposits from the same reef.⁵⁴ But despite this, some major problems arose in mining operations, one of which was subsequently noted by Lord Randolph Churchill when he toured the Transvaal in 1891 on behalf of The Daily Graphic. He commented that, "... the Grahamstown mine ..., though situated on the main reef, unfortunately struck upon a spot where the reef was intersected by a thick dyke of clay, and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that hardly an ounce of gold has ever rewarded or will ever reward the victimised shareholders."⁵⁵ Churchill misunderstood the value of the claims and was overly pessimistic in his judgement. The Grahamstown Gold Prospecting and Gold Mining Companies have been cited by Eric Rosenthal as among the most successful private mining enterprises.⁵⁶ But in the clay dyke, Churchill had pinpointed the main difficulty that obstructed the Company in its battle to win gold from its claim.

The Grahamstown Gold Mining Company handled its affairs with caution. The Transvaal Mining Argus sharply criticised its decision to delay operations until the neighbouring Jubilee Company (a Kimberley syndicate) had commenced the development of its claims.⁵⁷ The agents for the

⁵³The Standard n.d. as taken up by GTJ 4.8.87.

⁵⁴GTJ 23.4.87.

⁵⁵R.S. Churchill, Men, Mines and Animals in South Africa, pg 71.

⁵⁶E. Rosenthal, Gold! Gold! Gold!: the Johannesburg Gold Rush, pg 155.

⁵⁷The Transvaal Mining Argus 29.7.87 as taken up by GTJ 4.8.87.

Grahamstown Gold Mining Company vigorously defended the policy of its directors,⁵⁸ but the assertion that it was speculative was not unjustified. When operations began, another major difficulty emerged in the severe limitations imposed by insufficient working capital. Nominal capital was increased to £11 000 when four and a half adjoining claims were bought up for £4500. Even so, the Grahamstown Syndicate decided to accept the substantial purchase price of £60 000 offered for the property by the Kimberley Syndicate in December 1888. This was a handsome profit. The New Grahamstown Gold Mining Company formed subsequently was dominated by the Barnato Brothers.⁵⁹

The success of this particular enterprise indicated the capabilities of Grahamstown's petty capitalists in competition with speculators from larger centres. Not all local entrepreneurs were as fortunate. The Douglass Mining Company, formed in November 1886 and named after Grahamstown politician, Arthur Douglass,⁶⁰ failed as dismally as did most speculative mining concerns. The fifty-four claims which Arthur Douglass had obtained were at Malmani in the Transvaal. The Company directors were more pragmatic than those of the Grahamstown Mining

⁵⁸ The Standard n.d. Kisch Cowan and Co. to Editor, 29.7.87, as taken up by GTJ 4.8.87.

⁵⁹ Webb, Witwatersrand Genesis, pp 20-21. The Grahamstown Gold Prospecting Company also obtained twenty-four claims on Concession Creek, about four miles south west of Barberton. The Great Scot Gold Mining Company was formed in April 1889 to mine these claims. (GTJ 18.4.89 Prospectus). It met with little success and was dissolved in September 1891. (GTJ 26.9.91).

⁶⁰ GPM 3.11.86 Prospectus. Provisional directors were A. Douglass (Chairman), J.G. Wood (of the Wood - Francis - Chapman Syndicate - see below, pg 69), C.J. Stirk (merchant), T.H. Grocott, J.H. Copeland (Justice of the Peace), E. Lowden (grocer) and B. Prew (merchant).

Company in beginning with a nominal capital of £30 000,⁶¹ but less fortunate in that the Malmani reefs contained no rich mineral deposits. By mid-1887, confidence in the prospects of the undertaking had been shaken by the failure to strike payable quantities of gold.⁶² In 1889, the Douglass Mining Company directors were given "carte blanche" to salvage what finances they could from their disastrous project.⁶³

Enterprising men did not limit their search for gold to the Transvaal. P. Maylam has vividly sketched the fate of a Grahamstown Syndicate which journeyed to Matabele-Mashonaland to obtain mineral concessions from Khama and Lobengula, chiefs of the Ngwato and Ndebele tribes respectively. They succeeded only in arousing the wrath of the Imperial authorities, and in almost provoking a war between the Ngwato and Ndebele.⁶⁴ The failure of Joseph Wood, William Francis and Edward Chapman on the one hand, and the Douglass Mining Company on the other, to find a fortune in the interior, is perhaps typical of the fate of most Victorian Syndicates.

Some did not venture beyond the district boundary in their search for gold. The Albany Gold Prospecting Company was formed in November 1886. From the rate at which the shares were taken up,⁶⁵ it would appear that many local inhabitants visualised Albany as a possible gold field.

⁶¹ GPM 3.11.86.

⁶² GPM 12.8.87.

⁶³ GPM 13.2.89.

⁶⁴ J.A. Benyon, C.W. Cook, T.R.H. Davenport and K.S. Hunt, Studies in Local History: Essays in Honour of Professor Winifred Maxwell, pp 80-88.

⁶⁵ GPM 3.11.86, 8.11.86.
Five hundred £1 shares were offered. All but fifty were taken up at the first meeting. The remainder were taken up within 5 days.

The Company was altogether unsuccessful, and was quietly liquidated in July 1887.⁶⁶ Remnants of the vision remained, to be brought sharply into focus in December 1889, when the head attendant at the Fort England Lunatic Asylum accidentally struck a reef of gold quartz there.⁶⁷

Excitement electrified Grahamstown as jeweller, J.S. Willcox solemnly examined the quartz. Unfortunately he could find only a trace of gold - certainly not enough to make a mining concern pay.⁶⁸ Even so, it was only in March 1892 that the town council withdrew a resolution offering a £500 reward to anyone who found minerals in profitable quantities on the commonage.⁶⁹

Exactly how many Grahamstown fortunes were made during the gold rush, is unclear. Evidence suggests that at least seventy-eight former Grahamstonians were resident in Johannesburg in 1898, and had achieved a measure of prosperity in that they were all property holders.⁷⁰

Certainly, Grahamstown's unpopular and ill-supported newspaper, The Eastern Star, had little to lose in leaving for the Rand.⁷¹ There

⁶⁶ GPM 6.7.87.

⁶⁷ GTJ 31.12.89.

⁶⁸ GTJ 7.1.90.

⁶⁹ GTJ 10.3.92 TCM 9.3.92.

The resolution had been passed in February 1890.

⁷⁰ In November 1898, the town council received a petition opposed to the proposed dismissal of the Grahamstown Foreman of Works, W.A. Smith. The petition had been sent by these seventy-eight former residents of Grahams-town, living on the Reef. They specified that they were property-holders.
(CMB 30.11.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13).

⁷¹ In the 1870's, a rift had been created in the local Anglican church by a bitter dispute between Bishop N.J. Merriman and the controversial Dean Williams. The Eastern Star had supported the Dean. For a full treatment, see M.M. Goedhals, Nathaniel James Merriman, Archdeacon and Bishop, 1849-1882: A Study in Church Life and Government. (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), ch. 5, 7.

it became The Star; the widespread circulation of that newspaper today testifies to the fortuitous nature of the move.

The three year period of fortune-hunting, speculation and economic change initiated by the opening of the gold fields in 1886, culminated abruptly in a stock market collapse in 1889. The subsequent depression had as one of its characteristics the demise of a number of district banks. The banking crisis of 1889-1890 was the second of its kind within a decade. Between 1880 and 1881, both the South African Bank and the South African Commercial Bank had failed. The Cape of Good Hope Commercial Bank had weathered the storm by registering as a limited liability company. The instability of 1889-1890 came too soon thereafter for the Good Hope Bank to have generated sufficient assets to meet another crisis. The fall of the Union Bank in July 1890 provoked a "run" on the Good Hope Bank, which collapsed and was liquidated in September 1890. The shareholders lost everything.⁷²

The Good Hope Bank was associated with the Grahamstown Savings Bank in that the bulk of the latter's money was invested in the former. The Savings Bank had been established in 1872 by philanthropic men like Bishop N.J. Merriman, to encourage thriftiness among the local artisan class.⁷³ The Bank had gone from strength to strength even after the opening of the Post Office Savings Bank, which had offered greater security in return for only a slightly lower interest rate. The Mail viewed the Grahamstown Savings Bank as "... one of our strong

⁷² E.H.D. Arndt, Banking and Currency Development in South Africa (1652-1927), pp 284-285, 290-291.

⁷³ GPM 29.9.90.

moralising forces...."⁷⁴ No speculative or unsound management marred its record until 1890,⁷⁵ when in the embittered opinion of The Mail, "... the bad steering of the Cape of Good Hope Bank," caused it to run aground.⁷⁶ The Savings Bank was liquidated in September 1890,⁷⁷ its demise marking the extinguishing of a cherished link with Grahamstown's past benefactors.

The connections of the Grahamstown Building Society with the Good Hope Bank were not as close as those of the Savings Bank. The directors believed that there would ultimately be no financial loss, and simply delayed the division of the 1890 profits among shareholders.⁷⁸ The Building Society weathered the crisis with relative ease.

Grahamstown market activity flourished between 1883 and 1904, encouraged by extensions and improvements to facilities made by the town council. Interesting experimentation in Albany farming captured the local imagination and was encouraged by the press with an eye to possible advantage to Grahamstown in the form of increased market trade. Wide coverage was initially given to a cotton cultivation project. This was not a new experiment. The first attempts to initiate cotton farming in the 1870's had been thwarted by the opening of the diamond fields and the ostrich feather boom.⁷⁹ These had captured the

⁷⁴GPM 27.7.88.

⁷⁵GPM 29.9.90.

⁷⁶GPM 13.10.90.

⁷⁷GPM 29.9.90.

⁷⁸GTJ 15.11.90.

⁷⁹Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 82.

attention and capital necessary for cotton experimentation. The declining value of ostrich feathers⁸⁰ and the 1882-1886 recession re-awakened interest in cotton as a new marketable product. The imagination of the Albany farmer was fired by the claim that during droughts, cotton would yield a crop even when cereal failed.⁸¹

The initial results of the project were disappointing. Peddie farmers discovered that no agent was available to receive their bales and transmit them to Europe.⁸² The grander possibilities offered by the gold fields shifted attention from cotton experimentation. So quickly did cotton farming fade from the news, that the local press did not publish the results of the 1886-1887 cotton experiments,⁸³ and the scheme was shelved.

Tea cultivation, encouraged by Dr. W.G. Atherstone, initially met with similar enthusiasm,⁸⁴ but was also abandoned without further comment when it failed. The agricultural development with the greatest prospects at this point, was the fruit-growing industry. Serious attention was given to fruit cultivation after the successful establishment in 1896 of a Grahamstown and Albany Horticultural Society.⁸⁵ The Society encouraged an improvement in the quality of the fruit

⁸⁰See above pg 57, footnote 7.

⁸¹GTJ 27.2.86.

⁸²GTJ 15.1.86 "A Lower Albany Farmer" to Editor.

⁸³The Journal had stressed that 1886-1887 would be the trial year for Cape cotton cultivation. (GTJ 27.2.86).

⁸⁴GTJ 1.7.86 and J. Laing to Editor.

⁸⁵GTJ 14.11.96.

produced,⁸⁶ and, inspired by the possibilities of fruit-farming, the Grahamstown Chamber of Commerce pressed for an experimental fruit farm in Albany.⁸⁷ It did not succeed in the enterprise; nor did Grahamstown become the centre of the extensive fruit canning and preserving enterprises visualised by The Journal.⁸⁸ Despite this, the Albany fruit-industry, especially pineapple cultivation, was by 1904 firmly established.⁸⁹

Ostrich feather sales remained a highly profitable commercial enterprise in Grahamstown between 1883 and 1904, even if profits dwindled as the years passed. By mid 1883, the decline in the profit margin had become evident in that the eighteen sales held between January and June 1883 realised only £44 300, a sum markedly lower than the £44 947 realised in twelve sales during the equivalent period in 1882.⁹⁰ By August 1883, feathers were in such great supply that fortnightly sales were replaced by weekly sales to work them off.⁹¹ This was an ominous sign, but the Chamber of Commerce firmly held that ostrich feathers were more remunerative than other products. Even if the price fell to a mere £3.10.0/lb., it would far exceed a top price of 2s6d/lb for good mohair,

⁸⁶ The Journal noted a marked improvement in the quality of fruit, especially citrus, exhibited on the 1901 horticultural show. (GTJ 10.12.01).

⁸⁷ CMB 4.6.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁸⁸ GTJ 5.9.95.

⁸⁹ By 1903, pineapples were growing well locally, although quantities probably did not exceed fifty tons. C.B. Strauss, Pineapples in the Eastern Cape: A Study of the Farm Economy and Marketing Patterns, pg 6.

⁹⁰ GTJ 9.7.83.

⁹¹ GTJ 26.7.83 TCM 25.7.83, GTJ 9.8.83 TCM 8.8.83.

or 1s10d/lb. for wool.⁹² By the turn of the century, business had declined to the extent that the town council considered replacing the feather market auctioneer, C.W. Dold, with the market master in order to economise on municipal expenditure. The suggestion was countered by the protests of eight buyers and sellers,⁹³ but it exposed a growing lack of confidence in the market. By 1904, feather sales had declined to an average of one per month,⁹⁴ with no immediate prospects of a revival in business.

This trend was not reflected on Grahamstown's morning market, which had by 1904 considerably extended its activities. A.E. Nelson presided over most of the changes, because he chaired the Market Committee for twelve consecutive years between 1884 and 1895.⁹⁵ The Journal in 1902 attributed the "... present great financial prosperity" of the market to his work.⁹⁶ Three key developments account for the growth in trade. First, an order of sales satisfactory to both buyers and sellers was devised after extensive experimentation between 1883 and 1892. Disagreement existed over whether it was preferable to sell goods in order of arrival, according to a set system of lots, or to

⁹²GTJ 9.7.83.

⁹³CMB 26.2.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.
The suggestion was made in a petition signed by fifty-two residents.

⁹⁴CMB 3.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.
The council decided that Dold would receive a £5 commission monthly, rather than £10, unless two or more sales were held.

⁹⁵A.E. Nelson was elected Mayor in 1895, but chaired the Market Committee again from July 1901 until his death in November 1902.

⁹⁶GTJ 13.11.02.

their physical arrangement around market square. By 1892, eighty-five Lower Albany farmers had indicated their support for a system which began with the disposal of wood, and then moved on to wagon produce.⁹⁷ This was the order followed until 1904.

The second development factor relates to the gradual inclusion of a variety of produce in the market sales. The auction of meat in quantities under twenty-five pounds was permitted from May 1883, despite the protests of local butchers that their sale advantages were being invaded.⁹⁸ In July 1884, a corn market was established, scheduled monthly for the hour before the opening of the stock fair.⁹⁹ In 1900 the council sanctioned the sale of imported food on the public market, when the unprecedented conditions of drought and warfare made food - especially meat - prices prohibitive.¹⁰⁰

The third stimulus to market growth was provided by Alfred Preddy, a town councillor who resigned in October 1889 to become market master.¹⁰¹ Preddy rapidly earned a reputation as a speedy salesman, an accolade by all accounts well deserved. On one occasion, Preddy's sales averaged at a time of one and a half minutes per wagon, a record indeed!¹⁰² This efficiency had caused a £400 increase in market

⁹⁷ GPM 29.4.92 TCM 27.4.92.

⁹⁸ GTJ 29.5.84 TCM 28.5.84.
The market regulations had to be altered to permit this sale.

⁹⁹ GTJ 18.7.84 TCM 16.7.84, GTJ 19.7.84.

¹⁰⁰ CMB 25.1.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁰¹ GTJ 24.10.89 TCM 23.10.89.

¹⁰² GTJ 28.10.90.

revenue within a year. Council confidence in Preddy's ability was expressed in the unanimous sanction given to his request for a salary increase.¹⁰³ Business continued to flourish in the 1890's.

Unfortunately, this most satisfactory state of affairs was marred by the strained relations between Preddy and the council. The Journal attributed the council's ready acceptance in 1895 of Preddy's resignation to "... some occurrence or occurrences which have not come to light," and asked for the full particulars to be made known.¹⁰⁴ While the local authority did not heed that request, it did respond to three petitions¹⁰⁵ for the retention of Preddy's services, by raising his salary to £350 per annum.¹⁰⁶ Preddy accepted this, but his behaviour remained erratic. In 1897, relations were upset again when he categorically refused to pay the £31 which was outstanding from market dues. Preddy maintained that the sum had been paid earlier, and although he had no receipt to prove his claim, the Finance Committee had to be content with expressions of dissatisfaction on the matter.¹⁰⁷ It was a relief to many when Preddy finally resigned in September 1898.¹⁰⁸ Business continued to grow under the new market master, A.G. Pike. In 1902 a permanent telephone was installed in the market office.¹⁰⁹ While

¹⁰³ GPM 10.10.90 TCM 8.10.90, GTJ 23.10.90 TCM 22.10.90.

¹⁰⁴ GTJ 19.1.95.

¹⁰⁵ GTJ 19.1.95, GTJ 24.1.95 TCM 23.1.95.

¹⁰⁶ GTJ 23.5.95 TCM 22.5.95.

¹⁰⁷ FCMB 26.1.97, 2.2.97, 9.2.97, 9.3.97, 21.6.98
CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

¹⁰⁸ CMB 7.9.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁰⁹ CMB 30.4.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

the council refused a petition for an assistant market master in October 1903,¹¹⁰ it is likely that the decision was motivated by economic considerations rather than a belief that the request was unnecessary.

Grahamstown's monthly stock fair, which drew farmers from all over Albany, also grew substantially in this period, although its development was temporarily interrupted between 1880 and 1890 by a dispute between stock buyers and the town council. The conflict arose when a council majority increased the dues charged on cattle sales from 1% to 2%, ignoring protests from local farmers, the auctioneer, H. Lawrance, and the Chamber of Commerce.¹¹¹ Business gradually moved from the Grahamstown fair, and in January 1890, the farmers held their first independent stock fair at Hell's Poort. It was most successful, bringing in ten times the amount received during the most recent stock sales in Grahamstown. Plans were proposed to extend these fairs into quarterly sales for the three nearest Farmers' Associations.¹¹² Even in the face of this threat of loss of trade, the Grahamstown council obstinately stood by its 2% due. Only in May 1890, when the farmers tried to initiate market relations with Port Elizabeth, to the exclusion of Grahamstown, was the 1% reduction effected.¹¹³ Hereafter, the stock fair flourished, particularly after the introduction of a special Christmas sale of fat stock.

¹¹⁰ CMB 7.10.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.
The petition came from fifty-two purchasers and twenty-two sellers on the morning market.

¹¹¹ GTJ 5.4.88 TCM 4.4.88, GTJ 17.10.89 TCM 16.10.89,
GPM 24.1.90 TCM 23.1.90.

¹¹² GTJ 28.1.90.

¹¹³ GTJ 15.5.90, GTJ 5.6.90, GPM 20.6.90 TCM 18.6.90.

The Christmas sale was initiated in 1896 by a town council donation of £50 towards the best cattle sold at the final stock fair before Christmas.¹¹⁴ Two auctioneers, Lawrance and Dold made private contributions towards prize lists,¹¹⁵ and in 1902, 12 December was chosen as the fixed annual date for the sale. The council prize contribution was increased to £100.¹¹⁶ The fair of 1902 was most successful. Advertised as widely as Kimberley and Johannesburg, it drew buyers from all parts of the colony.¹¹⁷ But the enthusiasm soon evaporated, and the council contribution was reduced to £50 in 1903, when only H.O. Dold declared his intention of holding a special sale.¹¹⁸ In 1904, Dold reduced his own prize offer to £25,¹¹⁹ which prompted a widely-supported, if unsuccessful, ratepayer demand that the council donation of £50 be withdrawn that year.¹²⁰ The Christmas stock fairs ended on a discouraging note in the period reviewed, but on the whole, Grahamstown stock sales had become a market activity with great potential for future growth.

With all this agricultural trade, it was natural that Grahamstown should stage an annual Albany agricultural show. This was both a means of encouraging farmers to improve the quality of their produce, and of attracting trade to the city. It lapsed temporarily between 1884 and

¹¹⁴ GTJ 23.1.96 TCM 22.1.96.

¹¹⁵ CMB 7.6.99, 5.7.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹¹⁶ CMB 24.9.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹⁷ CMB 17.12.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹⁸ CMB 21.10.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹⁹ CMB 19.10.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹²⁰ CMB 26.10.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

1891, probably because of the difficulties caused by the drought and recession of 1882-1886. The shows began again after the Albany Agricultural Society had been reformed in 1891 by the Mayor, J.S. Willcox,¹²¹ in response to appeals from The Mail.¹²² The 1891-1892 agricultural show was so successful¹²³ that the Society undertook the construction of permanent show ground facilities.¹²⁴ Within two years, over £1000 had been spent on shedding, pens and an octagonal bandstand with a refreshment room beneath it. The executive committee aimed to provide shelter for all animal exhibits,¹²⁵ and by 1895, dog-kennels, a bee-proof tent, poultry shed and butter-making facilities had been constructed.¹²⁶

In 1894, J. Frost, Secretary for Agriculture in the Rhodes Ministry, placed Grahamstown agricultural shows third in importance in the Cape, behind those of Port Elizabeth and Queenstown. The Mail was inclined to acknowledge only Port Elizabeth's superiority in this regard.¹²⁷

The Grahamstown shows went from strength to strength. They were officially suspended in 1901 and 1902 because of the disruptions caused by the Anglo-Boer war.¹²⁸ The Society resumed its activities in 1903, and structural improvements were undertaken again in 1904.

¹²¹ GPM 29.7.91.

¹²² GPM 6.5.91.

¹²³ GTJ 12.12.91.

¹²⁴ GTJ 2.4.92, GPM 5.8.92.

¹²⁵ GPM 13.12.93, GTJ 8.3.94.

¹²⁶ GTJ 23.2.95.

¹²⁷ GPM 6.12.95.

¹²⁸ GTJ 20.11.00, 18.1.02.

Railway traffic in particular had been hampered.

Grahamstown's success as an agricultural marketing centre was largely attributable to her situation in the Albany farming district. The city could attract agricultural trade because this was a natural market pattern. The attempts to draw economic investment by means of the two Exhibitions challenged the trend of the removal of Cape commerce and economy from Grahamstown, and consequently failed.

The Exhibitions of 1887 and 1898 were similar in aim and organisation, but differed in scale. Both were intended to promote commercial, industrial and agricultural growth in the colony as a whole, and Grahamstown in particular. The 1898 Exhibition had as an additional goal, that of drawing South Africans together¹²⁹ in a venture which might foster unity in a land divided by the Jameson Raid and the tension between English and Afrikaner. There was some carry-over of the membership of the 1887 to the 1898 Executive Committees. J.S. Willcox was president of both, and his committees on both occasions included J.E. Wood, A. Douglass, Hon. A. Wilmot and W.C. Muirhead.¹³⁰ In 1887, an additional committee was formed in London to promote the Exhibition. The 1898 committee developed the South African aspect of its organisation to include as honorary committee members, Earl Grey, President M. Steyn, Sir J.G. Sprigg and C.J. Rhodes. The High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, became titular president.¹³¹ In 1887 and 1898, work of

¹²⁹W.A. Maxwell, The Great Exhibition at Grahamstown December 1898 - January 1899, pg 1.

¹³⁰Minutes of the Grahamstown Queen's Jubilee Exhibition 18.1.87 (pg 3), and the Industrial and Arts Exhibition 19.11.97 (pp 173, 175, 177) CL, MS 7054.

¹³¹GTJ 10.2.87 Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 7. In 1898, Committee members like Muirhead, Dr. Schönland and J.W. Bayes (merchant), went to London to combine personal and Exhibition business. They arranged, for example, for an English art exhibition to be brought out to Grahamstown.

organisation included visits to various parts of Southern Africa, although this was taken much further in 1898 than had been the case previously.¹³² The problems of accommodation and the Exhibition site found similar solutions on both occasions. Hotels and boarding houses could not have coped with the influx of visitors, so camping grounds were set aside for tents and wagons, and citizens obligingly opened their homes to Exhibition-goers.¹³³ J.E. Wood's home was used for the honorary guests, the Governor, Sir Hercules and Lady Robinson in 1887, and Sir William Butler, Cape Administrator during Lord Milner's absence, in 1898.¹³⁴ In 1887, the town hall and its grounds were selected as the site for the Exhibition buildings. Some disagreement surrounded this choice,¹³⁵ but it proved successful, and was used again in 1898.¹³⁶ Wood and iron structures were erected. The unkempt grounds were transformed into attractive parklands, more successfully in 1887 than in 1898, when a lengthy drought undermined Dr. S. Schönland's attempts to cultivate cycads and aloes.¹³⁷ Fortunately Grahamstown was spared a water famine on the latter occasion by the timely introduction of Slaai Kraal water to meet Exhibition demands.¹³⁸

¹³²GTJ 23.4.87, 10.9.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 7.

¹³³GPM 28.9.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 10. Although citizens did not initially respond to the 1887 appeal, the absence of comment on the accommodation issue during the Exhibition implies that few problems were experienced.

¹³⁴GTJ 13.12.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 11.

¹³⁵GTJ 7.4.87 H.G. Hubbard to Editor; GPM 23.5.87; Exhibition Minute Book 20.5.87, pg 61 CL, MS 7054.

¹³⁶Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 3 (Map).

¹³⁷GPM 26.10.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 10.

¹³⁸This is discussed below, ch. 4, pp 96-101.

Both Exhibitions ran the risk of considerable financial loss, so that citizens were encouraged to guarantee funds;¹³⁹ the town council itself subscribed £500 in 1887,¹⁴⁰ despite its extensive retrenchment campaign. The Cape government paid grants of £1000 in 1887 and £3000 in 1898,¹⁴¹ and generous railway concessions relieved the costs for travellers and exhibitors.¹⁴²

The shows ran from 15 December 1887 to 14 January 1888, and 15 December 1898 to 21 January 1899, offering exhibits designed to fascinate and amuse even the most seasoned of travellers. In 1887 they included a small bag of cotton grown and picked by a Transkeian Mfengu group, dried fruit, chicory and colonially-made "eau de Cologne", an electric light and motor machinery.¹⁴³ Those of 1898 were more spectacular, and drawn from a wider area of Southern Africa. Natal voted £1000 for her exhibits, which were very popular, ranging from Zulus with twenty-eight rickshas, to a massive, solid block of coal. From as far away as Matabeleland, came huge, mounted animals. De Beers presented a diamond display.¹⁴⁴ Music formed a central part of the entertainment at both Exhibitions. Arrangements were made for two African concerts in 1887, and for an orchestra and choirs to present works like "Judas Maccabeus", the "Revenge" and Handel's Coronation Anthem under the direction of a local musician, H. Winney.¹⁴⁵ In 1898, the St. Andrew's

¹³⁹ GTJ 23.12.86; GPM 19.1.87, 16.5.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 7 .

¹⁴⁰ GTJ 31.3.87 TCM 30.3.87.

¹⁴¹ GTJ 30.8.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 7.

¹⁴² GPM 5.12.87; Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 7.

¹⁴³ GPM 26.10.87, 16.12.87, GTJ 22.12.87.

¹⁴⁴ Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pp 10, 14.

¹⁴⁵ GPM 25.11.87, The Eastern Province Herald 16.1.88.

College music master, Percy Ould, took charge of arrangements which included Brinsley White's Exhibition ode set to music, and the Hallelujah Chorus, which closed the Exhibition.¹⁴⁶

Interesting and varied visitors were present on both occasions. In 1887, Dalindybo, paramount chief of the Thembu, and twenty councillors and followers, were present at the opening ceremony, taking the opportunity to confer with the Secretary for Native Affairs, J.A. de Wet.¹⁴⁷ Edgar Wallace, then a freelance journalist, joined in the fun of the 1898 Exhibition.¹⁴⁸

Neither show went uncriticised. In 1888, great disappointment was expressed over the quality of the prize medals awarded. The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser commented that they appeared to have been produced as cheaply as possible; The Journal agreed that the "recumbent" Mercury looked as if "... a few good meals would do him no harm."¹⁴⁹ In 1898, a number of stallholders expressed resentment at the restrictions placed on them:

"An exhibitor may not alter his stall, ... paint a sign, ... sell an article from his table of wares, he may not do this, he is prevented from doing that"

Businessmen resented the delay in awarding prizes, because it deprived them of additional sales at the exhibition.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pp 13, 17.

¹⁴⁷CPP, G.6 - '88, pg 3.

¹⁴⁸Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 11.

¹⁴⁹The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser n.d. as taken up by GTJ 20.9.88.

¹⁵⁰The Cape Times 7.1.99 (Quoting an unnamed correspondent).

The 1887 and 1898 Exhibitions were immediately successful, but The Eastern Province Herald's appeal in 1888, "... that the lessons we have been taught will not be forgotten, but will in future years bring forth much fruit, some sixty, some a hundredfold,"¹⁵¹ was not fulfilled. No economic investment was drawn to Grahamstown, and the attempts made particularly after 1887 to promote local industrial development, had ultimately to be abandoned.

One of the important, if short-term outcomes of the first Exhibition, was the formal constitution of a Manufacturers' Association at a conference arranged by Arthur Douglass and Alexander Wilmot.¹⁵² The Association had been formed tentatively during the 1885 parliamentary session; its fundamental aim was economic, for it intended to promote Cape manufactures and manufacturers.¹⁵³ It assumed a political significance in its promotion of protectionism, and the mouthpiece it gave politicians like Douglass and Wilmot. The Executive Committee of the Manufacturers' Association elected at the Grahamstown Exhibition, included local men like Douglass, Wilmot, A.E. Nelson and B. Prew.¹⁵⁴ The Association was Grahamstown-based, and therein lay its weakness. The city was barely on the periphery of the infant colonial manufacturing industry, and unlikely in the circumstances to carry political or

¹⁵¹The Eastern Province Herald 16.1.88.

¹⁵²GPM 23.11.87, GTJ 20.12.87.

¹⁵³A. Wilmot, The History of Our Own Times in South Africa, Vol. II, 1880-1888, pg 168. Wilmot does not identify the leaders of the Association at this point, but implies that Arthur Douglass was closely involved.

¹⁵⁴GTJ 20.12.88.

economic weight. The attempts to broaden the base of the Association to include manufacturers from a large number of colonial towns, failed, and in February 1888, the thirty member firms were drawn from less than six colonial towns.¹⁵⁵ It soon became apparent that the Association was merely a parochial affair, with little initiative or direction.¹⁵⁶ It had few suggestions for new products and cheaper methods of production. The only change it appeared to offer was increased import dues.¹⁵⁷

The Grahamstown press followed the activities of the Manufacturers' Association until 1895. Thereafter they seem to have lost interest, possibly because the city remained industrially underdeveloped. In the colonial context, the Association might have contributed towards the growth of the Cape manufacturing industry; in 1894, twenty thousand people were employed in these industries, which produced goods to a total value of £60 million.¹⁵⁸ The significance of Grahamstown involvement in the Association lies in the continuing interest in commercial and industrial undertakings that it indicates among the citizens.

Despite the fact that parochial concerns like David Knight's shoe-business,¹⁵⁹ A.E. Nelson's soap factory,¹⁶⁰ Price's organ-building

¹⁵⁵GPM 24.2.88.

¹⁵⁶The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 19.1.88.

¹⁵⁷GPM 24.2.88.

¹⁵⁸GTJ 16.5.95.

¹⁵⁹Knight's shoe business had been established in Grahamstown in 1876. The firm dealt with English, American and Continental factories. By 1904, a branch of the business had been opened in Bulawayo. (GTJ 20.9.04 Supplement No. 3. See below, Appendix A, pp 297-298).

¹⁶⁰Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, pg 258.

concern¹⁶¹ and Wedderburn's cart and wagon industry,¹⁶² flourished, the city was unable to support larger industries. This was illustrated most clearly in the decade between the two Exhibitions, by the collapse of the first colonial woollen cloth factory. The Victoria Woollen Company was formed in February 1888, with a capital of £3000 in £10 shares, and a local directorate.¹⁶³ Great energy was applied to ensure the success of this undertaking. The directors looked to long-term growth rather than immediate profit, and remained optimistic when a substantial outlay on machinery resulted in a debt of £2780 after one year of operation.¹⁶⁴ Their confidence was vindicated when the good quality of the cloth produced brought special awards at the 1890 Kimberley Exhibition, and 1891 Port Elizabeth Show.¹⁶⁵ Private wool suppliers were given special, generous terms for the manufacture of their wool into tweed and cloth.¹⁶⁶ A £1000 government grant, ready sales and the satisfaction of purchasers¹⁶⁷ augured well for future prosperity.

¹⁶¹ Price achieved renown as an organ-builder in the 1890's. He constructed the St. Andrew's College and St. Michael's Church (Queenstown) organs. He enlarged and rebuilt those of the Trinity and Commemoration Churches, and the Grahamstown Cathedral. (GPM 1.2.93, 19.8.96).

¹⁶² Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, pg 260.

¹⁶³ GTJ 9.2.88. The directors were A. Wilmot, J.E. Wood, S. Cronwright, W.H.S. Bell (attorney), J. McLeod (miller), T.H. Grocott (merchant) and A. Logie (shopkeeper). In 1889, T.B. van der Riet (attorney) and J. Slater (Journal editor) were elected to replace Cronwright (deceased) and Bell (resigned). (GPM 10.5.89).

¹⁶⁴ GPM 10.5.89.

¹⁶⁵ GTJ 20.5.90 Extra pamphlet, 14.4.91.

¹⁶⁶ GTJ 7.12.89. The Company would buy 400 lbs. of wool or more from the dealer at market price, manufacture it into tweed or cloth, and return it to him at wholesale price.

¹⁶⁷ GPM 10.5.89, The East London Dispatch n.d. as taken up by GTJ 5.11.89.

In 1890 the increase in staff to include an experienced cutter and several Scottish "hands", the establishment of a tailoring department and manufacture of 600 yards of tweed weekly,¹⁶⁸ made prospects appear superficially bright.

By February 1890, problems had surfaced. The capital of £3000 was too limited to sustain company operations;¹⁶⁹ the directors failed to raise this to £10 000, because the public responded poorly to the new shares offered.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the collapse of the company in September 1891 came as a shock. The Journal rather unfairly related this to inadequate local support.¹⁷¹ However commendable the project was, it was premature and the factory had been established in the wrong place. Grahamstown was not situated on a direct trade route, and lacked the abundant coal, wood and water supplies necessary in the manufacturing process.¹⁷² Coupled with problems created by the severely limited working capital, the factory was unable to survive long. It was re-established in Newcastle, Natal. There, as in Grahamstown, it met with initial success but ultimate failure, and was liquidated in 1899.¹⁷³

Two other attempts to restore commercial prosperity to Grahamstown are worth mentioning. The Monopole Tobacco Company got off to a good start

¹⁶⁸GTJ 20.5.90 Extra pamphlet, 18.11.90.

¹⁶⁹GTJ 10.9.91.

¹⁷⁰GPM 24.2.90, The Cape Argus n.d. as taken up by GTJ 10.9.91.

¹⁷¹GTJ 10.9.91.

¹⁷²The Cape Argus n.d. as taken up by GPM 29.7.89.

¹⁷³GTJ 14.8.99.

when it was established in Grahamstown in 1892, by the firm of Bear and Sons of London, Calcutta and New York.¹⁷⁴ But although fine quality tobacco was manufactured there until 1897, the firm was subsequently transferred to Seymour for unspecified reasons.¹⁷⁵ The Grahamstown Brick Making Company, on the other hand, flourished after its establishment in the 1880's.¹⁷⁶ The company relied for its success on the good clay deposits in Grahamstown. The quality of the bricks produced was so good, that the company was soon unable to meet the demand. It was not long before several local businessmen had realised the potential of the industry, assumed control and commenced expansion of its facilities and activities.¹⁷⁷ In 1902, the government and town council sanctioned the construction of a railway siding over a strip of commonage.¹⁷⁸ New machinery and kilns were purchased, to eliminate the drying process after baking, and to double the weekly output to 100 000 bricks.¹⁷⁹ These improvements ensured the future of the Grahamstown brickmaking industry, which was by 1904 a concern of some importance in the Eastern Cape.

¹⁷⁴GPM 1.2.92, 2.5.92.

¹⁷⁵S. Playne (compiler and editor), Cape Colony (Cape Province): Its History, Commerce, Industries and Resources, pg 770.
The most likely explanation for the move is that Seymour was closer to the source of supply.

¹⁷⁶GTJ 26.5.83.

¹⁷⁷H. Fitchat (merchant) became Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the New Brickmaking Company in December 1902.
(CMB 3.12.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

¹⁷⁸CMB 20.8.02, 27.8.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹⁷⁹GTJ 3.10.03.

The legacy of the two Grahamstown Exhibitions was short-lived. Grahamstown was severely disappointed by the lack of economic investment after the Exhibitions, but the immediate urgency for such development waned as her educational function became more clearly defined. By 1904, the Brickmaking Company was one of the few promising and developing industries in Grahamstown. The goodwill inspired by the 1898-1899 Exhibition soon evaporated as South Africa was plunged into the Anglo-Boer war. Grahamstown opinion itself soon came to oppose the conciliatory approaches of the premiers, W.P. Schreiner and J.G. Sprigg.¹⁸⁰ The legacy of the 1898 Exhibition was dispelled more rapidly by the war than it would otherwise have been. In 1902, The Cape Times summed up the remaining significance of the undertaking thus: "... as an educational venture, the exhibition did a vast amount of good to the Eastern Province of the Colony."¹⁸¹

Grahamstown's attempts to foster unity, tolerance and fraternity in 1898, had come too late to succeed. The city remained locked on the commercial and industrial periphery, as much so after the Anglo-Boer war as after the troop withdrawal of 1870 and the collapse of the Victoria Woollen Company in 1891. The men who tried to woo entrepreneurial investment back to Grahamstown, were fighting a losing battle against a changing economic structure and colonial trends. Those who sought the foundation of a university college were the ones who had stumbled on the key to Grahamstown's future growth. The Exhibition of 1898-1899 was rightly termed "'the best ever held in South Africa.'"¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰This is discussed below, ch. 7, pp 226-234.

¹⁸¹The Cape Times 7.1.02.

¹⁸²Maxwell, The Great Exhibition, pg 5 (no reference given).

But the establishment of Rhodes University College in 1904 was an event of greater significance, one which would yield more returns than any other undertaking between 1883 and 1904.

CHAPTER FOUR

PUBLIC WORKS

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By 1883, Grahamstown's public works programme had been hindered for several decades by a shortage of municipal finance.¹ Extensive undertakings necessitated major capital expenditure and loans that absorbed interest payments for a number of years. Large and small projects suffered in consequence of the excessive caution with which they were approached by councillors, but although changes were slow, by 1904 those most necessary had been implemented. A municipal fire engine was purchased in 1893, despite the fact that a number of councillors believed that the maintenance costs of the establishment would absorb funding that was needed for other projects. Few could deny the need for municipal protection from the ravages of uncontrolled fire. In 1895, the introduction of gas lighting improved the quality of illumination in Grahamstown. Some citizens were disappointed at the extent of the change, but none suggested that paraffin lighting was preferable. The Slaai Kraal water scheme, implemented in 1897, was the most significant project of the period, undertaken despite the severe odds of considerable expense and organised working class opposition.

Other issues arose in varying degrees of importance. Mountain Drive, a pride of Grahamstown, was extended and developed with considerable enthusiasm, but the council was only prepared to undertake piecemeal

¹In 1860, Grahamstown Civil Commissioners had to pledge their private credit to guarantee a loan to build the Grey Dam. (K.S. Hunt, "The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope with Special Reference to Grahamstown 1827-1862." AYB 1961, pg 197). Also M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pg 133.

repairs to city streets. Pedestrians welcomed the extension of tar paving, which provided comfortable sidewalks at moderate expense. The dispute over the condition of approaches to the city assumed complex proportions in the tension it exposed between the urban and rural authorities in Albany. Fortunately negotiation averted outright confrontation. Afforestation went ahead as far as finances would allow. Preference was given to the planting of wattle trees after October 1900²; the council was unaware at that stage of the extent to which wattles would proliferate to the detriment of natural vegetation, and become a fire hazard. The public swimming bath remained one of the least satisfactory municipal amenities. The chronic water shortage obstructed attempts to keep the pool clean,³ and local sportsmen resented the inadequate facilities that deprived them of the opportunity to compete effectively with rival clubs.⁴ The council recognised the need for improvement,⁵ but by 1904 had achieved little more than a gift of land for a new pool.⁶

The construction of the Grahamstown city hall was enviously applauded in 1882 by The Cape Times as, "... the pious liberality of the sons of the settlers in creating ... a stately municipal ediface consecrated to the memory of their fathers."⁷ The Jubilee Tower, completed in 1884,

²CMB 31.10.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³GTJ 17.2.99 "Germs" to Editor.

⁴GTJ 15.2.02.

⁵CMB 19.3.02, 26.3.02, 14.10.03, 20.7.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁶GPM 26.6.03 TCM 24.6.03 (Mayor's Minute).
The gift was presented by Messrs. Birch, Stirk and others, on condition that new baths should be constructed within five years of the presentation.

⁷The Cape Times 24.7.82.

was Grahamstown's touch of splendour to the structure, and a tribute to the queen her citizens served with devotion. Only a small number of settlers survived to see their labours thus enshrined;⁸ their dedication and that of their descendants enabled Grahamstown to emerge into the twentieth century with municipal resources sufficient to cope with most new demands.

Grahamstown's difficulty in securing a good water supply relates to her situation on a high watershed. The problem is compounded by the wide disparity of rainfall around the city.⁹ Frequent droughts exacerbated the water shortage between 1883 and 1904. That which accompanied the economic depression of 1882-1886 provoked heated debate on three water augmentation proposals; the Green Hills, Howieson's Poort and Slaai Kraal projects. The most definitive of the several reports commissioned on the viability of these schemes¹⁰ was issued in April 1884 by H.L. Spindler, an independent civil engineer. It directed attention from Green Hills to the Slaai Kraal project, which was adopted in 1897, and left the Howieson's Poort plan open for consideration at a later stage.

Green Hills was favoured at one stage for its large watershed and the fact that the water could be brought into the city by gravitation. The scheme was rejected when Spindler drew attention to the fact that the

⁸GTJ 27.5.84.

⁹K.S. Hunt, "The Story of Grahamstown's Water Supply." Annals of the Grahamstown Historical Society, Vol.II No. 2, pg 8.

¹⁰The first report was presented in October 1882 by J.G. Gamble, the colonial hydraulic engineer. He reported on the suitability of the Green Hills and Slaai Kraal schemes, and minor projects like reservoir construction and boring operations. (GTJ 6.10.82). The second report was presented in July 1883 by W.B. Tripp, an engineer employed by the council to suggest specific implementation programmes for the Green Hills supply scheme. (GTJ 6.7.83 TCM 5.7.83).

supply was feeble and inconsistent during a drought, the floor of the valley unsound and that the construction of a pipe track would be expensive and difficult.¹¹ In 1883, the idea of pumping water from Howieson's Poort was in its infancy. Water could be pumped 700 ft. from the Poort dam to Waai Nek, from whence it would descend by gravitation. Spindler did not reject the plan, but drew attention to the unreliability of springs in the area and the permanently heavy pumping and maintenance costs that could be expected.¹² The Slaai Kraal project received a favourable report. A good daily supply of about 150 000 gallons could be brought by gravitation to Brickmaker's Kloof. The scheme would unfortunately involve additional expense in filter bed construction, the acquisition of water rights and rearrangement of the city pipe service. Dissatisfaction over these aspects of the programme delayed implementation until 1897.¹³

The water augmentation issue had unexpected ramifications in the class conflict it provoked in Grahamstown. White working class citizens, hard-pressed as they were in the 1880's, feared not being able to meet the increased water rates consequent upon a new scheme. Their united stance and sheer weight of numbers gave them the upper hand in decision making for several years. For most middle class residents, a new

¹¹GTJ 2.4.84. Spindler estimated the cost of the Green Hills project at £27 105. The daily water supply would be 80 000-100 000 gallons.

¹²GTJ 2.4.84. The estimated cost was £16 490. Springs in the area of the dam would supply only 30 000-45 000 gallons daily. However, Spindler believed that if supplemented with three or four springs lower down, Howieson's Poort was good for some 250 000 gallons daily.

¹³GTJ 2.4.84. The estimated cost of £26 813 included the construction of a storage reservoir and filter beds to purify the water. Spindler himself proposed a scheme which would bring into the city, the Howieson's Poort and Slaai Kraal waters via Brickmaker's Kloof. This would secure 400 000-500 000 gallons daily, at a cost of £50 000.

source of supply offered every advantage of an improved quality of life and freedom from threats of water famines. However, they were apathetic and undecided on the scheme they desired, and left the initiative to the council until 1897.

In the 1880's and early 1890's, the conflict surfaced in town council meetings in motions which diverted attention from a fullscale undertaking. Proposals for the construction of new reservoirs at Fort England and Pinnock's Toll were considered, but not implemented.¹⁴ Unfortunately, they temporarily relieved the pressure on the councillors to decide on a new scheme. Unsuccessful municipal water boring operations undertaken between 1883 and 1885 had a similar effect.¹⁵ In 1893, a completely unwarranted motion in favour of the construction of a reservoir at Goodwin's Kloof was withdrawn in response to local opposition,¹⁶ but here again, it created a diversion and delayed a commitment to a water augmentation programme. For the most part, these red herrings were motivated by a mistaken belief that there were cheap and effective alternatives to a scheme designed to tap a new source of supply. The devastating drought of the 1890's prompted the town council's renewed search for the best source of supply available. In April 1896, the municipality's piped water supply was reduced to a three hour service fortnightly.¹⁷ In June, a contractor began

¹⁴ GTJ 28.2.83, 1.3.83 TCM 28.2.83, GTJ 12.4.83 TCM 11.4.83, GTJ 20.4.83 TCM 18.4.83.

¹⁵ GTJ 18.5.83 TCM 16.5.83, GTJ 20.6.84 TCM 18.6.84, GTJ 2.8.84, 19.2.85 TCM 18.2.85.

¹⁶ GTJ 23.9.93 TCM 22.9.93, GPM 23.10.93, 26.10.93 TCM 25.10.93.

¹⁷ GPM 29.4.96.

supplying citizens with Slaai Kraal water at 20s per 400 gallon tank.¹⁸ Taken with a report submitted by engineer Thomas Stewart on water supply sources available, these developments brought the Slaai Kraal issue to a head. Stewart favoured Slaai Kraal as the best source available to Grahamstown at moderate cost.¹⁹ Tentative arrangements were made for the implementation of the scheme and an engineer was engaged to prepare plans and specifications.²⁰ However, just as arrangements got underway, proceedings were obstructed by a backlash of resistance from the local working class citizens.

The opposition to the Slaai Kraal project was expressed at public meetings at which middle class ratepayers were conspicuous by their absence. The issues raised were not new. They related to doubts about the reliability and purity of the Slaai Kraal water supply and the substantial riparian compensation payments expected.²¹ These objections rang hollow. Firstly, the reliability of the supply in dry seasons had been confirmed by tests conducted by councillors in 1893²² and Stewart's report in 1895.²³ Secondly, an academic dispute in 1896

¹⁸ GTJ 4.6.96 Advertisement, GPM 12.6.96.

¹⁹ GTJ 28.2.95. Stewart was an independent civil engineer commissioned by the town council to compile the report. He rejected the Goodwin's Kloof and Fort England reservoir schemes.

²⁰ GTJ 20.8.96 TCM 19.8.96.

²¹ GPM 17.6.95, 30.8.97.

²² GTJ 27.6.93. They found the flow of water sufficient to fill a five and three-quarter inch pipe. This was twice the total amount of water flowing into the town reservoirs at that stage.

²³ GTJ 28.2.95.

between bacteriologist, Alexander Edington, and chemist, George Cory, seems to have confirmed that removable surface impurities caused the pollution of the Slaai Kraal water.²⁴ Thirdly, many riparian rights claimants had agreed to submit their demands to arbitration. These developments made the rejection of the proposed scheme by a public meeting in August 1897²⁵ all the more controversial, and understandable only in the light of working class resistance to an undertaking as expensive as this.

The first signs of concerted group pressure in favour of water supply augmentation came in 1895, when the Grahamstown Bench, Bar of the Eastern Districts' Court, Civil Commissioner, local press and clergymen, and thirty representatives of leading medical, educational and government institutions, expressed their support for the Slaai Kraal scheme.²⁶ When the Slaai Kraal scheme was rejected in 1897 after the council had accepted tenders and plans for its implementation,²⁷ middle class ratepayers achieved some kind of organisation and resolve. The

²⁴ Edington conducted the initial tests on water collected downstream, and declared it impure. (GTJ 12.9.96 "Scrutineer" to Editor). Cory subsequently followed the stream to its source, collected samples there and after a series of tests, pronounced the water pure. He claimed on the basis of his results that the impurities were merely surface impurities. (GTJ 8.10.96 TCM 7.10.96, GTJ 10.10.96).

²⁵ GPM 30.8.97.

²⁶ GTJ 20.6.95 TCM 19.6.95, GTJ 29.6.95.

²⁷ These were submitted by engineer D. Gerrand. (GPM 23.10.96 TCM 21.10.96, GPM 11.12.96 TCM 9.12.96). Messrs. Reunert and Lenz would supply pipes to the value of £14 014.14. 3, which would be laid by Messrs. Jowett and Woods who would construct the reservoir for a combined total cost of £7 824. 7. 5. (CMB 14.4.97, 21.4.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13).

"Increased Water Supply Association," formed to urge the adoption of the project, drew its support from citizens like J.E. Wood, the Honourable A. Wilmot and the Reverend Theo Chubb.²⁸ Middle class pressure settled the matter. A poll was held, limited to ratepayers who had met all their payments, and 257/192 supported the implementation of the Slaai Kraal project.²⁹ D. Gerrand became the engineer and inspector of works at a total salary of £1400.³⁰ The hostility that had developed between working and middle class groups subsided as construction began. Financial arrangements were finalised. George Palmer received £4500 for the watershed area to the Slaai Kraal stream,³¹ and £200, along with J. Glass, for permitting pipe track construction across his property.³² The riparian claims of T.C. White and A.W. Munroe were settled with compensation of £2300, and the Slaai Kraal outspan, respectively.³³ The latter agreement was considered dubious on grounds of the lack of provision made for compensation by municipal land transfer in the 1869 Grahamstown Municipal Act, but was effected nonetheless.³⁴

²⁸CMB 8.9.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. Chubb was a Wesleyan minister.

²⁹GPM 13.9.97, 15.9.97.

³⁰WCMB 5.10.97, 6.10.97 CA, 3/AY 1/2/5/1/1.

³¹CMB 2.2.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. For this area, Palmer had originally demanded £5000.-(GTJ 2.5.95 TCM 1.5.95).

³²CMB 3.11.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³³WCMB 4.11.97, 8.11.97, 20.1.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/5/1/1; CMB 3.11.97, 26.1.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³⁴CMB 9.2.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. Act 23, 1869, Clause XLIV, allowed the council, with the consent of the Governor, to sell or mortgage Corporation lands by public auction, or to raise money by debentures issued on the security charged on such land.

Stage one of the Slaai Kraal project comprised the construction of a 50 million gallon storage reservoir with a ten inch pipe running to Brickmaker's Kloof, a high pressure tank for screening and gauging the supply, and the enclosure of the property to eliminate pollution.³⁵ The fencing was not extensive enough to be effective at first, and in August 1900 was extended to the south western boundary area to eliminate stock trespass entirely.³⁶ Water was supplied from Slaai Kraal for the first time on 12 November 1898, in time to fill the empty Grey Reservoir for the Exhibition visitors.³⁷ In April 1899, operations were completed, having amounted to £2500 more than the £35 000 limit initially set on the project.³⁸ In 1901 the new reservoir was named "Milner" in honour of the High Commissioner.³⁹ Grahamstonians did not have to wait long for evidence of the success of the scheme. Between November 1898 and April 1900, Slaai Kraal was the sole city water supply, as the other sources had all run dry. This encouraged a public meeting in May 1900 to sanction a £5000 loan to meet the additional costs that had been incurred, and to finance the extension of water mains from Worcester Street to Robert's Vlei.⁴⁰ No working class opposition obstructed these plans. That group had obviously been reconciled by the fact that the new graduated scale of water rate payments placed the burden of the increased costs on owners of large properties.⁴¹ In

³⁵CMB 12.4.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³⁶CMB 29.11.99, 1.8.00, 29.8.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³⁷GTJ 15.11.98, 23.11.01.

³⁸CMB 12.4.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13, GTJ 8.5.00.

³⁹CMB 23.11.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴⁰GTJ 8.5.00.

⁴¹Details are given above, ch. 2, pp 47-48.

November 1901 a heavy downpour of rain filled the Milner dam overnight, and provoked plans to increase the storage capacity at Slaai Kraal.⁴²

In May 1904, tenders were accepted for the construction of a 130 million gallon reservoir in accordance with plans submitted by engineer Gerrand. The £6946. 0. 8⁴³ Jameson reservoir was completed in March 1906.

The completion of the second Slaai Kraal reservoir more than tripled the storage capacity of the city in bringing it to 230 million gallons.⁴⁴ This achievement, together with the water service extension and provision of a supply that continued even in the driest seasons, was secured during the eight year period between 1898 and 1906, at a cost of under £50 000.⁴⁵ The undertaking gave rise to a great deal of civic pride, which manifested itself in an unsuccessful attempt to stock the reservoir with trout.⁴⁶ The greatest triumph of the project lay in the council decision in December 1903, to serve the city with a continuous supply of water.⁴⁷ In this development was contained a practical indication of Grahamstown's transition into sophisticated twentieth century urban life.

The introduction of gas lighting into the city in 1895 was another sign of civic consciousness and municipal progress. The gas and water issues

⁴²CMB 15.4.03, 16.9.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴³CMB 15.4.03, 4.5.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14. The tenders received prior to May 1904 had been considered unsatisfactory. The sum of £6946. 0. 8 was tendered by Green and Co. and accepted by the council.

⁴⁴K.S. Hunt, "Grahamstown's Water Supply", pp 16-17.

⁴⁵The first stage of the operations had absorbed about £40 000, and the Jameson reservoir, £7000.

⁴⁶GTJ 29.10.04.

⁴⁷CMB 9.12.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

differed markedly in the responses they provoked from the community. The former did not create the bitterness, class division and factionalism of the latter. Economy conscious citizens and councillors had fundamentally little reason to oppose a gas project, because the lump sum required for the works and pipes would be provided by the Company granted the monopoly of the supply. Furthermore, as there was no direct "lighting" rate for the city, and as private use of gas was entirely the voluntary decision of the householder, working class groups had little reason to fear an increase in direct costs. Even so, the cost factor played a role in delaying the introduction of gas into Grahamstown. Working and maintenance costs of gas lighting would be almost double those of paraffin lamps,⁴⁸ which amounted to less than a minimal £300 annually.⁴⁹ The increasing popularity of electricity as a form of power caused further delays in a commitment to gas. The council delayed the introduction of gas until the danger and expense of electricity eliminated it as a viable alternative at that stage.⁵⁰

⁴⁸This cost would be met out of the town rate. It was unlikely that the costs of gas would result in an increased rate, but some funds would have to be diverted from other municipal projects to meet the new expenditure.

⁴⁹The following are random examples of annual expenditure on lighting:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost</u>
	£
1889	258.15.11
1891	298. 1. 2
1893	270.13. 3

These figures were obtained from the Corporation accounts, published in the following sources respectively: GTJ 25.3.90, 14.4.92, 21.4.94.

⁵⁰GTJ 17.9.91 The Journal rejected electricity partly because a report of civil engineers in Paris had indicated that it cost ten times as much as gas.

Various proposals for the introduction of gas into Grahamstown were made before an offer was accepted in 1892. Of the four offers between 1882 and 1889, that of Maynard and Cooke in 1885 was most seriously considered.⁵¹ Negotiations finally broke down on the issue of a lengthy thirty year monopoly of public lighting required by the company and the depressed state of Corporation finances.⁵² The introduction of gas into the city was really out of the question while Grahamstown applied its stringent retrenchment measures after 1886. Even the municipal lighting bill was reviewed when the council discontinued lighting half the lamps in the city from April 1886-April 1887.⁵³ The decision was unpopular; judging by the council insistence a few months later that all vehicles driven in the evening should have lighted lamps,⁵⁴ more than one accident had occurred in the gloomy streets. The maxim "penny wise, pound foolish" also applied to the town council's action in replacing the reliable lamplighter, Fellowes, with an incompetent man whose tender had been lower.⁵⁵ The move was unsuccessful and Fellowes was re-employed in April 1890,⁵⁶ after an absence of four months

⁵¹The offers were made by the following:
 Mr. S. George, 1882. (GTJ 21.12.82 TCM 20.12.82).
 Messrs. Maynard and Cooke, 1885. (GTJ 5.2.85).
 Mr. Woodall, 1888. (GTJ 26.1.88 TCM 25.1.88).
 Mr. H.J. Rogers, 1889. (GTJ 5.9.89 TCM 4.9.89).

⁵²GTJ 20.11.85 TCM 18.11.85, GTJ 24.11.85. The councillors were divided on this issue. Luke, Lowden and Richmond favoured the introduction of gas, while Stirk, Reynolds, A.E. Nelson, Atherstone, Templer, Ayliff, Roberts and Smith opposed it on grounds of the need for retrenchment.

⁵³FCMB 6.4.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3, GTJ 22.4.86 TCM 21.4.86,
 GTJ 24.3.87 TCM 23.3.87.

⁵⁴GTJ 5.8.86 TCM 4.8.86.

⁵⁵GPM 6.12.89 TCM 4.12.89, GPM 13.12.89 TCM 4 (sic).12.89. (The meeting was in fact held on 11.12.89).

⁵⁶GPM 3.4.90 TCM 1.4.90, GPM 18.4.90 TCM 16.4.90.

Opinion in favour of the introduction of gas lighting consolidated in the 1890's, when the poor performance of Grahamstown's street lights⁵⁷ forced the council to sanction an enquiry into the advisability of introducing gas into Grahamstown.⁵⁸ Consequently, the councillors were ready to accept the terms offered by the South African Lighting Association in 1892,⁵⁹ despite the fact that they were little different from those offered previously. The Association requested a thirty year monopoly of public lighting and sales of gas and tar, in return for erecting a gasplant. The cost of gas would initially be 15s per one thousand cubic feet, which would fall once the dividend payable by the company had reached 10%.⁶⁰ The additional council expenditure on gas would not exceed £200 annually - scarcely 1/8d in the £ in the town rate. A public meeting held in 1892 to discuss the matter, regarded the scheme as workable from all points of view, and requested some alterations to the agreement.⁶¹ In June 1892 the council was able unanimously to sanction the contract with the South African Lighting Association.⁶²

The buildings were erected behind the railway station and included the plant and a manager's private residence.⁶³ Grahamstown was illuminated

⁵⁷ GTJ 4.7.91 "Diogenes" to Editor, The Port Elizabeth Telegraph n.d. as taken up by GTJ 8.9.91.

⁵⁸ GTJ 3.9.91.

⁵⁹ FCMB 9.2.92 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

⁶⁰ GTJ 18.2.92, GPM 18.3.92.

⁶¹ GPM 21.3.92. An express stipulation as to the minimum quality of the gas to be supplied by the company, was required. So also was some guarantee of its illuminating power and approximate freedom from poisons.

⁶² GPM 10.6.92 TCM 8.6.92.

⁶³ GTJ 13.2.94, GPM 12.10.94.

with gas for the first time on 1 February 1895, after a ceremony at which Mayor J.S. Willcox was presented with a silver key by the South African Lighting Association. The city must have looked markedly different that night. The number of street lamps had been increased from eighty-six to one hundred, and supplemented by a powerful Siemen's burner presented by the Association and positioned opposite the Commemoration Church.⁶⁴ The town councillors enjoyed their first gas-lit banquet in the city hall after the ceremony.⁶⁵ In February 1895, gas was offered to consumers at 13s 9d per one thousand cubic feet, 1s 3d lower than expected.⁶⁶ By the end of 1895, the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George, the public library and a number of businesses and private homes had introduced gas. By May 1896, gas stoves were in use.⁶⁷

Some disappointment was expressed in the quality of gas lighting. In November 1896, the street lamps were reported to be in bad order. One citizen attributed the continued domestic use of gas to the popularity of the incandescent burner.⁶⁸ At least one business - Brook and Pote's "Roller Flour Mills" - began to instal electrical equipment at about this time.⁶⁹ Two offers in 1897 and 1903 to extend electricity throughout the municipality, had to be refused in view of the thirty year monopoly granted the South African Lighting Association.⁷⁰ Despite

⁶⁴ GTJ 2.2.95, GPM 30.1.95.

⁶⁵ GTJ 2.2.95.

⁶⁶ GPM 4.2.95.

⁶⁷ GPM 4.2.95, 2.8.95, 22.5.96.

⁶⁸ GPM 9.11.96 "Ratepayer" to Editor.

⁶⁹ GPM 21.7.97.

⁷⁰ The offers were made by E. Stuart Menteath in 1897.(CMB 1.12.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/13) and the Pioneer Gas and Electric Light and Power Company of South Africa in 1903.(CMB 4.3.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/14).

the complaints about gas lighting, it was a considerable improvement on the unsatisfactory paraffin system operative before. Rapid advances in electrical engineering made it possible for Grahamstown to be electrified in 1921. Both gas and electrical power were products of key developments in technology, and radically affected the life styles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Unfortunately, the council's progressive policies in the 1890's did not immediately include provision for adequate fire-fighting equipment. The local engine and brigade were maintained until 1885 by the Fire and Marine Assurance Company. The firm undertook this responsibility to protect its own clients, but found its obligations increased by the fact that it was morally difficult to refuse assistance in cases of fire where the Marine Company was not the insurer.⁷¹ The depression of the 1880's severely affected the Marine Assurance Company, which was liquidated in March 1885,⁷² and succeeded by the Commercial Union Fire Insurance Company. The latter was less willing to accept responsibility for extinguishing all local fires. Several requests to the town council for relief were rejected,⁷³ and when the company abdicated all responsibility for the engine and brigade in February 1892,⁷⁴ Grahamstown was left without any official fire-fighting facilities. Even in these circumstances, conservative councillors rejected motions in

⁷¹ GTJ 29.9.91.

⁷² GTJ 26.3.85.

⁷³ WLCMB 3.8.85 CA, 3/AY 1/2/2/1/6; FCMB 24.2.86 ,25.3.86 ,27.10.91, 10.11.91 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3 and 4; GPM 25.9.91 TCM 23.9.91, GTJ 29.9.91, 14.11.91 TCM 13.11.91.

⁷⁴ FCMB 2.2.92 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

favour of the purchase of the Union Company's equipment.⁷⁵

Moral pressure was applied from a number of sources with some success.

The Cape Times reacted to these developments with a stinging rebuke:

A city having no organised protection against fire is surely only a hamlet in disguise.⁷⁶

The abhorrence of both local newspapers was shared by the Mayor, J.S. Willcox.⁷⁷ In June 1892, the council decided to hire the Union Company's fire plant.⁷⁸ The matter of full responsibility for fire protection was left in abeyance, however, until two developments precipitated the council's final commitment to a municipal fire-fighting plant. First, the Under-Colonial Secretary's expression of concern at Grahamstown's vulnerability⁷⁹ implied the possibility of government intervention in the matter. The second was the complete destruction by fire of McLaren's Flour Mill in Cawood Street.⁸⁰ The council must have been aware of its moral culpability in the loss. Debates over whether to buy the old and cheap equipment from the Union Company, or new apparatus from England, were hastily settled in favour of the latter.⁸¹ The new £312 engine arrived in June 1893; it was named the

⁷⁵ GTJ 7.4.92 TCM 6.4.92. The motion was rejected by a majority of nine to seven votes, despite J.G. Wood's warning that a conference of Insurance Societies had decided to raise Grahamstown premiums by 50% unless fire fighting apparatus were provided.

⁷⁶ The Cape Times n.d. as taken up by GTJ 26.11.91.

⁷⁷ GTJ 9.4.92, GPM 11.4.92, 14.4.92.

⁷⁸ GTJ 18.6.92 TCM 15.6.92.

⁷⁹ GTJ 6.10.92 TCM 5.10.92.

⁸⁰ GPM 18.11.92.

⁸¹ GTJ 22.12.92 TCM 21.12.92.

"Willcox" in honour of the man who had done most to secure its purchase.⁸²

Grahamstown's position with regard to fire prevention was further improved when the 1894 Grahamstown Municipal Act extended the authority of the superintendent of the brigade.⁸³ He was authorised to assume complete control over burning buildings and those at risk, even to the extent of ordering their destruction to protect life and property.⁸⁴

These discretionary powers reverted to a capable local plumber, Thomas Clarke,⁸⁵ who had superintended the fire brigade for over a decade. Clarke was held in high regard, and great alarm was expressed when he resigned in 1903 in response to personal dissatisfaction over council arrangements for the fire-fighting establishment.⁸⁶ If his aim in so doing was to precipitate reform, he was most successful.

Clarke's first major complaint concerned the unsatisfactory location of the fire engine and apparatus. In 1893, the new equipment had been housed in a shed near the Eastern Province Guardian and Loan Investment Company, but moved to a more central site on the south side of the Drostdy Gateway in 1895.⁸⁷ This location was unsatisfactory. On one occasion, the engine and brigade took twenty minutes to arrive at the scene of a fire in Bathurst Street.⁸⁸ At Clarke's insistence in 1904,

⁸²GTJ 22.12.92 TCM 21.12.92, GTJ 24.6.93 TCM 21.6.93, GTJ 5.9.95
TCM 4.5.95.

⁸³Act 14, 1894.

⁸⁴GPM 8.8.94.

⁸⁵Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, 1901, pg 257.

⁸⁶CMB 23.12.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁸⁷GTJ 8.7.93 TCM 5.7.93, GTJ 14.11.95 TCM 13.11.95.

⁸⁸GPM 4.12.96.

the Finance Committee accepted his plans for the construction of a shed on Church Square.⁸⁹ The inadequate fire alarm system exacerbated the problem of delay attendant upon many Grahamstown fires. Clarke's reputation for efficiency and organisation was threatened by this. In 1903 he pressed for a more extensive system after another fire in Bathurst Street had been attended by himself and only one fireman.⁹⁰ The council agreed to pay policemen 2s 6d to rouse the firemen on their beat in an emergency,⁹¹ and the firebell was transferred from the Drostdy Gate to the town hall tower.⁹² In a drive for greater efficiency in 1904, the town council dismissed the six members serving in the brigade - some of whom were inefficient - and invited applications for the vacancies created. Renumeration for the first two hours of attendance at fires was raised from 2s to 3s, to attract interest from a wider range of people. New uniforms were ordered to improve the image of the brigade.⁹³

By 1904, one major problem had defied solution; water pressure was insufficient to obtain a satisfactorily strong jet. Choked mains⁹⁴ and the chronic water shortage were largely responsible for this. The problem persisted even after the construction of the Slaai Kraal dam and a mains replacement programme.⁹⁵ In May 1904, Clarke attributed a forty-five minute delay in the commencement of operations at a fire, to the lack of suitable pressure. The cause in that instance was the

⁸⁹FCMB 6.4.04 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/6.

⁹⁰CMB 1.4.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹¹CMB 8.4.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹²FCMB 16.2.04 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/6.

⁹³CMB 6.4.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹⁴GPM 4.12.96.

⁹⁵See below, ch. 5, pg 137.

distance the water had to travel to the outlet point.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the improvement had been sufficient to retain Clarke's services.⁹⁷ There was certainly room for further reform, but great progress had been made over the previous decade.

The shortage of Corporation finance also affected the council road-maintenance policy. Local drivers of wagons and carts welcomed the covering of strategically sited culverts and drains between 1883 and 1904, because it spared axles and wheels from damage. Despite this very practical advantage, the undertaking was conducted in an unsatisfactorily piecemeal fashion, so that its overall effect was limited. On the other hand, Grahamstown's pleasure drive which was frequented voluntarily, was extended and maintained at the expense of busier streets. In 1891, the cheap convict labour available to the municipality was devoted entirely to work on Mountain Drive, a policy which quadrupled the cost of labour on city streets⁹⁸ and caused considerable local dissatisfaction. The work continued, however, supported by a group of citizens who suggested the imposition of an annual maintenance charge to finance the Mountain Drive project.⁹⁹ The charge was never levied; it would doubtless have evoked extensive opposition from working class groups.

If dissatisfaction at the state of the city streets prevailed until 1904, the same was not true of the footpaths. Grahamstown's pedestrian

⁹⁶CMB 11.5.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹⁷CMB 1.6.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁹⁸GPM 2.11.91 S. Crispin to Editor. Crispin estimated that whereas £25 might be spent on convict labour, £100 would be required if free labour were used.

⁹⁹GTJ 17.7.90 TCM 16.7.90.

population was large, and the sharp gravel used on the sidewalks drew numerous complaints.¹⁰⁰ However, the issue was neglected until the 1890's for two reasons. The first related to the considerable cost of paving the city's fifty-two miles of footpaths. If estimated at an average of 6s per yard, the cost totalled £53 000.¹⁰¹ The second concerned council indecision about the replacement for gravel. Stone-flags or bricks were favoured,¹⁰² but abandoned on grounds of expense and the difficulty of procuring essential materials. The remaining alternatives were considered viable; cement concrete slabs and tar paving. The latter was popular in Port Elizabeth, but was viewed with some reserve in Grahamstown. Probably many shared Dr. W.G. Atherstone's view that the tar would melt and stick to the heel on hot days.¹⁰³ Consequently, in August 1892 the council selected concrete paving for the footpath by-passing the town hall,¹⁰⁴ despite the fact that it was more expensive than tar. Further commissions were received, and although work was initially obstructed by an inefficient and incompetent contractor,¹⁰⁵ it proceeded apace after the services of the capable W. Young were engaged in August 1895.¹⁰⁶

After 1900, economic considerations led to the replacement of commissions for concrete, by tar paving.¹⁰⁷ The difference in costs was

¹⁰⁰For example, GTJ 28.6.88 TCM 27.6.88.

¹⁰¹GPM 25.7.90 TCM 23.7.90.

¹⁰²GTJ 12.4.88 TCM 4.3.88 (sic), (The meeting was in fact held on 11.4.88), GTJ 10.8.93 TCM 9.8.93.

¹⁰³GTJ 6.11.84 TCM 5.11.84.

¹⁰⁴GTJ 18.8.92 TCM 17.8.92, GTJ 22.9.92 TCM 21.9.92.

¹⁰⁵GTJ 22.2.94 TCM 21.2.94, GTJ 13.9.94 TCM 12.9.94, GTJ 4.10.94
TCM 3.10.94.

¹⁰⁶GTJ 22.8.95 TCM 21.8.95, GTJ 1.8.95 TCM 31.7.95, GTJ 22.8.95
TCM 21.8.95.

¹⁰⁷CMB 29.8.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

considerable. In 1892, a 9s 9d per yard tender for the concrete sidewalk outside the town hall had been accepted without argument.¹⁰⁸ In 1900, a 3s 2d per yard offer for tar paving was rejected as unreasonably high.¹⁰⁹ The changeover was vindicated in 1902 by the discovery that some of the cement used for paving was defective. Most of the paving in Bathurst street had to be taken up and replaced by tar,¹¹⁰ which was being used extensively by 1904. The only negative feature of the improvement scheme was the rivalry for attention that it provoked among the wards. In 1903, Daniel Knight encouraged the southern part of the city to drop its claims for paving until the northern section had received more attention.¹¹¹ The success of the tar project gave rise to more effective departmental organisation when the Board of Works was ordered to report comprehensively on Grahamstown's paving requirements.¹¹² The extent of the change wrought was conveyed in a newspaper article which described the city sidewalks as, "smooth, even and elastic to the tread," and asserted that although "... Port Elizabeth prides herself upon the extent and quality of her pavements, ... , we think that (with regard to the latter) Grahamstown can honestly claim the 'cake'."¹¹³

Of broader significance simply than that of an unsatisfactory surface,

¹⁰⁸ GTJ 22.9.92 TCM 21.9.92.

¹⁰⁹ CMB 12.9.00, 19.9.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹¹⁰ CMB 16.7.02, 16.12.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹¹ GTJ 25.8.03 D. Knight to Editor.

¹¹² CMB 3.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹³ George Marshall's Journal (no page number) CL, MS 14, 589. The newspaper cutting is unnamed and undated. It probably dates back to the early years of the twentieth century, and is unlikely to have been taken from a local newspaper.

was the problem of the poor condition of the five approaches to Grahamstown.¹¹⁴ The maintenance of these roads was the responsibility of the Albany Divisional Council, which levied a rate on immovable property within the Grahamstown municipality.¹¹⁵ Despite the fact that Grahamstonians had a substantial 50%¹¹⁶ of Divisional Council representation in return for paying only 33% of the total divisional rate,¹¹⁷ the citizens deeply resented their liability to these rates. Much of the rate was intended for the maintenance of main roads. There were several reasons why Albany's main roads deteriorated. Grahamstown's declining commercial activity reduced the pressure to provide good roads. Furthermore, by 1890 Grahamstown lacked Divisional Council representatives with the dedication of the Honourable George Wood and Samuel Cawood. These men had ensured that Grahamstown's approaches were among the best in the Eastern Cape.¹¹⁸ In contrast, in 1890 John Webb, one of Grahamstown's divisional representatives, maintained that the municipal council had gone beyond the bounds of duty in pointing out specific examples of main road disrepair.¹¹⁹ The Grahamstown local authority was not discouraged by the negative reception of this particular complaint to the Divisional Council. The municipal foreman reported periodically

¹¹⁴GTJ 3.7.90 TCM 2.7.90. The Howieson's Poort, Cradock, King William's Town, Peddie and Kowie roads.

¹¹⁵See above ch. 2, pg 46, footnote 88.

¹¹⁶The Civil Commissioner sat as Chairman in an unofficial capacity.

¹¹⁷GPM 9.3.88, GPM 20.3.91 TCM 18.3.91. In view of this, the Finance Committee in 1891 advised the council against supporting a petition put out by the Graaff-Reinet municipality, to secure immunity from Divisional Council rates. The town council decided to support this petition nonetheless.

¹¹⁸GTJ 3.6.93 "City Progress" to Editor.

¹¹⁹GPM 7.5.90 Albany Divisional Council Minutes 6.5.90.

on the condition of the approaches to the city. These reports provoked Divisional Council hostility when they threatened to override its own.¹²⁰ Doubts were cast on the integrity of the Divisional Council when J.H. Webber, who had repaired the Kowie West Road, claimed that he had not been paid for the undertaking.¹²¹ However, a breakdown of relations between the councils was averted by a suggestion in favour of joint inspection of the approaches.¹²² The unease continued, although not with such intensity. It again broke into conflict in 1901, when the Divisional Council tried to ensure that the portions of the main roads passing through municipalities, should be declared divisional roads. This would have made the rural authority liable to maintain a road width of fifteen feet only. However, municipal opposition to this move forced a written guarantee from the divisional body, that the full municipal road-width would be maintained.¹²³ By 1904, Grahamstown's relations with the Albany Divisional Council had been restored to an equilibrium, and the main roads to a condition acceptable to the town council.

Although in Grahamstown tarred footpaths proved most successful, the state of the city streets remained fundamentally unsatisfactory. Between 1901 and 1903, a steam traction engine, stone crusher and trucks were purchased to facilitate road maintenance, but the council would not employ an experienced road repair worker to assist the municipal foreman.¹²⁴ As such, its street maintenance programme remained piecemeal.

¹²⁰ GTJ 28.8.90 TCM 27.8.90.

¹²¹ GPM 12.5.90 J.H. Webber to Editor.

¹²² GTJ 28.8.90 TCM 27.8.90.

¹²³ CMB 17.7.01, 21.8.01, 4.9.01, 9.10.01, 16.10.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹²⁴ CMB 9.10.01, 23.10.01, 30.10.01, 6.11.01, 26.2.02, 21.1.03, 28.1.03. CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

The construction of the town hall was intended to enhance the cultural life of Grahamstown. The building would be maintained out of proceeds derived from various kinds of cultural activities. A most reliable, but small source of income was provided by the hire of rooms to the public library, Albany Museum, and for weekly feather sales and Chamber of Commerce meetings. Entertainment charges varied according to the type and length of the programme, but were fixed in 1895 at a minimum of £3.15. 0 per night.¹²⁵ This drove small local groups to other venues.¹²⁶ The town hall was left relatively unpatronised until it reduced its charges to between £2. 5. 0 and £4 per night.¹²⁷ The tariff revisions of 1895 and 1897 were consequent upon the introduction of gas lighting and related to the amount of gas used during the evening.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ GTJ 19.6.85 TCM 17.6.85.

Type of Programme	Charge if ending before midnight	Charge if ending after midnight
	£	£
Local entertainment	3.15. 0	-
Balls	-	15.14. 0
Professional entertainment	5. 5. 0	7.10. 0

¹²⁶ GTJ 1.4.90 "Mercantile" to Editor.

¹²⁷ GTJ 19.11.91 TCM 18.11.91. The difference depended on whether the entertainment ended before or after midnight.

¹²⁸ GTJ 28.2.95 TCM 28 (sic).2.95, (The meeting was actually held on 27.2.95), CMB 24.3.91 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. The charges finally agreed upon were as follows:

Basic charge if ending before midnight	Basic charge if ending after midnight	Charge for gas consumed
£	£	
3.10. 0	4.15. 0	13s 9d/1000 ft + 25%

Structural problems became manifest in 1886, when the floor of the library began to sink.¹²⁹ On investigation it became evident that the construction of dwarf walls to support the floors had obstructed air circulation and caused joists and sleepers to rot. The Foreman of Works recommended the easy solution of cutting holes in the dwarf walls. This would cost only £12,¹³⁰ but the work was delayed because the Finance Committee insisted that the Library Committee was responsible for these rooms. As the latter refused to finance alterations of a structural nature,¹³¹ the matter was left in abeyance for thirteen years, until joists throughout the building and wooden pillars supporting the stage began to rot.¹³² When reports were received subsequently that the roof too might be damaged during heavy rain, the council did not delay an investigation into the cause of the problem.¹³³

All attempts made to correct the acoustic defects in the town hall failed, because the council was not prepared to undertake extensive structural alterations. Measures such as "... the judicious arrangement of flags or a few other draperies ...,"¹³⁴ the construction of an entrance porch, suspension of wires across the hall and laying of coir matting,¹³⁵ had no effect on acoustic properties, but merit mention for ingenuity alone. This problem, when coupled with a shortage of

¹²⁹FCMB 21.9.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

¹³⁰FCMB 23.11.86, 2.4.89 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

¹³¹FCMB 21.9.86, 23.11.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/3.

¹³²GTJ 25.7.89 TCM 24.7.89.

¹³³GPM 8.12.93 TCM 6.12.93.

¹³⁴GPM 27.6.90 TCM 25.6.90.

¹³⁵GTJ 10 (sic) .9.91 TCM 10.9.91, (The newspaper was actually issued on 11.9.91), GTJ 26.5.92, TCM 25.5.92; GPM 14.8.96 TCM 12.8.96, GPM 26.8.96.

municipal finance and the construction of a 800-900 pipe organ in the Cathedral, encouraged the council to shelve plans to spend £2000 on an organ for the town hall.¹³⁶ Structurally, the town hall remains less successful than might have been hoped; the acoustics are still poor.

Grahamstown's record of public works projects between 1883 and 1904 was surprisingly full, given the unsatisfactory state of the finances at her disposal. Council debates on public works projects became the battleground of progressive and conservative councillors in which the former struggled to convey to the latter a sense of the local authority's accountability for public welfare. The question of local responsibility crystallised clearly in the Grahamstown council in its battle to convince the Albany Divisional Council of the need to maintain the main roads leading into the city. Sidewalk construction, tar paving and the town hall, all symbols of the quality of municipal life, received some attention, even if sporadic. But the issues which really tested the mettle of the council were those of the water supply, gas lighting and municipal fire engine. Ultimately, the quiet dedication of men like J.S. Willcox was of key importance in ensuring that these matters received attention. Grahamstown's development was closely linked to the work of those who were prepared to challenge formidable odds to secure municipal progress.

¹³⁶GTJ 23.1.90 TCM 22.1.90, GPM 26.2.90.

CHAPTER FIVE
SANITATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

CHAPTER FIVESANITATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The Cape Colony reaped the benefits of the experience of English industrial cities in its campaign against filth and disease. Edwin Chadwick¹ had initiated a major battle against illness and inadequate sanitation provisions in nineteenth century Britain. The Chadwick Report of 1842 had broad application: it urged the need for national action, centralised control of public health, and drew attention to the connection between slum conditions and disease.² This was subsequently emphasised by statistical studies which compared mortality rates in healthy and unhealthy areas.³ The tardy development of English medical skills was responsible for the delay in legislation governing the management of nineteenth century public health.⁴ Lessons were often learnt in the wake of errors; Lewis Mumford maintains that, "... for the urbanist, the chief lesson was in what to avoid."⁵ The major advance early in Queen Victoria's reign was the replacement of amateur health officials by fully-trained practitioners. In 1847, Liverpool

¹DNB Supplement Vol.I, pp 407-408. Chadwick was Secretary to the Poor Law Commissioner 1834-1846, and appointed commissioner to inquire into the health of the British working class.

²M.W. Flinn (Editor), Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain by Edwin Chadwick 1842.

³Flinn, The Chadwick Report, pp 26-27. The pioneer in this field was William Farr, who was born in Shropshire in 1807, trained as a doctor in Paris and London, went into practice in London in 1833, and showed an early interest in matters of public health.

⁴A. Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 21.

⁵Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 17 (Mumford quoted with no reference).

was the first English city to appoint a qualified Medical Officer of Health. London followed suit a year later. In 1869, the Royal Sanitary Commission stressed the need for good, pure drinking water, effective sewerage disposal, legislation imposing disease-prevention measures and the registration of disease and death.⁶ The sheer magnitude of the problem in industrial cities overwhelmed officials. The 1875 British Public Health Act codified forty-three statutes and placed control of public health in the hands of specific authorities. Town councils and Boards of Guardians became responsible respectively for urban and rural sanitation, and were in turn controlled by a central government department.⁷

At the Cape, the years from 1883 to 1904 witnessed a significant extension of colonial public health legislation and services. Fortunately, the Cape government did not share the British problem of having to placate a labyrinth of statutes and local authorities. The 1883 Public Health Act dealt fairly fully with the powers of the Governor and the local councils in preventing the spread of contagious diseases.⁸ Thereafter, no significant developments occurred in public health legislation,⁹ until general concern at the state of colonial health was awakened by disturbing mortality statistics released in 1897. These indicated that a substantial proportion of deaths in the Cape Colony

⁶H.J. Laski, W.I. Jennings and W.A. Robson (Editors), A Century of Municipal Progress: The Last Hundred Years, pp 164-165.

⁷J. Redlich and F.W. Hirst, The History of Local Government in England, pp 159-160.

⁸Act 4, 1883.

⁹Act 41 of 1885 provided for parliament to bear half the expense of preventing the spread of contagious diseases, with the local authority. (Clause 2).

related to inadequate sanitation and health procedures.¹⁰ The 1897 Public Health Amendment Act was designed to bring colonial health standards to a more acceptable level.

The Act defined more clearly the colonial approach to health matters, indicated problem areas and allocated powers and responsibilities. Provision was made for a Board of Health and the appointment of a colonial Medical Officer of Health.¹¹ The Governor was empowered to enforce the Act at a cost to the municipality of one quarter of its annual revenue.¹² Town councils acquired an impressive range of duties: regular inspections of dairies, bakeries and abattoirs, refuse removals, and the provision of a separate sanitary removal service for typhoid and cholera cases.¹³ Most of the new duties would be performed by a local Medical Officer of Health.¹⁴ The initiative to act was left with the municipalities, but their financial, organisational and moral obligations were substantially extended.

Grahamstown shared a number of sanitation problems in common with other colonial towns. Overcrowding, especially in those areas occupied by Blacks, the inadequate programme of refuse, nightsoil and slop removals, defective gutters and drains, and the cesspool system, were all hazardous to public health. Other difficulties were peculiar to Grahamstown's

¹⁰GTJ 2.10.96. Registration of births and deaths became compulsory in the Cape Colony in 1895.(Act 7, 1894, Clause 1).

¹¹Act 23, 1897, Clauses 3, 6.

¹²Act 23, 1897, Clauses 7-8. The sum spent was limited to £100 annually.

¹³Act 23, 1897, Clauses 9, 20, 26.

¹⁴Act 23, 1897, Clause 4.

geographical position. The chronic water shortage obstructed the adoption of improved sanitation techniques, and conservative councillors rejected these when mooted, because of the financial implications. Progressive councillors like J.S. Willcox were seldom able to coerce the council into taking responsible action. However, the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act forced the issue, and changes had to be made in spite of some councillors' reluctance, and a good deal of local opposition. The resistance to reform was motivated by a fear of increased town rates, and was openly expressed at public meetings. By 1904, the reforms accomplished included the appointment of a Medical Officer of Health in April, 1898,¹⁵ to monitor local standards of sanitation. The cesspool system was abolished in 1901,¹⁶ but only after a struggle lasting more than a decade. River beds were a little cleaner, and water pipes were being replaced. Despite a controversy over the quality of Slaai Kraal water, it was a distinct improvement on that previously obtainable. Nevertheless, the council continued to avoid reform from time to time, especially with regard to the local abattoirs.

The concept of public health extends beyond simply the sanitation issue, to include physical and mental well-being. Grahamstown prided herself on the quality of her medical institutions. Local practitioners and nurses co-operated fully in measures aimed at disease prevention. The progressive approach to hospital management was illustrated by the additions to the Albany General Hospital in 1889 and 1902, of a new wing and fever wards.¹⁷ Medical services to the Black population were

¹⁵ CMB 15.12.97, 19.1.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. Dr. J. Bays was the first local Medical Officer of Health, appointed at an annual salary of £250.

¹⁶ CMB 30.10.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹⁷ GTJ 23.2.89, 23.3.89, 6.9.02.

aimed principally at the control of syphilis and other infectious diseases. The reputation of the Fort England Lunatic Asylum as a place of refuge and restoration for mental patients, grew between 1883 and 1904. Despite disturbing reports of unhygienic conditions and immorality after the death of Superintendent R. Hullah in 1890,¹⁸ the hospital was renowned for favouring therapy above restriction. Hullah's successor, Dr. T.D. Greenlees, extended the well-considered methods of treatment. The Institute for Imbecile Children added a welcome branch to facilities already offered, when it was founded with young inmates of the Chronic Sick Hospital in 1895.¹⁹

For all the traditional local comment on Grahamstown's beneficial and healthy environment, there were areas of concern for local authorities. In 1887, diphtheria, typhoid and scarlatina were prevalent in the city.²⁰ A number of councillors perceived the connection between filth and disease only tentatively. Few were willing to pay a high price for an effective sanitation removal system. Quality of life is greatly dependent on hygiene and the absence of disease. In Grahamstown, the eclipse of the amateur health official, the streetkeeper, by the professional - the Medical Officer of Health - indicates a growing awareness of this relationship. The threat of epidemic disease played a part in precipitating this, although Grahamstown escaped the ravages experienced by many other colonial towns. Of the smallpox epidemics of 1882, 1893, 1898 and 1900, only that of 1893 affected the city to

¹⁸GTJ 22.7.90.

¹⁹GPM 19.6.96.

²⁰GTJ 13.8.87 "City Saint" to Editor.

any significant extent. This epidemic was initiated by an outbreak of smallpox among the passengers on H.M.S. Scot, a ship carrying, ironically, a consignment of lymph vaccine to Swaziland. H.M.S. Scot visited all the major ports from Table Bay to Durban before the symptoms of the "skin disease" on board were correctly diagnosed. Quarantine measures at the harbours had not been strictly enforced,²¹ and this enabled the disease to sweep through the colony, reaching Grahamstown in 1894. Fortunately, the smallpox took a mild form, and although it had a fairly protracted course in Grahamstown, it was not difficult to control.

Between 1901 and 1904, Grahamstown was entirely unaffected by the plague epidemic that reached South Africa during the Anglo-Boer war. This disease was part of the third great plague pandemic, which had originated in Southern China in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The plague bacillus was brought to the Cape with horse forage imported from Argentina, India and Australia, and ravaged Cape Town after the first human case of the illness was reported there in February 1901. The epidemic reached Port Elizabeth in April 1901.²² However, Grahamstown was fortunate to escape the plague, because of the prevention measures, the small size of the town and the ease with which the means of access could be controlled.

²¹GPM 18.1.93, 25.1.93, The Port Elizabeth Telegraph n.d. as taken up by GTJ 21.1.93.

²²M.W. Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1901." JAH, Vol.18, No. 3, 1977, pp 391-392; GTJ 18.4.01.

The cesspit system of excrement disposal was a major health hazard. There are no Grahamstown legends to equal that of an English carriage which sank ignominiously into a forgotten cesspit outside a country mansion,²³ but the problems experienced were no less great. Leaking cesspits threatened to contaminate drinking water from wells and underground tanks on which a number of citizens relied. Expense, organisational problems and local opposition to change delayed the abolition of cesspools and the implementation of a new sanitation system in Grahamstown. The inhabitants divided into opposing factions on the issue, led by prominent local personalities. Progressives included J.S. Willcox, Dr. W.G. Atherstone, H.R. Wood, D. Knight, A.E. Nelson and F.H. Hallen. Conservatives included R.W. Nelson, J.H. Webber, R.J. Cogan and D. Sampson in their number. The sanitation issue engendered great emotion and bitterness, which was expressed in public meetings and angry letters to the town council and newspapers.

Attempts to secure a better sanitation programme were unsuccessful at first. In 1883, a dry-earth tub scheme was rejected, because it would have required a $\frac{1}{2}$ d increase in the town rate to meet costs.²⁴ Local medical opinion was by no means uniformly desirous of the abolition of all cesspools. For this reason, the council had ultimately to abandon an attempt to close as hazardous to public health, those in the area bounded by High, Hill, Bathurst and Beaufort Streets.²⁵ Greater success

²³ L. Wright, Clean and Decent: The Fascinating History of the Bathroom and Water Closet, pg 148.

²⁴ GTJ 7.9.83 TCM 5.9.83, GTJ 27.9.83 TCM 26.9.83.

²⁵ GTJ 16.8.88 TCM 15.8.88, GTJ 5.9.89 TCM 4.9.89, GTJ 26.9.89 TCM 25.9.89, MCMB 10.8.92 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/5.

was achieved after 1894, once the powers of the town council had been extended to include the summary closure of unhealthy cesspits.²⁶ Real change was slow in coming, however, because in the 1890's, the indecision on sanitation standards was exacerbated by local disagreements on the replacement programme for cesspools. The disorder made reform imperative. The disposal of refuse and noxious matter was left to the householder. Urine was generally thrown into the river-bed or gutters, as there was at that stage no provision for slop removal.²⁷ Complaints brought little change.

The 1897 Public Health Amendment Act provoked some consideration of a revised sanitation programme. The long-term local plan was for the abolition of cesspools, their replacement by a tub sanitation system, and the provision of regular refuse and excrement removals. The alterations would be gradually imposed. In 1898, an eight-man committee which included the progressive D. Knight and A.E. Nelson, and the conservative R.J. Cogan, J.H. Webber and D. Sampson,²⁸ framed a bi-weekly slop removal system. The scheme would be costly. The initial outlay was estimated at £1575, and the probable annual working costs of £3143 would only just be covered by the estimated annual return of £3142. The uniform annual charge of £2 proposed for this programme, provoked the opposition of the local artisan class,²⁹ and was ultimately responsible for the abandonment of the project.³⁰ Existing arrangements

²⁶ GTJ 15.12.94 TCM 12.12.94. A fine of £1 - £5 would be levied for non-compliance with closure orders.

²⁷ GTJ 11.7.95 J. Jolly to Editor.

²⁸ CMB 3.8.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. The other members were councillors J. Stanton, J. Trower and H.F. Oliver.

²⁹ GTJ 15.9.98 TCM 14.9.98, GTJ 20.9.98.

³⁰ CMB 21.9.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

remained unsatisfactory and in some cases, deteriorated. In 1900, a property in Weakley's Row was found to have a leaky sheep-dip drum as a sanitary pail.³¹ When one woman substituted dry-earth tubs for her cesspool, she found service by licensed nightmen denied her, because of the disrepair of the street in which she lived.³² Even the Resident Magistrate was confused as to whether or not a slop removal service had become available by the turn of the century.³³

Threat succeeded where persuasion failed. Epidemics of smallpox and plague during the Anglo-Boer war provoked disease prevention programmes which involved careful enforcement of sanitation regulations. In Grahamstown, a special sanitation inspector was appointed in 1901 to work under the Medical Officer of Health.³⁴ Strict sanitary regulations empowered the inspector to enter any property to ascertain contraventions of public health requirements. The council was authorised to remove accumulations of filth from properties at the expense of the occupiers.³⁵ The high annual mortality rate in Grahamstown's locations - 8,2% of the inhabitants - caused concern about the city's vulnerability to epidemic disease. Local alarm grew with reports that the Port Elizabeth municipality had received official warning of the

³¹ MOHRB 7.5.00 CA, 3/AY 5/2/1/1.

³² CMB 15.5.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

³³ CMB 10.10.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. The Magistrate's confusion became apparent in a court case in which he had declined to punish a man for disposing of slop-water in the river bed, on grounds that the council had not made provision for slop disposal. The council informed him that provision had been made, and duly advertised.

³⁴ CMB 3.4.01, 10.4.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13 and 14. The council tried subsequently to ensure that the sanitary inspector should be a qualified man (CMB 29.1.02, 21.1.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

³⁵ CMB 27.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

likelihood of a high mortality rate if the introduction of an efficient sanitary service were neglected. Port Elizabeth responded with the implementation of a weekly sanitation removal programme.³⁶ In Grahamstown, the cesspool system was finally abolished in October 1901,³⁷ and a project for municipally controlled excrement and refuse removals was placed before the town council in 1902. The scheme was comprehensive, but expensive. The initial outlay and annual maintenance costs were estimated at £3052 and £3736 respectively. Revenue could be derived in one of three ways; from an annual uniform sanitary rate of 1¹/₂d in the £, or from graduated scales of charges based either on the number of removals required weekly,³⁸ or on the assessed value of properties.³⁹

Most councillors and citizens grasped that a new sanitation system was imperative. Earlier, opposition to a more expensive scheme had been

³⁶DDNS, pp 30-31. Cutting from an unnamed newspaper, probably The Journal, dated 30.3.01 CL, PR 1741.

³⁷CMB 30.10.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

³⁸GTJ 15.5.02 TCM 14.5.02.

Number of Removals Weekly	Charge/quarter
1	9
2	15
3	21

³⁹GTJ 15.5.02 TCM 14.5.02.

Value of Property	Charge/annum
Up to £ 200	1.17. 6
201-500	2. 5. 0
501-800	3. 0. 0
801-1000	3.15. 0
Over 1000	4.10. 0

evident mainly among working class citizens, who feared the imposition of heavy charges.⁴⁰ More broad-based reluctance to accept change was expressed after the publication of the proposals. H.R. Wood altered his stance when he became spokesman for a group with middle class support, which disagreed with the council on minor points of the execution of the programme.⁴¹ Suggestions were made for other schemes, while the council vacillated between whether to initiate the new programme on a departmental or contractual basis.⁴² The latter system was finally selected, tenders advertised, and the monopoly of sanitation removals granted for a three to five year period from 1 January 1903, to the sole applicant, H. Rugg of Johannesburg.⁴³

The enthusiasm that greeted the implementation of the scheme was soon scotched by Rugg's inefficiency. He arrived late in Grahamstown with neither plant nor workmen. His unreliability was such that some citizens had to resort to burying nightsoil in their gardens. Within two weeks, a large public meeting had demanded the withdrawal of Rugg's monopoly.⁴⁴ The council duly granted licenses to other nightmen.⁴⁵ Rugg did not meekly accept this abandonment of the contract. When an air of wronged innocence failed to provoke council remorse,⁴⁶ he

⁴⁰ See above, pg 127.

⁴¹ DDNS, pg 32. Cutting from GPM 18.6.02 CL, PR 1741. The main point of contention at this meeting seems to have been whether the work should be carried out departmentally or by contract.

⁴² CMB 6.8.02, 8.10.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14, GTJ 27.11.02, 17.1.03.

⁴³ CMB 8.10.02, 19.11.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14, GTJ 17.1.03.

⁴⁴ GTJ 17.1.03.

⁴⁵ CMB 16.1.03, 28.1.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴⁶ MCMB 20.1.03 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/10, CMB 21.1.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14. Rugg claimed that members of the Grahamstown community had thwarted him in the execution of his duties.

resorted to litigation.⁴⁷ His vociferous attempts at revenge ultimately came to nothing. In April 1903 the council considered, but rejected, an offer to Rugg of £5 in full settlement of his claims.⁴⁸ Rugg himself subsequently set these claims at £5000,⁴⁹ but then disappeared for a year. Rumours circulated that he had withdrawn the charges, and that his Cape Town attorneys were unable to trace him.⁵⁰ However, Rugg reappeared late in 1904, and a Supreme Court subpoena was served on the town council.⁵¹ The matter ended rather abruptly; the absence of newspaper and town council comment thereafter implies either that the charges were dropped, or that the case was dismissed.

The contract system of regular removals operated more successfully after the withdrawal of Rugg's monopoly. The town council effected further health reform. Business offices outside the location were required to provide conveniences which were serviced fortnightly.⁵² A municipal slopwater cart was acquired.⁵³ New regulations for ordure closets stipulated that they should have removable pails, impermeable floors, preferably of cement, and a weekly disposal service.⁵⁴ In 1904, Grahamstown was divided into four districts to facilitate sanitary

⁴⁷ CMB 28.1.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴⁸ GTJ 4.4.03 TCM 1.4.03.

⁴⁹ CMB 19.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵⁰ CMB 9.3.04, 23.3.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵¹ CMB 19.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵² CMB 11.2.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵³ CMB 29.4.03, 28.10.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵⁴ CMB 14.10.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

removals. Nightmen could operate only within the limits specified on their licenses. The system of payment was altered from a set fee paid quarterly, to a charge of 6d per pail, which sum was collected by the nightman himself.⁵⁵ Deposit pits were managed more efficiently from 1905, when a five year contract for their construction and maintenance replaced the unsatisfactory tender system practised previously.⁵⁶

The sanitation programme operative in Grahamstown in 1904 was more expensive than that of 1883, but a good deal more effective. No organised opposition seems to have developed after the implementation of the programme in 1903, although some dissatisfaction was expressed at the increased charges.⁵⁷ Most citizens accepted the reforms as necessary to the development of Grahamstown. The abolition of the cesspool system and initiation of a more efficient sanitation programme, was symbolic of the transition made by the city to twentieth century urban sophistication.

Overcrowded cattle kraals and the insanitary conditions in which animals and cattle were slaughtered were sources of concern to the standards of public health in Grahamstown. Real reform in these areas was obstructed by a town council lobby which protected the interests of the local butchers. Both the membership and the role of the group altered somewhat between 1883 and 1904. The earlier faction was led by R.W. Nelson, James Stanton and Charles Cawood, all of whom were butchers.⁵⁸

⁵⁵CMB 7.10.03, 24.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵⁶CMB 27.7.04, 2.11.04. CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁵⁷GTJ 14.7.04 "Hard Up Enough Already" to Editor.

⁵⁸Cape Post Office Directory for 1886-1887, pp 579, 588, 592.

A.E. Nelson was reserved in support of his brother's stance, because he served regularly as Chairman of the Market and Sanitation Committee between 1883 and 1904. By the turn of the century, councillor J.H. Webber, a butcher and lessee of an abattoir in Lavender Valley, had become the leader of the lobby. His support group is difficult to identify. R.W. Nelson still sided with the butchers, but less vociferously so, because he had become a Commissioner and General Agent.⁵⁹ As Mayor in 1895, 1899 and 1900, A.E. Nelson was less able to show a preference for a particular point of view. Probably the most useful support for the butchers was given by those councillors who opposed the calls for a new sanitation scheme, and vetoed reform measures.

The approach of the butchers' lobby was less than subtle, but usually carefully considered. By pulling their punches, the members of the group tended to secure the adjournment, rather than the outright rejection of reform regulations threatening their profits or convenience. This veiled approach drew the votes of indecisive councillors in their favour. The tactics of the butchers' lobby did not alter much over the years, despite a change of role from one of active promotion of its interests, to one of defence against costly reforms.

The emergence of the butchers' protection group was provoked in the 1880's by disputes over crowded cattle kraals on private property. One of the principal offenders was a town councillor, James Stanton. In contravention of the 1881 municipal regulations limiting kraal occupancy to six head of horned cattle and twelve sheep or goats,⁶⁰ Stanton was

⁵⁹Howard and Co's Border Directory, 1901, pg 252.

⁶⁰Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 7 January 1881, Regulations for the Municipality of Grahamstown, Proclamation No. 5, 1881, Section IV No. 2. The fine for contravention ranged from £1 - £5.

reported to have kraaled between fifty and one hundred cattle at a time.⁶¹ The issue of overcrowding could not lightly be dismissed. Some weeks earlier, a citizen had attributed a case of typhoid in his family to dung washed down from a neighbouring kraal.⁶² The matter seemed clearcut; in terms of the regulations, Stanton was undeniably at fault. But the council reaction was indecisive. Albert Preddy, Sanitation Committee Chairman, and Dr. W.G. Atherstone advocated stringent application of the municipal regulations, in contradiction to a more general desire for flexibility. A council majority of six to five votes, with a telling five abstentions, rejected the imposition of the regulation fine.⁶³ Litigation undertaken subsequently initially brought judgement in favour of the town council. This ruling was reversed on appeal, on grounds of insufficient summons.⁶⁴ The precedent in the matter of cattle kraaling had been set earlier, in a case in which a man charged with kraal overcrowding had been granted an application to keep additional cattle. In the Stanton case, the Judge President was probably further influenced by the inadequacy of the municipal regulations, and by the absence of legal backing for regulation enforcement.⁶⁵ These factors, coupled with the retirement of councillor W.G. Atherstone, a strict advocate of cattle limitation, placed the council on the path of greater flexibility in the 1890's. The local authority tended to allow the kraaling of additional cattle

⁶¹ GTJ 1.5.84 TCM 30.4.84.

⁶² GTJ 7.2.84 TCM 6.2.84.

⁶³ GTJ 1.5.84 TCM 30.4.84.

⁶⁴ GTJ 28.8.84. TCM 27.8.84.

⁶⁵ GTJ 20.3.84 TCM 19.3.84, GTJ 10.4.84 TCM 9.4.84,
GTJ 1.5.84 TCM 30.4.84.

if application were made, but to impose the limit if it were not.⁶⁶

The effectiveness of this approach is indicated in the lack of subsequent dispute over cattle kraaling.

Further inadequacies in the 1881 municipal regulations were exposed in the clauses concerning the shambles; sanitation provisions merely authorised inspectors to enforce reasonable standards of cleanliness.⁶⁷ The council allowed slaughter on private property if the meat was not intended for sale,⁶⁸ a policy which deprived butchers of some business. Consequently, in 1887 the butchers' lobby pushed through an amendment to the municipal regulations, to prohibit the slaughter of cattle, sheep, goats and pigs outside of the abattoirs. The move was justified as an attempt to remove the potential threat to public health posed by slaughtering operations.⁶⁹

The citizens and newspapers united in protest against this example of "town council tyranny." Their objections concentrated on the prohibition of pig slaughter, which was widely practised in Grahamstown.⁷⁰

⁶⁶For example, GPM 5.6.96 TCM 3.6.96, CMB 25.8.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁶⁷Grahamstown Municipal Regulations, 1881, Section IV No.3.

⁶⁸This was in spite of provisions contained in the Grahamstown Municipal Regulations, Section IV No. 1, which prohibited the slaughter of cattle and sheep within the municipal bounds, except at council-approved sites. In 1884, some degree of clarity on the issue was achieved in an amended regulation specifying that slaughter within the city was punishable only when the meat was offered for sale. (GTJ 14.8.84 TCM 13.8.84).

⁶⁹GTJ 15.9.87 TCM 14.9.87.

⁷⁰GPM 16.9.87. An indication of the strength of this group is contained in the fact that the resolution was carried by a majority of nine votes - slightly more than one-third of the total number of councillors. Six councillors were absent from the meeting.

Protest soon led to a withdrawal of the restriction, but this was not accomplished without an excessive display of opposition from R.W. Nelson. In an attempt to defeat the motion, he undertook a lengthy address on the efficiency of local sanitation inspections. In the words of a frustrated Mail reporter: "He began his oration at 5.15, and for four mortal hours and a quarter he kept pegging away, talking against time, in the hope of wearing out the patience of his fellow-Councillors, and of clearing the Council Chamber, when the (to him) obnoxious resolution of Mr. Luke would, of course, be defeated 'pro tem.'"⁷¹ But seventeen councillors writhed grimly through the speech, and at 9.30 p.m. the motion sanctioning the private slaughter of pigs was carried.⁷² The time allowed a councillor for any one address was subsequently limited to fifteen minutes!⁷³

With these new limitations on private slaughter, attention turned to the sanitary regulations for the abattoirs. The power wielded by the butchers' lobby threw into question the wisdom of council-controlled abattoir inspections. The possibility existed that the inspectors might seek in their reports to protect councillors concerned, for fear of losing their positions.⁷⁴ However, things went quite well at first. In 1891, the Sanitation Committee reported that only one out of the five abattoirs lacked a suitable means of disposal for blood and offal, and presented a health hazard.⁷⁵ A subsequent resolution sought to secure

⁷¹GPM 7.10.87 TCM 5.10.87.

⁷²GTJ 7.10.87 TCM 5.10.87.

⁷³GTJ 20.10.87 TCM 19.10.87.

⁷⁴GPM 7.10.87.

⁷⁵MCMB 12.8.91 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/5. In June 1891, a resolution had been passed to the effect that all blood and refuse incurred in operations should be cleared away daily. (GTJ 25.6.91 TCM 24.6.91).

the replacement of unhygienic wooden floors with stone and cement.⁷⁶ Between September and November 1891, daily inspections were undertaken to regulate disposal procedures,⁷⁷ and in 1892 the sanitary inspector was empowered to enforce necessary refuse disposal measures.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, as time passed the town council relaxed its attempts to enforce reasonable standards of sanitation at the abattoirs. In 1897, in the midst of a water shortage which limited the supplies vitally necessary in slaughtering operations,⁷⁹ disturbing cases of neglect of sanitation procedures were reported. At one abattoir, stagnant water had been boiled to scald pork.⁸⁰ Conditions at the shambles continued to deteriorate, and by 1898 the river-bed was putrid, and refuse and blood was being deposited a mere twenty paces from the buildings.

Popular opinion favoured drastic steps to resite the shambles and enforce daily inspections.⁸¹ The council could not comply, because over the next few years the butchers' lobby used the full extent of its power to delay reform. The battle for change was spearheaded by councillors F.H. Hallen, M. Hawken and H.J. Sole, but achieved little of significance. The men unsuccessfully encouraged the erection of more abattoirs⁸² and the transference of management from private owners

⁷⁶GTJ 13.8.91 TCM 12.8.91.

⁷⁷GPM 4.9.91 TCM 2.9.91. The resolution was carried by a narrow majority of one vote.

⁷⁸GTJ 10.11.92 TCM 9.11.92.

⁷⁹GPM 28.12.97.

⁸⁰GTJ 23.12.97 H. Becker to Editor.

⁸¹GPM 27.6.98 "Citizen" to Editor.

⁸²CMB 18.11.03, 3.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

to the municipality.⁸³ They met an insuperable block of opposition from the butchers' lobby, and were unable to deprive the unsatisfactory lessees of their right to slaughter. The lobby occasionally allowed concessions to avert public alarm at the abattoir conditions. Consequently, people were prohibited from living within one hundred feet of the shambles,⁸⁴ and after 1900, blood and offal had to be buried at least eighteen inches below ground surface.⁸⁵ Other seemingly innocuous motions were adjourned, so that the stream at the shambles could not be diverted, stagnant pools filled up,⁸⁶ nor blood and offal removed as a matter of course to municipally-approved deposit pits.⁸⁷ The one glimmer of hope in November 1904 was shortlived when the Sanitary Committee failed to circumvent the state of deadlock by securing municipal control of the shambles. All but one of the slaughter-house owners refused to sell to the council, and leases were granted again to the irresponsible lessees.⁸⁸

In abusing its ability to affect municipal policy, the butchers' lobby threatened standards of local health. However, if abattoir conditions had been mortally dangerous, the Governor would probably have enforced the provisions of the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act. By 1904, although there were few overt consequences of town council inaction on

⁸³CMB 3.5.99, 26.3.02, 3.8.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13 and 14.

⁸⁴CMB 28.6.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸⁵CMB 5.12.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸⁶CMB 28.6.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸⁷CMB 4.10.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁸⁸CMB 16.11.04, 25.1.05 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/15.

the abattoir problem, the matter could be neglected further only at grave risk to public health.

The general lack of council commitment to sanitation reform is further apparent in the absence of a systematic approach to the problem of polluted river beds, water pipes and reservoirs. These presented a greater health hazard than most were prepared to concede. River bed pollution by deposits of excrement was eliminated to some extent by the provision of public latrines, but improvements really depended on a change of habits. The stagnation of water in river bed holes presented an additional hazard. The council policy of paving was conducted in a very piecemeal fashion,⁸⁹ and although the condition of the river beds had improved slightly by 1904, it still left a great deal to be desired.

The age and condition of the municipal water pipes were among the causes of the questionable purity, colour and odour of Grahamstown water. Some of the pipes were thirty years old, and in 1895 an unearthed section of Beaufort Street piping was found to be choked with rust, mud, slime and maggots.⁹⁰ Despite a public outcry, the economy-conscious council undertook pipe replacement with great reluctance. New piping was laid in Market and High Streets⁹¹ only when filth reduced the water-supply to a trickle, or eliminated it altogether. Reservoir pollution was caused chiefly by the growth of vegetation along reservoir walls, decomposing

⁸⁹By 1890 some sections of the river bed had been paved, but J.S. Willcox pointed out that although £100 had been set aside that year for the work, such was the lack of interest that it had not been used. (GTJ 23.10.90 TCM 22.10.90). However, in 1903 the success of the experimental laying of concrete blocks at the Chapel Street bridge motivated a council decision to continue paving the river bed from Bathurst to Kowie Street in this way. (CMB 17.6.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

⁹⁰GTJ 28.5.95.

⁹¹GPM 19.6.96 TCM 17.6.96, GTJ 28.1.97 TCM 27.1.97.

twigs and leaves, and litter left by picnickers. There was no regular cleansing programme; the reservoirs were flushed only when they were in a most insanitary condition.

In view of the fundamentally unsatisfactory sanitation arrangements, Grahamstown officials were fortunate that the only epidemic to affect the city between 1883 and 1904, did not have more serious consequences. Once the first case of smallpox had been reported in Grahamstown in May 1894,⁹² the disease spread rapidly among the local Africans, most of whom lived in overcrowded slum conditions. However, a substantial number of the Black patients treated for smallpox at the Grahamstown lazarettos⁹³ came from the countryside,⁹⁴ where the disease became rife despite the vigilance exercised by the Albany Divisional Council.⁹⁵ This situation might have provoked friction between the two councils, for there is little doubt that the Grahamstown local authority tried to deal with the disease as cheaply as possible. Consequently, it delayed the construction of a lazaretto for White smallpox patients as long as possible. The first few victims were treated at home; the mild nature of the disease made this possible.⁹⁶ But in October 1894, when increasing numbers of citizens were affected, vaccination campaigns were stepped up, an additional medical officer was appointed and a government

⁹²GTJ 4.4.95 W.A. Betts's report.

⁹³The term "lazaretto" refers either to a quarantine hospital, or one for the diseased poor. The Grahamstown lazarettos usually served both purposes.

⁹⁴GTJ 13.9.94 TCM 12.9.94, GTJ 15.9.94. Between 16 September and 31 December 1894, 194 Black patients were treated for smallpox in Albany. 131 of these were in quarantine. (GTJ 4.4.95 W.T. Hamilton's report).

⁹⁵GTJ 18.10.94.

⁹⁶GTJ 18.10.94.

grant obtained for another lazaretto.⁹⁷ The disease began to recede within a month, and in January 1895, the last patient was discharged from the lazaretto.⁹⁸

Probably with economy in mind, the council relaxed its smallpox control measures. This action was premature; in February 1895, Grahamstown was placed on the alert by news that a recently-afflicted Uitenhage man had spent a night in the Grahamstown location one month previously.⁹⁹ The disease cycle began again,¹⁰⁰ ending only in October 1895.¹⁰¹ The recurrence of smallpox in Grahamstown lent credence to The Eastern Province Herald's claims that the local council and press had been negligent and irresponsible in their response to the epidemic.¹⁰² In the light of The Journal's regular publication of reports and numbers of smallpox patients,¹⁰³ The Herald had to admit to having overstated its case. Ironically, the most effective indictment was contained in The Herald's backhanded apology:

"... their slipshod method of dealing with this outbreak was merely habitual and characteristic, and not, as far as we can learn, intentional."¹⁰⁴

The "bona fides" of the Grahamstown local authority was cast further

⁹⁷ MCBM 1.10.94 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6; GTJ 4.10.94 TCM 3.10.94, GTJ 4.10.94 G.M. Leppan to Editor.

⁹⁸ GPM 30.1.95.

⁹⁹ MCBM 4.3.95 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6.

¹⁰⁰ MCBM 8.5.95 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6. By May 1895, smallpox had gained a firm foothold in the Grahamstown location.

¹⁰¹ GTJ 10.10.95 TCM 9.10.95.

¹⁰² The Eastern Province Herald 17.10.94 as taken up by GTJ 18.10.94.

¹⁰³ GTJ 18.10.94.

¹⁰⁴ The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 1.11.94.

in doubt by the contradictory reports issued in 1895 by Drs. W.T. Hamilton and W.A. Betts, the medical officers for smallpox employed jointly by the Albany Divisional Council and the Grahamstown town council.¹⁰⁵

Hamilton's report implicated the municipal council¹⁰⁶ and Betts in serious neglect of smallpox patients, and unjustifiable attempts at economy at the African lazarettos. These, he claimed, were merely dilapidated ten-by-eight foot stone buildings, with neither floors nor ceilings. One person only had been responsible for day and night nursing, until three staff members had been added at Hamilton's insistence. The latter maintained that he had extended the diet from mealies to include meat, fresh vegetables, lime juice and stimulants.¹⁰⁷ Betts denied the allegations, quoting in his defence the fact that Dr. A. Edington, the colonial health officer, had inspected and approved his arrangements. Most of Hamilton's assertions were rejected after

¹⁰⁵ Betts had been the first municipal appointee, but had resigned in September 1894 when the council had reduced his daily remuneration from £2. 2. 0 to £1. 1. 0. (GTJ 6.9.94 TCM 5.9.94). He had been replaced by Hamilton, who had agreed to take over the duties provided the Albany Divisional Council also engaged him, and contributed £1. 1. 0 to his salary. (GTJ 13.9.94 TCM 12.9.94). However, when smallpox spread among White citizens in October 1894, Betts had been re-engaged, with Hamilton as his assistant. (GTJ 4.10.94 TCM 3.10.94).

¹⁰⁶ The assertions made by Hamilton and Betts in regard to the lazarettos under the control of the Albany Divisional Council are not dealt with here.

¹⁰⁷ GTJ 4.4.95. The reports were submitted to the Albany Divisional Council.

examination by the Smallpox Committee of the Albany Divisional Council.¹⁰⁸ No explanation was offered for Hamilton's attacks on the municipal council and Betts: personal and professional rivalry probably existed between the two men. Even so, when the claims in Hamilton's report are set against those made earlier by The Herald, it would appear that the arrangements made for the disease were inadequate.

The ramifications of the epidemic did not end here. In 1895, the Roman Catholic parents of the only White smallpox fatality requested the disinterment of their son's body from its grave at the lazaretto, in order to rebury it in hallowed ground.¹⁰⁹ The councillors were faced with a moral dilemma. While many were inclined to sympathise, they had a duty to safeguard public health and, after the recurrence of the disease, the reputation of the town council. The matter became confused and unpleasant when the parents, assisted by councillor James Demaine, resorted to underhand methods to secure the reinterment of the body. Dr. Duncan, acting medical officer while Hamilton was on leave, was given a false account of the issues involved, and granted the necessary documents for reburial. Fortunately the sanitary inspector, W.R. Praed, managed to nip the plans in the bud.¹¹⁰ The Under-Colonial Secretary eventually granted permission for reburial, under strict conditions to preclude any human contact with the corpse. However, the final decision rested with the town council, which prohibited the

¹⁰⁸GTJ 4.4.95. Among other things, the Committee maintained that the appointment of two (sic) additional attendants in September 1894 had not in any way been connected with representations made by Hamilton. The latter had apparently not made recommendations for improvements to the treatment of patients.

¹⁰⁹MCMB 4.3.95 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6. John MacDonald, the victim, died after refusing vaccination.(GTJ 4.4.95 W.A. Betts's report). In all, thirteen whites contracted the disease in the period between 16 September and 31 December 1894. (GTJ 4.4.95 W.T. Hamilton's report).

¹¹⁰MCMB 4.3.95 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6.

removal of the remains.¹¹¹

If the town council approach to the smallpox epidemic lacked urgency in 1894 and 1895, the opposite was the case in 1898. The smallpox which spread from the Transvaal affected Port Elizabeth with particular severity, and threatened the success of the 1898 Great Exhibition. The Grahamstown Medical Officer of Health, Dr. J. Bays, and a special Smallpox Vigilance Committee enforced stringent regulations to restrict access to the city,¹¹² which fortunately remained free from disease. When smallpox spread again during the Anglo-Boer war, only a few, isolated cases of the disease occurred locally.¹¹³

When an epidemic of plague swept the Cape Colony during the Anglo-Boer war, the experience with smallpox in the 1890's was put to good use in Grahamstown, in the strict control measures implemented to keep the city free from the disease. The government plan was to prevent the spread of plague by controlling the movements of Blacks,¹¹⁴ and by remunerating individuals for the destruction of rats and mice. Blacks had to obtain health passes before they could travel.¹¹⁵ Such openly discriminatory restrictions aroused understandable resentment among those they affected,¹¹⁶ but, coupled with martial law regulations, probably spared

¹¹¹GTJ 19.9.95 TCM 18.9.95. The Under-Colonial Secretary's conditions were that the corpse should not be removed from its coffin, but should be encased, untouched, in a second coffin. The remains could not be taken into a church or through streets, and the cart would have to be disinfected after the ceremony. Only those who had had smallpox could participate.

¹¹²MCMB 26.9.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/7.

¹¹³MCMB 6.8.02 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/10, CMB 2.9.03, 9.9.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹⁴These people were often the carriers of the disease by virtue of the slum conditions in which most of them lived.

¹¹⁵MCMB 10.6.01 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/9.

¹¹⁶Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome," pp 402-403.

a number of towns from the effects of plague.

Grahamstown had been alerted to the probability of an epidemic of plague early in 1899.¹¹⁷ When the disease reached the Eastern Cape in 1901, a Grahamstown Vigilance Committee was formed to safeguard the health and sanitation of the city, especially the locations. The Reverends W. Turpin, S.J. Helm and S. Ntsiko encouraged the limewashing of huts, burial of excrement in trenches and reduction of the rodent population in the location.¹¹⁸ Several proposals were made as to how to achieve the latter objective. Councillor R. Restall Stocks's ingenious plan to intoxicate rodents with mealies soaked in whisky, or brandy, and then to kill the fleas by plunging the rats into boiling water, was graciously declined by the council. It settled instead for payments of 1d¹¹⁹ - later 3d¹²⁰ - for every rat or pair of mice brought to the municipal stables. The creatures would be dispatched there in quicklime. This policy was effective particularly because it drew responses from poverty-stricken Blacks, reducing the numbers of rats, and, consequently, the chances of an outbreak of plague, in the areas in which they lived.

Strict application of plague prevention measures spared Grahamstown of the disease in 1901 and 1902. But in 1903, her chances of continued immunity were threatened when plague recurred severely in Port

¹¹⁷ CMB 8.3.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹¹⁸ MCMB 22.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/8.

¹¹⁹ CMB 27.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. A refund of all the money spent in this way was expected from the government.

¹²⁰ CMB 15.5.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14. This sum was reduced in November 1901 to 3d per rat and 1d per mouse. (CMB 20.11.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

Elizabeth, King William's Town and East London.¹²¹ The proximity of these towns and the danger of transmission through rats on trains,¹²² aroused some considerable alarm in Grahamstown on three occasions. The first took place in March 1903, when an African disembarked from a Port Elizabeth train and died on the Grahamstown station of a disease later diagnosed as plague. His fellow passengers were quarantined at the municipal lazaretto,¹²³ and a local outbreak of the disease was prevented. The second and third alarms occurred in 1904, when diseased rats were discovered in a railway goods shed,¹²⁴ and when an Indian child was thought temporarily to have the symptoms of plague.¹²⁵ By the end of 1904, when plague was receding rapidly throughout the colony, Grahamstown could boast absolute freedom from the disease.

The dedication and energy usually channelled into keeping Grahamstown free from epidemic disease between 1883 and 1904, was evinced also in the efforts to develop the facilities offered by the Albany General and Chronic Sick Hospitals, and the Fort England Lunatic Asylum. The Albany General Hospital was locally managed and depended heavily on financial assistance from the community. The government subsidy was inadequate, but provided the greatest and most reliable source of

¹²¹GTJ 17.3.03 "Eothen" to Editor, GTJ 26.3.03.

¹²²MCMB 9.3.03 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/10.

¹²³CMB 25.3.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹²⁴GTJ 31.5.04.

¹²⁵GTJ 6.8.04, 9.8.04.

income, rising steadily from £1000 in 1883 to £3250 in 1904.¹²⁶ Contributions, both large and small, came from varied sources; an examination of the lists of special donations to the hospital indicates something of the local involvement in the institution. From 1882 onwards, the Ladies' Benevolent Society usually made the largest voluntary contribution to working costs.¹²⁷ Sums of £10. 5. 0 from the Dutch Reformed Church in Adelaide, £1. 1. 0 from "Proceeds of a Smoking Concert at Masonic Hall" and 2s 9d in Kaffir Institution fines, all helped to balance the hospital budget.¹²⁸ In 1885, for example, a total of £523.15. 8 in donations, subscriptions and endowments amounted to a fairly considerable part of the hospital revenue of £2505. 7. 0.¹²⁹ The sums collected seem to have remained fairly constant, although in 1904 the voluntary contributions of £507. 1. 2 out of a total revenue of £5449.15. 7,¹³⁰ formed a much smaller percentage of the hospital

¹²⁶ Government subsidies were granted as follows: (Random)

Year	Total Sum Paid	Total Increase Granted
	£	£
1883	1000	-
1885	1125	125
1892	1750	625
1897	2300	550
1901	3250	950
1904	3250	0

These sums are recorded in the Annual Statements of the Albany General Hospital 1883 (pg 14), 1885 (pg 18), 1893 (sic) (pg 19), 1898 (sic) (pg 11), 1901 (pg 12), 1904 (pg 23). With the exception of the Annual Statement for 1890, those issued for the period 1889-1899 are incorrectly dated.

¹²⁷ J.M. Berning, Outline History of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, Grahamstown 1867-1954, pg 4 CL, PR 2855.

¹²⁸ Annual Statements 1883 (pg 15), 1893 (sic) (pg 21), 1901 (pg 26).

¹²⁹ Annual Statement 1885, pp 18-20.

¹³⁰ Annual Statement 1904, pg 23.

income than had been the case previously.

Unfortunately, the limited finances available to the hospital made it difficult to keep abreast of modern developments. Debit balances in the 1890's exacerbated the problem; that of 1897 occurred despite an extra parliamentary grant to eliminate the old debt, and because of the increased prices of provisions, surgical instruments and hospital repairs.¹³¹ The rise in the cost per patient from 5s 4d in 1883, to 7s 3d in 1904, when coupled with expensive technological advances, is reflected in the doubling of hospital expenditure from £2554.15. 3 in 1883 to £5449.15. 7 in 1904.¹³²

Structural improvements were undertaken in spite of these financial difficulties. Minor additions included a ward for syphilitics in 1883¹³³ and a new wing for white and coloured patients in 1889.¹³⁴

¹³¹ GPM 18.2.98. The Annual Statements indicate that the problems began in 1891. Overdrawn accounts are indicated in the "Receipts" columns for 1891-1893, but thereafter the Statements merely indicate the sources and allocation of the funding. References to the fact that debt was a continuing problem of the Albany General Hospital, are occasionally made by the newspapers.

Year	Balance overdrawn at the Standard Bank £
1891	523. 6. 2
1892	396.10. 7
1893	501. 8.10

Annual Statements 1892 (sic) (pg 17), 1893 (sic) (pg 19), 1894 (sic) (pg 17).

¹³² Annual Statements 1883, pp 9, 14-16; 1904, pp 22-23.

¹³³ GTJ 15.6.83 TCM 13.6.83, GTJ 28.6.83 TCM 27.6.83.

¹³⁴ GTJ 23.2.89, 23.3.89.

The £4000 Victoria Fever Hospital, commenced in 1902, was the most substantial of the additions made. The wards were Grahamstown's practical commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and would provide for effective isolation and treatment of fever patients.¹³⁵

The passage of time brought alterations to hospital staffing arrangements. In-service training of nurses was successfully commenced in 1891,¹³⁶ and the unqualified hospital superintendent was replaced by a fully-trained resident surgeon, who would be able to render medical service in a crisis. This change was motivated in part by the Victorian trend towards professionalism. However, problems arose in that the salary offered by the Management Committee could not compete with private practice. Consequently, resident surgeons came and went in fairly rapid succession.¹³⁷ The change was retained, however, a fact which indicates that it was found to be preferable to earlier policy.

Two men emerge as champions of the Albany General Hospital in the period reviewed; J.E. and H.R. Wood.¹³⁸ They were particularly able to serve its interests as local parliamentary representatives with access to those responsible for government funding. The Chronic Sick Hospital was served on a smaller scale, but with equal energy, by the city librarian, W.E. Norris, who used money from his annual Christmas fund

¹³⁵ GTJ 18.2.97, 21.2.01, 10.7.02, 6.9.02. The project was championed by J.E. Wood, who secured a £2000 government grant, and by whose efforts Grahamstonians were encouraged to raise an equivalent sum.

¹³⁶ GPM 22.9.92.

¹³⁷ For example, four superintendents served between 1892 and 1896. (GPM 2.11.91, GTJ 25.6.96).

¹³⁸ GDM 25.7.21.

to provide treats for the patients. Among his fairly ambitious, but successful projects, was a seaside excursion for chronically ill and mentally disturbed patients.¹³⁹ In 1895, the five imbecile children who had hitherto been given shelter at the Chronic Sick Hospital, were transferred to the newly established Institute for Imbecile Children. The institution fulfilled a vital social function, and numbers rose from fifteen in 1895 to twenty in 1903.¹⁴⁰

Local pride in this kind of concern did not extend to the victims of leprosy in 1886, when the rumoured government intention to establish a leper hospital in the city aroused considerable local alarm. The reports circulated after the colonial Public Works Department had investigated the possibility of accommodating lepers in empty military buildings in Fort Beaufort and Grahamstown. The town council and citizens were unnerved by the fact that the project had come close to fruition; it had been abandoned because of a shortage of funds, and objections made by the Mayor of Grahamstown. The Eastern Province had a particular need for a leper hospital, because the scourge had spread rapidly in the area.¹⁴¹ Little accommodation was available at the Robben Island infirmary. Grahamstonians opposed the establishment of a leper colony near the city, in the knowledge that it would seriously retard local development. In 1903 the council refused to consider the erection even of temporary accommodation for lepers outside Grahamstown,¹⁴²

¹³⁹ GTJ 12.12.89 W.E. Norris to Editor, GTJ 17.12.89 W.E. Norris to Editor.

¹⁴⁰ GPM 19.6.96; CPP, G.55 - 1904, pg 27. The institution could accommodate a maximum number of twenty-four children.

¹⁴¹ GTJ 9.7.86, 22.7.86 TCM 21.7.86.

¹⁴² CMB 29.4.03, 20.5.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

for fear that this might become a permanent hospital.

The reaction of the municipal authority and inhabitants was understandable in view of the repulsive physical manifestations and infectious nature of some forms of leprosy. The Fort England Lunatic Asylum was not regarded with such abhorrence, despite the stigma attached to mental illness in the nineteenth century. The sound reputation of the asylum was unchallenged during the twenty-five years of Robert Hullah's superintendence, but was severely shaken on his death in February 1890. A government commission revealed gross neglect and some malpractice in the absence of regular curative treatment and patient classification, and in staff immorality and defective sanitation arrangements.¹⁴³ The most likely explanation for the discoveries lies in the probability that Hullah allowed his policy of freedom from restraint to devolve into staff license and neglect. He had, quite clearly, been unable to cope with the demands of the superintendence by 1890. It is tempting to attribute the insistence of his successor, Dr. T.D. Greenlees, that no one over the age of fifty should be responsible for a mental institution,¹⁴⁴ to his knowledge of the fate of his predecessor.

In the interim period between Hullah's death and Greenlees's arrival in August 1890,¹⁴⁵ two acting superintendents faced the unenviable task of disciplining staff and tightening asylum control. Mr. J.S. Collins and Dr. H. Becker were not very successful, partly because of

¹⁴³GTJ 22.7.90.

¹⁴⁴E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa up to the End of the Nineteenth Century, pg 343.

¹⁴⁵GPM 18.8.90.

their personal and professional rivalry. The tension already felt at the asylum was exacerbated by their over-zealous extension of hours of duty, and the dismissal of three unco-operative staff members.¹⁴⁶ Fortunately, Greenless had the enthusiasm and reformist vigour needed to defuse the situation and rebuild the reputation of the asylum. He had experience of mental work in England. At the Cape, Greenlees established a reputation as an able administrator and pioneer of mental institutional welfare,¹⁴⁷ and emerged as a man with a vigorous and sympathetic approach to mental disorder. His new standards of order and hygiene transformed the asylum. Greenlees's holistic approach to mental care brought the introduction of outdoor sports, evening recreation¹⁴⁸ and redecoration of the institution with cheerful colours. In the African wards heavy furniture was replaced with light, attractive pieces. Patients were given wire-woven mattresses in place of rope-strung canvas beds. The services of an Anglican chaplain were obtained and a profitable vegetable garden established.¹⁴⁹ Attempts were made to attract paying patients by providing comfortable facilities. This involved the construction of private wards for males and females.¹⁵⁰ In 1892 Greenlees launched the training of mental nurses in South Africa. The first certificate in mental nursing was awarded to a Fort England

¹⁴⁶ GTJ 5.7.90 Deputies and Attendants to Editor, GTJ 19.7.90, 22.7.90.

¹⁴⁷ Burrows, Medicine in South Africa, pg 343.

¹⁴⁸ GTJ 15.11.90, 18.6.91.

¹⁴⁹ GPM 13.4.91. 19.6.96. In 1903, the profit from the Asylum farm amounted to £273.19. 1. (CPP, G.55 - 1904, pg 113).

¹⁵⁰ GTJ 23.6.99, GPM 22.5.03; CPP, G.55 - 1904, pg 111.

nurse, Amelia Fraser, in 1895.¹⁵¹

Occasionally a complaint challenged the asylum's reputation for efficiency. In 1899, a Kimberley man asserted that asylum officials had been so unhelpful as to leave him uninformed of his wife's progress while she was a patient.¹⁵² Such claims were rare, however. Greenlees was well-deserving of the compliment paid his institution in 1891 by the Inspector of Asylums. Dr. W.J. Dodds asserted then that Fort England was almost the only colonial asylum that "... need not ... fear comparison with even good models."¹⁵³ The best evidence of Greenlees's success was contained in the improvement in the recovery rates at Fort England after his arrival. They rose from 34,15% in 1889, to 43,51% in 1895,¹⁵⁴ averaging at about this level for the following decade. This figure contrasts sharply with the recovery rate of 9% and 9,5% attributed the old Somerset Hospital and the Robben Island Asylum in 1891,¹⁵⁵ and must have been Greenlees's most satisfying personal reward.

Grahamstonians had every right to be proud of the contributions made by their medical institutions. The Albany General Hospital served the district well despite its inadequate funding; improvements and the development of facilities were not neglected. The renown of the Fort England Lunatic Asylum extended well beyond the bounds of Albany,

¹⁵¹C. Searle, The History of the Development of Nursing in South Africa 1652-1960, pg 117.

¹⁵²The Cape Times 28.3.99.

¹⁵³The Cape Times 11.6.91.

¹⁵⁴CPP, G.29 - 90, pg 27; GPM 19.6.96.

¹⁵⁵GPM 19.6.91. In 1891, the Fort England Lunatic Asylum recorded a 41,1% recovery rate.

because Greenlees's effective curative treatments were highly regarded. The Chronic Sick Hospital and Institute for Imbecile Children catered for limited groups, but ones which had important needs.

In all, the state of public health and sanitation was far more satisfactory in Grahamstown in 1904, than it had been in 1883. The system of ordure closets and sanitation removal was a vast improvement on the leaky cesspools and irregular removals of 1883. This augured well for the future cleanliness of the town. Personal and domestic hygiene improved with the increased supply of water from Slaai Kraal, and the replacement of old, choked water pipes in the city. Unfortunately the slaughter-house problem was not resolved, and the power of the butchers' lobby remained unbroken.

Outbreaks of epidemic disease in Grahamstown in the period reviewed were the exception, rather than the rule. The smallpox of 1894-1895 taught the municipal authorities a useful lesson in the necessity of adopting stringent preventive measures to combat the likelihood of disease. The experience gained was usefully applied in averting a local outbreak of plague early in the twentieth century. In all, issues of sanitation and public health were as important and contentious in Grahamstown as in most cities in the Victorian age. Fortunately with time, progress and modernisation triumphed over tradition and conservatism. Moving frontiers of economic development might well have left Grahamstown behind by 1904, but her enviable clean bill of health could not be equalled by many of the larger, more prosperous colonial cities.

CHAPTER SIX

GRAHAMSTOWN'S BLACK POPULATION

RECORD OF LOCATION REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE 1889 - 1904

Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Town Council Profit
	£	£	£
1889	147.15. 0	65.10. 0	82. 5. 0
1890	146. 0. 0	73.12. 4	72. 7. 8
1891	141. 0. 0	78. 2. 6	62.17. 6
1892	143. 0. 0	70. 0. 0	73. 0. 0
1893	124.10. 0	79. 8. 0	45. 2. 0
1894	126. 0. 0	85. 2. 7	40.17. 5
1895	133. 0. 0	70. 0. 0	63. 0. 0
1896	118.10. 0	77.19. 0	40.11. 0
1897	209. 5. 0	90.11. 7	118.13. 5
1898	296.14. 4	129. 0. 1	167.14. 3
1899	238. 0. 0	75.14. 4	162.15. 8
1900	129.15. 0	119. 0. 3	10.14. 9
1901	686.16. 2	158. 0. 0	528.16. 2
1902	251. 3.10	199. 6.11	51.16.11
1903	435. 7. 0	176. 8. 6	258.18. 6
1904	352.17. 6	286.10.10	66. 6. 8

Average town council profit per annum: £115. 7. 4.

The sums recorded above are inclusive of miscellaneous location income and expenditure, not always included directly under location funding. The information is derived from the municipal accounts, published between 1889 and 1904 in the following sources: GTJ 25.3.90, 26.3.91, 14.4.92, 25.3.93, 21.4.94, 25.4.95, 17.3.96, 10.4.97, 19.4.98, 30.3.99, 22.3.00, 13.4.01, 26.3.02, 18.4.03, 21.4.04, 20.4.05.

1884 Market Committee Report on Conditions in Dell's Row (African Street)¹

The tenements contained the following occupants:

Cottages	Occupants
1	Miss Webb (caretaker)
1	Mr. E. Hancock
Total 2	Two White inhabitants

STONE BLOCK

Compartments	Men	Inhabitants		Children	Total per compartment
		Women			
1	1	2		0	3
2	1	2		0	3
3	0	1		2	3
4	1	1		0	2
5	1	3		0	4
6	1	1		2	4
7	1	1		1	3
8	1	1		0	2
9	1	1		0	2
10	1	1		2	4
11	1	1		4	6
12	2	0		0	2
13	0	1		1	2
14	0	0		0	0
15	0	0		0	0
16	1	2		0	3
17	1	0		0	1
Totals 17	14	18		12	44 inhabitants

WOODEN BLOCK

Compartments	Men	Inhabitants		Children	Total per compartment
		Women			
1	1	1		0	2
2	1	1		1	3
3	1	1		0	2
4	0	1		0	1
5	0	0		0	0
6	0	0		0	0
7	1	1		0	2
8	1	0		0	1
9	1	0		0	1
10	1	1		0	2
11	0	0		0	0
12	0	0		0	0
13	1	2		0	3
14	0	0		0	0
Totals 14	8	8		1	17 inhabitants

Dell's Row Report Continued:Total Number of Rooms and Inhabitants for Both Blocks

Compartments	Men	Women	Children	Total
31	22	26	13	61

¹MCMB 13.1.84 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

CHAPTER SIXGRAHAMSTOWN'S BLACK POPULATION

The bulk of Grahamstown's Black population lived in three locations,² set apart for them in the nineteenth century. The African and Coloured people were not confined to these areas, however, and some took up residence in slum areas in the city, like Dell's Row and Paradise Row. The living conditions in all these places were extremely poor. The health hazard created by the proximity of the locations to the municipal stercus pits and abattoirs, was exacerbated by the absence of adequate refuse and excrement disposal provisions for location residents. Water, always in short supply in the locations, came either from a small municipal water tank, or from springs polluted by nightsoil and slaughterhouse offal. Between 1883 and 1904, the locations were little more than disease-ridden ghettos. In 1901, the Medical Officer of Health reported that scarcely 25% of location children reached the age of five years, and that during the course of a year, each location inhabitant could expect to fall ill at least once.³

²Blue Book Reports on Native Affairs for Albany are misleading on the number of recognised locations in Grahamstown. A third location had been created in 1879 and placed under municipal control, but up until 1893, the Civil Commissioner and Inspector of Locations refer to only two; the Fingo and old Coloured or "Hottentot" Villages. It seems that from 1894 onwards, the Albany location inspector was given some measure of authority in the municipal location. (CPP, G.8-'95, pg 5). From that date, the reports refer to three locations.

³DDNS, pg 30. Unidentified newspaper cutting, probably The Journal, dated 30.3.01. CL, PR 1741.

The town council seldom heeded pleas for reform made by local African people. Those of clerics like Reverend S.J. Helm and W. Turpin⁴ often elicited a more adequate response, but never one which brought far-reaching change. The lives of location residents were filled with unremitting hardships.⁵ In Grahamstown, the church is one of the few organisations that emerges with a distinguished record of service. The same cannot be said of the town council; the indictment of neglect on that body is all the more serious in the light of evidence that although it made a profit from the rents of location erven, only paltry amounts were spent on meeting the desperate needs of the location. The bulk of the money must have found its way into general revenue.

Among other things, these appalling circumstances provoked some political activity. By 1900, Grahamstown's Black population had formed a Vigilance Association, intended to further the aims of the South African Native Congress and secure improved living conditions. The local leaders were drawn from an emergent group of African modernists⁶ -

⁴Turpin was an Anglican clergyman who worked among the African people at St. Philip's Mission. Helm was a Congregationalist, and a minister at the Union Church from 1882 to 1918. He worked mainly among Coloured people. (Centenary Souvenir, Union Congregational Church Grahamstown, South Africa, 1827-1927, pp 4-6).

⁵A report written by Albany's Civil Commissioner, John Hemming, is quoted briefly in the Appendix of the Select Committee on the Labour Question in 1892. It contains much the same observations on poor living conditions and municipal neglect, that he makes in the annual Blue Book Reports on Native Affairs. (CPP, C.2 - '92 Appendix pp v-vi. Also referred to in J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, pg 257 footnote 4).

⁶This term is used instead of "elite" on the advice of André Odendaal, who is currently preparing a Ph.D. thesis at Cambridge University, entitled African Political Mobilization in the Eastern Cape, 1880-1910. "Modernists" is more useful in that it includes anyone adapting consciously to the new colonial institutions - non-literate people, peasants, headmen and not only Christians or schooled people. Odendaal believes that the so-called "elite" were more Africanist and tied to their own communities than has previously been acknowledged. Hence, some educated Africans were not registered voters, while some traditionalists were. All classes formed the African polity and worked together to further political interests. (A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence, 23.4.1983).

clergymen like the Reverends J.J. Jabavu, G. Nzungu and S. Ntsiko, and local traders like R. Xola (also Xholla).⁷ But by 1904, even this organisation had managed to secure few reforms in location conditions. Sanitation provisions remained almost non-existent. Although the Vigilance Association had battled to prevent the imposition of a curfew in 1904, the Governor's refusal to sanction this regulation related more closely to the intervention of the local clergy than to efforts made by the Association. That body placed tremendous odds in its pleas for consideration, from the growing hostility and fear of Black violence experienced by White residents, and the consequent lack of sympathy for Africans in the city.

For the local authority, the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act precipitated one of the most important changes in location administration. Only with the Governor's permission could the council enforce rate payment in the Fingo Village and Hottentot location, by leasing lands on which five years of rates were due. Various conditions were specified; 5s would be deducted from the total lease sums paid on each property, and contributed to Black education. Lands with unpaid rates would revert to government control after thirty years.⁸ The Finance Committee was dissatisfied with these provisions for two reasons. First, moveable property would in many cases be insufficient to pay the costs of legal action to secure rate payment. Second, a number (unspecified) of Whites had taken up residence in the locations, and they would be able to take

⁷These men are discussed below, pp 161-163, 190-191.

⁸Act 18, 1902, Clauses 98-103.

advantage of these restrictions on the council's power.⁹ The objections voiced by the Finance Committee were to little effect; the council was forced to concede to the changes.¹⁰

Developments in Grahamstown between 1883 and 1904 simply reflect trends and attitudes in colonial politics. The growing desire for a "cordon sanitaire" between Black and White found expression most overtly in the Native Reserve Locations Act (No. 40) of 1902, and the South African Native Affairs (Lagden) Commission report of 1905. Act 40 raised the issue of territorial segregation; this becomes apparent in the provisions for the exclusion of Black residents from White municipal areas.¹¹ It is the only Act passed during the period 1883-1904 which deals comprehensively with the establishment of Black reserve locations near urban areas.¹² The Governor had extensive powers to prohibit Blacks from living outside the locations, to regulate the erection of shelters, curfew hours, entry into the location, the carrying of identity documents and eviction of residents regarded as "unlawful". Servants living with

⁹FCMB 29.7.02 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/5.

The 1903 Grahamstown Voters' List indicates that twenty-seven registered White voters lived in the locations. This figure naturally excludes those who did not qualify to vote. (Cape of Good Hope List of Persons Residing in the Electoral Division of Grahamstown, Whose Names Have Been Registered in the Year 1903 as Qualified to Vote in the Election for the Parliament of This Colony. Hereafter these sources are cited under the title Grahamstown Voters' List, with the appropriate date).

¹⁰The regulations passed by the council in 1903 to ensure payments of the rents of erven were specifically applied to the municipal locations only. (CMB 11.2.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14).

¹¹Act 40, 1902, Clauses 2-3.

¹²Act 40, 1902, Clause 1, defined "native reserve locations" as areas near towns or villages set apart for occupation by Africans employed in municipal areas. Other relevant Acts, i.e. Acts 37 of 1884, 33 of 1892 and 29 of 1899 applied to rural locations and aimed to reduce the numbers of squatters there. Act 5 of 1899 applied to locations on private property for Blacks employed in mining works.

their employers, employees with permission to reside in the municipal area and registered voters were exempted from the operation of the Act.¹³

Segregationist principles were more firmly enunciated in the Lagden Commission's recommendations for clear political and territorial separation of Black and White. Africans responded to these developments by attempting political organisation. The Eastern Cape was in many ways the centre of the growth of Black political consciousness. In the 1880's, some Africans resident in Grahamstown became involved in a Black political organisation which was based in the Eastern Cape and called the Native Education Association. Some confusion exists as to the date of its foundation; probably it was as early as 1879.¹⁴ The Association aimed to pay special attention to educational matters and issues concerning the general wellbeing of Africans. Before long, it was drawn into electoral politics.¹⁵ Meetings were held fairly regularly, and although missionaries were dissatisfied that political matters like pass laws and liquor prohibition were raised, the Association remained moderate in its approach. The leadership was distinguished, and included men of the calibre of John Tengo Jabavu,

¹³ Act 40, 1902, Clauses 3-4, 6, 9, 11 (3-4, 12, 15).

¹⁴ This debate is more fully dealt with by A. Odendaal in The Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, with Particular Emphasis on the Response of Africans to the Process of Unification 1899-1910. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Stellenbosch Univ., 1980), pg 8 footnote 21.

¹⁵ R. Hunt Davis, "School vs. Blanket and Settler; Elijah Makiwane and the Leadership of the Cape School Community" African Affairs, Vol. 78, No. 310, January 1979, pp 27-30.

W.B. Rubusana, Elijah Makiwane and P.J. Mzimba.¹⁶

The known Grahamstown members of the Native Education Association comprised both educated and acculturated, and unschooled people. Ebenezer Magaba was a Wesleyan Methodist minister who had been transferred from Healdtown to Grahamstown in 1883.¹⁷ Jonathan James Jabavu was the brother of John Tengo Jabavu, and worked in Grahamstown as a school-teacher in the 1880's.¹⁸ In 1890 he was received on trial as a Wesleyan minister, ordained in 1894, and returned subsequently to Grahamstown.¹⁹ By the turn of the century he had become closely involved in local politics again, this time under the auspices of the South African Native Congress, an association in political opposition to his brother, J.T. Jabavu.²⁰ Samuel T. Danga, a storeman,²¹

¹⁶ Odendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pg 10.

John Tengo Jabavu is discussed below, pg 164. Walter Benson Rubusana became a Congregational minister in 1886. In about 1900 he emerged as a leading political opponent of J.T. Jabavu, his former ally. Between 1910 and 1914 he sat in the Cape Provincial Council, the only African member in its history. Elijah Makiwane and P.J. Mzimba were both Lovedale graduates and ministers in the Free Church of Scotland. Mzimba seceded from the Free Church in 1898. (Hunt Davis, "School vs. Blanket and Settler," pp 16-23).

¹⁷ Minutes of the Fifth Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, April 1887, pg 257.

¹⁸ Grahamstown Voters' List, 1887, pg 23.

¹⁹ Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, 1901, pp 4, 174.

²⁰ This is discussed below pp 163-164.

²¹ Grahamstown Voters' List, 1899, pg 16; 1903, pg 19. Danga is not registered on the Grahamstown Voters' Lists for 1887 and 1893.

P. Nkosinkulu (of whom no details are known)²² and Robert Xola were also actively involved in the Native Education Association. Xola's movements are interesting; his occupations between 1883 and 1904 varied from those of speculator, to dairyman and boarding-house keeper.²³

1887 was significant in the development of African political organisation in Grahamstown and, more widely, in the Eastern Cape. The Native Education Association met in Grahamstown in January that year.²⁴ In September another meeting was organised in response to the 1887 Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act.²⁵ J.J. Jabavu and P. Nkosinkulu attended as Grahamstown delegates.²⁶ The threat posed to the African franchise by the 1887 Act provoked a regional conference, called by J.T. Jabavu, of the political organisations and groups that had sprung up in the 1880's. The result was the formation of a Union of Native Vigilance Associations to protect African rights and promote the registration of voters. The conference delegates - Grahamstown's Robert Xola and Samuel Danga being among them²⁷ - were encouraged to establish local

²² Nkosinkulu is not included among the registered franchise-holders in any of the Grahamstown Voters' Lists examined, i.e. for the years 1887, 1893, 1899 and 1903. These particular Lists have been selected, because they would have been the ones used in the parliamentary elections in the period under review.

²³ Grahamstown Voters' Lists, 1887, pg 49; 1893, pg 61; 1903, pg 89.

²⁴ The meeting was arranged by Magaba, Xola and Nkosinkulu (Imvo Zabantsundu 21.1.87 Xhosa Original. All the references to this newspaper have been supplied to the researcher by A. Odendaal in A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence 28.7.1983).

²⁵ Discussed below, pp 164-165.

²⁶ Imvo Zabantsundu 7.9.87 (Xhosa Original).

²⁷ Imvo Zabantsundu 5.10.87 (Xhosa Original).

Vigilance Associations.²⁸ It is likely that just such an attempt was made in Grahamstown at this point. However, either the Association was unsuccessful, or its aims were of such limited application that it did not tackle the fundamental problems facing the average Black Grahamstonian. In any event, its activities did not impinge upon the public consciousness to the extent that its existence was openly acknowledged. Ironically in fact, Albany's Civil Commissioner commented in his 1887 government report on the absence of Black political activity in his district, and that, "The new registration of voters is received with perfect indifference."²⁹

The events of 1887 are significant for two reasons. First, for the political consciousness that they reveal among Africans in Grahamstown, and second, for the ground they prepared for later developments. The Grahamstown Native Vigilance Association of 1900³⁰ must have benefitted from the experience of the 1880's. Some continuity of leadership was provided by the involvement of J.J. Jabavu and R. Xola on both occasions.

The political group which seems to have had the greatest influence in Grahamstown at the turn of the century, was the South African Native Congress (SANC), formed tentatively in 1898.³¹ Its national leaders

²⁸ Odendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pg 17.

²⁹ CPP, G.6 - '88, pg 3.

³⁰ Discussed below, pp 190-197.

³¹ The date has been set at 1902 by both T.R.H. Davenport in South Africa: A Modern History, pg 154, and by T. Karis and G.M. Carter, From Protest to Challenge, A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, Vol.1, pg 9. A. Odendaal's recent M.A. thesis, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pg 65, indicates that 1898 is a more accurate date.

included A.K. Soga, W.B. Rubusana, J. Tunyiswa and Chief Umhalla.³² The mouthpiece of the organisation was the East London-based newspaper, Izwi Labantu, which was founded with funds provided by Cecil Rhodes. In the 1898 and 1904 Cape elections, the Congress supported the Progressive Party. The SANC organised its members into local voters' and location committees, and came to represent urban communities and their Vigilance Associations. Its aims were broad-based, although it never became a mass movement. The activities of the SANC increased after the Anglo-Boer war in the campaign for unity then undertaken. The organisation was assertive in its approach, and consequently never won the support of the influential Mfengu politician and editor of Imvo Zabantsundu, John Tengo Jabavu. The latter stressed co-operation with white politicians and played down ethnic differences.³³ Despite the absence of this influential man's support, the SANC was an important stimulus in the politicisation of the African intelligentsia early in the twentieth century.

The politicisation process of the late nineteenth century was affected by threatening legislation in 1887 and 1892, which reduced the numbers of Blacks able to qualify for the Cape franchise. The colour blind franchise of the 1853 Cape constitution allowed all males over the age of twenty-one with £25 of property, an annual salary of £50, or £25 with free board and lodging, to register as voters.³⁴ The 1887

³²A.K. Soga was a son of Revd. Tiyo Soga. He and Rubusana were the leading spokesmen for the SANC group. J. Tunyiswa of Queenstown and Chief Umhalla of Berlin were involved in 1891 in an unsuccessful attempt to extend the existing Native Vigilance Associations into colony-wide organisations. (Odendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pp 21-22, 70).

³³Odendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pp 22-23, 67, 71.

³⁴Odendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pg 5.

Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act eroded African voting rights in excluding tribal tenure as a basis for the property qualification. Most of the 19729 voters (24% of the total number) eliminated from the roll in consequence of the Act were Black. However, the biggest departure from the colour-blind principle came with the 1892 Franchise and Ballot Act, which raised the property qualification for new voters from £25 to £75. The £50 salary qualification was retained,³⁵ but a simple literacy test was included.³⁶ Although the Act effected a further, immediate reduction of 3348 Black voters,³⁷ the consequences were felt mainly in subsequent years.

Richard Moyer asserts in his study of the Mfengu that they learnt through experience that British justice and social equality would be denied them once they began to constitute an economic threat to the White colonists.³⁸ Alfred Milner himself opposed the principle of political equality for Blacks.³⁹ In Grahamstown, as in many other communities, probably a substantial number of people identified with the Journal subscriber who claimed that, "... you will find a great many people - even in this town - who do not think it right that the natives should have equal voting rights with the whites."⁴⁰ Active political involvement was not widespread among Blacks. Richard Rose-Innes maintained in his evidence before the Lagden Commission of

³⁵ J.L. McCracken, The Cape Parliament 1854-1910, pp 90, 92-94.

³⁶ Cdendaal, Development of African Organisational Politics in South Africa, pg 18.

³⁷ McCracken, Cape Parliament, pg 95.

³⁸ R. Moyer, A History of the Mfengu of the Eastern Cape, 1815-1865. (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, London Univ., 1976), Part I, pg 20.

³⁹ Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, pg 152.

⁴⁰ GTJ 8.10.04 "Ratepayer" to Editor.

1903-1905, that the real interest was elicited from among educated Africans.⁴¹ This contention was inadvertently confirmed by Martin Lutuli when he specified that the Natal Native Congress limited its membership to "'Christian and civilized'" Africans.⁴² Missionaries played a key role in the acculturation process; Peter Walshe claims that, "... Christian orientation provided a new social cohesiveness in that it created the concept of a wider community which transcended traditional or tribal units;"⁴³ In the late nineteenth century, mission schools bore the entire burden of African education.⁴⁴ Many Cape government officials regarded education and Christianity as the most effective instruments of inculcating Western culture, and assumed that the espousal of the latter was the ultimate aim of most Africans. This was certainly the view of Albany's location inspector, G.E. Nightingale who reported that some Africans were willing to finance school and church construction themselves, in order to reap the advantages of westernisation.⁴⁵

Grahamstown missionaries were fully aware of the function that schools fulfilled in attracting congregations, and by 1897 a large number of denominations offered schooling facilities for Blacks.⁴⁶ Grahamstown

⁴¹S. Trapido, "African Divisional Politics in the Cape Colony, 1884 to 1910," *JAH*, Vol.9, 1968, pg 87 footnote 25. (Referring to the evidence of R. Rose-Innes, from the South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1905, Vol.II, paragraph 8733).

⁴²P. Walshe, The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, pg 9, footnote. (Quoted from the South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1905. No further details given).

⁴³P. Walshe, Black Nationalism in South Africa: A Short History, pg 6.

⁴⁴Walshe, Black Nationalism in South Africa, pg 6.

⁴⁵CPP, G.8-'95, pg 5.

⁴⁶CPP, G.42-'98, pg 9.

newspaper opinion supported these endeavours from the point of view that "the advancement of the native" would be to the advantage of the colony.⁴⁷ The Mail favoured practical training, which would enable the African to support himself in the White economy.⁴⁸ Industrial work constituted an important part of the curriculum of the Kaffir Institution, founded in Grahamstown in 1860,⁴⁹ and the city's most important African educational institution. G.E. Nightingale was correct in his observation that Grahamstown Africans were deeply desirous of education. However, they were hindered by poverty and the shortage of facilities. In 1884, of the two thousand Africans of schoolgoing age in Albany, 495 attended schools. Grahamstown's five schools for Black pupils catered for 344 of this number.⁵⁰ Some attempts were made to extend schooling facilities for Africans in Grahamstown in the period under review; in 1901, the town council granted two land applications for mission schools.⁵¹

While education might have prepared the Africans for service in the Cape colonial economy, it often failed to affect the paternalistic attitude of Whites towards Blacks. The vast majority of English speakers are likely to have shared the opinion of the editor of The Cape Times, who wrote, "The native, ..., is to be regarded as a child. That is very well, provided the white man does not forget his parental duties. The native is a child, but a child who looks to us for justice and protection, and such advantages of education and moral instruction

⁴⁷GTJ 4.1.90.

⁴⁸GPM 5.10.91.

⁴⁹M.M. Goedhals, Nathaniel James Merriman, Archdeacon and Bishop 1849-1882. A Study in Church Life and Government. (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pg 336.

⁵⁰GTJ 15.3.84.

⁵¹CMB 28.8.01, 13.11.01, 27.11.01, 4.12.01 CA,3/AY 1/1/1/14.

as we can bring within his reach."⁵² G.E. Nightingale took just such a paternal interest in the people under his charge. His reports invariably attempt to assess the "progress" made by the communities he visited. The term "progress" is never defined, but is always linked with the adoption of European dress, traditions and concepts of morality. Alfred Wylde, Civil Commissioner of Port Elizabeth in 1882, was somewhat less tolerant of the Africans under his authority. "... as regards the masses, squalid barbarism in dirty pondoks is the prevailing desire. I have even known educated natives to relish the liberty of a red blanket and the taste again of Kaffir beer in a smoky wigwam."⁵³ Although many officials sensed that the root of the problem of restlessness among Africans was the insecurity of land tenure, few linked this with social evils like violence and alcohol abuse.⁵⁴

In Grahamstown, land in the two older locations, the Coloured location and the Fingo Village, was held on quitrent tenure.⁵⁵ Joint control was exercised by the town council and the government. The extent of the powers held by each was unclear, until the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act substantially eroded council authority by depriving it of the power to enforce rate payment in these areas.⁵⁶ That a definition of the powers exercised was necessary, became apparent in 1885 when Reverend S.J. Helm negotiated with the government, the purchase of twenty-four erven in the old Coloured location. The town council received official

⁵²The Cape Times 14.12.01.

⁵³CPP, G.8-'83, pg 62.

⁵⁴G.E. Nightingale and John Hemming (Civil Commissioner for Albany) both perceived this connection.

⁵⁵ G.7-'10, Annexure 445-1917, pg 2.
I am indebted to N. Southey for this reference.

⁵⁶Discussed above, pp 158-159.

confirmation of the deal for the first time with a draft payment of £57.16.3 for the land sold. The council initially refused to accept the money, questioning the legal and ethical basis of the agreement. The transaction had raised two issues; first, whether either the government or the council could sell location land without the consent of the other, and second, whether an individual had the right privately to deal with the government.⁵⁷ Unfortunately the matter was never tested in a court of law; when it appeared that the titles to the erven in question had actually been issued, the council conceded the sale to avoid litigation.⁵⁸

The municipal location was divided by the Fingo Village.⁵⁹ By the end of the nineteenth century, it seems to have been extended; the section north-east of the Fingo Village acquired the name "Taantje" or "Tantye", to which it was increasingly referred in the twentieth century.⁶⁰ The municipal location was more specifically under the authority of the town council than the Coloured location and Fingo Village. However, the need for the Civil Commissioner's attention to developments there was acknowledged.⁶¹ All three locations were on the town commonage and adjoined one another. Each was managed under the 1881 Municipal

⁵⁷ GTJ 10.9.85 TCM 9.9.85.

⁵⁸ GTJ 24.6.86 TCM 23.6.86.

⁵⁹ G.7-'10, Annexure 445-1917, pg 2.

⁶⁰ Several references have been found to the name "Taantje":
GTJ 4.12.99 "Umxosa" to Editor, CMB 6.4.04, 19.10.04
CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.
 Taantje seems to have come into existence somewhat earlier than T.R.H. Davenport has speculated in Black Grahamstown: The Agony of a Community, pg 4.

⁶¹ M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pg 283.

Regulations, and was patrolled by the Grahamstown police force. Authority was in the hands of different officials, however. The old Coloured location was controlled by an assistant field cornet, the Fingo Village by two headmen, and the municipal location by a town council employee, the borough ranger. The Albany location inspector exercised general supervision and collected quitrents.⁶² In 1895, in response to unrest in the municipal location, the council applied a modified system of control by African headmen to that area.⁶³ This was an unpopular measure. The appointees were little more than constables or detectives, and seem to have performed their duties in a singularly objectionable manner. The 5s tax levied annually from 1896 to cover the salaries of these men and the contribution to the location inspector, aroused considerable resentment, but protests did not elicit much sympathy from the municipal authorities.⁶⁴

By 1894, Grahamstown had a substantial group of 5173 Blacks living in the locations. 2931 of these were Xhosa, 1230 Mfengu, and 1012 were Coloured people.⁶⁵ The presence of a number of Africans and Coloureds within the city was barely tolerated by the White citizens. Many of their regular complaints about overcrowding, noise, drunkenness and the pollution of the surrounds, were quite justified. However, the responsibility for this often rested with the owners of the tenements, who neglected to provide suitable living and sanitation facilities.

⁶²AMR 2.2.94, No. 469, RM to GD, pp638-640
CA, 1/AY 9/46.

⁶³MCMB 12.12.94 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6, GTJ 17.1.95 TCM 16.1.95,
GTJ 25.4.95 TCM 24.4.95.

⁶⁴MCMB 12.2.96 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/6.

⁶⁵AMR 2.2.94, No. 469, RM to GD, pp 638-640 CA, 1/AY 9/46.

Fairly large groups of Blacks lived in Dell's Row in African Street, and Paradise Row in New Street. Smaller groups could be found scattered throughout the town. Dell's Row was arguably Grahamstown's worst example of a slum outside the locations. The 1884 Market Committee report on conditions there indicated that the Row comprised two cottages and two blocks of tenements, one of stone with seventeen rooms, and another of wood with fourteen rooms. The cottages were occupied by two Whites, one the caretaker of the Row, while sixty-one Africans roomed in the tenements. The only ordure closet provided was kept locked, because of the "dirty habits" of the tenants.⁶⁶ When the town council responded to the report by ordering the construction of six ordure closets,⁶⁷ a dispute arose over the ownership of the Row. A Grahamstown auctioneer, Peter Pote, hitherto thought to be the owner of the property, initially denied any connection with the "disgusting hole", claiming that he had ceded title to the erven.⁶⁸ On investigation the council established that he was ultimately responsible for the Row, and Pote was fined the surprisingly meagre sum of 20s for failing to provide adequate sanitation facilities.⁶⁹ The dispute continued for a while thereafter, but was settled when Pote became sole owner of Dell's Row. He vowed to rebuild it for "decent and respectable citizens",⁷⁰ but by the time of his death in 1895, he had made no more than minor improvements.⁷¹

⁶⁶ MCMB 13.2.84 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

Details of the report are given above, pp 154-155.

⁶⁷ MCMB 4.4.84 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

⁶⁸ GTJ 10.9.85 TCM 9.9.85.

⁶⁹ GTJ 10.9.85 (Resident Magistrate's Court: Town Council v Peter Pote).

⁷⁰ GTJ 26.3.91.

⁷¹ WLCMB 23.3.91 CA, 3/AY 1/2/2/1/8, GTJ 23.7.95.

Paradise Row in New Street was similarly lacking in sanitation facilities. It was jointly owned by three men, one of whom was a town councillor, David Sampson.⁷² His position in the Grahamstown community made his disregard of the municipal regulations all the more reprehensible. The Journal subscriber who asserted in 1886 that city councillors were "... among the greatest sinners in respect of letting houses in the town to Kafirs,"⁷³ quite possibly had a good deal of evidence to substantiate his claim. The Market Committee was obstructed by inadequate municipal regulations, from preventing the construction of cheap wooden tenements by those desirous of a quick financial profit. However, the Committee deemed the root of the Grahamstown slum problem to be the absence of legislation to prohibit Blacks from living outside the locations.⁷⁴ In view of this assertion, the Market Committee probably welcomed the segregationist provisions of the 1902 Native Reserve Locations Act.

As with other Victorian communities, the citizens of Grahamstown took pride in their British connections and suburban respectability. The Black population was allowed access to the urban area on sufferance. The attitudes of the town council, press and White residents were often hypocritical, although probably not consciously so. In 1894, a Mail editorial expressed outrage at the Johannesburg municipality's imposition of a curfew, and its refusal to allow Africans to walk on

⁷²MCMB 20.4.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

The other two owners were a local dairyman, J. Edkins, and the Secretary of the Eastern Province Guardian and Loan Investment Company.

⁷³GTJ 7.12.86 "A Householder" to Editor.

⁷⁴MCMB 12.2.84 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/4.

pavements or carry sticks or weapons. Yet, in that very column, the editor admitted that, "We have felt a strong desire to kick the natives who have ... rudely refused to make way for lady pedestrians."⁷⁵

Local expressions of disgust at the abuse of administrative authority in the Transvaal cannot be treated seriously in the light of a Grahamstown municipal regulation of 1888, which prohibited Africans from carrying "... sticks or other offensive weapons through the streets or thoroughfares of the city, ...,"⁷⁶ the attempted imposition of a curfew in 1904,⁷⁷ and the oft-expressed view of Grahamstown citizens that Africans should "... recognise the difference that exists socially between masters and servants and act accordingly," in their use of municipal facilities.⁷⁸

Incidents revealing racial hostility were reported from time to time in Grahamstown. Despite his unquestionable right to travel in a second-class railway carriage, J. Dyoba was loudly and publicly abused for doing so by a "Mr. Nelson", at the Grahamstown station. A touching sequel to this undignified story is worth relating. Dyoba was assured by a local schoolboy that God had made no mistake in creating him Black, "'No more ... than he made some cows white and some black, and Mr. Nelson had no right to abuse you for what you could not help.'⁷⁹ The

⁷⁵GPM 9.2.94.

⁷⁶GTJ 26.7.88 TCM 25.7.88. The council was in fact empowered to implement this regulation only in terms of Act 12 of 1893. (Clause 1b).

⁷⁷CMB 16.3.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.
Discussed below, pp 186-190, 193-194.

⁷⁸GTJ 8.12.00 "F.P." to Editor.

⁷⁹GTJ 2.7.87 J. Dyoba to Editor.

The writer does not specify which "Mr. Nelson" insulted him. It is not likely to have been A.E. Nelson. R.W. Nelson was not renowned for his racial tolerance, but there were a number of Nelsons living in Grahamstown at the time, and it could have been any one of them.

wisdom and tolerance of the school-child was not always shared by leading city officials. The Civil Commissioner, John Hemming, firmly maintained, in connection with the imprisonment of Whites and Coloureds together, that, "After a white man has suffered the degradation of such association, even for a week, can he possibly come out of it without being contaminated, and being worse than when he was forced into it?"⁸⁰ Furthermore, racial intolerance was not confined to Whites. In 1886, Reverend S.J. Helm saw fit to advise the separation of Coloured and African pupils at the Arbour Day celebrations of Queen Victoria's birthday, to ensure a peaceful day.⁸¹

In a lighter vein, occasional flashes of wry humour appear in the newspapers, when the reporters' sense of the ridiculous relieved the tensions and complexities of race relations. One gleeful article recounted the visit to a Grahamstown flower show of a Black man, "... dressed in the latest Parisian fashion, with gloves and walking stick. One gloved hand he gracefully held behind his back, with a finger between the leaves of Darwin's Theory of the Evolution of the Human Race!"⁸²

The issues at stake in the Albany district were no different from those of other parts of Africa; the struggle for possession of the land.

⁸⁰AMR 9.12.87, No. 648, RM to GD, pg 238 CA, 1/AY 9/42.

⁸¹WLCMB 23.8.86 CA, 3/AY 1/2/2/1/7.

⁸²GTJ 20.2.97.

The Mail revealed its own bias in 1891, in an editorial in which it complained that the Africans "... occupy a great deal of land which the Europeans would be glad to purchase, and still gladder to receive as a free giftThey do not supply in sufficient quantity the labour that the Colony needs."⁸³ In his study of the development and decline of African peasantry between 1870 and 1913, C. Bundy has noted that Albany farmers tried to ensure a cheap labour supply by renting farm-land to squatter-peasants.⁸⁴ They were not always successful; when opportunities arose for work in the mines or cities, the labour supply dwindled, for the men could quadruple their salaries in urban areas. Furthermore, they could be more certain of being paid the sum promised. It was not unusual for the farmer to reduce the pittance he paid his labourers once they had completed their contract.⁸⁵ Low wages and insufficient rations were at the root of the Albany farm labour problem.⁸⁶ Consequently, it is difficult to accept, without grave reservations, the claims in 1891 of the Albany location inspector, that Africans in his district worked for "... extremely high wages, ... so that the country location natives, as a whole, are about the most prosperous in the community...."⁸⁷ Only one year later, John

⁸³GPM 23.10.91.

⁸⁴C.Bundy, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry, pp 79-80.

⁸⁵GTJ 20.6.91 Budlwana to Editor.

⁸⁶GTJ 6.8.91 "H" to Editor, GTJ 5.2.01 L. Nyaniso to Editor. "H" maintained that because he paid his labourers daily at 9d, and gave an adequate weekly ration of eleven pints of mealies, ten pints of meal, one pound of sugar, half a pound of coffee, some salt and spans of tobacco, he had no labour problems.

⁸⁷CPP, G. 7-'92, pg 2.

Hemming reported to the Select Committee on the Labour Question that the average farm labourer's wage of 6s to 10s per month in Albany was "... altogether insufficient to admit of the people clothing themselves with decency,...." ⁸⁸

Stock theft, a common problem in agricultural areas, declined in Albany when food and work were plentiful. Even during lean years, Blue Book Reports indicate that in comparison with the hardships suffered, incidents of this crime were limited. ⁸⁹ At times, however, stock theft was one of the few means of survival for landless and unemployed people. The lengthy drought of the mid-1890's enlarged the landless Ciskeian peasantry ⁹⁰ and left Albany's African population in severe distress. By 1900, the majority of Grahamstown location inhabitants were unemployed and destitute, forced to keep themselves alive on blood and offal from the abattoirs, or by begging from door to door. ⁹¹ In Albany, the critical nature of the situation ended with the termination of the Anglo-Boer war in 1902. The mines were reopened, public works projects commenced and the drought broken. By 1903, an "outcry" for farm labour had developed. ⁹² But the position of African peasantry in general continued to decline in the face of pressure from white farmers and urban employees, eager for land and cheap labour. ⁹³

⁸⁸ CPP, C.2-'92, Appendix pp v-vi.

⁸⁹ This observation is made on the basis of Cape Blue Book Reports on Native Affairs for the District of Albany, 1883-1904.

⁹⁰ Bundy, The South African Peasantry, pg 117.

⁹¹ GTJ 13.2.00 W. Smith to Editor.

⁹² CPP, G.12-1904, pg 2.

⁹³ This trend is explored by Bundy in The South African Peasantry.

Vagrant and poverty-stricken Africans who sought refuge in Grahamstown locations simply swelled the numbers of the destitute there. The circumstances of the location population presented problems when it came to the payment of the town rate imposed on these areas. Reluctance to pay did not always stem from an inability to do so; at times it related to town council neglect of facilities there. In 1887, for example, residents of the old Coloured location indicated, when asked to pay rates overdue on their erven, that the council had never defined or repaired their streets. They paid the outstanding sums quite willingly on the condition that the streets would be attended to.⁹⁴ Such ready payment of arrears was an exception, however. In 1901 the Finance Committee demanded a weekly report on rate collection in the Coloured location, to encourage progress in the matter.⁹⁵ The provisions of the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act complicated the difficult problem of ensuring location rate payment; it remained for the council simply to do the best it could in the Fingo Village and the Coloured location. The generally improved arrear rate position by December 1904, testifies to the fact that the council managed adequately for the first few years at least.⁹⁶

Location revenue, derived mainly from the rents of erven and a certain amount brought in by rate payment,⁹⁷ was pitifully small in view of the

⁹⁴George Marshall's Journal 17.1.87 CL, MS 14, 589.

⁹⁵FCMB 15.1.01 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/5.

⁹⁶Discussed above, ch. 2, pp 45-46, and ch. 6, pp 158-159.

⁹⁷The amount paid in by the location inhabitants was not differentiated from the total amount paid in the form of the town rate. One of the few indications of the sums involved was given in 1900, when £215 was reported to have been due from the municipal locations in the form of arrear rates. (CMB 1.8.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13).

numbers living there. The sums spent on maintenance and improvement were even smaller; annual expenditure was limited almost entirely to the salary contribution to the municipal location inspector, and small sums for printing, advertising and minor improvements. If expenditure on items like disinfectants, fencing or contributions to the smallpox account were incurred, they were in all likelihood so trifling as to be unworthy of record. All the account statements examined⁹⁸ indicate that of the money derived from location sources a surplus remained which was not expended on location projects. The sums unaccounted for, vary. A random selection indicates that credit balances remained of £82.5.0 in 1889, £40.11.0 in 1896, a substantial £528.16.2 in 1901, accounted for in the payment of arrear rates, and £66.6.8 in 1904.⁹⁹ The citizens of Grahamstown were probably unaware that the contributions demanded of the location inhabitants were being absorbed into general municipal projects. Judging by the studied tolerance of the prevailing attitude to the local Black people, it is debateable whether many would have regarded this as unjust.

The reluctance to invest money in location projects manifested itself in the municipal public works programme, where the locations were always the last areas to receive consideration. Streets there did not win even the piecemeal attention given those in other parts of the city.¹⁰⁰ The most serious problem, and one which exposes the town councillors' startling and disturbing lack of concern for location

⁹⁸i.e. Those printed in The Journal for the period 1889-1904.

⁹⁹A more substantial list is given above, pg 153.

¹⁰⁰See above, ch. 4, pg 110.

requirements, was the grossly inadequate provision made for a water supply. Trifling amounts were spent on water tanks from time to time,¹⁰¹ but because of Grahamstown's unsatisfactory municipal supply and shortage of Corporation funds, no comprehensive scheme was undertaken. Only after the completion of the first stage of the Slaai Kraal works, did the council consider extending the advantages of the additional supply to location areas.

The location inhabitants derived their water from two main sources. A municipal tank near the railway station was supplied twice weekly with water for their use. However, those who used the tank complained that the water was insufficient even for their drinking purposes.¹⁰² The second source comprised five holes containing springs. Three were in the bed of a ravine, at the upper end of which was deposited the night-soil and refuse of the town. The fourth hole was in a river bed near the burial ground for animal carcasses, and the fifth was located just below the area on which the gasworks were constructed in 1894.¹⁰³ The inadequacy of the supply meant that standards of personal hygiene deteriorated, and that White households were liable to incipient disease introduced by domestic servants.¹⁰⁴ However, few people were prepared to battle with the recalcitrant council for a pure, reliable location

¹⁰¹ In 1904, for example, £106.15.6 was spent in this way. (GTJ 20.4.05).

¹⁰² GTJ 13.11.90 TCM 12.11.90.

¹⁰³ GPM 7.9.94 TCM 5.9.94.

¹⁰⁴ GTJ 10.11.87 TCM 9.11.87.

water supply. In this regard, the Ministers' Union¹⁰⁵ and clergymen like S.J. Helm and W. Turpin, acting in individual capacities, championed the cause of the Black people. Their concern ensured that the Black people had a voice, and that the council and citizens could not completely ignore the great suffering in the location. In 1894, Bishop A. Webb approached the local authority on behalf of a large number of location residents, to request that their water should be supplied directly through the city mains. The people he represented¹⁰⁶ had indicated their preparedness to pay a water rate in proportion to their means, rather than rely on the available supplies.¹⁰⁷ Their request went unheeded; the councillors could not even agree to spend £2 on cleaning the springs below the stercus pits.¹⁰⁸

The drought at the end of the nineteenth century provoked a water crisis of major proportions in the Grahamstown locations. One resident reported that a number of Blacks had died from lack of water, and appealed for help through the columns of The Journal. He described

¹⁰⁵ Little is known about this organisation. It existed as early as 1888 (GTJ 21.7.88 TCM 18.7.88), but the minute book for the period February 1896-May 1898 only, has survived. The membership of the Union at that point comprised the Wesleyan, Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist clergy of the city. United services were held monthly. Only one Black minister, the Methodist Samuel Ntsiko, is recorded as a member of the Union in the surviving minute book. (Ministers' Union Minute Book 5.2.96-18.5.98 CL, MS 15, 848).

¹⁰⁶ A large number (unspecified) of location residents had gathered at a public meeting and appointed Webb as their spokesman before the town council on the water issue. (GPM 7.9.94 TCM 5.9.94).

¹⁰⁷ GPM 7.9.94 TCM 5.9.94.

¹⁰⁸ GTJ 15.12.94 TCM 12.12.94, GTJ 17.1.95 TCM 16.1.95.

the distressing conditions in which old women roamed the locations in desperation, and young women begged - often unsuccessfully - for water in town.¹⁰⁹ The council opened several new springs, but not in time to stop a representation to the government on the insanitary and inadequate nature of the location supply. The general shortage was such that the council could merely claim in response to a government query, to have done the best possible in the circumstances.¹¹⁰ Its "best" was unsatisfactory in this case: in 1900, George Cory's analysis of a sample of location water produced the disturbing, but predictable result that the water was so polluted as to be unfit for human consumption.¹¹¹ A tour of inspection undertaken by the Mayor a year later, led him to conclude personally that the high location death rate was attributable to the unhealthy water.¹¹²

These findings provoked minor, but welcome changes to the supply offered. In December 1902, the council sanctioned the extension of the main water pipe along Albany Road,¹¹³ and in May 1904 ordered one thousand three inch pipes for use in the old Coloured location.¹¹⁴ The local authority proved surprisingly sympathetic towards Black people who were unable to pay the water rate. In 1903, at the request of Reverend S.J. Helm, the Finance Committee dropped its demands for water

¹⁰⁹GTJ 2.5.99 E. Tshongwana to Editor.

¹¹⁰CMB 5.7.99, 19.7.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹¹¹MCMB 13.7.00 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/9.

¹¹²CMB 31.7.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹³CMB 17.12.02, 23.12.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹¹⁴CMB 4.5.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

rate payments from some of those resident in the Coloured location.¹¹⁵ In general, the improvements were limited and affected those who lived in this area only. However, any change was welcome in signifying a growing awareness among councillors of the extent of the hardships endured by the Black population.

The location pollution problem presented another major health hazard. In 1899, "Umxosa" described the location in general, and Taantje in particular, as barely fit for human habitation. People lived, "... like cattle in kraals, worse than horses in stables, and no better than pigs in the sty, as these animals do not clean their sleeping places. So it is with us with our street, every bush and prickly pear fences are used as places for nightsoil, the result is that on wet days the smell is sickening, our street are [sic] gravelled with broken bottles, old tins, etc. ... There are cases of bad fever in the location, above the Kafir Mission House, there is one case of fever, one girl died two weeks ago, another one is very sick in the same house. Sir, who will help us?"¹¹⁶ The location inhabitants had no readily available solution to their difficulty. The few public ordure closets in no way met the need. The council seemed to prefer appointing constables to track down offenders forced to use the bushes, to providing adequate facilities.¹¹⁷ The problem was exacerbated by African ignorance of Western sanitation methods. Municipal officials viewed the incorrect use of ordure closets as a cultural, rather than an

¹¹⁵FCMB 19.5.03 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/5.

¹¹⁶GTJ 4.12.99 Umxosa to Editor.

¹¹⁷CMB 13.7.98, 31.8.98 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

educational deficiency. The Medical Officer of Health himself attributed the insanitary condition of location latrines to "... the filthy habits of the natives themselves who although they have suitable places provided for them with all the necessary conveniences persist in defecating upon the floor of the latrine or on the ground immediately adjoining."¹¹⁸ By 1894, despite the fact that two thousand Africans came into the city daily to work, there were no lavatory facilities for their use. The Resident Magistrate was placed in the awkward position of having to punish those who defecated in the undergrowth about the city.¹¹⁹ In such cases, he was as lenient as possible.¹²⁰ The situation changed little over the next decade.

Given the insecurity and filth of the conditions in which Grahamstown's Black population lived, it is not surprising that abuse of alcohol was widespread in the city, as in the entire Cape Colony after 1884.¹²¹ The spread of alcoholism was facilitated by the availability of cheap liquor, especially brandy. The brews consumed were of a very dubious nature. The mixture popular in Albany was, according to the Civil Commissioner, a "... vile ... decoction of tobacco juice...."¹²² The concern felt by white colonists at the trend towards drunkenness was in many respects selfishly motivated, and summed up in The Journal's

¹¹⁸MOHRB 19.9.98 CA, 3/AY 5/2/1/1.

¹¹⁹AMR 2.2.94, No. 469, RM to GD, pg 641 CA, 1/AY 9/45.

¹²⁰GTJ 20.12.92. In this case in December 1892, he imposed a nominal fine of 1s.

¹²¹E.H. Brookes, The History of Native Policy in South Africa from 1830 to the Present Day, pg 112.
An examination of the Blue Book Reports on Native Affairs for the District of Albany indicates that Brookes's contention applies to Albany.

¹²²CPP, G.12-'87, pg 5.

expression of fear that the degradation of the African peasantry would retard colonial development.¹²³ Location inspector G.E. Nightingale, strongly disapproved of the trend: "... these wretched people seem utterly unable to resist the temptation of strong drink and are fast becoming a besotted, depraved and shameless class of humanity."¹²⁴

Legislative control of liquor sales to Blacks was extended in a series of Acts passed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The measures developed in scope and stringency as time passed. In 1883, the issue of licenses for the supply and sale of alcohol in locations without the governor's consent was prohibited.¹²⁵ The effectiveness of these restrictions was reduced by the fact that Africans in Albany had started mixing brandy into Kaffir beer.¹²⁶ The latter was classed as an "intoxicating liquor" only in 1891,¹²⁷ by which time abuse of alcohol was more rife than before in municipal locations. The 1898 Liquor Law Amendment Act imposed further restrictions by requiring retail and bottle licenses of wholesalers supplying Africans. License renewals could be prohibited by petitions from more than half of the registered voters in a Divisional area, and licensing courts were empowered to impose conditions on location sales of alcohol.¹²⁸ The latter provision was ultimately responsible for the breakdown of the

¹²³GTJ 7.4.83.

¹²⁴CPP, G.8-'95, pg 6.

¹²⁵Act 28, 1883, Clauses 20-22.
An exception was made if the alcohol was intended for medicinal purposes.

¹²⁶CPP, G.2-'85, pg 4.

¹²⁷Act 25, 1891, Clause 31.

¹²⁸Act 28, 1898, Clauses 1, 3, 6.

Act. When appeals were made against the restrictions imposed, the Higher Courts generally ruled that licensing courts had acted beyond their legal capacity in framing conditions of sale. This was unfortunate; Albany's Civil Commissioner noted a decrease in the spread of alcoholism in the short period between the promulgation of the Act and the judgements of the Higher Courts.¹²⁹

The implementation of martial law during the Anglo-Boer war placed an almost complete prohibition on alcohol sales to Africans, who required permits from a Magistrate, Chief of Police or field-cornet, even for a mere half pint of liquor.¹³⁰ Prohibition probably led to illegal location canteens, but to the Albany location inspector the advantages were immediately apparent. In 1900 he noted enthusiastically that it was "... becoming quite a rarity to see a drunken native."¹³¹ Regulated sales of alcohol outlasted the Anglo-Boer war. According to an official report, in 1903 alcoholism in Albany was still at a minimum in the towns, and almost entirely absent from rural locations.¹³²

The Grahamstown town council had been deeply concerned about the rising consumption of alcohol. In 1888 a regulation had been framed to abolish the manufacture and sale of Kaffir beer, but rejected by the government¹³³ until the municipality had been legally empowered to impose the restriction in terms of the 1893 Local Bodies' Increased Powers Act.¹³⁴ The regulation passed then was difficult to implement.

¹²⁹CPP, G.50-1900, pg 6.

¹³⁰GTJ 10.3.00.

¹³¹CPP, G.52-1901, pg 6.

¹³²CPP, G.12-1904, pg 1.

¹³³GTJ 18.10.88 TCM 17.10.88, GTJ 29.11.88 TCM 28.11.88.

¹³⁴Act 12, 1893, Clause 1a; GTJ 11.11.93 TCM 8.11.93.

George Marshall maintained that the manufacture of Kaffir beer in the Grahamstown locations only ended in March 1898¹³⁵ - and indeed it was probably just conducted in secrecy. This date coincides with the Liquor Law Amendment Act, restricting alcohol sales in the location.¹³⁶ In many ways, the prohibition of Kaffir beer manufacture did more harm than good. Although brandy was at times added to the brew, this was done almost exclusively by the buyers rather than the manufacturers. Kaffir beer fulfilled an important social function in the Grahamstown location economy, where old women without means of support were granted the trade monopoly. Both George Marshall, municipal locations inspector, and the Resident Magistrate opposed the prohibitive regulation. The former claimed that Kaffir beer was manufactured and sold in an orderly, open manner,¹³⁷ and the latter recognised that it provided basic nutrition for a large number of Blacks.¹³⁸ This was also the claim of one James Snaker, who protested laboriously that, "My Kafir Beer is my food an [sic] my wife is my wife and my children too.... I ask why honest James Snaker cannot mak [sic] his own food which kafir-beer is."¹³⁹ Despite these protests, the council included in the new regulations issued after the 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act, one which prohibited the manufacture of Kaffir beer in the locations.¹⁴⁰

The restrictions on Kaffir beer consumption were based on mistaken, but usually well-meaning assumptions as to its intoxicating effects. The

¹³⁵GTJ 15.4.99 G. Marshall to Editor.

¹³⁶Discussed above, pp 184-185.

¹³⁷GTJ 15.4.99 G. Marshall to Editor.

¹³⁸GPM 16.3.94 TCM 14.3.94; CPP, G.50-1900, pg 6.

¹³⁹GTJ 12.4.99 J. Snaker to Editor.

¹⁴⁰CMB 9.9.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

curfew of 1904 resulted less from a concern for the welfare of location inhabitants, than from the desire of White citizens to ensure their own safety. Curfew regulations were proposed on several occasions between 1883 and 1904, usually after acts of violence perpetrated by Black against White inhabitants. Ironically, the measure was passed by the council after a period of peace and calm in Grahamstown, when its opponents were caught off guard. All along, resistance from White citizens to the measure varied in intensity according to the city crime rate, and waned perceptibly as the years passed. In 1888, for example, a proposal for a curfew was rejected by a large number of councillors.¹⁴¹ But by 1891, there was a general shift in favour of a curfew as a result of the rape and murder of a young girl near Alicedale, and a series of assaults.¹⁴² Fear gripped the district. The Albany Farmers' Congress demanded that Africans should in future always be fully clad.¹⁴³ A Grahamstown lady proposed the formation of a women's shooting club.¹⁴⁴ The town council itself was not stirred beyond a decision to rid the city of unemployed Black people by implementing the provisions of the 1879 Vagrancy Act.¹⁴⁵ At this stage, Reverend W. Turpin was the only person who put forward moderate and well-considered suggestions. In a location survey undertaken privately, Turpin had discovered that most of the huts accommodated between ten and twenty-two people of all ages and both sexes, with no partitions to provide privacy. He quite justifiably suggested that a curfew would be unnecessary if the council

¹⁴¹ GTJ 21.6.88 TCM 20.6.88, GTJ 13.9.88 TCM 12.9.88, GTJ 27.9.88
TCM 26.9.88.

¹⁴² GTJ 24.3.91, GPM 13.5.91. The murder took place in February 1891.

¹⁴³ GPM 26.3.91.

¹⁴⁴ GTJ 4.4.91 "A Grahamstown Lady" to Editor.

¹⁴⁵ GTJ 23.4.91 TCM 22.4.91, GTJ 14.5.91 TCM 13.5.91, Act 23, 1879.

improved the conditions in which people lived.¹⁴⁶

Turpin's advice drew no response from the local authority. Cases of sporadic violence occurred again in 1894, climaxing in the murder of a well-known Grahamstown couple, Mr. and Mr. J. Gadd.¹⁴⁷ The Resident Magistrate attributed the crimes to abuse of alcohol;¹⁴⁸ doubtless the frustration caused by filth and slum dwelling further influenced those responsible for the crimes. The town council reacted to the deteriorating situation by proposing a curfew for Blacks between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.¹⁴⁹ The measure was so severe that it drew concerted protest from both local newspapers and Black residents, who appointed a delegation to confer with the councillors on the matter. The motion was passed,¹⁵⁰ but on this occasion the Black population was aided by the fact that the municipal charter did not empower the council to impose curfew restrictions.¹⁵¹ The 1895 Local Authorities Increased Powers' Act overcame this limitation,¹⁵² but by then the situation in Grahamstown had quietened considerably, and there seemed little need for a curfew. The outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war in 1899 brought with it a period of martial law, which kept both Black and White indoors at night. The matter was consequently left in abeyance until martial law

¹⁴⁶GPM 15.4.91 W.H. Turpin to Editor.

¹⁴⁷GTJ 8.11.94 TCM 7.11.94, GTJ 15.11.94 TCM 14.11.94.

¹⁴⁸CPP, G.8-'95, pg 4.

¹⁴⁹GTJ 8.11.94 TCM 7.11.94.

¹⁵⁰GTJ 22.11.94 TCM 21.11.94, GTJ 29.11.94 TCM 28.11.94.
The majority was small, i.e. three votes.

¹⁵¹GPM 4.6.95.

¹⁵²Act 30, 1895, Clauses 2-3.

restrictions had been lifted. The probability that this action left the White residents feeling vulnerable, makes the council's recommendation in favour of a curfew in 1903 less surprising than at first appears. Small groups of councillors battled to delay its imposition as long as possible. Chief among these were H. Fitchat and J.A. Tomlinson, whose support group included D. Knight, J. Orsmond, W.P. Slater and M. Hawken.¹⁵³ R.W. Nelson's stance is confusing. In 1903, as chairman of the Market Committee, he had to propose a curfew between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m., but openly expressed his personal opposition to it.¹⁵⁴ However, when the motion was discussed after a six month adjournment, he supported it and the measure was passed.¹⁵⁵

Within a few weeks he had reversed his position again claiming to be in full sympathy with the deputation of Black residents present at that council meeting.¹⁵⁶ There is no readily available explanation for Nelson's uncertain conduct, apart perhaps from that of an impulsive and unpredictable temperament.

Black opinion ranged unanimously against the regulation, but found little effective support. A group of "influential white people of the

¹⁵³ There seems to have been no particular pattern to the membership of this group. H. Fitchat and D. Knight were merchants and general dealers, J.A. Tomlinson a butcher, J. Orsmond a builder and M. Hawken a wagonbuilder. (Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, 1901, pp 248-260). W.P. Slater worked for The Journal. (The Grahamstown Year-Book and Directory 1905-1906, pg 18).

¹⁵⁴ GPM 18.9.03 TCM 16.9.03.

¹⁵⁵ GPM 18.3.04 TCM 16.3.04.

¹⁵⁶ GPM 8.4.04 TCM 6.4.04.

town" - unidentified, but as it transpired, inclusive of most of the local clergy - informed the council of its intention of forwarding a petition of protest to the government.¹⁵⁷ The local authority remained unmoved, commenting later in self-righteous vein that it failed to see "... that the respectable people being at the Location have any reason to feel aggrieved at the exclusion from the Tcwn at night time of others less worthy than themselves."¹⁵⁸

In Grahamstown, the Civil Commissioner and other government officials were removed from the nerve centre of nascent Black political consciousness. Consequently, their observations on local Black politics are superficial. While the general assertion that Africans in Albany had no interest in politics¹⁵⁹ was probably true for the majority, it overlooked the burgeoning activity which by 1900 had led to the formation of a Grahamstown Native Vigilance Association (NVA),¹⁶⁰ a branch of the South African Native Congress (SANC). Little is known of the workings and membership of the NVA. Neither the press nor the town council comprehended the significance of the Association, or showed interest in its work. Consequently, only brief reference is made to its existence, and its structure and organisation remain obscure. It is

¹⁵⁷ GPM 8.4.04 TCM 6.4.04.

¹⁵⁸ CMB 4.5.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹⁵⁹ For example: CPP, G.3-'84, pg 5; G.5-'86, pg 4, G.6-'88 pg 3.

¹⁶⁰ The existence of the NVA became apparent when it approached the council on the need for water tanks and improved sanitation facilities in the location. (CMB 28.11.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/13). A. Odendaal has confirmed that as yet, no more specific date than 1900 has been found for the formation of the Grahamstown NVA, and that this date coincides with efforts by the SANC to establish local branches. (A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence, 23.4.1983).

apparent that Grahamstown's Black clergy filled a key role in the Vigilance Association. The Chairman in 1900 and 1901 was the Reverend Samuel Ntsiko,¹⁶¹ a Wesleyan minister.¹⁶² By 1904 he had been succeeded by Robert Xola.¹⁶³ The Reverend George E. Nzungu of St. Philip's Mission (Church of the Province of South Africa)¹⁶⁴ was the Secretary to the Association.¹⁶⁵ By 1904 he had achieved the distinction of serving as Assistant Secretary to J. Tunyiswa in the executive body of the SANC.¹⁶⁶ The Reverend J.J. Jabavu's position within the Association has not been established.

These were men of great quality and ability, who provided the NVA with strong leadership. For the rest, the local membership is unknown. It is probably safe to assume that S.T. Danga, who had played a part in the Native Education Association of the 1880's and was still a registered voter in 1903,¹⁶⁷ became involved in the NVA. The extent of its influence is difficult to assess; the participation of local clergymen must have affected the politicisation of the people to whom they ministered. This would have been limited however, because most Black Grahamstonians were concerned with the battle for survival, and could

¹⁶¹CMB 5.12.00, 6.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁶²Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1901, pg 12.

¹⁶³GPM 8.4.04 TCM 6.4.04.

¹⁶⁴Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1903, pg 1012.

¹⁶⁵GPM 23.9.04 TCM 21.9.04.

¹⁶⁶GPM 7.10.04 (J.J. Jabavu's report on the Fifteenth Annual Native Congress).

¹⁶⁷Discussed above pp 161 and footnote 21. The Reverend Ebenezer Magaba had been transferred from Grahamstown, and was working at Queenstown (Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, 1901, pg 174).

have had little time and energy for political activity. Of the four known leaders, J.J. Jabavu alone was not a registered voter in 1903.¹⁶⁸ The Black franchise-holders on the 1903 Grahamstown Voters' List - four Indian, ninety-four Coloured and seventy-six African - formed 9,47% of the total number of Grahamstonians registered to vote.¹⁶⁹ The absence of Jabavu's name from the list probably relates to the mobility of the

¹⁶⁸ 1903 was the first year in which the racial groupings of voters were specified in the Grahamstown Voters' Lists. When using the Lists for the period up until 1903, one has to rely on a combination of the name, occupation and place of residence of the voter in order to establish his racial identity. These criteria are too vague to be of much use; many Coloured people had English or Afrikaans names, and a number of Whites resided in the locations, or were engaged in the kind of menial work often performed by African people. Voters' Lists do not appear to have been issued during the Anglo-Boer war, in the years 1900-1902.

¹⁶⁹ Survey of Racial Groupings in the 1903 Grahamstown Voters' List

<u>Racial Grouping</u>	<u>Number of Voters</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Hottentot ("H")	36	
Malay ("M")	2	
Other ("O")	56	
Total Coloured Voters	94	5,12
Kaffir ("K")	69	
Mfengu ("F")	6	
Damara ("D")	1	
Total African voters	76	4,14
Indian	4	0,21
European/White	1663	90,53

Percentage of Black voters in 1903: 9,47%

A key to the code of symbols used to indicate the racial identities of the voters - "H", "M", "O" etc. - is neither given with the 1903 Voters' Lists, nor specified in Act 48 of 1899, in terms of which the Lists were framed. I am indebted to Roger Beck for his help in obtaining this information.

early churchmen, but also raises a broader issue. Often churchmen were unpropertied and relatively poor, and therefore failed to qualify as voters although many fulfilled important political functions.¹⁷⁰

Few White citizens could have been aware of the political awakening taking place in the locations. The NVA concerned itself with the struggle to secure improved living conditions for location residents in three key areas; the water supply, sanitation facilities and the curfew restriction of 1904. Its mediums and methods of approach were carefully selected to be acceptable to, and to allay the suspicions of the local authority and White residents. Consequently, these were confined in the main to meetings, appeals and deputations to the town council, and letters of protest to the press. The most intensive campaign in the period 1900-1904, was undertaken when curfew restrictions were sanctioned in 1904.¹⁷¹ This provoked the appearance before the council of a deputation of four "Coloured" men, inclusive of Robert Xola, George Nzungu and J.J. Jabavu.¹⁷² They clearly represented the Grahamstown NVA, although this was not officially stated. The visit exposes the extent of the organisation of the Association.

At this point, the Association's chief error was its failure to predict the support given to the curfew motion, or to respond to it by organising mass opposition. The deputation's expression of surprise at the suddenness of its introduction was not entirely justified. The

¹⁷⁰A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence, 23.4.1983.

¹⁷¹GPM 18.3.04 TCM 16.3.04.

¹⁷²The fourth member of the delegation was not specified.

curfew regulation had been accepted after a six month adjournment,¹⁷³ and the only surprising aspect was that little recent crime or violence could justify its imposition. The NVA had had good warning.

On the other hand, the Association prepared a case for the immediate repeal of the curfew regulation with great care, couching its pleas in humble and diffident terms. The deputation stressed the difficulty and inconvenience of enforcement, and the hardship and bitterness that would be experienced by Black people. The group could not be persuaded to act outside its instructions by treating with the council for shorter curfew hours; it discussed total repeal only. This indicates a certain maturity; compromise might have been regarded by location inhabitants as betrayal. It is apparent that while members of the delegation were in complete sympathy with those affected by the curfew and saw themselves as true spokesmen for the location inhabitants, they were conscious of the barriers that separated them from those they sought to represent. Jabavu specified that the curfew regulation did not apply to many of the "class" of the delegation.¹⁷⁴

Little came of the deputation's visit to the council; the Governor's eventual refusal to sanction the curfew regulation was unrelated to the Black opposition. Rather, his decision was motivated by the protests of the clergy and the fact that local opinion on curfew implementation was never sounded in a public meeting.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ GPM 18.9.03 TCM 16.9.03, GPM 18.3.04 TCM 16.3.04.

¹⁷⁴ GPM 8.4.04 TCM 6.4.04.

¹⁷⁵ GPM 6.3.11.

The exact date of his rejection of the regulation is unclear. Reference was made to the Governor's action in a public meeting in 1911 on a new curfew motion. I am grateful to N. Southey for this reference.

The Association members were self-consciously aware of the distinguished nature of the South African Native Congress leadership, and probably greeted with enthusiasm the SANC's plans to hold its 1904 conference in Grahamstown. The choice of a conference venue proved difficult, and the NVA's application for use of the town hall provoked a lengthy and heated town council debate.¹⁷⁶ Most councillors believed that letting the hall to African people would be a "dangerous" precedent. Only three of them supported the application - George Marshall, T.F.B. van der Riet¹⁷⁷ and surprisingly, the unpredictable R.W. Nelson. Nelson vigorously criticised councillor H.R. Wood(M.L.A.) for courting the favour of African voters during the election and disregarding their interests thereafter.¹⁷⁸ The indictment of Wood is particularly serious in view of the support given to the Progressive Party by the SANC in the 1904 election.¹⁷⁹

The application was refused, but it revealed some of the dynamics of local Black-White relations. The Deputy Mayor, H.F. Oliver, probably summed up the opinion of most Whites when he commented that "... he did not know what the Vigilance Association was; it might turn out to be a political association, and if there was one thing more abominable than another, it was politics among the natives."¹⁸⁰ Hopefully not all would have supported the extreme view of the Journal subscriber who

¹⁷⁶GPM 23.9.04 TCM 21.9.04.

¹⁷⁷Van der Riet was an attorney. (The Grahamstown Year-Book and Directory, 1905-1906, pg 31).

¹⁷⁸GPM 30.9.04 TCM 28.9.04.

¹⁷⁹Wood's involvement in the Progressive Party is discussed above, ch. 7, pp 232-234.

¹⁸⁰GPM 30.9.04 TCM 28.9.04.

asserted that, "What the natives want is a little of the late Transvaal Government's rule, then they would appreciate the freedom they at present enjoy in this Colony."¹⁸¹ From the absence of letters from White citizens published in condemnation of the council's ruling, it may be assumed that most favoured - however reluctantly or uneasily - the decision made.

The Black community was united in opposition to the resolution.¹⁸² The most persuasive and moving letter of protest came from J.J. Jabavu. His incisive comments on the significance of the SANC reduced the council's ruling to a spiteful act of undignified pettiness, and is worth quoting at length:

We are the disciples of such eminent men of great calibre as Dr. Muir, Andrew Smith, M.A., George Baker, Esq., and some are the alumni of American and European colleges and universities and yet we are told by the Grahamstown few that we have not yet learnt the most primary lesson "cleanliness is godliness [sic]."

(A councillor had protested against the "odour" that Africans might leave in the hall). Jabavu topped his scenario with a graphic analogy:

Having read the paper containing the refusal last night I soon fell in a trance; afterwards I suddenly awoke and lo and behold I began to meditate within me: "Am I in the City of the Saints, or North of Russia, or in the Southern States of America?" On recovering myself in the morning I found

¹⁸¹ GTJ 8.10.04 "Ratepayer" to Editor.

¹⁸² A number of letters of objection were published, for example, GPM 5.10.04 and 10.10.04 "S, A Coloured Ratepayer" to Editor, GPM 12.10.04 Toni Bapoti Xota to Editor.

myself still "In urbem sanctum," to my great disappointment and regret.¹⁸³

The Journal and The Mail avoided taking sides in this dispute; editorials on the town council debate are conspicuous by their absence. The SANC conference was held in the St. Clement's schoolroom in the Grahamstown location. J.J. Jabavu submitted two reports of proceedings for publication in The Mail.¹⁸⁴ The Journal did not refer to the meetings at all. If the 1904 conference stimulated the growth of local African political consciousness, this would have become evident only in subsequent years.

The town council's dealings with its Black population between 1883 and 1904 do it little credit. The absence of real interest or concern for the welfare of the location inhabitants is mirrored in the neglect of crucial sanitation and water facilities. Neither an individual nor a group in the council undertook the task of championing the interests of the Coloured and African people. R.W. Nelson was too unpredictable and inconsistent to fill this role, even in view of his stance in the debates on allowing SANC delegates to use the town hall. The local clergy acted outside the confines of the council, and their effect on council policy was limited. Little of material or quantifiable improvement had been secured by 1904; the locations remained the overcrowded, insanitary, unhealthy, impoverished slums, filled with destitute and dislocated people, that they had been in 1883.

¹⁸³GPM 3.10.04. J.J. Jabavu to Editor.

¹⁸⁴GPM 7.10.04, 12.10.04. These are possibly the only press reports on the conference that exist, as A. Odendaal has indicated that the files for the SANC mouthpiece, Izwi Labantu, are missing for the period 1903-1905 (A. Odendaal to R. Sellick, personal correspondence, 23.4.1983).

Other developments had taken place. There was a growing belief among Black people that education would ensure economic and social mobility. This conviction has not been vindicated by subsequent experience. However, the picture was not entirely gloomy. The growth of political consciousness in the Grahamstown locations would give the African people a means of self-expression in the socio-political milieu into which they were being absorbed. In the years between 1883 and 1904, the barrier against the social, political and economic interaction of Black and White in Grahamstown, was the creation of the latter rather than the former. Fear that Black violence might be directed against White citizens, and concern over the local administration of public health - Swanson's "sanitation syndrome"¹⁸⁵ - were key factors in the growing support in Grahamstown for discriminatory regulations to control the movements of Black people. Maynard Swanson's assertions on Cape race legislation can be applied to Grahamstown in the period reviewed:

The location [regulations] ... could never solve the problems of African urbanisation and white anxiety, but [they] served to define the issues and set the pattern of response, it became clear that ... the ideological and institutional foundations of urban segregation had been laid.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵M. Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1901." *JAH*, Vol.18, No. 3, 1977, pg 387.

¹⁸⁶Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome," pg 408.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GRAHAMSTOWN'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Grahamstown Representatives in the House of Assembly 1883-1904¹

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sessions</u>	<u>Years in House</u>
Atherstone, Dr. W.G.	1881-1883	3
Ayliff, J.	1879-1885	10 (3 years Victoria East)
Douglass, A.	1884-1903	20
Wood, J.E.	1886-1900	18 (3 years Albany)
Luke, G.	1889 +	- (Died before taking his seat)
Wood, H.R.	1902-1907	6
Jameson, Dr. L.S.	1904-1910	11 (4 years Kimberley)

Grahamstown Representatives to take seats in the Cabinet between 1883 and 1904.²

Colonial Secretary

Ayliff, J. (M.L.A.) 13 May 1884 - 3 March 1885.

Douglass, A. (M.L.A.) 19 February 1902 - 29 May 1902.

Commissioner of Public Works

Douglass, A. (M.L.A.) 30 May 1902 - 21 February 1904.

Prime Minister

Jameson, Rt. Hon. Dr. L.S., P.C., C.B. (M.L.A.)

22 February 1904 - 2 February 1908.

¹ R. Kilpin, The Romance of a Colonial Parliament pp 137-161.

² Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 165-169.

Albany Representatives in the House of Assembly, 1883-1904.³

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sessions</u>	<u>Years in House</u>
Wright, E.C.	1874-1883	10
Gush, J.	(1867-1878) (1883)	13
Wood, J.G.	1879-1887	9
Crosbie, R.	(1884-1888) (1894-1903)	15
Norton, J.O.	1888-1898	11
Trower, J.	1889-1893	5
Demaine, J.	1894 †	- (Unseated before Parliament met)
Sampson, V.	1898-1907	10
Thomas, W.	1904-1910	7

Albany Representatives to take up seats in the Cabinet
between 1883 and 1904.⁴Attorney-General

Sampson, V., K.C. (M.L.A.) 22 February 1904 - 2 February 1908.

³Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 137-161.

⁴Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 165-169.

Men who Represented the South Eastern Circle
in the Legislative Council, 1883-1904.⁵

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sessions</u>	<u>Years in Council</u>
Geard, J.	1879-1883	10 (5 years Eastern Divisions)
Miller, J.	1879-1887	14 (5 years Eastern Divisions)
Cawood, S.	1883	20 (19 years Eastern Divisions)
Atherstone, W.G.	1884-1890	7
Ebden, A.	1884-1890	12 (5 years Western Province)
Savage, W.	1888	1
Wilmot, A.	1889-1910	22
Dolley, J.F.	1891-1903	13
Bellingan, P.S.	1891-1907	17
Pyott, J.	1904-1907	4

⁵Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 127-135.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GRAHAMSTOWN'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

D. Fraser has asserted that for Victorians, politics began "... at their own front gates." They were as immensely concerned with the incarceration of the poor in workhouses and the sweeping of their pavements as they were with matters of national concern.⁶ Parochial issues were drawn into the controversies of rival parliamentary parties, hence local institutions became additional battlegrounds for party conflict.⁷ At the Cape by contrast, ideology and party programmes were comparatively insignificant in shaping group loyalties in the colonial parliament, because parties were late in developing.⁸ Nevertheless, controversial parochial matters could on occasion be seized upon by politicians anxious to promote a particular group.

Party organisation began at the Cape with the formation of the Zuid Afrikaansche Boeren Bescherminings Vereeniging in 1878. This group, which sought to protect the interests of farmers, was nurtured into the Afrikaner Bond in 1882 by J.H. Hofmeyr.⁹ In the latter nineteenth century, no government could command a majority without the support of the Bond. The Progressive Party, which became substantially a party for English speakers, was formed tentatively in the 1890's,¹⁰ but only managed to win the 1903-1904 Cape election because of the disfranchisement of those who had rebelled during the Anglo-Boer war. The "South

⁶D. Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England, pg 9.

⁷Fraser, Urban Politics, pp 154-155.

⁸See above, ch. 1, pp 3-4.

⁹T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond 1880-1911, pg 16, ch. 3.

¹⁰Discussed below, pg 220.

African Party" was the name given to the supporters of Schreiner's government in 1898,¹¹ moderates who included J.X. Merriman, R. Solomon and J.W. Sauer.¹² The re-enfranchisement of the Cape rebels enabled them to win the 1908 election.¹³

In the period 1883-1904, party political divisions did not dictate the resolution of municipal affairs in Grahamstown. Very few colonists of Dutch descent lived in the city.¹⁴ Consequently, English traditions and Victorian "mores" usually went unchallenged. However, the existence of local class consciousness became evident in the two attempts made at political organisation by working class citizens. The first was in 1883, when the Working Men's Political Association was formed,¹⁵ and the second in 1891, when the Grahamstown Employees' Association came into being.¹⁶ The former organisation had a broader

¹¹W.P. Schreiner was prime minister from 14 October 1898-17 June 1900. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pg 165). See below, pg 226.

¹²John X. Merriman was Treasurer between October 1898 and June 1900, and Cape prime minister from February 1908-May 1910. Richard Solomon was Attorney-General from October 1898-June 1900. J.W. Sauer was Commissioner of Public Works between October 1898 and June 1900. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 166-168).

¹³Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 189, 262-263.

¹⁴No figures have been found to indicate the ratio of English to Afrikaans citizens. This contention is made on the basis of the absence of Afrikaner group activity or organisation in Grahamstown. In 1897, when Ds. George Rudman became the leader of the "verstrooide skape" of the Grahamstown Dutch Reformed community, "Hulle sou ... so min gewees het dat die hou van dienste nie kon verg nie." An independent Dutch Reformed community was only established in 1916. (Kommissie van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerkraad, Grahamstad (Opstellers), Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente, Grahamstad: Kort Geskiedenis tot op 1937, pg 3)

¹⁵GTJ 9.10.83. I am indebted to Dr. H.C. Hummel for this reference.

¹⁶GTJ 16.7.91.

vision and overtly political objectives, but the latter, with its concentration on parochial interests, survived longer and achieved more.

Depression in the 1880's provoked the organisation of the Working Men's Political Association. Like other towns in the colony, there was severe unemployment in Grahamstown. About seventy men had indicated their interest in the formation of the Association, but few of them turned up at its first meeting in October 1883.¹⁷ However, a president - David Sampson¹⁸ - and a committee were chosen, monthly meetings prescribed, and the membership subscription fixed at 1s monthly. The organisation planned to throw its support behind parliamentarians who would protect working class interests. Protectionism was not necessarily the proclaimed policy of the Association,¹⁹ but most of its members were avowed protectionists, for they believed that import duties would foster the growth of industry.

The muddled thinking and inexperience of the conveners of the Association became evident at the first meeting when the speaker, local painter and afforestation enthusiast Walter Smith, used the platform of the meeting to oppose protectionism and applaud afforestation. In the opinion of one disenchanted member, "What he had said would be interesting enough for niggers, but they had nothing to do with treeplanting."²⁰ Despite great promise, the Association failed to capture the imagination

¹⁷GTJ 9.10.83. The meeting was scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., but only by 8 p.m. were the numbers present sufficient to constitute a quorum. Exactly how many people attended the meeting is not recorded in the newspaper report.

¹⁸See above, ch. 1, pg 14, footnote 53.

¹⁹GTJ 10.10.83 W.H. Fletcher to Editor.

²⁰GTJ 9.10.83.

of the citizens of Grahamstown. Only twenty people attended the meeting to select parliamentary candidates for the 1884 election. Arthur Douglass was the only protectionist standing for the Grahamstown seat, hence his nomination was endorsed. Sampson, the president of the Association, was chosen as his running mate, although he was in fact opposed to the policy of protection.²¹ However, the man returned at the head of the polls was the third candidate, Jonathan Ayliff. Douglass was also returned, but Ayliff's victory indicates the ineffectiveness of the Working Men's Political Association in influencing the election results.²² And while the Grahamstown initiative had stimulated the organisation in December 1883 of the East London Working Men's Political Association,²³ the Grahamstown Committee itself soon collapsed.

The Association had a distinct role to play in politics, but it was premature. The average working man in Grahamstown possessed little breadth of political outlook. Most had an axe to grind in promoting protectionism, but few grasped the extent to which they would have to be committed to the Association in order for it to succeed. Some of the lessons learnt might have been applied to the Employees' Association, which was established in 1891, except that there appears to have been little carry-over of the leadership of the former to the latter

²¹ GTJ 5.11.83.

²² GTJ 13.2.84.

The results were as follows:

J. Ayliff	547 votes
A. Douglass	386 votes
D. Sampson (not returned)	355 votes

²³ The East London Dispatch n.d. as taken up by GTJ 22.12.83.

Association.²⁴

The Employees' Association represented a very specific group; Grahamstown shop assistants and store owners. It aimed to reduce the number of trading hours on Saturdays. In Grahamstown, the battle for the Saturday half-holiday took place first in 1891, and again in 1901. The initial victory was achieved in 1891 when, by general agreement, Grahamstown employers sanctioned a Saturday afternoon closing between 1 p.m. and 6,30 p.m. Citizens seemed eager to co-operate, and at least one sermon expounded the moral and religious benefits of the move.²⁵

Although in 1892 one employee reported that people were beginning to disregard the agreement,²⁶ the Saturday half-holiday seems generally to have been well-observed.²⁷ The Association's activities over the next years comprised little more than an annual torchlight procession and masquerade.²⁸ Membership declined, and in 1896 the Association became temporarily defunct when no one would accept leadership of the organisation.²⁹

The Employees' Association was reconstituted in 1901 in order to extend the Saturday evening closing to apply even after the curfew restrictions

²⁴At these meetings, the names mentioned were usually only those of Committee members, and perhaps one or two speakers. Consequently it is difficult to assess to what extent the membership of the two Associations coincided.

²⁵GTJ 16.7.91, 25.7.91 B. Impey to Editor, 20.8.91 B. Impey to Editor.

²⁶GPM 26.10.92 "Employee" to Editor.

²⁷GTJ 11.8.94.

²⁸GTJ 2.8.92, 1.8.93, 7.8.94, 13.8.95, 4.8.96.

²⁹GTJ 8.8.96.

of martial law had been lifted.³⁰ Interestingly, the Committee of the new group specifically included three women in its total of fourteen members.³¹ The Saturday evening closing was secured with relative ease for two reasons. First, important local merchants co-operated readily,³² and second, the 1899 Half Holiday Act provided for compulsory closure after 1 p.m. on Saturday, on the application of the local authority.³³ The matter did not end here, however. The Act also provided for the revocation of a Saturday half-holiday regulation at the request of more than half of the local shopkeepers.³⁴ In 1904 this clause provoked discussion in Parliament. In several colonial towns, friction had arisen between White and Indian shopkeepers when the latter, who had moved in increasing numbers into cities like Kimberley, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, attempted to extend the Saturday trading hours.³⁵ Their efforts were circumvented by the 1904 Half-Holiday Amendment Act, which raised the number of shopkeepers necessary to support the abolition of the Saturday half-holiday, from one half to two-thirds of the total number in the area. The right to sign the application was limited to shopkeepers with at least two paid assistants other than the family members.³⁶ This clause in particular would curtail the powers of most Indian traders, whose stores were usually family concerns. The Grahamstown Employees' Association exaggerated

³⁰GTJ 27.8.01.

³¹GTJ 10.9.01.

³²GTJ 10.9.01.

³³Act 32, 1899, Clause 1.

³⁴Act 32, 1899, Clause 3.

³⁵Cape Hansard: Assembly, 5.5.04, pg 449.

³⁶Act 27, 1904, Clauses 1, 2.

the role it played in the 1904 Act by attributing the motivation for the measure to H.R. Wood, acting on behalf of the Association.³⁷ The organisation telegraphed its support for the Bill while it was being discussed,³⁸ but numerous other sources had pressurised the government for the measure.³⁹

The importance of the Employees' Association to this study lies in its effective representation of a particular group interest. In all, it remained peripheral to politics in the period reviewed; the Association operated through the local parliamentary representatives when legislation affected its members, but at no stage did it express support as a body for any particular group or government policy.

Both of these Associations represent interesting stages in Grahamstown's political development. They indicate a growing awareness of the need for group organisation, and the prevailing sense of parochialism among the city's working class citizens. The question of whether the Grahamstown electorate conceived politics as an instrument for colonial or local good, is complex, answered in part by a compromise in the choice of Legislative Assembly representatives. Parochial loyalties triumphed in the support given to the Wood brothers between 1886 and 1908. John Edwin Wood was a Grahamstown parliamentary representative from 1886-1900; he was succeeded by his brother, Henry Richard Wood, between 1902 and

³⁷GTJ 29.9.04.

³⁸Cape Hansard: Assembly, 5.5.04, pg 449. The Association indicated its support particularly for Clause 1, which required a two-thirds majority of shopkeepers to support the abolition of the Saturday half-holiday.

³⁹Cape Hansard: Assembly, 25.4.04, pg 348; 6.5.04, pp 449-450; 27.5.04, pg 655.

and 1908. Both had distinguished records of local service. John Edwin Wood was a founder of the Grahamstown Public School, and promoted its interests throughout his lifetime. He chaired the Management Committee of the Albany General Hospital for more than two decades, and was instrumental in securing funds for the new Albany Museum buildings. As one of the founders of the Grahamstown Building Society, he headed its committee until his death. He presented 280 acres of land to the town council, including Fern Kloof and an area necessary for the continuation of Mountain Drive, and bore the costs of transfer. His home on West Hill was willingly placed at the disposal of governors visiting Grahamstown. J.E. Wood's service in the House of Assembly was terminated only by his death in July 1901.⁴⁰

There were few local bodies with which Henry Richard Wood was not associated. Despite a lack of initiative and innovation, he worked for Grahamstown with energy and enthusiasm. He was a town councillor for over twenty-eight years and Mayor from 1896-1899 and 1909-1910. He chaired the Albany Hospital Committee for twenty-five years, and served as Honorary Treasurer to the Albany Museum Board, Vice-Chairman of the Albany Divisional School Board and a member of both the Rhodes University College Council and the Chamber of Commerce. H.R. Wood presided over the Kingswood College Council from 1894-1921. In addition to this, he held almost every office open to a layman in the Methodist Church, and superintended the West Hill Sunday School for forty-five years.⁴¹

⁴⁰GTJ 20.7.01. See below, Appendix B, pp 306-307.

⁴¹GDM25.7.21. See below, Appendix A, pg 302.

Grahamstown's other parliamentary representative from 1884-1903,⁴² Arthur Douglass, conceived the role of the parliamentary representative in broader terms than did the Wood brothers. Douglass viewed politics from a colonial point of view, rather than as a means to serve local interests only. But although his constituency was for him little more than a springboard into the political arena, Douglass was not unsympathetic to the need for involvement in local affairs. He commanded the Albany District Mounted Troops during the Anglo-Boer war.⁴³ In 1902, The Cape Times noted that while Douglass was generally unsympathetic to harbour development schemes, "... the little Kowie ever claimed a soft, warm corner of his heart." In fact, that newspaper generously conceded that the "strain of conservatism" manifested in that particular loyalty, exercised "a wholesome steadiness" on his parliamentary activity.⁴⁴ Douglass became noted for his opposition to free trade policies soon after he entered parliament. In 1904, The Cape Times alluded admiringly to a speech he had made twenty years earlier, "... when he unfurled the banner of a defiant Protection, and metaphorically tweaked the noses of Messrs. Sprigg, Merriman and other astonished members for putting their faith in the 'schoolboy twaddle of John Stuart Mill.'"⁴⁵

Douglass achieved more success - and a great deal more censure - than did either of the Wood brothers. He served in J.G. Sprigg's Cabinet

⁴²Douglass was unseated very briefly in 1888. Discussed below, pg 216-219.

⁴³GTJ 14.10.05. See below, Appendix B, pp 304-305.

⁴⁴The Cape Times 20.2.02.

⁴⁵The Cape Times 3.10.04.

of 1902-1904;⁴⁶ between February and March 1902 as Colonial Secretary, and between May 1902 and February 1904 as Commissioner of Public Works.⁴⁷ His determination to stick with the anti-suspensionist Sprigg cabinet was not popular in Grahamstown, and he subsequently lost the 1904 election.⁴⁸ His successor was a man with no prior connections with Grahamstown, but of rising prominence in Cape politics; Dr. Leander Starr Jameson.

In 1900 Jameson had been returned unopposed to parliament as a member for Kimberley, shortly after which he became a director of De Beers Consolidated Mines.⁴⁹ His election as Progressive Party leader in June 1903⁵⁰ was largely consequent upon the support he had given the unsuccessful Progressive campaign to suspend the Cape constitution.⁵¹ However, the reasons for his decision to fight the Grahamstown, rather than the Kimberley seat in the 1904 election, remain obscure. The anti-Progressive Mail claimed Jameson's "express purpose" to be to unseat Douglass.⁵² While this might hold more truth than Jameson was prepared to concede at the time,⁵³ it can only be part of the answer.

⁴⁶ J.G. Sprigg was Cape premier four times, from February 1878-May 1881, November 1886-July 1890, January 1896-October 1898 and June 1900-February 1904. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 165-166).

⁴⁷ Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 166, 168.

⁴⁸ Suspensionism and the 1904 election are discussed below, pp 227-235.

⁴⁹ DSAB III, pp 440-441.

⁵⁰ M.R. Siepman, An Analytical survey of the Political Career of Leander Starr Jameson, 1900-1912. (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, Natal Univ., 1979), pg 76. This date conflicts with that (ie. March 1903) cited in DSAB III, pg 440.

⁵¹ DSAB III, pp 440-441.

⁵² GPM 29.5.03.

⁵³ GTJ 28.5.03. Jameson dealt with this accusation in an election address.

M.R. Siepman's recent study of Jameson's political career offers neither insight nor conjecture on this point, beyond a supposition that he desired an election fight.⁵⁴

Grahamstown's choice of Jameson as a candidate is of more consequence to this study. The bulk of the local electorate favourably received Jameson's close association with C.J. Rhodes and his involvement in the abortive suspension movement. At an early stage, Grahamstown recognised Jameson as a probable leader of the Progressive Party,⁵⁵ and hence possibly a future premier. A desire for the accolades accorded the premier's constituency, and a notion that his position alone might be a safeguard against a complete stagnation of local development, would not have escaped the constituents. Jameson was in fact in a position to render the Grahamstown community a great service in the form of the £50 000 donation to the university college project, which he offered on behalf of the Rhodes Trustees. It emerged subsequently that the other Trustees had not sanctioned the offer, but the donation was granted before Jameson had lost face in the city.⁵⁶ The influence of Jameson's offer on the election result should not be underestimated,⁵⁷ because if either of the concepts of politics as a colonial or a local service still had the upper hand in Grahamstown, it was the latter. Even candidates selected for considerations other than the purely parochial, found it necessary to some extent to attend to local needs.

⁵⁴Siepman, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 73.

⁵⁵Siepman, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 73 footnote 142.

⁵⁶R.F. Currey, Rhodes University 1904-1970: A Chronicle, pp 10-12.

⁵⁷This debate is taken up in more detail by N.D. Southey in A Period of Transition: Grahamstown 1902-1918 (M.A. thesis in the course of preparation at Rhodes University).

One of the interesting developments in Grahamstown between 1883 and 1904 was the gradual transformation of her political outlook from one of pronounced localism, to one which, by the twentieth century, gave considerably more credence to colonial concerns. While the change is probably largely attributable to the growth of parties and the political polarisation caused by the Anglo-Boer war, Grahamstown was by no means unresponsive to earlier political movements. The local reaction to the Empire League, formed in Cape Town in 1884 after the Transvaal Republic's attempted annexation of Stellaland and Goshen,⁵⁸ supports this contention. English political consciousness was stirred by this interference in the imperial advance northwards. Loyalist Grahamstown rallied in defence of British interests, and a branch of the Imperial League was formed in the city in December 1884.⁵⁹

The League failed to entrench itself locally, because it relied on jingoism for support and did not extend its programme to include other aspects of colonial politics.⁶⁰ The Journal, with a sagacity absent during the Anglo-Boer war, perceived this weakness from the beginning.⁶¹ When the movement faded, the newspaper expressed, "... regret that it ever existed, since while it was in life, it stood in the way of better things."⁶² When he pondered these "better things" it is unlikely that the editor of The Journal had in mind a revival of Eastern Cape

⁵⁸G.M. Theal, History of South Africa from 1873-1884, Vol.11, pg 206.

⁵⁹GTJ 2.12.84.

⁶⁰In The Origin and Development of the Cape Progressive Party 1884-1898, (Unp. M.A. thesis, Univ. of Cape Town, 1955), pg 23, Y.P. Sank suggests that the movement faded once it had fulfilled Rhodes' object of keeping open the Road to the North, and had subsequently lost his sponsorship.

⁶¹GTJ 3.12.84.

⁶²GTJ 5.2.86.

separatism.

B. le Cordeur has attributed the objective of the separatist movement of 1820-1870, to East-West political rivalry. The separatists wished to gain control over local government, so that it would meet more effectively, the peculiar needs of the Eastern Cape. As le Cordeur suggests, the main thrust of separatism was dissipated in the 1870's.⁶³ However, twice, in 1886 and in 1900, movements reminiscent of separatism developed in Grahamstown in response to Western Cape challenges to the political and economic security of the Eastern Cape. The first of these movements was a reaction to threats to the continued functioning of the Eastern Districts' Court and the Uitenhage railway workshops. The second, in 1900, was connected with the issue of a South African federation.

Act 17 of 1886 abolished the separate Appeal Court at the Cape, and granted its powers to the Cape Town Bench.⁶⁴ This was interpreted as a direct affront to the status of the Eastern Districts' Court, Grahamstown's local branch of the Supreme Court.

Western Cape legal circles were apparently eager to monopolise the cases with which the Higher Court dealt. The tension was exacerbated when the possibility of a transfer of railway workshops from the Eastern to the Western Cape was considered.⁶⁵ In June 1886, a

⁶³B.A. le Cordeur, The Politics of Eastern Cape Separatism 1820-1854, pp 1, 282.

⁶⁴The bill was passed as Act 17 of 1886. This, and other matters related to the Eastern Districts' Court, are discussed below, ch. 8, pp 251-256.

⁶⁵GTJ 28.5.86.

Grahamstown public meeting was called to select a Provisional Executive Committee for a Political Union which would seek to protect the interests of the Eastern, Midland and Northern districts of the colony.⁶⁶ And while in August 1886 The Journal staunchly maintained that Grahamstown had "... no petty ambition to be a bastard capital, ...,"⁶⁷ it had to admit eleven days later that, "... if the cry of Separatism were once again raised here, it would meet in various quarters with enthusiastic support."⁶⁸

The Political Union was founded in a blaze of enthusiasm, but it ground to a halt almost immediately because it lacked wide appeal⁶⁹ and effective organisation. A suggestion in August 1887 that the Eastern Districts should undertake the construction of a railway line to the goldfields,⁷⁰ drew no response from the obviously defunct Political Union. The true significance of the movement lies in its parochialism, and its intention to counteract specific measures which would work to the disadvantage of the East. The Union in fact failed for much the same reason as the Empire League; its appeal was limited, and once the emotions it depended on for support had dissipated, there was little to hold it together.

The failure of these first attempts at political organisation of English colonists meant that many towns approached the 1888 election devoid of parties offering a clearly defined programme. The election assumed a

⁶⁶GTJ 15.6.86.

⁶⁷GTJ 2.8.86.

⁶⁸GTJ 13.8.86.

⁶⁹Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pg 28.

⁷⁰GTJ 18.8.87 "Citizen" to Editor.

unique significance in Grahamstown, where the issues raised were entirely overshadowed by a dispute between her two parliamentary representatives, Arthur Douglass and J.E. Wood. This dissention related to their antagonistic stances in parliament, but was fundamentally attributable to their differing notions of the purpose of political representation.

This discord surfaced during the parliamentary debate on the 1888 Ballot Bill, which was intended to introduce use of the secret ballot in parliamentary elections in Cape Town and Kimberley.⁷¹ Douglass wished to bring the entire colony, or, failing that, Grahamstown, Cape Town and Kimberley, under the aegis of the secret ballot.⁷² Douglass's stand was supported by a Grahamstown public meeting, but because he doubted the numerical strength and "bona fides" of the gathering, J.E. Wood opposed the city's inclusion in the bill.⁷³ Grahamstown was seriously embarrassed by the overt display of hostility between her representatives, and feared that if this were translated into other areas, the Grahamstown vote would carry no weight in parliament.

Their conflict intensified during the election campaign. J.E. Wood supported free trade and the Sprigg government, which in 1887 had raised Cape franchise qualifications in the Bond-approved Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act. Arthur Douglass championed protectionism⁷⁴ - but less vociferously than previously - and opposed Sprigg, whom he

⁷¹ Cape Hansard: Assembly, 6.6.88, pg 49.

⁷² GPM 2.7.88, Cape Hansard: Assembly, 6.6.88. pg 51.

⁷³ GPM 9.7.88, 30.7.88, Cape Hansard: Assembly, 28.6.88, pp 194-195; 3.7.88, pp 222-223; 24.7.88, pp 344-346. The measure was not passed during the 1888 session.

⁷⁴ See above, ch. 3, pp 85-86.

having tampered with the constitution in the 1887 Act.⁷⁵ Despite their differences, Wood and Douglass were not associated with opposing parties; this indicates the extent to which political groupings outside the Bond were amorphous and vague. The Journal⁷⁶ opposed Douglass's return for two reasons. First, his personal attacks on Wood, Sprigg and others fell short of the Victorian sense of fair-play, and second, the prevailing opinion was that Douglass had failed significantly to promote local interests. Wood drew attention to this disparity between them: "'It was said by Mr. Douglass, ... , that it was not the duty of a member to look after the interests of his constituents, but to take wider and higher views. I do not think so. I think your member's primary duty is to look after your interests, not neglecting the interests of the Colony. I have attempted to do this. Mr. Douglass calls it backstairs work, and blacking hoots [sic].'"⁷⁷ The volatile Arthur Douglass was in fact narrowly defeated at the polls by eight votes. The two men returned in November 1888, J.E. Wood and George

⁷⁵GPM 17.8.88, 20.8.88, 3.9.88.

⁷⁶The Mail was ambivalent; while it criticized Douglass's views in the election as "erratic and mischievous," it held that not even his "... greatest enemies can deny that he has some of the qualities requisite for vigorous and successful Parliamentary life." (GPM 7.11.88).

⁷⁷The Eastern Province Herald 7.9.88.

Luke, the Mayor of Grahamstown,⁷⁸ had both stressed service to the community in their electoral campaigns.

The Mail's contention that Douglass's defeat was merely temporary was vindicated sooner than it could possibly have envisaged.⁷⁹ Luke's sudden death a fortnight after the election⁸⁰ left Grahamstown bereft of both a Mayor and a parliamentary representative. Douglass was returned in the by-election of March 1889,⁸¹ despite the fact that The Journal and The Mail firmly supported his opponent, the erudite Alexander Wilmot of Port Elizabeth.⁸² The reasons for Douglass's victory

⁷⁸GPM 7.11.88.

The results were as follows:

J.E. Wood	486 votes
G. Luke	421 votes
A. Douglass	413 votes
D. Sampson	267 votes

Luke supported protectionism, favoured the secret ballot and the development of the Kowie harbour. He appears to have been undecided on the issue of a South African customs union.

(GTJ 25.9.88, GPM 26.9.88). Sampson was less informed on colonial issues. He expressed his opposition to Responsible Government (an emotion condemned by The Mail as "... too late in the day to be of any use,") and expressed support for the Sprigg government, the secret ballot and the development of the Kowie harbour. (GPM 22.10.88).

⁷⁹GPM 7.11.88.

⁸⁰GTJ 22.11.88.

⁸¹GTJ 5.3.89.

The results were as follows:

A. Douglass	452 votes
A. Wilmot	364 votes

Douglass's majority	<u>88</u> votes
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⁸²GTJ 23.2.89, GPM 27.2.89. Wilmot subsequently represented the South Eastern Circle in the Legislative Council from 1889-1910. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the imperial connection, C.J. Rhodes and the temperance movement. Among his more important publications is the three-volumed History of our own Times in South Africa (1872-1898).

were not closely examined by the Grahamstown press. The implication is that he had a greater reserve of local support than The Journal was prepared to admit. The editor attributed his success somewhat disparagingly to "... the native vote, which mainly decided the election," and which opposed the Sprigg government.⁸³

Douglass made his most significant contribution to colonial politics during the period 1889-1903. His rising prominence in the 1890's is connected with the emergence of a more clearly defined opposition group after premier C.J. Rhodes' alliance with the Afrikaner Bond.⁸⁴ Rhodes' broadbased ministry of liberals and Bondsmen was a calculated combination of the two groups most likely to oppose him.⁸⁵ His economic policy was clearly aimed to protect Bond interests; for example, protective tariffs sheltered farmers and proposed railway extensions were designed to serve agricultural areas.⁸⁶

Coherent opposition to the Rhodes Ministry grew up in response to the introduction of two measures in particular; the 'Strop' Bill of 1891,

⁸³GTJ 5.3.89. It is difficult to comment on the truth of this assertion, because no figures are quoted to support it, and one cannot establish with any certainty the racial identities of many of the voters listed in the division at this stage. (See below, ch. 6, pg 192, footnote 168).

⁸⁴Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pp 38-39. Rhodes was prime minister from July 1890-January 1896. (T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, pg 405).

⁸⁵Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pg 132. In Rhodes' first ministry, the liberal group included J. Rose Innes (Attorney-General 1890-1893), J.W. Sauer (Colonial Secretary 1890-1893) and J.X. Merriman (Treasurer 1890-1893). (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 165-169).

⁸⁶Siepmann, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 32.

and the Franchise and Ballot Bill (later Act 9) of 1892. The former was a Bond-inspired measure which would have given the employer a right to lash his servant. Rhodes' support for the legislation provoked the combination of about twenty-eight parliamentary representatives in order to monitor Cape legislation and the imperial connection.⁸⁷ The bill was dropped. In 1892, a division on the third reading of the Franchise and Ballot Bill reduced the group to a core of thirteen members, comprising with one exception, entirely Eastern representatives. J.E. Wood and A. Douglass were among these. The Progressive Party emerged from this opposition group.⁸⁸

Douglass leapt to prominence during the debates on the Franchise and Ballot Bill. His unrelenting opposition was based both on a desire to safeguard the Black vote, and a realisation that the measure would serve Bond electoral interests.⁸⁹ However, the vituperous and at times undignified manner in which Douglass conducted himself did not endear him to his constituency. The flames of antagonism were rekindled in Grahamstown, and at Douglass's 1892 local parliamentary report meeting, the commercial and professional men present on previous occasions, were conspicuous by their absence from the platform.⁹⁰ The disenchantment was exacerbated when Douglass claimed misguidedly that two Grahamstown "traitors" had bade Hofmeyr "... not to be 'afraid of Douglass' for

⁸⁷Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pp 40-41.

⁸⁸The thirteen members comprised the following: J.G. Sprigg (East London), J. Frost (Queenstown), C.W. Hutton (Fort Beaufort), C.T. Jones and H.W. Pearson (Port Elizabeth), J.O. Norton (Albany), G.M. Palmer and W.H. Hockley (Somerset East), F. Schermbucker King William's Town), H.T. Tamplin (Victoria East), J.E. Wood and A. Douglass (Grahamstown) and T.J. O'Reilly (Cape Town). (Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pp 38, 47; Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 137-161).

⁸⁹J.L. McCracken, The Cape Parliament 1854-1910, pp 93-96.

⁹⁰GPM 2.9.92.

whom they were prepared to make it hot upon his return."⁹¹ Despite strongly anti-Bond feeling in the city, Hofmeyr's response must have struck a chord with many disapproving Grahamstonians: "He [Douglass] flings about the most horrid imputations with madcap recklessness, without the slightest justification, and never has the good grace to apologise for those baseless fabrics of his fancy."⁹²

The incident was merely a preview to the 1893 electoral campaign, characterised in Grahamstown by yet another local crisis of confidence in Arthur Douglass. In typical fashion, the latter devoted much of his electioneering to invective and attempts to debunk political favourites like James Sivewright.⁹³ Surprisingly, this did not damage his own cause as much as might have been expected. Douglass's return at the head of the poll, with a majority of fifty-four votes over Wood,⁹⁴ indicated that his unpopularity was not as deep-seated as his opponents liked to believe. Again, the local press attributed Douglass's

⁹¹ GTJ 27.9.92.

⁹² GTJ 8.10.92. J.H. Hofmeyr to Editor.

⁹³ Sivewright was Minister without Portfolio (July 1890-September 1890) and Commissioner of Public Works (September 1890-May 1893) in the Rhodes Ministry. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 168-169). Douglass's attacks on Sivewright concerned his membership of the Afrikaner Bond.

⁹⁴ GTJ 27.1.94.

The results were as follows:

A. Douglass	722 votes
J.E. Wood	688 votes
T.H. Grocott	615 votes

Grocott, a local bookseller and stationer, pledged support for the Rhodes Ministry, and favoured a South African federation, an excise duty on brandy and a redistribution of parliamentary seats to limit Bond power. (GPM 13.10.93).

victory to Black support, although the reasons perceived by The Journal and The Mail for this, differed. The former believed the African vote to be "... an erratic element which seems to have no intelligent principle behind it, ... placing its favourite candidate at the head of the poll here, ... devoted in Victoria, Kaffraria and the Transkei, to the support of his [Douglass's] bitter antagonists."⁹⁵ For The Mail, the issue was clearer: Douglass was a "negrophilist," but only at election times: "Had that blanket vote been obtained by honest means there would be less ground for ... personal humiliation on the part of [Douglass]."⁹⁶ But on the whole, Douglass's victory was not unfavourably received by the Grahamstown newspapers. The fact that both Douglass and Wood had pledged support for the Rhodes ministry portended well for their future partnership.⁹⁷

Cape politics remained in a state of flux over the next few years, as confusing political alliances were forged. The Progressive Party, by no means united during the 1893-1894 election,⁹⁸ was rendered impotent by the lack of agreement between key members like Douglass, Palmer, Hockley, Trower, Norton, Frost and Brabant.⁹⁹ The South African Political Association assumed prominence in opposition politics; J.W. Sauer was elected leader of the group in May 1894. The Association

⁹⁵ GTJ 27.1.94.

⁹⁶ GPM 29.1.94.

⁹⁷ GTJ 27.1.94. Douglass and Wood had contested the election as "unattached" candidates, aligning themselves neither with the government nor the opposition. (Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pg 72).

⁹⁸ Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 148-149.

⁹⁹ Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pg 59.
E.Y. Brabant, M.L.A., East London, 1873-1878, 1884-1902, 1905-1907. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pg 140).

promoted free trade, anti-scab legislation, and compulsory education. Political confusion was exacerbated in December 1895, when the Rhodes-Bond alliance split inexorably after the Jameson Raid. With Bond backing, J.G. Sprigg replaced Rhodes as premier. The effect of the Raid on the opposition groups was divisive. The Progressive Party remained disorganised, and in March 1896 the Loyal Colonial (later South African) League formed a branch in the Eastern Cape. Sauer resigned as leader of the South African Political Association, which was replaced as official opposition in May 1896 by the newly formed Liberal Party, comprising ten members led by James Rose Innes.¹⁰⁰ However, alliances remained uncertain and changeable until in 1898, forces coalesced into two major groupings to fight the election provoked by W.P. Schreiner's successful motion of no-confidence in the Sprigg ministry. Sprigg had lost Bond backing when he had supported a scheme for a redistribution of parliamentary seats, which favoured the Progressive Party. Two future prime ministers, Schreiner and Merriman¹⁰¹ and their followers, joined forces with the Afrikaner Bond to fight as the South African Party. Ranged against them were the South African League and the Progressive Party, which were led by Rhodes and supported by Innes, who nevertheless stood as an Independent.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ James Rose Innes was the Attorney-General from June 1890-May 1893 and from June 1900-February 1902. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 167-168).

¹⁰¹ Technically, Merriman remained an Independent.

¹⁰² McCracken, Cape Parliament, pp 116-119. In 1898, the South African League became an extra-parliamentary branch of the Progressive Party. (M.F. Bitensky, The South African League. Unp. M.A. thesis, Witwatersrand Univ., 1950, pp 148-150).

These developments captured the attention of the Grahamstown public. The surprise and scandal of the Jameson Raid caused local press support for Rhodes to flicker slightly, but soon it burned more brightly than before. The increasing polarisation in Cape political thinking was reflected in the shift in Grahamstown press opinion from tolerance of Afrikanerdom, to distrust of its political objectives. Sympathy for Rhodes developed during the rebellions in Rhodesia; in July 1896, a Grahamstown public meeting appealed for the reinstatement of Rhodes as Managing Director of the British South Africa Chartered Company.¹⁰³ In December 1896 he was invited to visit the city.¹⁰⁴

Rhodes' association with the South African League influenced local attitudes towards it. Motivated by fear of a loss of face if the League should collapse, Grahamstonians were initially reluctant to support the movement. The Journal questioned the League's political and cultural intolerance and exclusivism, musing that, "... the old policy of forbearance and conciliation is the only plan that offers any prospect of an ultimate accord between the two races [i.e. English and Afrikaans]."¹⁰⁵ But the city could not long withstand the pressure exerted upon it. In February 1897, The Eastern Province Herald intimated that Grahamstown would have one year in which to alter her attitude to the League, before political pressure would be applied.¹⁰⁶ The Journal accused several East London Leaguers of attempting to

¹⁰³GTJ 14.7.96.

¹⁰⁴GPM 11.12.96.

¹⁰⁵GTJ 21.5.96. The League's attempt to interfere in the situation in the Transvaal seems to have been the main point of objection. (GTJ 25.8.96; Bitensky, The South African League, ch. iv-vi).

¹⁰⁶The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 18.2.97.

dismantle the Eastern Districts' Court because of Grahamstown's non-compliance in the matter.¹⁰⁷ This claim was probably exaggerated, but once the city's social and economic security was believed to have been challenged, the sabre-rattling could not blithely be disregarded. In August 1897, a branch of the South African League was formed at a crowded Grahamstown public meeting.¹⁰⁸

Ironically, although the emergence of political parties made the 1898 Cape election the most bitterly contested thus far, the two Grahamstown representatives were more united than before. Their partnership had consolidated in their combined opposition to Schreiner's successful no-confidence motion in 1898,¹⁰⁹ and they entered the election firmly in support of Sprigg. The Journal enthusiastically promoted their joint return: "We have ... two of the most satisfactory representatives whom it would be possible to obtain or desire ... they are in perfect harmony with us in supporting the loyal and progressive policy of the present Government...."¹¹⁰ Both were re-elected with resounding majorities.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ GTJ 18.2.97.

¹⁰⁸ GTJ 21.8.97.

¹⁰⁹ GPM 7.5.97.

¹¹⁰ GTJ 4.8.98.

¹¹¹ GTJ 13.8.98.

The results were as follows:

A. Douglass	735 votes
J.E. Wood	700 votes
A. Preddy	283 votes

Alfred Preddy, Grahamstown's market-master between 1889 and 1898, supported Rhodes, the Progressives and federation, and promised to attempt to reduce the price of beer, "the drink of the working man." (GTJ 2.8.98).

The 1898 election brought a marginal victory for the Afrikaner Bond. Schreiner formed a ministry when his second no-confidence motion in the Sprigg ministry was carried in October 1898. Schreiner attempted to keep moderation alive in a fast-deteriorating South African situation. His Cabinet included some of the most gifted administrators of the day in J.X. Merriman, J.W. Sauer and R. Solomon,¹¹² but it was disrupted after the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war by differing attitudes towards British imperialism.¹¹³ The ministry finally divided on the complex issue of punishments for martial law offenders.¹¹⁴

The Grahamstown press had never supported the Schreiner ministry, seeing the Cabinet as "... the creature of Mr. Hofmeyr, - a molehill thrown up as it were by that hidden agitator."¹¹⁵ Consequently, The Journal viewed its collapse in 1900 as "... a matter for universal congratulation."¹¹⁶ Gordon Sprigg's fourth ministry of 1900 was initially far more acceptable to Grahamstown opinion. However, The Journal underestimated Sprigg's lack of dependable parliamentary support.¹¹⁷ The Progressive Party was internally divided and unable

¹¹²Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 184-188; Siepman, Jameson, 1900-1912, pp 40-41. Their positions in the Schreiner Cabinet are discussed above, pg 203, footnote 12.

¹¹³Merriman and Sauer disagreed with Solomon's support for British imperialism. (Siepman, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 46).

¹¹⁴Schreiner lost Bond support when he proposed a five-year disfranchisement of Afrikaner rebels. (E.A. Walker, W.P. Schreiner: a South African, pp 232-233).

¹¹⁵GTJ 15.10.98.

¹¹⁶GTJ 16.6.00.

¹¹⁷GTJ 19.6.00. The Journal believed that the ministry would "... command the confidence of the country."

to provide Sprigg with a sound base. A narrow ministerial majority of five prepared to do battle against the South African Party under Merriman and Sauer.¹¹⁸

Into this melting pot of kaleidoscopic alliances and political confusion, was cast suspensionism, one of the most divisive issues of the Anglo-Boer war. The Governor, Alfred Milner, first proposed the suspension of the Cape constitution in December 1899, to give Britain a firmer hold over the colony.¹¹⁹ Such a step would have meant that the Cape would revert to Crown Colony rule,¹²⁰ with a status similar to that of the recently annexed Transvaal and Orange Free State. Suspension would facilitate the formation of a South African federation,¹²¹ but despite this, both the Cape premier, J.G. Sprigg, and the British Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, viewed the measure as extreme. The South African Party and the Afrikaner Bond condemned the movement,¹²² but it gathered momentum in 1900 and swept the colony in 1901. Suspensionism subsided to some extent during the absence from the colony in 1901 of Dr. L.S. Jameson and Cecil Rhodes, but arose again the following year with the approach of peace. Thomas Smartt¹²³ and Jameson emerged clearly as Progressive Party leaders during this time,

¹¹⁸Walker, Schreiner, pg 235.

¹¹⁹McCracken, Cape Parliament, pg 130.

¹²⁰GTJ 4.9.00.

¹²¹McCracken, Cape Parliament, pg 130.

¹²²Siepmann, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 56.

¹²³Smartt was Colonial Secretary between May and October 1898, and Commissioner of Public Works between June 1900 and May 1902. (Kilpin, Colonial Parliament, pp 166, 168).

Jameson proving the more acceptable of the two through his dignified conduct during suspension debates.¹²⁴ Despite the fact that the suspension petitions were finally rejected by the Imperial Cabinet in July 1902,¹²⁵ the movement brought a new unity and common purpose to the Progressive Party, from which it would benefit in the 1903-1904 election.

Both suspension and federation were taken up enthusiastically in Grahamstown. These issues, coupled with a shortlived outburst of separatism, caused Grahamstown's estrangement from the Sprigg government and from her parliamentary representative, Arthur Douglass. The strong emotions engendered were exposed in the growing polarisation and intolerance of local press opinion. In 1899, The Journal had opposed disfranchisement as unjust and unwise, advocating instead the restriction of voting rights to fairly educated citizens.¹²⁶ Three months later, the editor lashed viciously at the Boers:

"They must be taken in hand, like other lapsed races, taught their own inferiority to average civilized manhood, and gently coerced to enter the path of progress. Happy it will be for the Transvaal Boer if the lessons he should learn do not find him too backward and deteriorated to profit by them."¹²⁷

¹²⁴Siepmann, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 64.

¹²⁵J.P. Vanstone, Sir John Gordon Sprigg: A Political Biography (Unp. Ph.D. thesis, Queens Univ., Ontario, 1974), pg 427 CL, MIC/F 57.

¹²⁶GTJ 9.12.99.

¹²⁷GTJ 15.3.00. This contrasts interestingly with the view of the contemporary English social reformer, Beatrice Webb, who deprecated the "unscrupulous" methods of the English in the war, and noted in her diary on 31 January 1901, that, "'The Boers are, man for man, our superiors in dignity, devotion and capacity - yes IN CAPACITY. That, to a ruling race, is the hardest hit of all'". (H. Kenney, Architect of Apartheid: H.F. Verwoerd - An Appraisal, pg 24, footnote. No further details given).

Local opinion favoured the temporary revocation of responsibility to a majority in the Cape parliament proposed by the suspensionists, on the grounds that control of the legislature might fall into the hands of a "disloyal element."¹²⁸ The real argument for suspension was maintained by The Journal to have arisen out of the unsuitability of the constitution to the colonial situation;¹²⁹ as such, Chamberlain's rejection of the suspension petition was received with bad grace.¹³⁰

One of the signal effects of the suspension movement in Grahamstown was the exposure of a severe difference of opinion between the constituency and its representative, Arthur Douglass. Douglass achieved ministerial office for the first time in February 1902, when he became Colonial Secretary after a Cabinet reshuffle provoked by the resignation of the Attorney-General, J.R. Innes. The initial satisfaction of the Grahamstown constituents with Douglass's achievement of office,¹³¹ was shattered when the Sprigg cabinet split on the suspension issue. Thomas Smartt, who had resigned in order to lead the suspension movement,¹³² was replaced as Commissioner of Public Works by Arthur Douglass.¹³³ The latter's decision to stay with Sprigg amounted to a firm commitment against suspension, at a stage when many Grahamstonians were advocating the abrogation of the constitution most energetically.

¹²⁸GTJ 13.6.01.

¹²⁹GTJ 27.6.01.

¹³⁰GTJ 8.7.02.

¹³¹GTJ 20.2.02. Innes resigned to take up an appointment as Chief Justice of the Transvaal Supreme Court.

¹³²The Cape Times 30.5.02.

¹³³The Cape Times 21.6.02.

In June 1902, a local public meeting firmly rejected the stance on suspension taken by Douglass and the Sprigg government.¹³⁴ Later, when asked to do so,¹³⁵ Douglass was unable to assure his constituents that he would support a parliamentary motion to suspend the constitution.¹³⁶

This crisis of relations provoked a feud between The Journal and The Mail. The latter hailed Douglass's stance as, "... constitutional, morally excellent and instinct with British pluck!"¹³⁷ The Journal demanded his resignation on grounds that he could no longer honourably discharge the trust of his constituents.¹³⁸ The hostility was intensified some months later by a public exposure of the tension that existed between Douglass and the High Commissioner, Alfred Milner.¹³⁹ The confrontation arose over Douglass's assertions that Milner had threatened to boycott or seize control of the Cape railway if the Sprigg government withheld trucks necessary to transport troops to the coast.¹⁴⁰ The subsequent furore severely embarrassed both the Sprigg government and Douglass's constituency. The premier would not run the gauntlet

¹³⁴GTJ 19.6.02. Douglass had addressed the gathering.

¹³⁵GTJ 19.7.02.

¹³⁶GPM 25.7.02.

¹³⁷GPM 25.7.02.

¹³⁸GTJ 29.7.02.

¹³⁹Milner became High Commissioner in May 1897.
(T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, pg 138).

¹⁴⁰GTJ 4.10.02; Cape Hansard: Assembly, 10.10.02, pg 421.
The assertions had been made confidentially before a meeting of merchants in Cape Town. The public outcry over the accusation broke in England, when one of the three reporters present cabled Douglass's claims for publication in the press there.

of hostile public opinion by defending his outspoken Commissioner of Public Works. Both he and Milner denied the allegations, Sprigg insisting that Milner had simply alluded to the power of the imperial military authorities to take such action. Douglass lost face, but retained office, arrogantly refusing to apologise for his indiscretion.¹⁴¹ The Grahamstown constituents were mortified and humiliated, but powerless to influence Douglass's actions.

The federation issue did not generate quite the heat of suspensionism, but it received considerable local support. While in expansive vein the Journal editor commented that, "The saving of South Africa to the British Empire lies in the speedy accomplishment of a federation in which Africanderism shall not predominate,"¹⁴² the Grahamstown response to federation contained distinct elements of separatism. A division of the Cape Colony was considered essential in many quarters to the success of a confederation scheme.¹⁴³ This would create an opportunity for the Eastern Province to secure its own provincial government, a possibility applauded by The Journal as "... [giving] the loyal and progressive East the chance of managing its own affairs."¹⁴⁴ Before long, federation had been hailed as a means to secure Eastern "emancipation."¹⁴⁵ But separation was not as desirable or emotive to

¹⁴¹ GTJ 14.10.02; Cape Hansard, Assembly, 10.10.02 pg 423.

¹⁴² GTJ 10.1.03.

¹⁴³ The Natal Witness n.d. as taken up by GTJ 9.12.99.

¹⁴⁴ GTJ 4.11.99. The Journal had a clear idea as to how the South African colonies should federate. The Cape should be divided into three or four provinces, the Transvaal into two or three, and Natal enlarged by the addition of a portion of the Orange Free State. Provincial capitals and a federal capital should be selected, and each province granted its own executive and a single-chambered legislature. (GTJ 9.12.99).

¹⁴⁵ GTJ 7.12.01.

Grahamstonians in 1900, as it had been forty years earlier. The agitation did not long survive the 1902 Peace of Vereeniging. No organised group or competent leader emerged, and separatism was shelved along with the federation issue after the Anglo-Boer war. The movement remained vague and undirected, its chief significance at this stage lying in its exposure of the surviving hostility between East and West.

These developments in Grahamstown provoked an awareness of party politics, and by implication, the development of a distinct colonial consciousness. During the Anglo-Boer war, local support for the South African League grew, with favourable ramifications for the Progressive Party cause. Consequently, in Grahamstown the Progressive Party faced the 1904 election as a well-disciplined and organised group. The party's two candidates, Dr. L.S. Jameson¹⁴⁶ and H.R. Wood, had the advantage of the rank and file support of the Grahamstown electorate, and that of The Journal. The opposing pro-Douglass faction, which was not allied to a particular party, was led by The Mail. Significantly some of the most prominent Grahamstown citizens were among the Douglassites. Men such as Drs. G. Cory, J. Bays, the Reverend Dr. J. Espin, H. Fitchat, T.H. Grocott and Colonel G. Marshall were less likely than many others to be swayed by popular opinion. The powerful part played by popular local sentiment in this election drew comment from a Mail subscriber: "If there is one thing that astonished a newcomer to these parts more than another, it is to see how the Grahamstown public allow themselves to be carried away by their feelings and run rampant over their own gods."¹⁴⁷ Such sober observations fell on deaf ears.

¹⁴⁶ Jameson had announced his intention to stand for election in the Grahamstown constituency in May 1903. (Siepman, Jameson, 1900-1912, pg 73).

¹⁴⁷ GPM 28.7.02 H.M. Barber to Editor. It is worth noting that Barber supported Arthur Douglass.

Douglass must have found the election campaign singularly discouraging. While Jameson was greeted with applause and approval, Douglass faced hostile jeers and hecklers. The campaign was not devoid of lighter moments. One such incident occurred in May 1903, when George Cory mounted the rostrum at one of Jameson's meetings, "... and began by telling his audience that they reminded him of a flock of sheep on Stock Fair day in the way they followed their leaders; when the sheep suddenly became restive, and the Professor left the platform amid cat-calls, hoots, and loud uproar."¹⁴⁸

The darker side of the electioneering took the form of a ferocious battle between Jameson and Douglass. Douglass's associations with the Sprigg government counted severely against him in the campaign. In 1902 Sprigg had worked successfully with the Bond, and although by 1903 he had lost its backing,¹⁴⁹ Douglass was accused of having performed a "political somersault" in his membership of a ministry which had supposedly, "... crept over to the Bond"¹⁵⁰ for support. The Mail vociferously denied that Douglass was a Bondsman,¹⁵¹ but the accusation was applied to great effect in discrediting him among the local constituents. Douglass's counter-attacks on capitalists and mining companies¹⁵² were considerably less successful. The Cape Argus fuelled anti-Douglass feeling by condemning him as, "'A politician without dignity, without shame, who exhibits no gentlemanly instinct, he

¹⁴⁸GTJ 28.5.03.

¹⁴⁹Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 240-241, 246.

¹⁵⁰GTJ 21.5.03.

¹⁵¹GPM 29.5.03.

¹⁵²GTJ 8.9.03.

flounders along from one mis-statement to another, and is only saved from submersion in his own selected slough by the contemptuous forbearance of his friends on the Opposition benches."¹⁵³

Given the extent of the hostility to Arthur Douglass, the election result was not unexpected. Jameson and Wood topped the poll with 707 and 696 votes respectively. Douglass came a poor third, with only 403 votes.¹⁵⁴ An analysis of the voting pattern reveals more accurately the extent of the support given to individual candidates. 1098 of the 1837 franchise-holders¹⁵⁵ actually voted; the percentage poll of 59,8% was regarded as fairly good, and indicative of the great interest shown in the election. Votes for the ticket "Jameson and Wood," totalled 653. While 160 electors plumped¹⁵⁶ for Douglass, there were only six plumpers for Jameson and eight for Wood. Forty-eight electors had voted for Jameson and Douglass, while thirty-five had supported Wood and Douglass. Spoilt papers totalled twenty-eight.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³The Cape Argus n.d. quoted by GTJ 23.7.03.

¹⁵⁴GTJ 21.1.04.

¹⁵⁵The Journal set the approximate total of registered voters incorrectly at 1200. (GTJ 23.1.04). The 1903 Grahamstown Voters' List, which would have been used in this election, sets the total accurately at 1837. (Grahamstown Voters' List, 1903, pg 1).

¹⁵⁶"Plumping" or cumulative voting occurred because each Grahamstown voter could exercise two votes. (GTJ 11.8.98). These he could distribute among two candidates, or use both to support one candidate. Act 16 of 1893 had abolished cumulative voting in the Cape Town constituency only, when it had appeared that plumping might secure the return to parliament of a Cape Malay candidate Ahmed Effendi. (McCracken, Cape Parliament, pg 96; Act 16, 1893).

¹⁵⁷GTJ 23.1.04. The Journal's claim that 320 electors plumped for Douglass is erroneous, because that would have given him an overall total of 723 votes. The misprint is a fairly obvious one: 320 of the votes for Douglass were cumulative votes.

The Cape Times was only partially correct in its comment that, "... we believe Grahamstown would have rejected Mr. Douglass simply because the Colony is disgusted with the policy of shilly-shally between Progressives and Bond, of which Sir G. Sprigg and Mr. Douglass are the most conspicuou [sic] examples."¹⁵⁸ T.R.H. Davenport has indicated that the mugwumps - Sprigg and Douglass being among these - were generally unsuccessful in the 1904 election.¹⁵⁹ But in the Grahamstown constituency personality factors and a dispute over whether the representative should present the view of his constituents or his own in parliament, were telling factors in Douglass's defeat.

In the colony as a whole, the Progressive Party secured only a marginal victory in the 1904 election, and took office with a majority of one seat in the Legislative Assembly, and approximately six in the House of Assembly.¹⁶⁰ Jameson, however, had considerable support from his local constituents, who applauded his ministry's retrenchment measures, taxation policies and decision to abandon "wildcat railway schemes in the Karoo." In December 1904, he was enthusiastically received when he returned to Grahamstown to report on his first session as prime minister.¹⁶¹

By 1904, the power of parochialism in Grahamstown political opinion had been eroded somewhat. By their enthusiasm for the Progressive Party programme, Grahamstown voters had acknowledged the importance of a

¹⁵⁸The Cape Times n.d. quoted by GTJ 26.1.04.

¹⁵⁹Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pg 249.

¹⁶⁰Davenport has suggested that the number of votes for the Progressives might actually have declined between 1898 and 1904. (Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 249-250).

¹⁶¹GTJ 8.12.04.

broad-based colonial orientation to political representation. Simply the fact that the premier was a Grahamstown representative would have forced his electorate to discard parochial expectations to some extent. The growth of parties, the ramifications of English-Afrikaner hostility and a determination to protect imperial interests, all played their parts in this broadening of Grahamstown's political horizons.

The extent of the change should not be over-emphasised. Jameson recognised the need to appease local interests. This much is implied in the support he gave the foundation of Rhodes University College, his efforts to ease the dissatisfaction over the unequal treatment hitherto given the Eastern Districts' Court, and to bring the Bench to full strength with a third judge.¹⁶² Jameson acknowledged initially at least, the importance of keeping in touch with local opinion,¹⁶³ hence his return in December 1904 for a parliamentary report-back. As it transpired, the term of office of the Jameson ministry was brief; the Progressive Party was defeated in the 1908 election.¹⁶⁴ But in 1904, the future was as a closed book to those Grahamstonians who viewed their senior representative with pride and self-congratulation. As far as they were concerned, Grahamstown stood at the brink of an era of political pre-eminence.

¹⁶² Discussed below, ch. 8, pp 251-256.

¹⁶³ Southey discusses Jameson's relationship with his constituency more fully in Grahamstown 1902-1918.

¹⁶⁴ Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, pp 262-263.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE TRANSITION

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Grahamstown's commercial heyday in the mid-Victorian era was largely attributable to the frontier trade she attracted as a garrison town. The withdrawal of the troops in 1870¹ left the city commercially impoverished, with no function of real importance to fulfil. In 1883, there seemed no reason to believe that the troops would ever return, for the last of the frontier wars had been fought and won. The departure of the garrison was in fact symbolic of the declining importance of Grahamstown, which was well under way by 1883.

Grahamstown did not easily shrug off her old identity as a military centre, probably because of the marked absence of anything to fill the vacuum created by the troop withdrawal. When the railway was built in 1879, Grahamstown was relegated to a branch line. The Port Alfred harbour project was ultimately abandoned, and the completion of the Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line in 1884 failed to revive it. The two Exhibitions were apparent successes, accomplished in the best Victorian style, but they did not attract capital investment to the city. The answer to a new role lay in the development of Grahamstown's educational institutions. Many had become aware of this by the end of the century, but the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war in 1899 temporarily shattered the tentative vision. Jingoist fervour obliterated the voice of moderation, and Grahamstown was swept away on the crest of emotional patriotism. The arrival in the city of the first Middlesex

¹M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pg 34.

Regiment, which was later replaced by the second Royal Berkshire Regiment, revived memories of past battles and victories. The old identity which Grahamstown had been loathe to relinquish returned briefly, but superficially until the troops were withdrawn again at the end of the war. The hiatus created then was of short duration, because Rhodes University College was founded in 1904. The location of the university college in the Drostdy buildings and grounds, clarified in concrete terms Grahamstown's transition from a military town to an educational centre.

The Journal's view of the Anglo-Boer war was totally biased in favour of the imperial forces; that of The Mail was less aggressively pro-British. As the war progressed, the former was carried away on the tide of its own rhetoric and extremism with increasing frequency. Rationalism fled in the face of the self-righteous and rather smug jingoism expressed in Journal reports. Sentimental Victorian metaphors revealed blatant prejudice. The British soldiers were "as dauntless as ever,"² and Sir Alfred Milner was revered for his "sagacity and decision, ... moderation and self-possession."³ On the other hand, the Boers were "ignorant, bigoted and barbarous,"⁴ and the Afrikaner Bond "... stinks in the nostrils of every honest citizen: it has sinned so deeply that its every movement is of necessity suspected;"⁵ President Kruger was considered, "... unscrupulous in his methods, unfaithful to his engagements, and unduly careful to secure personal

²GTJ 26.1.00.

³GTJ 1.2.00.

⁴GTJ 12.10.99.

⁵GTJ 2.2.00.

profit by his public position"⁶ Not even rumours of the reprehensible wartime conduct of the British military authorities restored a balance to The Journal's editorials: "We at least, knew well that this war is being carried on with a mercy and gentleness unprecedented in former history. Any doubt in our minds on the subject was whether kindness to a bitter enemy was not being carried much too far."⁷

Quite justifiably, Western Cape opinion maintained that the Eastern Cape had become more jingoist than the British Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain himself.⁸

The Journal's devotion to the imperial cause was blind, but born of sincerity and a conviction of the importance of British culture, customs and authority. The newspaper accepted British wartime propaganda with an unquestioning ease which became apparent in 1900 in its claim that the insurgents, rather than the British forces, were setting fire to Boer homesteads.⁹ The Journal's reaction to reports of shocking conditions in wartime concentration camps displayed a similar lack of insight:

"It has been left for the S. African campaign to show the spectacle of the victors gathering the Boer women and children whom the enemy refused to care for, into camps where they were treated with the utmost kindness, and fed and clothed better than the loyalist refugees whom the war has brought to destitution."¹⁰ One can but speculate on the issue of how

⁶GTJ 19.7.04.

⁷GTJ 18.3.02.

⁸The Cape Argus n.d. as taken up by GTJ 4.9.00.

⁹GTJ 8.11.00.

¹⁰GTJ 18.3.02.

many Grahamstonians identified with this virulently pro-British stance. The absence of opposition to a town council motion in support of Alfred Milner's policies,¹¹ and the fact that The Journal showed no signs of tempering its views- which would probably have happened if circulation had declined through lack of support - suggest that at least the bulk of local opinion coincided with that of The Journal.

As with many conflicts, the Anglo-Boer war created a refugee problem. In 1899 the Transvaal government had expelled one-third of its White population at a few days' notice. These people flooded into the Cape Colony, where locally supported charitable organisations struggled to relieve the distress among them.¹² In October 1899, a Grahamstown Refugee Relief Committee was elected at a well-supported public meeting,¹³ because the Ladies' Benevolent Society, already financially hard-pressed was unable to accept the additional responsibility of the refugees.¹⁴ The Committee included A.E. Nelson (Treasurer), Daniel Knight, T.H. Grocott, Bishop C.E. Cornish (Church of the Province of South Africa) and the Mother Superior of the Community of the Resurrection of Our Lord.¹⁵ A subscription list was started there and then.¹⁶ The town council played its part in the refugee relief work, but was hindered by the shortage of municipal funding. In 1899 and

¹¹ CMB 8.12.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13. A special meeting was held for this purpose.

¹² GTJ 11.10.99. Alfred Milner appealed to the Mayors of the towns and cities of the colony to form such organisations.

¹³ GTJ 13.10.99.

¹⁴ GTJ 6.10.99 M.A. Chalmers to Editor.

¹⁵ Discussed below, pp 257-259.

¹⁶ GTJ 13.10.99, Refugee Relief Committee Cash Book 1899-1902 CA, 3/AY Addendum 1/1.

1900, the Board of Works was granted £250 and £100 respectively, for use in employing refugees.¹⁷ These were magnanimous offers in view of the limited Corporation finance.

The number of refugees Grahamstown had to absorb was proportionately as substantial as that of larger towns. By December 1900, 484 refugees were receiving relief in Grahamstown, as opposed to 2000 in Pietermaritzburg, 2832 in Durban, 1757 in Port Elizabeth and 3242 in Cape Town.¹⁸ Unfortunately, not all attempted to alleviate the sufferings of those recently displaced. While some actions were merely misguided - like the 1s charged to visitors to refugees encamped at Port Elizabeth showgrounds¹⁹ - others were blatantly extortionist. The racketeers included some prominent, but unidentified Grahamstonians. In a letter to The Journal in November 1900, "Refugee" made serious allegations to this effect, which have every appearance of the truth. The writer maintained that when the influx of refugees had commenced, hotel, boarding and farm house tariffs had been substantially raised. Up to September 1899, Grahamstown citizens who had owned holiday cottages at Port Alfred had usually only been able to let them over the Christmas holiday, for about two months annually. With the arrival of the refugees, monthly charges had risen from 30s to £4, from £2 to £6, and from £5 to £12 or £15. Furthermore, a number of occupants had been turned out when the owners had wanted to spend their holidays at the coast. "Refugee" could cite only one case (no name was given) of the rent voluntarily being reduced because of the long term of occupation.

¹⁷CMB 8.11.99, 7.3.00 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁸GTJ 22.12.99.

¹⁹GTJ 28.11.99 "A Port Alfred Refugee" to Editor. The money was earmarked for the local Refugee Relief Fund.

He predicted that thenceforth, the name of Grahamstown would "... [stink] in the nostrils of the people who return to the Rand."²⁰

The Grahamstown Refugee Relief Committee rendered valuable service. Cash-book entries date from 21 October 1899. The first audit was conducted in September 1900, again in December 1900, and monthly thereafter. Payments declined from mid-July 1902, when refugees began to return to the Transvaal, and ended in October 1902. There is no record of what happened to the remaining balance of £117.10. 1.²¹

A number of Grahamstonians participated actively in the Anglo-Boer war. The First City Volunteers already had a distinguished record of service in colonial and frontier wars. Their first task in 1899 was to garrison Cradock. They were led by Captain George Marshall, Grahamstown's borough ranger and poundmaster.²² He subsequently established a mounted force dubbed "Marshall's Horse," which comprised troops of the First City Volunteers and the Uitenhage Volunteer Rifles.²³ Marshall was promoted to the rank of major, sent with his command to the Colesberg area, and then further afield. He was seriously wounded in 1900 in his first important engagement near Bloemfontein, whereafter he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and became a Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.²⁴ The force was not disbanded in December 1900, as is suggested in a letter

²⁰GTJ 29.11.00 "Refugee" to Editor.

²¹Refugee Relief Committee Cash Book 1899-1902 CA, 3/AY Addendum 1/1.

²²GTJ 21.5.07.

²³GTJ 12.1.00, 4.12.00 "Trooper Marshall's Horse" to Editor,
GTJ 21.5.07.

²⁴GTJ 21.5.07.

to The Journal from one of its members,²⁵ but operated in the Western and Central Cape between March 1901 and May 1902, joining the nucleus of the Western Cape Police Force No. 3 thereafter, until demobilization in January 1903.²⁶ Marshall resigned his command and returned to Grahamstown where a farewell dinner marked his retirement.²⁷ He assumed duties of a different kind when he was elected to represent Ward 1 in the town council in 1904.²⁸

Marshall filled the most prominent leadership role of all the Grahams-tonians involved in the Anglo-Boer war: 148 men from Albany died on active service.²⁹ Dr. Edwin Atherstone³⁰ and councillor John Webber³¹ were among the better-known citizens who lost sons in the war.

If the return of the military troops illustrated any one thing more clearly than another, it was that the facilities available in Grahams-town were inadequate for the maintenance of a garrison. The Drostdy was willingly vacated by the Public School, which had been in occupation there for some time, but the drainage³² and water facilities did

²⁵ GTJ 4.12.00 "Trooper Marshall's Horse" to Editor. The men simply returned home for Christmas. 130 officers and 150 men returned to active service in February 1901 (R. Griffiths, First City: A Saga of Service, pp 73-75).

²⁶ Griffiths, First City, pp 76-81.

²⁷ GTJ 21.3.03, 21.5.07.

²⁸ GTJ 21.5.07.

²⁹ The names are recorded on a monument commemorating the fallen at the intersection of High Street and Bathurst Street. Sixty-four of these men were members of the First City Regiment, or Marshall's Horse.

³⁰ GTJ 25.6.00.

³¹ GTJ 4.12.00.

³² CMB 15.9.97, 22.3.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

not meet the requirements of the soldiers. Their arrival coincided with a lengthy drought, and the council was at a loss as to how to meet the demand for water from the Drostdy.³³ A further problem was considerably less publicised, probably because it was offensive to Victorian sensibilities. At least one location brothel was well patronised by the soldiers. The missionaries working among the Black population appealed to the council to close it,³⁴ but the local authority declined to accept any responsibility in the matter.³⁵

Despite these drawbacks, the short stay of the troops in Grahamstown seems to have been fairly uneventful. In March 1898, a detachment of the King William's Town battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment replaced the 350 men of the first Middlesex Regiment, who had been stationed at Grahamstown for just over nine months.³⁶ The Berkshire Regiment had been created a royal regiment for distinguished conduct during the 1882-1884 Egyptian Campaign. By the turn of the century, it remained the only British infantry regiment to have received that honour for gallantry on the battlefield.³⁷ In February 1899, the numbers already in Grahamstown were supplemented by two corporals and 171 men of the first Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment.³⁸ These men stayed until after the termination of the Anglo-Boer war. October

³³CMB 15.9.97, 18.1.99, 5.7.99, 9.8.99, 16.8.99 CA, 3/AY, 1/1/1/13;
GTJ 6.7.99, 26.1.00, 27.1.00 F.G. Hammer to Editor.

³⁴CMB 8.3.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³⁵CMB 5.4.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

³⁶CMB 26.5.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13; GTJ 12.3.98, The Cape Times 28.1.99.

³⁷GTJ 9.1.99.

³⁸GTJ 4.2.99.

1902 saw their withdrawal from Grahamstown.³⁹

Not all the citizens mourned their departure. One Journal subscriber asserted that soldiers were no more than "... drones in the human hive, ... a relic of a barbarous age," and certainly not the "class" of men desired in a town aspiring to become an educational centre. However, "Citizen's" claim that many Journal readers shared his view,⁴⁰ cannot be treated with great seriousness. People adopting such a firm moral stance would scarcely have supported the militant Journal throughout the war. Furthermore, the town council made a concerted attempt to secure the stationing of a permanent garrison in the city. Persuasive letters were written to military commanders,⁴¹ but despite a visit to the city by General Lyttleton, General Officer commanding South African forces,⁴² in November 1903 the council was informed that "... circumstances do not admit of troops being stationed in Grahamstown."⁴³

The Anglo-Boer war impinged in other ways on the peaceful life of Grahamstown. It necessitated the formation of a local Town Guard to defend the city if it were attacked. The citizens did not greet this with the enthusiasm that might have been expected from a once-military centre. Two public meetings barely secured two hundred volunteers, although the Imperial Government had called for six hundred.⁴⁴ Only by mid-January 1900, had sufficient volunteers been found to form one

³⁹GTJ 30.10.02.

⁴⁰GTJ 5.5.03 "Citizen" to Editor.

⁴¹CMB 6.8.02 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴²CMB 29.4.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴³CMB 11.11.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

⁴⁴CMB 17.10.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13; GTJ 5.1.00; 6.1.00.

battalion of five companies.⁴⁵ These were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel A.E. Nelson, Major W.C. van Rynevelt and Sergeant-Major W.H. Gilder.⁴⁶ Still apathy reigned, and by February 1901, not all the able-bodied eighteen to thirty year olds had volunteered their services. Colonel Girouard, Chief of Staff to the Defence Force Colonel, arrived in the city to drum up support. The Town Guard he inspected must have presented a rather ragged and motley sight. The four hundred volunteers were ill-provided with uniforms,⁴⁷ and had not had much drill practice. They were certainly not the spruce and uniformed citizen force conjured up in The Journal's vision of what Grahamstonians could achieve.⁴⁸ The newspaper placed great store by the trappings of warfare, and supported Girouard's appeal to the "Merchant Princes of Grahamstown" to start a fund for Town Guard uniforms.⁴⁹ The town council could certainly not afford to do so. Its attempt to contribute to the fund was obstructed by R.W. Nelson, who threatened that such "illegal expenditure of municipal funds" would provoke litigation.⁵⁰ What Colonel A.E. Nelson felt about his brother's objections is not recorded; R.W. Nelson won the day when the proposed contribution to the uniform fund was declared by the council's attorneys to be beyond its legal powers.⁵¹

⁴⁵GTJ 15.1.00.

⁴⁶DDNS, pg 16. Cutting from an unnamed newspaper, dated 5.1.00. CL, PR 1741.

⁴⁷GTJ 26.2.01, 28.2.01.

⁴⁸For example: GTJ 28.12.99, 6.1.00.

⁴⁹GTJ 28.2.01.

⁵⁰CMB 6.3.01, 13.3.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

⁵¹CMB 3.4.01 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

The Anglo-Boer war brought the imposition of martial law to most parts of the Cape Colony. By January 1901, only the three chief ports of Cape Town, East London and Port Elizabeth, the Transkei and Griqualand East were excluded from its operation.⁵² This aided the Grahamstown authorities in their attempts to organise a defence system. Local business hours were shortened; shops were closed at 1 p.m. on Saturdays, and on weekdays at 5 p.m. in summer and 4 p.m. in winter. The time gained was allocated to Town Guard exercises, with target practice scheduled for Saturday afternoons. A second battalion was formed to facilitate the manning of trenches around the city.⁵³ In March 1901, C.J. Stirk formed a Company of Veterans for older men.⁵⁴ Despite these organisational improvements, the Grahamstown Town Guard never achieved a satisfactory standard of training. The Ambulance Corps appears to have got little further than learning to unload a rifle before using it as a splint for broken limbs.⁵⁵ The defence units were kept at drill, which was of ceremonial use only; by August 1901, after two years of existence, the first battalion had practised skirmishing drill only once or twice, and never the attack formation.⁵⁶

The defence network had to be carefully structured. In the event of an attack, the alert would be given by the firebell, and Brook and Pote's steam hooter.⁵⁷ The defence plan divided Grahamstown into five

⁵²GTJ 19.1.01.

⁵³GTJ 5.3.01.

⁵⁴GPM 8.3.01.

⁵⁵G. Cory, Recollections of the Past. (Unp. autobiography), pp 218-219 CL, unaccessioned photocopy.

⁵⁶GTJ 27.8.01 "Attack Drill" to Editor.

⁵⁷GTJ 9.2.00.

sections, and included the demolition of trees and other obstacles in the line of fire, the erection of barricades, organisation of forces, control of the population and hospital arrangements. Readily available supplies of food and tools were recorded, in case of seige.⁵⁸

The local authorities must have been grateful for these preparations, sketchy though they were, when Grahamstown was called to arms in March 1901. It was known that the Boer leaders, Generals P.H. Kritzinger and J.C. Smuts, had commandos in the area. On 8 March 1901, the Boers blew up the railway line at Sheldon. Eight hundred men then headed towards Carlisle Bridge, about twenty miles from Grahamstown, cutting the communication wires there at 10,20 a.m. on Sunday, 10 March. The alarm reached Grahamstown just after noon that day. The scene provoked a solemn description, with the faintest sense of enjoyment, from a Mail reporter:

"The alarm bells were rung and steam whistles blown, while high above the general clamour Messrs. Brook and Pote's powerful hooter rang out sonorously Of course, Dame Rumour's tongue was set awagging with characteristic volubility, and equally as a matter of course the old lady lied terrifically."⁵⁹ Grahamstown was a scurry of activity.

The Town Guard was served with ammunition, and detailed for duty in the trenches. The Veterans were formed into four companies of forty men each, and the Cadets of the Public School, Kingswood and St. Andrew's

⁵⁸This plan of defence was preserved by Dr. E. Dru Drury in his news scrapbook. It comprises two typed pages of comprehensive, and fairly simple proposals. The plan was dated 30.1.1900. DDNS, pp 18-19 CL, PR 1741.

⁵⁹GPM 12.3.01.

Colleges were marched to their positions on 11 March.⁶⁰ A contingent of the District Mounted Defence Force was brought up from Alicedale,⁶¹ and some fifty Coloured men from Reverend S.J. Helm's Union Church, "a promising lot of fellows," were allowed to enrol in the Town Guard.⁶²

The alarm was shortlived. Farms in the neighbourhood were ransacked,⁶³ but no great damage or lasting bitterness was created. The closest the commandos came to the city was said to be the Lombard farm, eighteen miles away.⁶⁴ Local legend has it that Smuts and Kritzinger did not consider Grahamstown worth attacking. This was just as well. A remark overheard by George Cory in the trenches, to the effect that, "... if I've got to be shot, let it be decently done by a Boer and not the Grahamstown Town Guard,"⁶⁵ probably contained as much apprehension as humour.

The Town Guard was dismissed five days after the alarm had been sounded,⁶⁶ whereafter life returned to its normal routine. An article in the Kingswood College Magazine in September 1901 recalled the excitement with wry humour, and some nostalgia:

"No wandering commando has come near enough to offer us any chance of fame in the field, and ... the unsympathetic Boer has refused to take

⁶⁰R.F. Currey implies in St. Andrew's College, Grahamstown 1855-1955, pp 74-75, that the St. Andrew's College Cadet Corps was the only one that served. This is inaccurate.

⁶¹GPM 12.3.01.

⁶²GTJ 12.3.01.

⁶³The farms belonged to, among others, M. Lombard, J.O. Norton, G. Johnson and T. Cousins, (GTJ 16.3.01).

⁶⁴GTJ 16.3.01.

⁶⁵Cory, Recollections, pg 221.

⁶⁶GPM 18.3.01.

account of the dullness of our existence and break the monotony of our repose."⁶⁷ The closing story of Grahamstown's days of alarm was related by J.C. Smuts, who visited Grahamstown in 1912 for the Centennial celebrations of the town's foundation. Smuts recalled "... with his Commando coming over the veld and finding a number of cans of cream that day they served as a refreshment for his little commando."⁶⁸ It was a simple, but picturesque anecdote of the former enemy's most vivid memory of Albany. The hostile emotions engendered in the days of March 1901 were finally swept away in the laughter that greeted the tale.

In one sense, the Anglo-Boer war brought only a temporary end to Grahamstown's military function. This role was revived by the presence of troops in the city during the European wars of 1914-1918, and 1939-1945, and the current stationing of the Sixth South African Infantry Battalion in Grahamstown. But in many ways, the removal of the British garrison in 1902 and the foundation of Rhodes University College in 1904, completed the city's symbolic transition from a military to an educational identity. By the turn of the century, The Journal's enthusiasm for things military was anachronistic, and met with a half-hearted response from the citizens. Perhaps the corporate sense of involvement in town and frontier defence suffered a demise in the period between the War of Ngqayecibi of 1877-1878 and the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war in 1899. This was certainly not true of everyone, but by then the average citizen seems to have been more concerned with maintaining a peaceful life, than with community orientated activities of a military nature.

⁶⁷The Kingswood College Magazine, No. 3, Vol.IV, September 1901, pp 1-2.

⁶⁸GTJ 15.8.12.

When Grahamstown's role as a military centre had been removed in 1870, other functions had assumed more significance. This was true of the Eastern Districts' Court, a local division of the Supreme Court based in Grahamstown. The Cape Higher Court comprised the Supreme Court in Cape Town, the Griqualand High Court at Kimberley, and the Eastern Districts' Court, which had been established in Grahamstown in 1864. As originally constituted, the latter had two judges, and its decisions were subject to appeal to the Supreme Court in Cape Town.⁶⁹ This provision provoked a great deal of dissatisfaction, because legally the Cape Town judges had the same status as those of the two other courts. The "de facto" superiority implied in the appeal provision, rankled until the 1879 Administration of Justice Act constituted a separate Court of Appeal. This would be made up of the Chief Justice of the Cape, the Judge President of the Eastern Districts' Court, and two puisne judges. The Appeal Court would deal with civil and criminal appeals from the Eastern Districts' Court,⁷⁰ and, from 1882, from the Griqualand High Court. The 1882 Administration of Justice Act included the Judge President of the Griqualand Court on the Appeal Bench.⁷¹

Unfortunately this was a temporary measure. The main purpose behind the creation of an Appeal Court with representation wider than simply that of the Cape Town Bench, had been to secure a uniform colonial system of legal practice. In this it was not particularly successful; in 1886, Attorney-General T. Upington asserted that the expense of

⁶⁹Act 21, 1864, Preamble, Clause VIII.

⁷⁰Act 5, 1879, Preamble, Clauses VII, XI, XXII.

⁷¹Act 40, 1882, Clauses XIII, XIV.

maintaining the Court was not justified by its achievements.⁷² The 1886 Appeal Court and Sheriff's Duties Act abolished the Appeal Court and returned its powers to the Cape Town Bench.⁷³ The measure provoked an outcry of indignation in Grahamstown. The Eastern Districts' Bar and Side Bar remained unconvinced by Upington's claims that the measure was not an attempt at centralisation in Cape Town. Members of the Bar saw the move as detrimental to the Northern and Eastern Cape Districts, but had their hands tied by Upington's assertion that the other alternative was to reduce the Eastern Districts' and Griqualand Courts to one judge each.⁷⁴

The Journal gave warning of the mounting opposition to the government's proposals when it commented on the formation of a "combination ... of sufficient strength to drive these betrayers of the public interest from office, and to exert a salutary control over future legislation."⁷⁵ Political unrest on the Eastern frontier climaxed in the unsuccessful Political Union of 1886. It was shortlived,⁷⁶ but the legacy of distrust in government dealings with the Eastern Districts' Court remained. Eastern authorities were only slightly appeased in 1896, when the Better Administration of Justice Act ruled that in cases of appeal, one judge from the Eastern Districts or Griqualand Court, could take part in the determination of the case, along with the three Supreme Court judges.⁷⁷ This did nothing to ease the burden of work of the

⁷²Cape Hansard: Assembly, 31.5.86, pp 324-325.

⁷³Act 17, 1886, Clauses 1, 4-5.

⁷⁴Cape Hansard: Assembly, 31.5.86, pg 325.

⁷⁵GTJ 12.6.86.

⁷⁶Discussed above, ch. 7, pp 214-215.

⁷⁷Act 35, 1896, Clause 20.

Supreme Court in Cape Town. A backlog accumulated during the Anglo-Boer war and by 1904 was such that the Jameson Ministry had to ease the situation by establishing Divisional Courts in Cape Town, each of which comprised one Supreme Court judge. These courts were subject to the appeal provision that applied to the Eastern Districts' and Griqualand Courts.⁷⁸ The Journal welcomed this development as a confirmation of the equal status of the Cape Town, Eastern Districts' and Griqualand judges.⁷⁹ The long-term project for a separate Appeal Court was even more enthusiastically applauded; The Journal saw this as "... a long step towards political federation, and ... welcome to all true lovers of South Africa."⁸⁰ The Appeal Court was eventually established after Union in 1910.

A second cause of restlessness and unease between 1883 and 1904, related to the understaffing of the Eastern Districts' Court, a trend which strengthened the suspicion held in the Eastern Cape, that the status of the court was progressively being undermined. In 1879, the number of Eastern Districts' judges had been increased to three in the Administration of Justice Act,⁸¹ but the extra seat was left unfilled for some years.⁸² The issue of the appointment of a third judge became the rod by which government attitudes towards the Eastern Districts' Court were measured. Government neglect of the demand for

⁷⁸Act 35, 1904, Clause 2.

⁷⁹GTJ 3.5.04.

⁸⁰GTJ 29.12.04.

⁸¹Act 5, 1879, Clause III.

⁸²The Cape Law Journal, 1885, pg 291.

a full Bench was facilitated by the temporary changes introduced into the administration of justice during the Anglo-Boer war. In 1900, the Indemnity and Special Tribunal Act created special Treason Courts to try rebels against the British government. The quorum required in the special courts in the Cape Town, Grahamstown and Kimberley circuits, was reduced from two to one judge.⁸³ The Eastern Districts' Bench drifted down to one or two members, and when Sir J.D. Barry, Judge President, retired in 1901, the vacancy created on the Bench was left unfilled. In response to the request of a Grahamstown public meeting in September 1902,⁸⁴ the government appointed a replacement in Judge Kotze.⁸⁵ However, his arrival was delayed for over a year, during which time insecurity grew in reaction to the Cape Town Incorporated Law Society's proposal that the Eastern Districts' and Griqualand Courts should be reduced to one judge each, and the four judges thus relieved be sent to Cape Town.⁸⁶ This example of the "metropolitan grab" provoked representations to the government by H.R. Wood, Advocate V. Sampson and the Grahamstown Chamber of Commerce.⁸⁷ The fear created by these incidents was exploited to its own political advantage by the Progressive Party during the 1904 election. Only after the Progressive Party victory did Kotze take up his seat on the Eastern Districts' Bench, as Judge President.⁸⁸

A third threat existed in the form of dissatisfaction concerning the location of the Eastern Districts' Court in Grahamstown. In 1891,

⁸³ Act 6, 1900, Preamble, Clauses 1, 8-10; GTJ 21.8.02.

⁸⁴ GTJ 4.9.02.

⁸⁵ GTJ 18.9.02, 14.7.04.

⁸⁶ GTJ 30.4.03.

⁸⁷ GTJ 8.10.03.

⁸⁸ GTJ 14.7.04.

The Port Elizabeth Telegraph maintained that judicial processes were handicapped by the costs of travelling to a city which was by that stage in a rather remote position, and difficult of access. The editor asserted that, "... many instances are on record of men choosing rather to smart under a wrong than to proceed to law."⁸⁹ These claims were disturbing, but do not appear to have been wholly justified. It was certainly true that the civil work of the Eastern Districts' Court was slack in the 1890's, supported only by a small Bar and Side Bar. However, a great deal of criminal work was undertaken, which was not recorded in law reports.⁹⁰ Fortunately for Grahamstown, the protests against the location of the Court were taken no further at this point.

Having used the Eastern Districts' Court as an election issue in its favour, the Progressive Party successfully set about appeasing Eastern Cape hostility in 1904, in the Better Administration of Justice Act.⁹¹ This move was justified by the strong legal tradition in Grahamstown. Twenty-two years earlier, in January 1883, Grahamstown had been the venue for the formation of the first Law Society at the Cape. The moving forces behind the venture were Jonathan Ayliff, an attorney and Member of Parliament for Grahamstown, and W.H.S. Bell, his enterprising young partner. Their Western Cape counterparts were disturbed at being pre-empted in this way. However, they were able to save face by the legal loophole created by the Eastern Districts' Law Society's failure to secure legislated recognition of its existence. The

⁸⁹The Port Elizabeth Telegraph 14.4.91.

⁹⁰The Honourable Justice J.D. Cloete, Judge President, "The Story of Grahamstown's Supreme Court." Grocott's Mail, 17.9.1982.

⁹¹Act 35, 1904. Discussed above, pg 253.

Western Cape attorneys hastily submitted a bill for an Incorporated Law Society for the entire colony, and Ayliff had to be content with merely a recognition of the separate existence of the Eastern Districts' Law Society. Before long, the latter had been absorbed into the Incorporated body, although its contribution was permanently enshrined in the colony's first legal publication, The Cape Law Journal. W.H.S. Bell had been authorised to edit the journal in January 1884, at the only Annual General Meeting of the Eastern Districts' Law Society.⁹² The publication acquired a distinguished reputation, which it retains today as The South African Law Journal.⁹³

Grahamstown's concrete contributions to the Cape legal world strengthened the resilience of her legal establishments to the machinations of rival groups. In 1905, these establishments would be supplemented by a Law Department at Rhodes University College. The foundation in Grahamstown of the university college had its precedent in the growth of several reputable educational institutions. From a purely pedagogic point of view, the city offered the advantage of research and teaching establishments likely to appeal - or so Victorian opinion had it - to serious-minded students.

By 1883, Grahamstown had acquired a considerable reputation in the field of school education. Several of her private and state-aided schools had come to command reputations which drew students from all parts of the colony. The better-known schools were founded in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Assumption Convent was opened in 1850, St. Andrew's College in 1855, and the Public Undenominational School,

⁹²H.C. Hummel, "The First Law Society." Grocott's Mail 25.3.1983.

⁹³The name was changed in 1901.

which subsequently separated into Graeme College and Victoria Girls' High School, in 1873. St. Aidan's College was established in 1876, the Wesleyan School for Girls in 1881, St. Andrew's Preparatory School in 1885, and the Wesleyan School for Boys (later Kingswood College), in 1894.⁹⁴ Denominational schools of lesser significance catered for smaller numbers. St. Joseph's School for Girls and St. Patrick's School for Boys, were associated with the Roman Catholic Church. The Anglican Church ran St. Bartholomew's High School for Boys, and a school for Girls and Infants.⁹⁵

Some attempt was made in Grahamstown to provide education for the poorer classes. The Public Undenominational School was originally established to educate boys "... belonging to the tradesman class."⁹⁶ The sisterhood of the Community of the Resurrection of our Lord undertook extensive educational work. The Community had been founded in Grahamstown in 1884 by the Anglican bishop, A.B. Webb. The nuns ran different grades of schools. "The Good Shepherd School" began in a kitchen with one pupil in 1884, and served the children of the poor. St. Peter's Higher Grade School of 1885⁹⁷ acquired such renown that in 1894 facilities were extended to include the training of elementary school teachers. Girls of at least fourteen years, with St. IV or V, were admitted to the teacher-training course, which lasted three

⁹⁴ K.S. Hunt, "Grahamstown: From Military Headquarters to Educational Centre." Rhodes Review, 1982, pg 19.

⁹⁵ Commercial Directory and Guide to the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, 1881, pp 409-410.

⁹⁶ Cory, Recollections, pg 173.

⁹⁷ M.W. Robins, Mother Cecile of Grahamstown, South Africa: A Record of a Great Educational Work, pp 8-10, 13, 16-17.

years. The project received the enthusiastic support of Dr. T. Muir, the Cape Superintendent General of Education, and was vindicated by the results achieved. Between 1894 and 1897, thirty of the forty pupils achieved first-class passes in the examinations of their years. The project was successful enough to warrant the separation of the training block from St. Peter's School in 1897, and its location in the central block of St. Peter's Home. The need for more adequate buildings became apparent when the Colonial Education Department began to pressurise the college to extend its facilities to include the training of secondary school teachers. Fund-raising was undertaken with great enthusiasm by the Mother Superior of the Community, Mother Cecile, who, by May 1903, had raised £5300 in England.⁹⁸ Prominent local citizens like J.E. Wood, Josiah Slater and Dr. S. Schönland gave the scheme considerable support.⁹⁹ Land adjoining St. Peter's Home was purchased after some delays in the selection of a suitable site for the College,¹⁰⁰ and the stone was laid on 31 August 1903.¹⁰¹ The building itself was opened officially in May 1904,¹⁰² and was occupied by July 1904.¹⁰³ The courses offered were substantial, designed to prepare pupils for Std. VI, for Pupil Teachers' First and Second year, Second¹⁰⁴ and Third Class, Kindergarten, Music and Art Teachers' Certificates, as well as

⁹⁸Sister Kate, Venturers for God: Mother Cecile, pp 30-34.

⁹⁹CMB 28.6.99 CA 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁰⁰CMB 28.6.99, 5.7.99, 2.8.99, 30.8.99, 6.9.99, 13.9.99 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14; GTJ 22.9.99.

¹⁰¹CMB 5.8.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹⁰²CMB 27.4.04 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

¹⁰³Sister Kate, Mother Cecile, pg 36.

¹⁰⁴For this course, a matriculation qualification was necessary.

the matriculation examination.¹⁰⁵ 135 students registered in 1905,¹⁰⁶ and numbers grew steadily during subsequent years. The Grahamstown Training College supplied South African schools with meticulously trained teachers until it was closed down at the end of 1975.

The Church of the Province of South Africa supplied Grahamstown with a seminary for clergy. St. Paul's Theological College, founded in 1902, was destined to play a vital role in the preparation of candidates for service in the Anglican church. The building had been purchased in 1885,¹⁰⁷ called St. Paul's Mission House, and set aside for a brotherhood of monks, and as a clergy retreat.¹⁰⁸ Although the key figure in the enterprise, Father Philip Simeon, was fully supported in his venture by Bishop A.B. Webb, he was drawn into other church activities and never achieved his ideal of founding a community there. In 1894, he abandoned his plans.

By this time the Provincial Synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa had agreed on Grahamstown as a suitable place for the foundation of a theological training college.¹⁰⁹ Even John X. Merriman, no friend of Grahamstown, rejected Cape Town as a viable alternative, because of its "materialistic associations."¹¹⁰ Canon J. Espin resigned as headmaster of St. Andrew's College to become the warden at St. Paul's College when it was opened in 1902.¹¹¹ An

¹⁰⁵GTJ 11.10.04 Notice.

¹⁰⁶Sister Kate, Mother Cecile, pg 37.

¹⁰⁷C. Lewis and G.E. Edwards, Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa, pg 294.

¹⁰⁸GTJ 2.7.86.

¹⁰⁹Lewis and Edwards, Historical Records, pg 204.

¹¹⁰GPM 11.2.91.

¹¹¹Lewis and Edwards, Historical Records, pg 297.

awareness of the mediaeval link between cathedral school and university was probably not prevalent in the minds of many. However, the foundation of the college contributed to the academic nature of Grahamstown in providing another local tertiary educational institution.

Attempts to increase the educational facilities in Grahamstown extended beyond the provision of schools or tertiary institutions, to practical training and scientific research. Not all of these met with success. The Agricultural College, founded in September 1889, was the first failure of note between 1883 and 1904. As the urban centre for the Albany farming community, Grahamstown was a good place for the location of the institution. The school was intended as an adjunct to other schools,¹¹² and was designed for experimental farming rather than theoretical teaching,¹¹³ in order to encourage a progressive and scientific approach to agriculture in Albany. The project never got off the ground. Farmers with sons at Grahamstown schools showed little interest in encouraging them to take the agricultural, agricultural chemistry, botany and veterinary science courses offered at the college.¹¹⁴ Neither the principal's attempts to elicit support from among the farmers,¹¹⁵ nor the persuasive tone of The Journal and The Mail reports,¹¹⁶ saved the enterprise. The school closed in 1891.¹¹⁷

¹¹²GTJ 10.9.89.

¹¹³SCMB 5.10.88 CA, 3/AY 1/3/1/1/3.

¹¹⁴GPM 8.10.90.

¹¹⁵GTJ 28.7.91.

¹¹⁶For example: GTJ 14.1.90, GPM 14.3.90.

¹¹⁷GTJ 28.7.91.

Two other scientifically-based institutions made valuable contributions in the form of material collected, and research conducted; the Albany Museum and the Bacteriological Institute. The former had been founded by a group of medical men in 1855, at which stage it had comprised the geological and natural history collections of the Eastern Province Literary, Scientific and Medical Society. The curators, town clerk B.J. Glanville (1855-1882), his daughter Miss M.E. Glanville (1882-1888) and Dr. S. Schönland (1888-1910), contributed significantly to the extension of the collection.¹¹⁸ Schönland particularly, was a man of considerable reputation and vision. He arrived in Grahamstown after having had some considerable experience at German and English universities.¹¹⁹ He collected, examined and classified specimens with great enthusiasm, but stressed that the object of a museum should be to teach, not merely to store.¹²⁰ He was aided by a dedicated committee, which supported his reorganisation of the museum. The exhibits were arranged more scientifically, and the services of a qualified taxidermist secured.¹²¹ The town council was persuaded to proclaim official protection of, among others, secretary birds, butcher birds, small hawks, spreeus, larks, plovers and honey-birds, from the ravages of saloon rifles, catapults, firearms and airguns.¹²² The staff were a little over-zealous at times; the Finance Committee was obliged to protest

¹¹⁸ An Illustrated Guide to the Exhibited Collections of the Albany Museum, Preface.

¹¹⁹ Schönland had been an assistant at the Berlin Royal Agricultural College Museum, assistant master at the Aschersleben College of Science, and sub-curator of the Botanical Museum of Oxford University. (GTJ 2.4.89, 4.4.89).

¹²⁰ GPM 27.3.96.

¹²¹ GPM 13.11.89.

¹²² GPM 18.9.96 TCM 16.9.96.

when kudu were skinned on the landing of the town hall,¹²³ and when a pungent odour from the fish collected by the taxidermist impregnated the building.¹²⁴

Grahamstonians were proud of the growing reputation and exhibits of the Albany Museum. In 1892 alone, twenty thousand people visited the museum, and eight thousand specimens were received.¹²⁵ Before long, the town hall rooms used by the museum had become hopelessly inadequate. In 1896, the government responded fairly promptly to the museum committee's appeal for funds for a new building. Government funding was conditional upon the town council's contribution of a suitable site. Furthermore, Schönland's distinguished service was acknowledged in his appointment as the first director of the Albany Museum in 1896.¹²⁶

The Albany Museum Committee lost no time in appointing a building sub-committee, and in forwarding plans to the government.¹²⁷ However, a delay in the commencement of operations occurred when a brief, but heated dispute developed over the site selected for the new building. Ground in Somerset Street was donated by the trustees of the Drostdy Grounds, and supplemented with adjoining land granted by the local authority. The site seemed ideal, as it was in a central position and close to the educational institutions. But it soon became apparent

¹²³FCMB 24.6.90 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4. The museum had moved into the town hall building in 1882. (Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 181).

¹²⁴FCMB 1.2.98 CA, 3/AY 1/2/3/1/4.

¹²⁵GTJ 11.2.93.

¹²⁶GPM 27.3.96.

¹²⁷GTJ 10.12.96.

that the Drostdy Gate would stand in the way of the museum. For some, the choice between whether to preserve the historic structure, or to sacrifice it for the practical advantage of a new Albany Museum building, was fairly clear-cut. Schönland's assertion that the Gate should be demolished if no other site could be found, won the support of prominent people like the Mayor, Dr. W.G. Atherstone, the Civil Commissioner, John Hemming, the Cape premier, J.G. Sprigg, and the committees of the Public School (which occupied the Drostdy Buildings) and the Albany Museum.¹²⁸

George Cory initiated the campaign to preserve the city's distinctive Gate. In a letter to The Mail, he postulated that, "... Grahamstown without the Drostdy Arch, would be like Capetown without Table Mountain."¹²⁹ He inspired the citizens to indignant protest, such as that voiced by "Englishwoman."

"... the Drostdy Gate speaks to us of things that are gone, and of primitive colonial history, and it is for this reason that it pleases and interests us;"¹³⁰

Exactly how close the Drostdy Gate came to demolition is not clear. The Albany Museum Committee did not tempt the wrath of civic-conscious citizens too far, and the museum was constructed on ground adjoining the Gate in Somerset Street. Sir Alfred Milner laid the foundation stone of the building in September 1897.¹³¹ In January 1900, specimens were removed to the new Albany Museum,¹³² which was officially

¹²⁸GTJ 4.5.97 S. Schönland to Editor.

¹²⁹GPM 3.5.97 G. Cory to Editor.

¹³⁰GPM 7.5.97 "Englishwoman" to Editor.

¹³¹GTJ 7.9.97, 9.9.97.

¹³²GTJ 11.1.00.

opened by the Governor, Sir. W. Hely-Hutchinson, in January 1902.¹³³

Research work of a more intensive and specialised nature was conducted at the Grahamstown Bacteriological Institute between 1891 and 1905. The Institute was the first of its kind in South Africa, and was established in response to calls for investigation into the causes of cattle, sheep and animal diseases. Eastern Cape farmers were particularly in need of scientific methods of combatting the scourges of horse-sickness, heartwater in sheep, and red-water in cattle. The man selected to head the Bacteriological Institute was a distinguished graduate of Edinburgh University, Dr. Alexander Edington. After a brilliant university career, he had served at the New Veterinary College as Assistant to the Professor of Surgery (1886), Lecturer in Bacteriology (1887-1890) and Professor of Comparative Pathology (1889-1890). In 1891 he accepted the appointment as Cape Bacteriologist, and arrived in Grahamstown after having travelled the continent to select suitable apparatus for the laboratory of the Institute.¹³⁴ This was located in a portion of the government buildings in Prince Alfred Street.¹³⁵

Grahamstown, as the urban centre of a stock farming district, was a natural choice for the location of the Bacteriological Institute. The city acquired some prestige from the Institute, but functional problems created by inadequate municipal facilities caused embarrassment. Coal gas was required to maintain a constant temperature for experiments,

¹³³ GTJ 23.1.02.

¹³⁴ E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa up to the End of the Nineteenth Century, pg 338.

¹³⁵ GTJ 14.7.91.

but as the Grahamstown gasworks only became operative in February 1895,¹³⁶ the Institute had to prepare its own gas from gasoline. The supply obtained could not be used for certain kinds of incubating apparatus.¹³⁷ Fortunately, that particular problem was of a temporary nature, and was overcome in 1895.

A more serious and recurrent difficulty was that of the deficient quantity, quality and pressure of the water supplied to the Institute. Edington needed a constant water supply from a height of one hundred feet.¹³⁸ The council could not have anticipated the problems it had in meeting this requirement. The tank installed in the Drostdy grounds to secure the hundred foot fall¹³⁹ was eventually transferred to the Botanic Gardens,¹⁴⁰ but additional problems were created by the water shortage of 1896-1898, and the bad state of repair of the tank in 1900 and 1902.

Research work rapidly got under way despite these setbacks. While Edington focussed on animal diseases like horse-sickness, heartwater and later, rinderpest, an important and remunerative adjunct to his activities was the culture of smallpox vaccine. An inexpensive and readily available supply of lymph was necessary to deal with the sporadic occurrences of smallpox at the Cape, and in 1892 a colonial Vaccine Institute was officially adjoined to the Bacteriological Institute.¹⁴¹ The staff was supplemented by a veterinary officer

¹³⁶ See below, ch. 4, pp 101-106.

¹³⁷ GPM 26.4.93.

¹³⁸ GTJ 23.7.91 TCM 22.7.91.

¹³⁹ WLCMB 17.8.91, 24.8.91 CA, 3/AY 1/2/2/1/8.

¹⁴⁰ WLCMB 7.9.91 CA, 3/AY 1/2/2/1/8.

¹⁴¹ GTJ 31.5.92.

experienced in vaccine production,¹⁴² which was well under way by July 1893, in time to meet a smallpox epidemic in the Transvaal. The Grahamstown laboratory supplied almost all the lymph used during the epidemic. In 1894, 99% of the vaccinations performed with lymph from the Institute were reported to have been successful.¹⁴³ These achievements were usefully applied in the German Protectorate of West Africa. The German government consulted the Grahamstown Institute when it discovered that the smallpox vaccine being used in the Protectorate, was ineffective. The German government was so impressed with the results obtained by the Institute, that it presented the Cape Colony with two of the best German-made emulsifying machines.¹⁴⁴ Even The Eastern Province Herald, hitherto critical of the Institute's work on lymph vaccine, acknowledged the prestige that this brought to Edington's work.¹⁴⁵ By the end of 1896, the Bacteriological Institute was able to justify its existence as a Vaccine Institute alone, because the £9555 brought in that year by lymph production had contributed substantially to covering the expenses connected with the inception and maintenance of the laboratory.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴²P.W. Laidler and M. Gelfand, South Africa: Its Medical History 1652-1898, pg 462.

¹⁴³Burrows, Medicine in South Africa, pg 339; GTJ 26.5.94. The Eastern Province Herald claimed, but without support from other sources, that a disproportionately large percentage of the vaccinations had been unsuccessful. (The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 20.9.94).

¹⁴⁴GPM 20.2.95.

¹⁴⁵The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 15.9.98.

¹⁴⁶GPM 9.4.97, The Eastern Province Herald n.d. as taken up by GTJ 15.9.98.

Edington had originally been instructed primarily to investigate heart-water or meltziekte, a disease affecting sheep at the coast. However, he had become so involved in other aspects of research, that by December 1894, this had not been tackled.¹⁴⁷ A successful attempt to rectify this omission resulted in the production of a reasonably effective antidote by 1899. The appeal made to the colonial government by the members of the Central Albany Farmers' Association, for sufficient vaccine for their entire flocks,¹⁴⁸ was a satisfying vote of confidence in this aspect of Edington's work.

Horse-sickness was the disease in connection with which Edington established his reputation both internationally and in South Africa, and made his principal contribution to veterinary science.¹⁴⁹ In the nineteenth century, horses played a vital role in Cape colonial transport, a fact which made the scourge of horse-sickness all the more devastating to the economy. Horse-sickness was a highly contagious seasonal illness with an extremely high mortality rate.¹⁵⁰ Although Edington investigated the disease thoroughly, he met with only partial success in that he was unable to produce an infallible vaccine.

The Grahamstown newspapers followed the course of Edington's research on horse-sickness eagerly. In 1892 he isolated the horse-sickness microbe,¹⁵¹ a development of such significance that The Cape Times

¹⁴⁷ GTJ 9.1.94, 22.12.94.

¹⁴⁸ GTJ 6.6.99.

¹⁴⁹ Burrows, Medicine in South Africa, pg 338.

¹⁵⁰ T. Gutsche, There was a Man: The Life and Times of Sir Arnold Theiler K.C.M.G. of Onderstepoort, pg 5.

¹⁵¹ GPM 8.8.92.

claimed that it, "... was of greater service to the Colony than the opening up of a new gold-field Dr. Edington's discovery presaged the ultimate disappearance of the sickness from amongst the agricultural plagues of the country."¹⁵² Unfortunately, extraneous demands on Edington's time and expertise, and the nature of the disease, complicated the production of an effective remedy. Not all horses were equally susceptible to horse-sickness. A vaccine safe in most cases, might be fatal to some horses, while in others it might never produce immunity. Even attenuated and, consequently, safer vaccines, often had either terminal or negligible effects. The safest remedy available by 1905 effectively immunised mules, but not necessarily horses,¹⁵³ for which no vaccine approached the standard of almost absolute safety.¹⁵⁴

Edington's research led him to draw important conclusions, which were published in a Bacteriological Institute report in 1903. He claimed that horse-sickness was identical to heartwater in sheep and goats, and cattle diseases such as veldsickness, and that all these were in fact variations of one great malarial infection prevalent in South Africa.¹⁵⁵ Edington was able to substantiate his assertions with evidence that he

¹⁵²The Cape Times 6.1.94.

¹⁵³GTJ 24.11.04.

¹⁵⁴GTJ 10.11.00. The method available at this stage was taken over from one of those used in rinderpest inoculation. A definite amount of virulent blood was mixed with 50 cc of serum and injected under the skin. The process was repeated twice more, each time with the same amount of blood, but a reduced amount of serum. Finally, two weeks later, pure, virulent blood was injected into the animal.

¹⁵⁵GTJ 10.5.04.

had produced heartwater in goats with blood drawn from cattle dying of veldsickness.¹⁵⁶ These conclusions were subsequently corroborated by the famous Transvaal bacteriologist, Dr. Arnold Theiler, when he partially ascertained the identities of heartwater, veldsickness and horse-sickness.¹⁵⁷ In 1902, the Principal of the Royal Veterinary College in London had good reason to pay tribute to Edington's contributions in the area of research into horse-sickness.¹⁵⁸

Edington's investigations into the rinderpest plague were similarly valuable, but also only partially successful. In the 1890's, rinderpest was carried down the Nile by Arabian caravans, and swept through Africa from the Sudan southwards. The devastating consequences of the disease were largely dictated by the fact that oxen and cattle were economically important as means of transport, ploughing and food.¹⁵⁹

C. van Onselen has noted that despite a warning in 1892, the Cape government took few measures to prevent the spread of the disease to the colony,¹⁶⁰ which was ravaged along with its neighbouring states in the latter 1890's. Once the slaughter of infected herds to contain the spread of the disease, had been stopped by popular request, the only means of preventing the loss of cattle was by inoculation with bile or serum.¹⁶¹ Unfortunately, no satisfactory serum was ever produced.

¹⁵⁶ GTJ 27.2.04.

¹⁵⁷ GTJ 10.5.04.

¹⁵⁸ Burrows, Medicine in South Africa, pg 338.

¹⁵⁹ Laidler and Gelfand, South Africa: Its Medical History, pg 466; D. Hutcheon, Rinderpest in South Africa: A Short Description of Its History, General Characters and Methods of Treatment, pg 1.

¹⁶⁰ C. van Onselen, "Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-1897." JAH, Vol.13, No. 3, 1972, pg 473.

¹⁶¹ GTJ 27.6.97.

Among the most popular antidotes were Dr. Koch's vaccination with pure bile, the serum injections of Drs. G. Turner and W. Kolle, and Dr. A. Edington's glycerinated bile injection. Koch's method operated on the principle that pure bile obtained from an animal with rinderpest, immediately after death, contained the rinderpest organism in its natural condition. Its activity in this instance would be restrained by immunising substances in the blood, and by bile salts. Slow absorption of bile injected under the skin would give passive immunity. Koch's initial experiments were successful. However, they were conducted on a limited scale; when extended, the results were found to be uncertain, because the bile procured was of different strengths.¹⁶² The injection of standardised, fortified serum and virulent blood favoured by Turner and Kolle, gave passive immunity, but did not possess the curative properties initially expected.¹⁶³

Edington produced glycerinated bile, made up of two parts of bile, to which one part of glycerine was added. The resultant serum could be used in large doses on infected herds. If followed by several injections of virulent blood, Edington believed that immunity would be secured. Unfortunately the strengths and immunising properties of the bile used differed, so that rinderpest was occasionally induced in a healthy animal. The injections of virulent blood had to be abandoned in view of the danger of communicating diseases other than rinderpest to the treated animal. Glycerinated bile could then only be used to give a passive immunity until the infection in the neighbourhood had died out.¹⁶⁴ The value of inoculation in combatting the

¹⁶²Hutcheon, Rinderpest in South Africa, pp 15-17; GTJ 27.6.97.

¹⁶³Hutcheon, Rinderpest in South Africa, pp 31-33.

¹⁶⁴Hutcheon, Rinderpest in South Africa, pp 22-24.

disease remained in question throughout the epidemic; some claimed that it in fact accelerated the spread of rinderpest. However, R. Koch's research into immunity showed that generally 82% of untreated animals died, as against 20% of treated animals.¹⁶⁵

The rinderpest epidemic affected the Eastern Cape most severely in the six months from June to November 1897.¹⁶⁶ The Albany Rinderpest Committee arranged the purchase of 4% of the registered stock that farmers were obliged to sell for bile extraction,¹⁶⁷ and unanimously supported compulsory inoculation. However, its decision to prosecute those who refused to comply was unpopular, because of the conflicting opinions of veterinary surgeons and rinderpest authorities on the value of inoculation.¹⁶⁸ Farmers in the Bedford and Koonap areas opposed inoculation,¹⁶⁹ and a strongly-worded letter to The Journal condemned Edington for "... wilfully misleading them [farmers], and stating as facts principles he had not proved with regard to rinderpest, and thus leading them to ruinous losses."¹⁷⁰

Others believed that Edington had substantially reduced the devastation caused in the Eastern Cape. One Journal subscriber favourably compared the results of Edington's inoculations with the losses incurred by the unhindered ravages of rinderpest in neighbouring states.¹⁷¹ Cape

¹⁶⁵Laidler and Gelfand, South Africa: Its Medical History, pg 465.

¹⁶⁶GTJ 31.7.97, 4.11.97.

¹⁶⁷MCMB 9.8.97 CA, 3/AY 1/2/1/1/7; CMB 11.8.97 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/13.

¹⁶⁸GTJ 6.11.97.

¹⁶⁹GPM 22.11.97, 3.12.97.

¹⁷⁰GTJ 22.1.98 A. Buckley to Editor.

¹⁷¹GTJ 25.1.98 W.G. Webb to Editor.

cattle losses during the epidemic totalled 35%.¹⁷² In a study of the social and political effects of the disease, van Onselen asserts that the epidemic did not cause major changes in the social structure in Southern Africa.¹⁷³ However, it did emphasise the need for bacteriological and veterinary research.

Despite the contributions made to veterinary science by the Bacteriological Institute, the opposition to its foundation that had been manifest at the outset from various quarters, did not disappear with time. A number of Cape legislators were farmers, suspicious of a scientific approach to stock diseases.¹⁷⁴ Edington's energies were continually diverted into other activities, of which calf lymph manufacture and rinderpest research formed only a part. In 1894, Edington became the Acting Colonial Medical Officer of Health, and joined the Leprosy Commission.¹⁷⁵ The Cape Times objected strongly to his effective removal from full-time research, asserting that "... the conditions which led to its [the Institute's] establishment at Grahamstown have lost none of their virtue."¹⁷⁶ In 1895, a complimentary report on achievements at the Institute¹⁷⁷ did little to remove objections to the principle of scientific veterinary research. These found expression in 1904 in an unsuccessful parliamentary motion to close the Institute. This measure was passed in 1905 in an amended form, limiting research

¹⁷²Gutsche, Dr. Arnold Theiler of Onderstepoort, pg 115.

¹⁷³Van Onselen, "Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa," pp 487-488.

¹⁷⁴Gutsche, Dr. Arnold Theiler of Onderstepoort, pg 221.

¹⁷⁵GPM 8.11.93, GTJ 9.1.94; Burrows, Medicine in South Africa, pg 338.

¹⁷⁶The Cape Times 6.1.94.

¹⁷⁷GPM 9.8.95.

purely to animal diseases.¹⁷⁸ The continued existence of the Institute was threatened further by the attempts of the parliamentary Budget Committee to withdraw the government grant to the Institute.¹⁷⁹ Edington resigned as director in 1905¹⁸⁰ and entered private medical practice, finally settling in Natal.¹⁸¹ The veterinary work conducted at the Bacteriological Institute dwindled, but was continued by Thomas Bowhill, who investigated lamziekte, long endemic in the Eastern Cape. Edington's work was soon overshadowed by that of Dr. A. Theiler of Onderstepoort, and his pioneering role in South African bacteriology has more or less been forgotten.¹⁸² A reinvestigation of his contributions might well be provoked when Sir George Cory's autobiography is edited and published. Cory attacks the image of Edington as a successful researcher; he regarded Edington as a "bally old fraud," claiming that he, "... as was always [sic] the case, was going to do great things, but never did them," and was, "... just sheer bluff and brag."¹⁸³ An exposition of his assertions might be recorded in the sections of his autobiography that have been closed to researchers by his surviving children.¹⁸⁴ Although Edington's reputation did suffer as a result

¹⁷⁸Gutsche, Dr. Arnold Theiler of Onderstepoort, pg 221.

¹⁷⁹GTJ 11.5.05.

¹⁸⁰GTJ 23.5.05, 15.7.05.

¹⁸¹DSAB IV, pp 144-145.

¹⁸²Gutsche, Dr. Arnold Theiler of Onderstepoort, pp 221, 236, 448.

¹⁸³Cory, Recollections, pp 218-219.

¹⁸⁴The manuscript was deposited in the South African Public Library in April 1954 by Dr. L. Herrman, with the instruction that it was not to be accessible to researchers until after the death of Cory's children. Recently the Cory librarian, Michael Berning, encouraged consultation with George Cory's two surviving sons on the matter. They confirmed in January 1981, that pp 73-96, 115-120, 133-141, 196-200, 227-228 and 230-240, were to remain closed to the public.

of his tendency to publish inadequately tested conclusions,¹⁸⁵ Cory's opinion is openly biased. That there was personal and academic rivalry between the two men is suggested by two confrontations. Cory almost revelled in Edington's failure to respond to Grahamstown's attack alarm on 10 March 1901. When Colonel A.E. Nelson demanded Edington's attention to his Ambulance Corps, Cory notes that, "It gave me great pleasure to give him this order in a peremptory manner."¹⁸⁶ The divergent results that they obtained in tests to ascertain the purity of Slaai Kraal water, probably exacerbated the academic friction between them.¹⁸⁷ The portrait of Edington painted by Cory's unsympathetic hand, is one of an absent-minded, eccentric and boastful non-achiever. But whatever the truth of Cory's assertions, Edington, in his struggle against the superstitions, hostility, shortage of funds and goodwill prevalent at the Cape, prepared the way for the acceptance of subsequent veterinary research work.

The foundation of Rhodes University College in Grahamstown in 1904 was a natural outcome of the development of local educational and research institutions. Serious discussion on the "collegiate crowning" of these facilities had begun in 1884, prompted by Judge S.G.A. Shippard's recommendation that Grahamstown should extend her educational institutions with the view to securing economic prosperity thereby.¹⁸⁸ Although this proposal was examined with interest, it took dissatisfaction over the unequal - and at times absence of - Eastern

¹⁸⁵ DSAB IV, pg 145.

¹⁸⁶ Cory, Recollections, pg 220.

¹⁸⁷ See above, ch. 4, pg 98 footnote 24.

¹⁸⁸ GTJ 28.5.84.

representation on the Cape of Good Hope University Council, finally to provoke the organised project which led to the foundation of an Eastern Districts' teaching university.

The University of the Cape of Good Hope was the centralised, degree-conferring body at the Cape between 1873 and 1918. Schools with college departments provided tuition for the degree courses examined. Four of these were in the Eastern Cape; the Grey Institute in Port Elizabeth, the Graaff-Reinet College, Gill College in Somerset East and, from 1879, St. Andrew's College in Grahamstown. The latter was the only one still operative in 1904.¹⁸⁹ With this amount of interest shown in tertiary education, the Eastern Cape justifiably expected representation on the Good Hope University Council, more so since railway construction had largely overcome transport difficulties. However, by 1891, the apathetic Eastern Cape representative, Josiah Slater, had achieved the dubious distinction of having failed to attend all the meetings to which he had been summoned.¹⁹⁰ While The Cape Times and De Zuid-Afrikaan maintained waspishly that his absence was no loss to higher education,¹⁹¹ the effect of his neglect was most unfortunate. In 1891, no Eastern representative was appointed to the Good Hope University Council.¹⁹² Even Canon John Espin, the principal of St. Andrew's College, failed to be elected, although he had a sound reputation in both the ecclesiastical and educational worlds. This drew considerable comment, and was

¹⁸⁹R.F. Currey, Rhodes University 1904-1970: A Chronicle, " pp 2-3.

¹⁹⁰The Cape Times n.d. as taken up by The Port Elizabeth Telegraph 9.5.91.

¹⁹¹The Cape Times n.d. and De Zuid-Afrikaan n.d., as taken up by GTJ 18.12.88.

¹⁹²GPM 25.3.91, 6.5.91.

roundly condemned by The Port Elizabeth Telegraph as "most discreditable" to the Convocation.¹⁹³ The Cape Times also conceded that, "In every point of qualification Canon Espin stood in the front rank of candidates."¹⁹⁴

Grahamstown's response to this snub was to form a University Education Committee to counter the lack of Eastern Cape representation on the University Council.¹⁹⁵ Membership was designed to include graduates as well as non-degreed people.¹⁹⁶ An energetic local advocate, Henry Lardner-Burke, served as its first chairman.¹⁹⁷ The Committee undertook its tasks most seriously; university education was widely debated, and by February 1893, the body included the principals of public schools throughout the Eastern Cape.¹⁹⁸ In 1894, the Committee achieved its aim in the uncontested return of Espin to the Good Hope University Council.¹⁹⁹

The University Education Committee continued to function, because other issues had become involved. In 1893, a publication of the Grahamstown Literary and Scientific Society, The Eastern Province Magazine, initiated a debate on the practicability of a scheme for an Eastern Cape teaching university.²⁰⁰ Several prominent citizens submitted their

¹⁹³The Port Elizabeth Telegraph 7.5.91.

¹⁹⁴The Cape Times n.d. as taken up by The Port Elizabeth Telegraph 9.5.91.

¹⁹⁵GTJ 10.3.94.

¹⁹⁶GTJ 16.5.91.

¹⁹⁷The Cape Times 12.6.91.

¹⁹⁸GTJ 18.2.93.

¹⁹⁹GTJ 10.3.94.

²⁰⁰The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.1, No. 3, April 1893, pg 49.

views. Judge S.T. Jones maintained that although Grahamstown's "... healthy environment - physical, social and moral - and its easy accessibility from every portion of the Province," made it a suitable place for a university college, the initiation of an extensive scheme was financially impractical at that stage.²⁰¹ Canon J. Espin also believed that immediate implementation would be premature:

"The supply should bear some sort of proportion to the demand, and no one who knows anything of the subject would maintain that the demand for Higher Education is as yet very urgent."²⁰² Yet he conceded that two issues seemed undisputed; firstly, that a university college for the Eastern Cape was desirable, and secondly, that it should be located in Grahamstown.²⁰³

The project for a teaching university failed to hold the public interest for long. In 1894, the Reverend Father John Ryan of St Aidan's College maintained that the movement had been "... slowly killed by waiting for letters that did not arrive, for decisions of Councils whose times of meeting were naturally not settled to meet its convenience. Those far away ceased to help, and the majority of those at hand found a new love."²⁰⁴ His view was rather exaggerated; the enthusiasm of the Easterners had only temporarily been sapped by an elaborate project for a university in Cape Town.²⁰⁵ In June 1894, the St. Andrew's College Council proposed that it should administer the grants it

²⁰¹The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.1, No. 3, pp 52-54.

²⁰²The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.II, No. 1, October 1893, pg 30.

²⁰³The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.II, No. 1, pg 28.

²⁰⁴The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.II, No. 4, June 1894, pg 128.

²⁰⁵The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol.II, No. 4, pg 129.

received for higher education, in collaboration with associated representatives. The arrangement would hold until a university college had been established,²⁰⁶ and did not imply that the movement had collapsed. The following month the Superintendent-General of Education, Dr. T. Muir, approved a scheme for an Eastern Cape university.²⁰⁷ The groundwork was prepared quietly; the University Education Committee undertook to guarantee half the annual interest rate on building costs, or to raise half the capital sum required for the undertaking, if the government would pay the other half. A list of professors and their proposed salaries was compiled, and a standing committee was appointed to raise funds for permanent buildings.²⁰⁸

Muir accepted these plans, but a period of confusion delayed their implementation. St. Andrew's College was denominational by its trust deed, unlike the body of associated representatives which assisted in the administration of its higher education grants. The Attorney-General, W.P. Schreiner, questioned the legality of this arrangement. An eighteen month government silence thereafter left interested parties

²⁰⁶The representatives would be the Civil Commissioner of Albany, the Mayor of Grahamstown, the principals of St. Andrew's and St. Aidan's Colleges, the Public and Wesleyan Collegiate Schools, and two representatives appointed by the Superintendent-General of Education. One representative would be chosen by the principals of the Diocesan School for Girls, the Assumption Convent and the Wesleyan High School. The principals of the first-class public schools in the Eastern Province outside Grahamstown would elect two representatives. Vacancies created in this body would temporarily be filled by the nominees of the Superintendent-General of Education. (The Eastern Province Magazine, Vol. II, No. 4, pp 131-133). When the Committee of Management was finally constituted, its membership comprised ten representatives of the St. Andrew's College Council, and ten associated representatives. (GTJ 2.7.95).

²⁰⁷GTJ 14.7.94.

²⁰⁸GPM 17.12.94.

in the East unsure of what to expect.²⁰⁹ The growing unrest in South Africa, the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war in 1899 and the return of a garrison of troops to Grahamstown, all diverted public attention from the university college project. But the committee continued to work, and in May 1903, when the newspapers took up the issue again, plans for the establishment of a university college were being brought to fruition. Fund raising went ahead; the £16 000 worth of ten-year subscriptions accumulated by November 1903, was supplemented by a donation of £5000 from De Beers towards building costs, and a permanent endowment of £50 000 from the Rhodes Trustees.²¹⁰ The new institution consequently acquired the name, "Rhodes University College".

Three sub-committees assisted the general committee at this stage. One was preparing the necessary parliamentary legislation to cover the foundation of Rhodes University College, a second was considering the buildings necessary to house the university, and the third was engaged on the question of finance.²¹¹ In December 1903, a fourth sub-committee was appointed to consider the number of professors required and the accommodation that they would need.²¹² The latter problem was solved when it became apparent that a garrison of soldiers would no longer be quartered in Grahamstown.²¹³ However, not all approved of the Drostdy as a site for the college.²¹⁴ One Journal subscriber

²⁰⁹The Port Elizabeth Telegraph n.d. as taken up by GTJ 12.12.95.

²¹⁰GTJ 21.11.03.

²¹¹GTJ 24.11.03.

²¹²GTJ 5.12.03.

²¹³CMB 18.11.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

²¹⁴CMB 9.12.03, 23.12.03 CA, 3/AY 1/1/1/14.

insisted that the decision lacked foresight:

"Where are your football grounds, your cricket grounds, your raquet tennis, lawn tennis, and fives courts (or, in these degenerate days, your 'ping pong' and 'bridge' rooms?)"²¹⁵ Eight decades later, the ample facilities provided on the Rhodes University campus vindicate the choice of its founders.

The Rhodes University College bill had its first reading on 12 April 1904,²¹⁶ and was passed as Act 21 on 31 May 1904. Most of the clauses dealt with the composition, functions and powers of the Council,²¹⁷ which would comprise twelve nominated and five elected members. Four of the former would be nominated by the Governor, and one each by the Albany Divisional Council, the Grahamstown town council and the six leading local schools.²¹⁸ The Rhodes Trustees had unanimously given up their right to nominate one council member during the passage of the bill.²¹⁹ The five elected members would be chosen by guarantors and subscribers of at least £500 to the institution. Only professors, teachers and other salaried officials of the university college were debarred from Council membership.²²⁰ The Act was innovative in that it provided for elections to the university college Council to occur

²¹⁵GTJ 2.8.04 "L.L.M., M.A., B.Sc." to Editor.

²¹⁶Cape Hansard: Assembly, 8.4.04, pg 205.

²¹⁷Act 21, 1904, Clauses 3-17.

²¹⁸Act 21, 1904, Clause 5.i.e.St. Andrew's College, Kingswood College, St. Aidan's College, the Public School, the Diocesan School for Girls and the Wesleyan High School.

²¹⁹GTJ 7.6.04.

²²⁰Act 21, 1904, Clauses 5, 6.

before nominations were made.²²¹ Entrance was open to all, regardless of creed;²²² in the words of the editor of The Journal:

"The design of the promoters is to establish the Rhodes College on such broad and liberal lines that it may be felt that all races and all localities in the Eastern Province, and indeed further afield, are able freely to utilise it."²²³

Prominent names featured among those which constituted the first Rhodes University College Council. The elected members included Andries Stockenström Hutton and Daniel Knight (Justices of the Peace). Judge Kotze (Judge President), Dr. Selmar Schönland, Francis Graham (Civil Commissioner) and Josiah Slater (M.L.A. for Victoria East) were the government nominees. Other nominated members included Canon J. Espin, R. Restall Stocks, James Hards, Henry Fitchat and H.R. Wood (M.L.A.)²²⁴

The first students enrolled in August 1904 and were instructed in the temporary quarters at St. Andrew's College until 1905, when they moved to the Drostdy Buildings. All four founding professors were from St. Andrew's College. Arthur Matthews, whose survey class had acquired an enviable reputation, became Professor of Mathematics. George Cory assumed responsibility for Physical Science and Chemistry. A. Stanley Kidd shouldered the Greek, Latin, English, History and Philosophy departments, while G.F. Dingemans became Professor of Modern Languages. Early in 1905, Dr. S. Schönland became head of the

²²¹ GTJ 7.6.04.

²²² Act 21, 1904, Clause 2.

²²³ GTJ 11.6.04.

²²⁴ DDNS, pg 109. Undated, unnamed newscutting on the nominated and elected members of the first Rhodes University College Council. CL, PR 1741.

Botany department.²²⁵

By 1904, Grahamstown had changed from a city preoccupied with past glories and hankering after the superficial splendour of military activity, to one with the self-conscious dignity associated with a seat of learning. This was a far cry from the days of 1883, when Grahamstown appeared to have lost her way, and when it remained for enterprising citizens to find a new role for the city to fulfil. It would have been unsatisfactory and anachronistic for the city to have relied solely on a military function; the return of the troops during the Anglo-Boer war illustrated this more clearly than could carefully phrased arguments. Nor was her position as the seat of the Eastern Districts' Court significant enough to ensure her future prosperity. Doubtless many perceived early on that the answer lay in Grahamstown's unquestioned position at the forefront of education. Not only were her schools held in high regard, but the city boasted a Bacteriological Research Institute, a museum which stimulated scientific study, a successful Teachers' Training College, and a training seminary for Anglican clergy. Despite these advantages, the task of founding a teaching university in Grahamstown could not lightly be undertaken. The promoters of the project battled to overcome the prejudice of those opposed to the decentralisation of Cape higher education. However, time has verified the assertion made by W.P. Schreiner in 1903, that, "... decentralisation [in education] accords with the spirit of South Africa."²²⁶

²²⁵Currey, Rhodes University, pp 17, 20-22, 29.

²²⁶The Cape Times 1.12.03.

The founders of Rhodes University College might well have suspected that what they took in 1904 as a carefully calculated, but considerable risk, would redeem Grahamstown from stultifying parochiality. Rhodes University would eventually draw students from all the corners of the sub-continent, be visited by internationally recognised academics and researchers, and become the seat of national conferences. In 1912, in his address at the Centennial celebrations of Grahamstown's foundation, General J.C. Smuts, Minister of Defence and the Interior, issued a challenge:

Here in this city you have ... laid the foundations of an educational system which, I hope, will be enduring in the future of South Africa I most sincerely hope that more and more you will be worthy of that name [i.e. the 'Oxford' of South Africa] and that you will become ... a beacon of light ..., that from here will radiate influences which will be beneficial for each portion, nay, for the whole of this sub continent.²²⁷

Grahamstown's success will be measured not only by her ultimate achievement, but by her endeavours to meet this goal.

²²⁷ GTJ 15.8.12.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

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Grahamstown faced the challenge that confronted several towns when the frontiers of economic and commercial development moved away from the city. A Study in Local History: Grahamstown 1883-1904, attempts to assess the response to this challenge, and to that of the demands of an increasingly sophisticated age. The citizens of Grahamstown were products of their environment and era; they were parochial, conservative and hardworking, divided along lines of race, language, class and creed. Many reacted vigorously against the trend of declining commercial activity, and were led in their battle by able men operating in different fields and through various mediums. J.S. Willcox, A.E. Nelson and D. Knight used the town council as a platform to promote local development. G. Cory, S. Schönland and H. Lardner-Burke concentrated their activities outside that body. A. Douglass, J.E. and H.R. Wood worked through the medium of the colonial parliament, the Wood brothers combining this with service on the town council and other local bodies. S. Ntsiko, J.J. Jabavu and R. Xola, leaders of the Black community, received less public acclaim for their attempts to improve the living conditions of their people. The Native Vigilance Association had both a political and a parochial function, but it was unsuccessful in influencing council policy.

The schism between progressive and conservative factions in the Grahamstown town council reflected the division in the White community itself. Grahamstown had a large working class population which suffered during the economic depression of the 1880's, especially because of the limited opportunities available locally to the labourer or semi-skilled worker. Working class citizens generally opposed

extensive municipal projects for fear that they would suffer through rate increases. Sheer weight of numbers and determination gave them an advantage over the wealthier, more progressive middle class group. The latter failed to meet the challenge by promoting the cause for municipal development on a regular, well-organised basis.

The pace of reform and growth was limited by the pecuniary problems of the Corporation, and the fact that some councillors, reluctant to accept change, blocked measures to secure municipal development. A further problem was the fact that among the twenty-four councillors in Grahamstown were men who were patently indifferent to the needs of the community. The 1902 Grahamstown Municipal Act reduced the number of councillors to a more manageable sixteen;¹ this in fact brought little improvement. A mere 10-15% of ratepayers attended meetings to chose capable candidates for the 1903 municipal election,² and although the election percentage poll was slightly higher than usual, Daniel Knight, one of the most progressive councillors, was not returned.³ The prognosis was discouraging, and The Journal commented dismally some time later that although, "It was hoped that the diminution in numbers of Councillors would lead to less eloquence and more action ...," no such change had occurred.⁴ The ratepayers responded angrily, stressing the need, ironically, for the protection of the town against the actions of the town council. Their calls for the formation of

¹ See above, ch. 1, pg 12.

² GTJ 12.5.03 "Citizen" to Editor.

³ GTJ 4.6.03.

⁴ GTJ 6.10.03.

Ratepayers' Associations to fulfil this purpose⁵ were met in 1905.⁶

Many councillors were reluctant to increase the municipal debt by sanctioning large-scale projects, because of the difficulty of eliminating financial liabilities incurred previously. The economic depression of the 1880's provoked extensive retrenchment measures and a reordering of municipal finances. Outstanding loans were consolidated and the interest rates on borrowed money reduced. The public works programme was cut to a minimum and the salaries of municipal employees were reduced as the council attempted to accelerate the pace of loan redemption. While some citizens helped where they could, with prompt rate payment, others would not or could not do the same. Rate default was a chronic, but complex problem. Most councillors had little wish to prosecute citizens genuinely unable to meet the sums charged. Unfortunately their ambivalence allowed some of those less worthy of sympathy to evade payment. However, coercive procedures to ensure rate payment⁷ and greater departmental efficiency contributed to the improved arrear rate position by 1904.

Other sources accounted for smaller amounts of income. Pound revenue declined as fencing and branding was more widely adopted, but market revenue increased substantially. The council took the initiative in expanding facilities. The innovative Christmas fat stock sales and the reconstituted agricultural shows encouraged competition among Albany farmers. Town council relations with them were uneasy on

⁵GTJ 10.5.04 "Ratepayer" and "Move On" to Editor, GTJ 3.12.04 "Ratepayer" to Editor, GTJ 8.12.04 D. Knight to Editor.

⁶N.D. Southey, A Period of Transition: Grahamstown 1902-1918. (M.A. thesis in the course of preparation at Rhodes University).

⁷See above, ch. 1, pp 9-12.

occasion; the dispute over the dues levied on stock sales between 1888 and 1890 is an example of this. However, the town council was too dependent on revenue derived from market activity to allow it to suffer; few other sources of income were substantially useful in making up the deficit between revenue and expenditure. Although in 1902 the council relinquished with relief its contribution to the maintenance of the local police force, this had no significant effect on the balance of payments position. Nor could the local authority long deny its employees a fair salary. The increases were granted with caution, but were nevertheless a drain on the limited municipal funding.

Grahamstown's financial liabilities between 1883 and 1904 were neither excessive nor exceptional. All the same, some councillors assumed their primary task to be that of reducing the size of the debt. They conflicted with those who wished to promote the growth of the city by developing municipal facilities. This group usually won the day. Grahamstown's debt increased from £34 280 in 1885 to £76 405 in January 1905,⁸ but the bulk of the money was spent on a project of major significance; the Slaai Kraal water augmentation scheme.

The public works programme was more eventful between 1883 and 1904 than might have been expected from the limited financial resources available. Reforms were debated at considerable length, and often implemented many years after they had first been proposed. This is true of the gas lighting and water supply projects. The returns on both undertakings were well worth the investment; electricity replaced gas in 1921, but Slaai Kraal water still supplements the city supply. These and other

⁸See above, ch. 2, Chart of Municipal Indebtedness, pg 25.

improvements were necessary if Grahamstown was to exploit the full potential of her claim to educational pre-eminence in the Eastern Cape. The council could not long avoid the responsibility for a municipal fire engine, because in so doing it placed the city severely at risk of being gutted by fire. The maintenance of a fire-fighting establishment was an issue which exposed one of the more serious examples of the council neglect evident in several areas. Merchants and travellers welcomed culvert construction at street junctions, but could not encourage the local authority to implement a policy of thorough street reform. Improvements went little beyond road levelling and the filling of potholes. Pedestrians had less reason for complaint. By 1904, the introduction of tar paving had contributed considerably to the comfort of a journey on foot across Grahamstown, but even that improvement had initially been undertaken with reluctance. In view of this, the town council had little moral right to criticise the Albany Divisional Council for its neglect of the roads approaching the city. The dissention between these two bodies also related to the deep-seated resentment of urban dwellers of their liability to Divisional Council rates.⁹ Luckily the disagreement stopped short of a complete breakdown in communication, and by 1904 some degree of equilibrium in relations had been restored.

Economic growth would have enabled the council to overcome many of its financial problems. Grahamstown had her share of the limited local industries that characterised the Cape economy at the time. The coach, cart and wagon building businesses, A.E. Nelson's soap and chemical factory, and J. and H. Hards' sweet factory¹⁰ did not develop

⁹See above, ch. 2, pg 46 , footnote 88.

¹⁰Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, 1901, pp 252, 258-260.

into concerns large enough to bring prosperity to the city. Other projects undertaken to stimulate local commercial activity, flopped dismally. Hopes vested in the possibilities of the Port Alfred harbour came to nothing. The Grahamstown-Port Alfred railway line was less than a success; transport services were reduced five months after it had been opened. The Victoria Woollen Company collapsed despite a promising start, and both of the Exhibitions ended without an expression of interest in Grahamstown as an area for economic investment. Some achieved success in enterprises undertaken outside Grahamstown. The Wood brothers - John Edwin and Henry Richard - were among these. The Grahamstown Gold Mining Company, in which they were involved, acquired, mined and sold at a profit, rich mineral claims on the Reef. Joseph Garbett Wood was less fortunate; his journey in search of gold to Matabele-Mashonaland ended in failure. The former undertaking brought profits to local investors, but had no effect on the economic growth of Grahamstown. Among other things, the distance of the city from the major ports and consumer centres discouraged commercial activity. With these considerations on the one hand, and the extension of educational facilities on the other, the path of development became increasingly clear.

The city was slow to change in the area of sanitation and public health; it took the new demands of the 1897 Public Health Amendment Act,¹¹ and the danger of the introduction of epidemic disease to motivate a real improvement in the standards imposed. Furthermore, the argument that improved standards of sanitation would obviate much of the expense incurred in disease control, only really succeeded when the connection

¹¹See above, ch. 5, pg 120.

between filth and ill-health was more widely perceived in Grahamstown. The buildup to the generally improved position of 1904 was gradual, but perceptible. River beds were cleaned out, some water pipes replaced and cesspools were abolished. The latter were replaced by a system of removable sanitary pails, which were serviced regularly. This was the major reform during the period reviewed. Only the abattoirs, protected by the powerful butchers' lobby in the council, remained unaffected by the new standards of cleanliness demanded.

The appointment of a Medical Officer of Health in Grahamstown in 1898 was a most significant development. Professional expertise would enable him to detect unsatisfactory conditions that might elude the eye of an amateur. The task of the first appointee, Dr. James Bays, was daunting by virtue of the size of the problem with which he was confronted. His surviving reports, for the period 1898-1901,¹² indicate something of this. The services of the Medical Officer of Health were of particular importance when an epidemic of plague swept the colony during the Anglo-Boer war. Although Grahamstown had hitherto remained relatively free of epidemic disease, experiencing only one local outbreak of smallpox in the period 1883-1904, plague was carried easily from one town to another by rats in railway trucks. The wisdom of the maxim, "prevention is better than cure," was emphasised during the months in which local officials remained on the alert for signs of the disease. Their vigilance enabled Grahamstown to escape the ravages of plague, which were felt particularly in cities with ports, like Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.

¹²MOHRB March 1898-March 1901 CA, 3/AY 5/2/1/1.

The medical services rendered by the Albany General Hospital and Fort England Lunatic Asylum adequately met the needs of those who used them. However, the former experienced financial difficulties, and the reputation of the lunatic asylum was shaken after the exposure of unsatisfactory conditions and practices following the death of Superintendent R. Hullah in 1890. The expansion of the services of both institutions was a triumph of local endeavour over these adversities. The Chronic Sick Hospital acquired an additional branch in 1895, in the form of the Institute for Imbecile Children. All these changes formed part of Grahamstown's literal and metaphoric transition into an era in which more exacting standards of public health would be demanded of urban communities.

Grahamstown's location residents were not among those who benefitted from the improved sanitation procedures adopted in the city. The locations received little attention at any stage during the period reviewed, and by 1904, the editor of The Journal can have had little reason to believe that much had changed since the days when "... the City fathers could not be got to do anything for the benefit of the natives,"¹³ If anything, the locations were even less habitable in 1904 than they had been in 1883. Overcrowding, grossly inadequate housing and the absence of adequate pure water and a suitable sewerage disposal system, made the areas breeding grounds for disease and extremely hazardous to public health. Here again, the shortage of municipal revenue was probably an important determining factor in council neglect. Public works programmes invariably excluded the locations; any projects actually undertaken were completed as cheaply and superficially as possible. Municipal authorities turned a blind

¹³GTJ 8.9.94.

eye to the evidence indicating that the high location mortality rate was caused by disease resulting from accumulations of filth.

These conditions were largely responsible for the abuse of alcohol in the Grahamstown locations. The prohibitions on alcohol sales to Blacks imposed during the Anglo-Boer war seem to have contained the spread of alcoholism in Albany to some extent. However, the frustration provoked by location slum conditions gave rise to acts of violence, directed at times against White citizens. The town council responded by trying unsuccessfully to impose a curfew in 1904. In the curfew issue, as in most others, the Black population failed to find a reliable defendant on the town council; it was left to the local missionaries to labour against the hostility of White residents in order to promote the interests of an oppressed people. Deprived of the fundamental necessities of sufficient food, pure water, adequate housing and regular employment, their daily struggle was directed against the debasing effects of dire poverty. A political awakening occurred in the midst of these hardships. It began in the 1880's with the activities of the Native Education Association, but made a noticeable local impression only at the turn of the century in the form of a local branch of the South African Native Congress. Unfortunately, by 1904 the Grahamstown Native Vigilance Association had little to show for its efforts to improve the location conditions.

Some councillors and citizens attempted to rationalise their unequal treatment of Black people by denigrating the noise, filth and drunkenness characteristic of many Black dwellings. These disturbances led to demands for the exclusion of Black residents from houses and tenements within the city. This power was granted the Governor in terms

of the 1902 Native Reserve Locations Act,¹⁴ which indicated the general tone of Black policy in South Africa in the twentieth century. On the whole, the town council's harsh and unsympathetic treatment of its Black citizens stemmed from indifference, ignorance and an unquestioning belief in the superiority of the English culture, rather than from pre-meditated malevolence. Unfortunately neglect, for whatever reason, had a thoroughly deleterious effect on the moral, social and physical environment of Grahamstown's Black people.

In the political sphere, the broadening of Grahamstown's perspective from one of introspection and parochialism to a wider, national view, is closely connected with the development of political parties at the Cape. It was difficult for the Grahamstown electorate to break with localism. No longer influential in colonial politics, economics and commerce, the city had become vulnerable to the kinds of political decisions that might undermine the market trade and judicial and educational activities remaining to her. Grahamstonians made several attempts to influence the course of colonial politics between 1883 and 1904. These took the form of the Working Men's Political Association of 1883, and the separatist-inspired agitation of 1886, and failed dismally. The former Association was forward-looking, but premature, while the separatist revival was anachronistic, an empty vessel with fundamentally little appeal by the late nineteenth century. The organisers of the local Employees' Associations were perhaps less imaginative and ambitious, but they achieved their aims because they represented a narrowly defined group with specific objectives.

¹⁴See above, ch. 6, pp 159-160.

If Grahamstown caused any stir in the political arena in the period reviewed, it was by virtue of the controversial behaviour of her senior parliamentary representative, Arthur Douglass. Douglass endeared himself to few, but he had the knack of drawing attention to himself. At times, Grahamstonians seem to have been reluctantly proud of their unpredictable representative. He represented Grahamstown in the House of Assembly for twenty years; after his initial return in 1884, he achieved victories in one by-election (1888) and two subsequent elections (1893 and 1898), despite the lack of support given him by the newspapers. Douglass was unseated in 1904 only after he openly had snubbed his constituency on the issue of the suspension of the Cape constitution in the early 1900's. Grahamstown opinion concurred with that of the Progressive Party, which favoured the reversion of the Cape to Crown Colony status during the Anglo Boer war. Douglass remained a member of the anti-suspensionist Sprigg cabinet, despite the opposition of many of his constituents. Consequently, in the 1904 election, the Progressive Party candidates, Dr. L.S. Jameson and H.R. Wood were returned with large majorities. Grahamstown's entry into the national party political arena with such decisiveness represented a break with the kind of parochialism which tended to disregard national concerns in favour of local interests. Jameson showed little interest in his constituency after 1904,¹⁵ but continued to command its support.

The broadening of parochialism into a colonial consciousness was accompanied by Grahamstown's literal and metaphoric change from a military to an education centre. This involved a readjustment in the thinking of those citizens for whom the sight of a red-coated British soldier

¹⁵Southey, Grahamstown 1902-1918.

evoked nostalgic images of the land they called "Home," and of Grahamstown's prosperity in the bustling 1860's. The military tradition had been perpetuated by the activities of the First City Volunteers. Nevertheless, the twenty-seven year break between the withdrawal of the troops in 1870, and their return in 1897 for the duration of the Anglo-Boer war, negatively affected Grahamstown's ability to cope with the demands of a garrison in the Drostdy. Past associations, superficial though they were, died hard. The town council was reluctant to relinquish the old military connections, and made concerted, but unsuccessful attempts to retain a garrison in Grahamstown on a permanent basis.

The prestigious reputations acquired by Grahamstown's educational institutions in the 1870's and 1880's made the project for the foundation in the city of a teaching university, a fairly logical development. Local schools drew pupils from all parts of the Eastern Cape; the four founding professors at Rhodes University College came from St. Andrew's College. Tertiary educational institutions included the latter's college department, the Teacher Training College and St. Paul's Theological College. Contributions were made to scientific research by the Albany Museum and the Bacteriological Institute. The work of the former expanded so significantly under Dr. S. Schönland, that a newly-constructed building was officially opened in 1902 to house its growing collections. The Bacteriological Institute was less fortunate; opposition to veterinary research was manifest from a number of quarters. The laboratory shrank from one which had contributed to calf-lymph production and rinderpest research, to one limited to the investigation of certain animal diseases, and hindered by the threat of a loss of its financial backing.

The Grahamstown Higher Education Committee could justify its demands for the foundation of a university college by drawing attention to the contributions made to science and education in Grahamstown. The institutions had attracted men of intellect and ability, like George Cory, Selmar Schönland and John Espin, who enthusiastically promoted the university college project. The work of this committee and of men such as these gave a new direction to the development of Grahamstown in the twentieth century.

If one accepts Asa Briggs' definition of a Victorian city as one which had moved tentatively to the fringes of the technological age,¹⁶ by 1904 Grahamstown, with a railway system, gas lighting, an augmented water supply and a modernised sanitation removal programme, was a typical example of a late Victorian urban community.

In 1887, The Eastern Province Herald published a touching and memorable description of the city which had won the loyalty of many:

Laid out in the valley, the settler city presents a refreshing sight with the white houses peeping out among the numerous trees and bushes, and awakens thoughts of similar looking dear spots in the old country At various times the Cathedral bells resound in grand chimes over the city. The public gardens abound just now in an immense variety of roses, and some of the private gardens are beautifully kept and show almost a tropical vegetation.¹⁷

To those who served her, Grahamstown was unquestionably "... one of the loveliest spots in this Colony."¹⁸

¹⁶A. Briggs, Victorian Cities, pg 16. (Quoted above, ch. 1, pg 1).

¹⁷The Eastern Province Herald 9.11.87.

¹⁸The Eastern Province Herald 9.11.87.

APPENDIX A

MAYORS OF GRAHAMSTOWN 1882 - 1905

APPENDIX A

Mayors of Grahamstown 1882 - 1905¹

Term of office: July - July.

1882 - 1883	Charles Joseph Stirk
1883 - 1884	George Luke
1884 - 1885	William Alexander Smith
1885 - 1886	John Syms Willcox
1886 - 1887	
1887 - 1888	
1888 - November 1888	George Luke (died in office)
November 1888 - 1889	Richard William Nelson
1889 - 1890	George Reynolds
1890 - 1891	John Syms Willcox
1891 - 1892	
1892 - 1893	
1893 - 1894	
1894 - 1895	
1895 - 1896	Albert Edward Nelson
1896 - 1897	Henry Richard Wood
1897 - 1898	
1898 - 1899	
1899 - 1900	Albert Edward Nelson
1900 - 1901	Daniel Knight
1901 - 1902	
1902 - 1903	
1903 - 1904	John Webber
1904 - 1905	

Daniel Knight² (died 1923)

Knight came from England to the Cape in the 1870's for health reasons. He arrived in Grahamstown in 1876 with a load of goods that became the nucleus of his boot and shoe business in Church Square. Knight retail-ed footwear of a superior quality. He dealt with English, Continental and American manufacturers, and had stock made specifically to suit his

¹Albany Museum, SMD 624.

²GTJ 20.9.04 Supplement No. 3, GDM 22.1.1923, 23.1.1923.

requirements. By 1904, Knight's premises had been extended and enlarged three times, and a branch of the business had been opened in Bulawayo. He was highly regarded for his integrity and business-like approach, and was president of the Grahamstown Chamber of Commerce for many years.

Knight was elected to the town council in 1891, and served there for over thirty years. He was elected Mayor twice, and chaired the Finance Committee on a number of occasions. He promoted afforestation enthusiastically, was a member of the Botanic Gardens Committee, and, when the Gardens were taken over by the municipality, of the Forestry Committee. At the time of his death in 1923, Knight was the longest-serving town councillor. A keen educationalist, he was a member of the municipal School Board, and chaired its Finance Committee. He was the president of the Grahamstown Fine Arts Association, chairman of the Kingswood College Council, and took an interest in the Wesleyan High School for Girls. He was a member of the Albany Museum Board and a founding member of the Rhodes University College Council.

Knight was a staunch Methodist and held numerous lay offices. He superintended the Commemoration Sunday School for almost fifty years, and was a prominent figure at the District Synod and at Conference. Although not a particularly robust man, Knight took a keen interest in football and cricket, and was a good bowls player. The Mayor and councillors attended his funeral in their official capacities.

George Luke³ (died 1888)

Luke came to Grahamstown from Birmingham in 1865. He set up a business as a saddler and harness-maker, and became actively involved in local affairs. He was a town councillor for fourteen years and Mayor twice. He promoted the 1887-1888 Jubilee Exhibition, and the scheme to secure a new water supply for Grahamstown. Luke was returned to parliament during the 1888 election, effectively unseating Arthur Douglass, a Grahamstown representative since 1884. Luke died shortly after the election; local opinion had it that the campaign had sapped his strength. As he was Mayor at the time of his death, he was given a civic funeral.

Albert Edward Nelson⁴ (died 1902)

He was born in Dublin in 1842, moving from there to Liverpool, where he

³ GTJ 22.11.88; Commercial Directory and Guide to the Eastern Province, 1881, pg 454; M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pp 439-440.

⁴ GTJ 13.11.02; Commercial Directory and Guide to the Eastern Province, 1881, pg 457; Cape Post Office Directory for 1886-1887, pg 588; Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, 1901, pp 255, 258.

became a member of the Fourth Lancashire Artillery Volunteers. He came to the Cape in 1862 and settled in Grahamstown, where he joined the Grahamstown Horse Artillery, first as Lieutenant, and later as Commanding Officer. Under Nelson's command, the corps participated in putting down the Mirosoi rebellion of 1878-1879. After the campaign, Nelson was promoted first to the rank of Major, and later to that of Lieutenant-Colonel, and awarded the Volunteer Officer's Decoration (V.D.). Membership of the Volunteer Horse Artillery declined once the diamond and gold fields had been opened, and the force was eventually disbanded. Nelson remained interested in military activities, and became the commander of the Grahamstown Town Guard when it was formed in 1899 to defend the city from the possibility of attack during the Anglo-Boer war.

A.E. Nelson had a lengthy municipal career, serving as a councillor for eighteen years. For most of this time he chaired one or other of the Standing Committees. He was elected Mayor three times, and was reputed to have a firm control over fellow-councillors. He was a lively and popular public speaker, with a wide knowledge of music and the workings of mechanical apparatus. He ran the Cathcart Arms Hotel in Market Square, and a soap and chemical factory which produced a popular brand of blue, mottled soap. Nelson was an Anglican, and a churchwarden for many years at the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George.

Richard William Nelson⁵ (died 1906)

Brother of A.E. Nelson, Richard William Nelson also settled in Grahamstown in 1862. His occupations were varied. He worked as a clerk for the successful merchant, Samuel Cawood, and married his daughter Rachel in 1863. He subsequently opened a butchering concern, and sub-edited The Eastern Star for some years. By 1901 he had become a Commissioner and General Agent. At the time of his death in 1906 he was working as an accountant. R.W. Nelson was declared insolvent twice, in 1868 and in 1890. Like his brother, he was involved in public affairs. He commanded a detachment of the First City Volunteers, and was decorated for active service. He was a member of the town council for many years, and was elected Mayor for a short term, after the death of George Luke in 1888. He held the Commission of Peace for Grahamstown. R.W. Nelson was an enthusiastic Anglican, siding with the controversial Dean Williams when he conflicted with Bishop Merriman in the 1870's. He was buried from the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George.

George Reynolds⁶ (died 1914)

Reynolds came to Grahamstown in the 1860's, where he became a successful merchant. He was initially one of the members of the firm of

⁵ GTJ 4.10.90, 3.7.06; Cape Post Office Directory for 1886-1887, pg 588; Howard and Co.'s Border Directory, 1901, pg 252; The Grahamstown Year-Book and Directory, 1905-1906, pg 24; Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 250.

⁶ GTJ 21.7.1914; Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 451.

Howse, Reynolds and Co. When it was dissolved in 1882, he entered into a partnership with B. Prew. In 1892, he and John Vaughan took control of Universal Providers, which was renamed Reynolds and Vaughan, Universal Providers. Reynolds spent some time in Prieska, but returned to settle in Grahamstown.

Reynolds was first returned to the council in 1876. He served as Mayor from 1878-1880, 1882-1883 and 1889-1890. He retired in 1901, but was re-elected to the council for the period between 1908 and 1911. He was a foundation member of the Grahamstown Horse Artillery and an active freemason. He laid the foundation stone of the Masonic Temple in Hill Street, and the building was completed under his aegis. He was buried from the Wesleyan Church.

William Alexander Smith⁷ (died 1915)

He was born in Northampton and came to the Cape as a youth. He ran a boot business in Bathurst Street. Smith was elected to the town council in 1874, and retained his seat until he retired in 1894. He served as Mayor once, and as Chairman of the Works and Lands Committee for a number of years. He zealously promoted schemes to beautify the city, especially the afforestation and extension of Mountain Drive. After his retirement from the council, Smith was appointed municipal Foreman of Works. He lost this position when a city engineer was appointed in 1907, and at the time of his death he held a subordinate post with the council. Smith was a Justice of the Peace, and a member of the St. John's Lodge of Freemasons.

Charles Joseph Stirk⁸ (died 1921)

He was the son of the 1820 settler, Joseph Stirk, who came to the Cape on the ship "John" with Wainwright's Party. Charles Joseph received his schooling in Salem. He came to Grahamstown at the age of fourteen, and was trained as a hardware merchant. He married Elizabeth Parker in 1858 and joined his brother-in-law, T.H. Parker, in a hardware business in Church Square. They dissolved their partnership in 1863. In 1864 C.J. Stirk opened his own business, and in 1890 he took his eldest son, Harry, into the partnership. In 1898, father and son opened a hardware business in Bulawayo. However, with the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer war and interrupted transport, the head office in Grahamstown had to sever connections with Bulawayo.

⁷ GPM 2.6.90, 20.7.94, GTJ 8.4.1915; Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 454.

⁸ GDM 13.12.1921, 14.12.1921, 15.12.1921 TCM 14.12.1921; G.M. Stocks, "History of Stirk Family Men." Grocott's Mail 4.3.1964 CL, PR 1822; The Eastern Province Herald 21.7.1964 (Advertisement) CL, PR 1797.

Stirk took a deep interest in matters affecting the community. He was elected to the town council in 1871, and remained a member until 1900. He served one term as Mayor, and several as chairman of the Finance Committee. He was one of the first directors of the Grahams-town Building Society, and the treasurer of the Hospital Committee. Throughout his life, Stirk showed a keen interest in rifle shooting. He was the president of the Eastern Districts' Rifle Association, becoming president of the Cape Colony Rifle Association when it absorbed the latter organisation. He held the position of honorary treasurer for some time after he retired as president. Stirk was also a successful fresh - and salt - water fisherman, and a pioneer of fruit-culture in the Albany district. In 1891, he bought two farms at Southwell - Woodlands and The Barkens - and established large apple and orange orchards, which were managed by his son, Reginald.

Stirk was a staunch Methodist. He was present at the laying of the foundation stone of the Commemoration Church, and became one of its trustees. His funeral was attended by the Mayor and town councillors of the city.

John Webber⁹ (died 1912)

He was born in South Molton in 1842, and was brought to the Cape by his parents in 1843. They settled in Grahamstown in 1844, where Webber received some education before being apprenticed to the printing trade at the age of thirteen. He subsequently took over the newspaper, The Frontier Times, jointly with J. Williams. Once The Times had been eclipsed by The Great Eastern, Webber was employed on The Journal for the period 1862-1864. He subsequently accepted a position on the staff of The Eastern Province Herald in Port Elizabeth, but returned to Grahamstown to work on The Great Eastern, until it declined. He then opened a successful butchering concern, which he ran for twelve years. In 1887, he bought the business of T. and G. Sheffield, and established himself as a stationer and fancy-goods merchant. A leading feature of his business was the supply of periodicals and newspapers.

Webber was elected to the town council for the first time in 1887. He served four terms as Mayor, and, with one short break, as a councillor until his retirement in 1910. He was a Justice of the Peace, and a valued member of the Management Committees of the Albany General Hospital and the Trinity Presbyterian Church. He was a founding member of the first lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars.

John Syms Willcox¹⁰ (died 1904)

Born in England, Willcox came to Grahamstown in 1861. For a number of years he was H.C. Galpin's partner in a jewellery and watch-making

⁹GTJ 27.8.04 Supplement No. 1, 19.3.1912.

¹⁰GTJ 25.1.78. 28.5.04.

business. He subsequently moved into his own premises in Bathurst Street, and by 1878, his concern was flourishing. He was elected to the town council in 1884, and apart from a brief break during a visit to England in 1888, served as a councillor until he retired in 1901.

Willcox chaired the Finance, Works and Lands, Lighting and Water Committees and completed seven terms as Mayor. He was chiefly responsible for the implementation of the Slaai Kraal water scheme, the introduction of gas lighting and the purchase of a municipal fire-engine. The latter was named the "Willcox" in his honour. He took a leading part in the running of, among others, the Albany General Hospital, the Grahamstown Library, the Albany Museum and the Licencing Board. He presided over the Albany Agricultural Society for a number of years, building it into a flourishing concern. He chaired the Jubilee Exhibition of 1887-1888, and the South African Industrial and Arts Exhibition of 1898-1899. Willcox was a prominent member of the Albany Lodge of Freemasons, and was given a Masonic funeral oration. He was buried from St. Clement's Church by the Anglican Dean, F.E. Carter. When he died The Journal paid Willcox a generous tribute:

He is one of whom it may suitably be written in letters of gold: "He was a good citizen, a kind and loving father, and a generous friend!"

Henry Richard Wood¹¹ (died 1921)

He was a son of the Honourable George Wood. H.R. Wood served as a councillor for over twenty-eight years from 1892, four times as Mayor, and as chairman of the Finance Committee for a number of years. He was somewhat conservative and unimaginative in his approach to local government, but dedicated to community service. He chaired the Eastern Province Guardian and Loan Investment Company for thirty-six years, the Kingswood College Council for twenty-six years, and the Albany Hospital Board for twenty-five years. He was a life governor of the Grahamstown Fine Arts Association, honorary treasurer of the Albany Museum Board, vice-chairman of the Albany Divisional School Board, a deputy-sheriff for the Albany District, and a member of the Wesleyan High School Committee, the Rhodes University College Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the Licencing Board. He succeeded his brother, J.E. Wood, as a Grahamstown representative in the House of Assembly between 1902 and 1907, reputedly never missing a meeting. After Union, he opposed the implementation of the Provincial Council system, asserting that it would undermine the powers of the local authority. However, he was ultimately reconciled to the idea of provincial government.

Wood was a Methodist; he superintended the West Hill Sunday School for forty-five years, held office as a circuit steward, and attended the Grahamstown District Synod and the Methodist Conference on numerous occasions.

¹¹GDM 25.7.1921.

APPENDIX B

GRAHAMSTOWN REPRESENTATIVES IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

APPENDIX BGrahamstown Representatives in the House of Assembly1883 - 1904¹William Guybon Atherstone² (1881-1883)

Born in Nottingham at Zion Hill in 1814, W.G. Atherstone was brought to the Cape by his father, Dr. John Atherstone, in 1820. In 1835 he commenced his medical studies, which took him as far afield as Dublin, London, Paris and Heidelberg. He returned to the Cape in 1840 with Catherine, the cousin he had married. Atherstone became an Assistant Staff Surgeon under Colonel Harry Smith, and eventually joined his father's medical practice. He was one of the first doctors at the Cape to use the anaesthetic in 1847. He was appointed District Surgeon and Physician in Grahamstown, and in 1875, the Cape government sent Atherstone to England to examine the functioning of English lunatic asylums.

Atherstone was keenly interested in geology. In 1868 he helped to identify the Hope Town diamond, and in the latter 1870's, he toured the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and the Cape Colony to assess the geological features of those areas. In the political arena, he represented Grahamstown in the House of Assembly between 1881 and 1883, and was a member of the Legislative Council from 1883-1891. He gave up his medical practice in 1887 when his eyesight began to fail; by 1892, he was totally blind. He remained alert and active, however, and in 1895 the newly formed South African Geological Society elected him as the first vice-president. In 1896, he gave the presidential address at the Fourth South African Medical Congress. Atherstone was an Anglican, and a supporter of the controversial Dean Williams in the 1870's. He died in 1897 after a sudden fall at his home.

Jonathan Ayliff³ (1879-1885)

A son of the Reverend John Ayliff, Jonathan Ayliff was born in Salem in 1829. He was schooled in Salem and in Bedford, and articled to a Grahamstown attorney, George Jarvis. He took over Jarvis's legal concern when he died, and went into partnership with W.H.S. Bell, Jarvis's grandson, and A.S. Hutton. Ayliff was the moving force

¹ See above, ch. 7, pg 199.

² GPM 28.11.92, GTJ 28.6.98, 30.6.98; E. Gledhill, "Dr. William Guybon Atherstone". Annals of the Grahamstown Historical Society Vol.3 No. 2, 1980, pp 85-95; M. Gibbens, Two Decades in the Life of a City: Grahamstown 1862-1882. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Rhodes Univ., 1982), pp 439-440.

³ GTJ 24.10.85, 16.12.90, 18.12.90; Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 440; H.C. Hummel, "The First Law Society." Grocott's Mail 25.3.1983.

behind the formation of South Africa's first law society, the Eastern Districts' Law Society, in 1884.

During the War of the Axe in 1846, he gave active service as a member of the Grahamstown Yeomanry. During the Eighth Frontier War, he commanded a group of Africans stationed near the Fish River. He represented Victoria East in the House of Assembly between 1864 and 1866, and Grahamstown between 1879 and 1885. He was the Colonial Secretary in the Upington Ministry from May 1884-March 1885, retiring because of ill-health. Ayliff was a Methodist, and renowned locally for his compassion and concern for all, regardless of creed or race. He went to England with his wife, Susanah (née Wood) when he became ill, and died there at the age of fifty-six. She subsequently returned to Grahamstown, where she died in 1890. The high regard in which Jonathan and Susanah Ayliff were held is illustrated to some extent by the fact that Bishop A.B. Webb and the Attorney-General, James Rose-Innes, were pallbearers at the funeral of Susanah Ayliff in 1890.

Arthur Douglass⁴ (1884-1903)

Douglass was Grahamstown's most important parliamentary representative in the period reviewed. He was British by birth, and received his schooling in Market Harborough. In 1864 he came to the Cape with his wife, having served a short spell as a midshipman in the Royal Navy. He worked as a land-surveyor for some time, and then took up sheep, and later, ostrich farming. In the latter field he achieved great success; he patented an incubator to hatch ostrich eggs, and wrote a book entitled Ostrich Farming in South Africa. He invented an apparatus used to spray fruit trees; this was later adapted for use in ridding stock of ticks. One of his major, but unsuccessful commercial ventures, was the Douglass Mining Company, which was liquidated in 1889 after failing to find rich mineral deposits in the Malmani reefs in the Transvaal.

Douglass took part in campaigns to put down the Mpirosi Rebellion of 1878-1879 and the Ninth Frontier War of 1877-1878. He commanded the Albany Mounted Troops during the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902. His political career began when he was elected to represent Grahamstown in the House of Assembly in 1884. He was unseated briefly in the 1888 election, but won a by-election in Grahamstown a few months later, after which he held his seat uninterruptedly until 1903.

In the 1880's, Douglass was an enthusiastic proponent of protectionism. He was one of the key figures behind the formal constitution of a Manufacturers' Association in Grahamstown in 1887. The Association aimed to promote the development of colonial industries, but was unsuccessful. Douglass opposed the restrictions placed on the voting rights of Africans in the 1887 Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act, and the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892. He was a founding member of the Progressive Party in 1892. Douglass became Colonial Secretary in

⁴GTJ 12.10.05, 14.10.05, 17.10.05; DSAB III, pg 238; Y.P. Sank, The Origin and Development of the Cape Progressive Party 1884-1898. (Unp. M.A. thesis, Univ. of Cape Town, 1955), pp 38, 47.

the Sprigg ministry in February 1902, and the Commissioner of Public Works in May 1902 when T.W. Smartt resigned to lead a movement to suspend the Cape constitution. Douglass opposed suspensionism, despite considerable pressure from his constituency to alter his stance. His non-compliance in the matter was largely responsible for his being unseated in the 1904 election.

Douglass's relationship with his constituency between 1884 and 1903 was uneasy. He was unpopular, because his conduct in parliament was at times so uncompromising and vociferous as to be undignified. His election campaigns were frequently characterised by invective and attempts to debunk other politicians. The Journal's contention at the time of his death, that Douglass had few enemies, even among political opponents, was generous to the point of inaccuracy, and is not borne out by his political career.

Douglass died in Cape Town in 1905. The funeral was held at the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. George, and he was buried at his farm, Heatherton Towers.

Dr. Leander Starr Jameson⁵ (1904-1910)

Jameson was born in Edinburgh in 1858, and educated in England at Godolphin School and University College, London. He qualified as a doctor in 1877, and in 1878 entered a partnership in Kimberley. His close association with C.J. Rhodes began in 1886; in 1889, he went to Bulawayo to ensure that Lobengula would honour the mineral concession granted to Rudd. Through Jameson's personal efforts, the concession was ensured. He was appointed the chief magistrate, and later the Administrator of Mashonaland. In 1895 he became resident commissioner of the Bechuanaland border strip for the British South Africa Company. From this base, he launched his Raid into the Transvaal in December 1895. The Jameson Raid was an attempt made on behalf of C.J. Rhodes, to displace the Transvaal government and re-establish British authority in the area. It failed, and Jameson was tried in England, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment for contravening the 1870 Foreign Enlistment Act. He was released early on grounds of ill-health, and in 1897, returned to Rhodesia to help Rhodes construct the Cape-to-Cairo telegraph. He fully supported Alfred Milner's diplomatic offensive against the Transvaal; he was in Rhodesia when the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902 broke out. He went to Natal where he was caught in the siege of Ladysmith. He subsequently returned to the Cape, and in 1900 was elected unopposed to replace Dr. F. Rutherford Harris as a Kimberley representative in the House of Assembly. In his first speech in parliament in August 1902, he pleaded that the Raid should be forgotten.

Jameson gained support within the Progressive Party when he approved its ultimately unsuccessful campaign to suspend the Cape constitution. He was elected the Progressive Party leader in 1903, and became prime minister in 1904 after successfully contesting a Grahamstown seat.

⁵DSAB III, pp 438-441.

The Progressive Party victory was largely attributable to the disfranchisement of the Cape rebels during the Anglo-Boer war. In the Legislative Council elections of 1908, the Unionist Party (as the Progressive Party had been renamed) was defeated; Jameson resigned as premier in January, and was succeeded by J.X. Merriman, the leader of the South African Party. Jameson attended the National Convention of 1908-1909 as a Cape delegate. He participated in the first Union elections as Louis Botha's opponent, and became leader of the opposition. He resigned his Union Party leadership in April 1912 and his Albany seat in October 1912, and retired to England. In 1913 he was elected president of the British South Africa Company. He died in London in 1917.

George Luke⁶ (1888 - died before taking up his seat)

Henry Richard Wood⁷ (1902-1907)

John Edwin Wood⁸ (1886-1900)

A son of George Wood, John Edwin Wood was born in Grahamstown in 1829, educated at Blaaukrantz and in Grahamstown, and joined the merchant firm of George Wood and Sons, later Wood Brothers. He became involved in many local organisations and institutions; he chaired the Wesleyan Girls' High School Committee, and was instrumental in the foundation of the Grahamstown Public School. He was a trustee of Kingswood College, and promoted the development of Victoria Girls' High School, the Grahamstown Art School, and the Albany Museum. Wood chaired the Albany Hospital Committee for many years, and was an official visitor to the Fort England Asylum, and the Chronic Sick Hospital. He served a lengthy term as chairman of the Grahamstown Building Society, was vice-president of the Albany Agricultural Society, chairman of the Horticultural Society, and played a leading part in organising the Exhibitions of 1887-1888 and 1898-1899. He was one of the directors of the Kowie Railway Company. Wood owned a farm in the Cradock district; he was one of the first farmers to import fencing for his land. His residence in Grahamstown, "Fair View," was placed at the disposal of Governors who visited the city. He presented 280 acres of land, including Fern Kloof, to the municipality, and bore the costs of transfer. Wood served as a town councillor and a member of the Albany Divisional Council.

Wood's political career began when he was elected to represent Albany in the House of Assembly from 1864-1866. He resigned because of ill health, but was returned as a Grahamstown representative in 1885. Wood did not speak often at sittings, but he was popular in Grahamstown

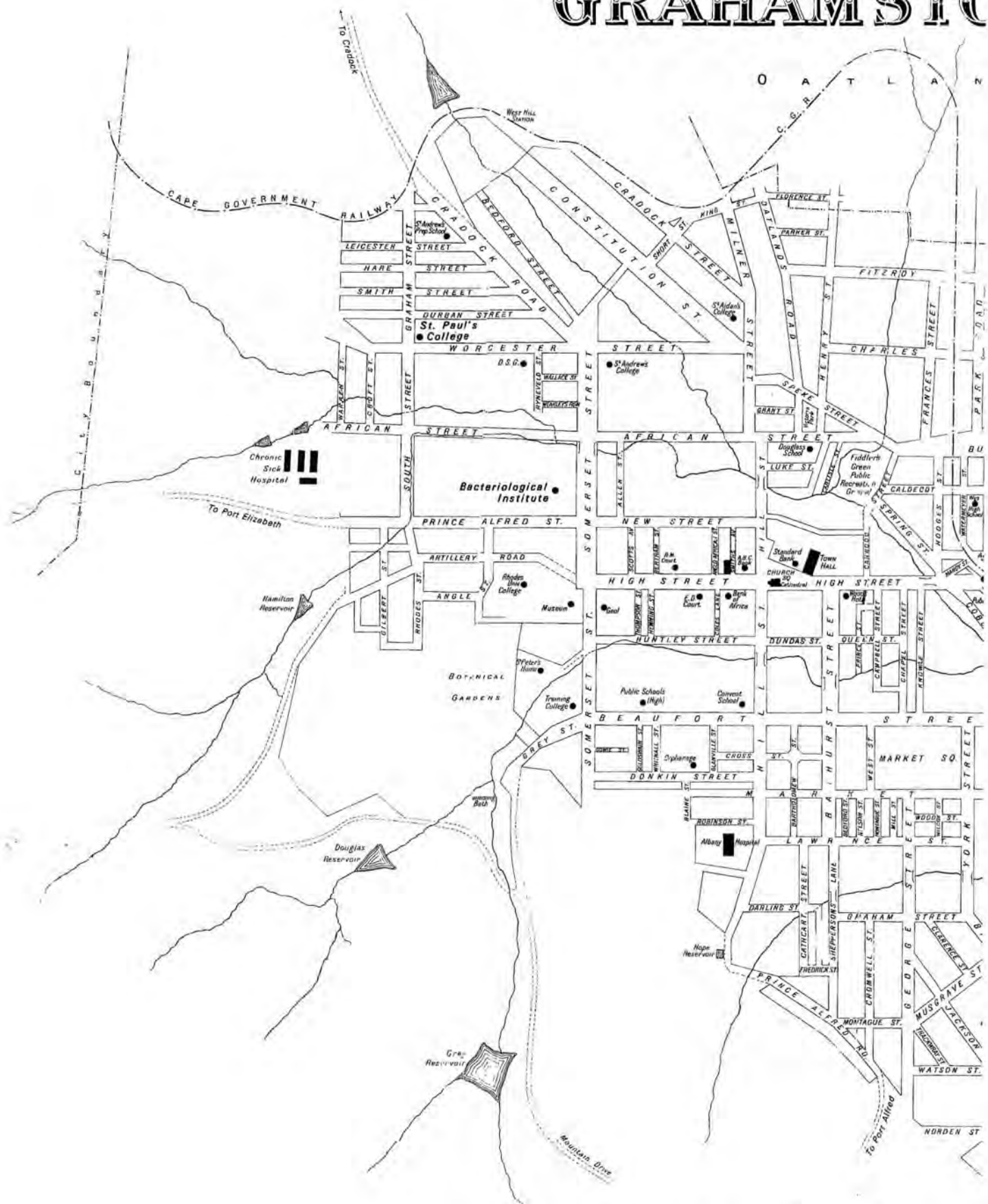
⁶See above, Appendix A, pg 298.

⁷See above, Appendix A, pg 302.

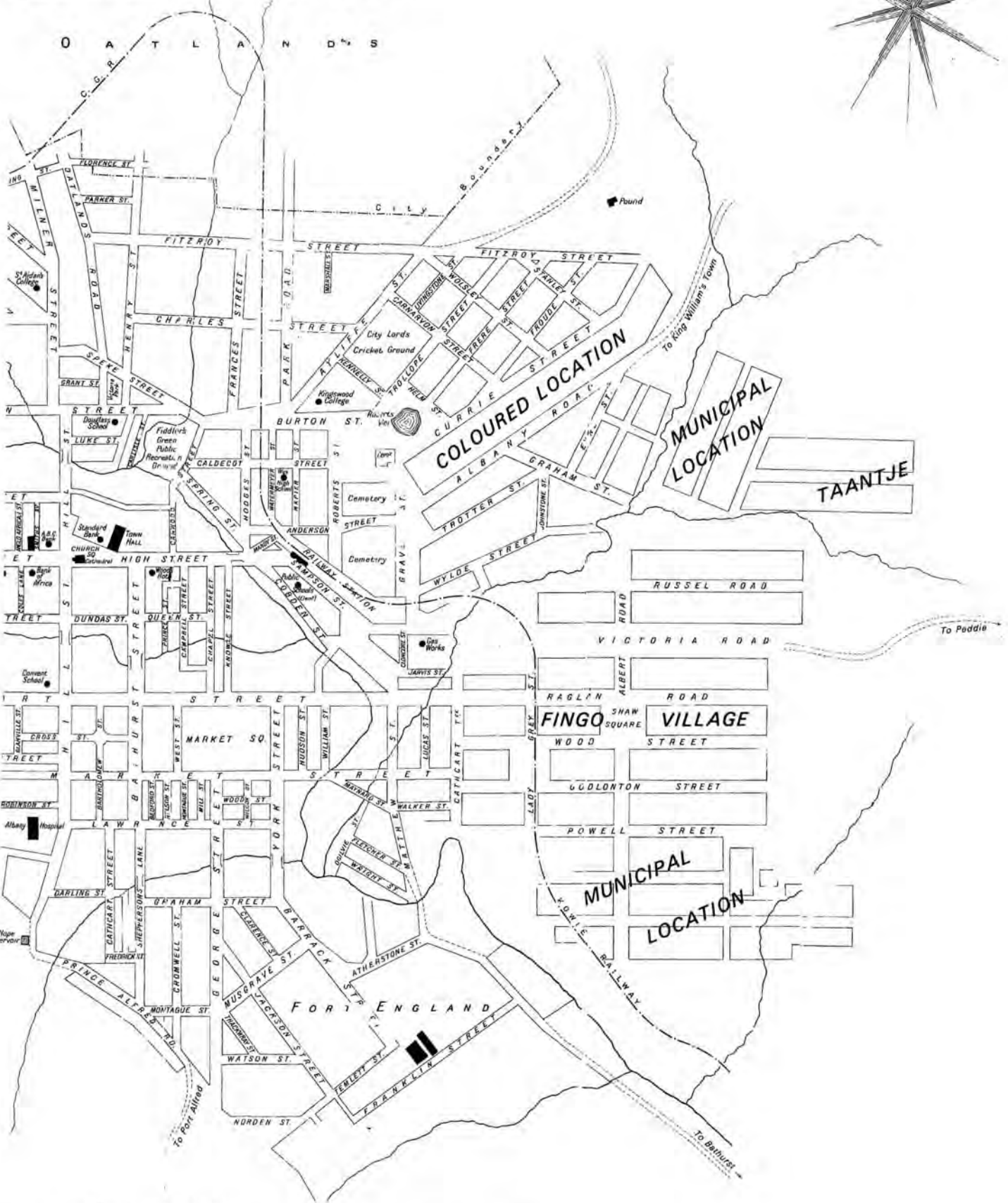
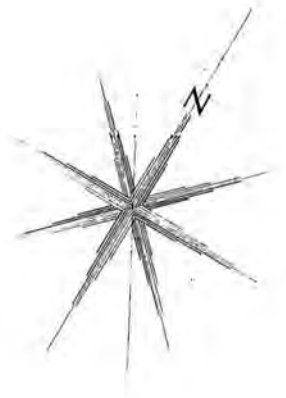
⁸GTJ 12.5.88, 20.7.01, Gibbens, Grahamstown 1862-1882, pg 459; Sank, Cape Progressive Party, pp 38, 47.

because of his devotion to duty and concern to promote the interests of his constituency. He served as government whip for some time, and, like Arthur Douglass, was a founding member of the Progressive Party in 1892. He died in 1901 in Grahamstown.

PLAN OF THE CITY OF GRAHAMSTOWN



PLAN OF THE CITY OF HAMSTOWN



SCALE OF YARDS



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