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**A small town in the early apartheid era:
A history of Grahamstown 1946-1960
focusing on "White English" perspectives**

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Abstract

This Thesis examines the socio-political perceptions of Grahamstown, a small South African City, during the period 1946 to 1960. The 'White English' population of Grahamstown is the specific focus, as it formed the dominant social group during the period and consequently provided the majority of information for this work.

During this period the majority of Grahamstown's 'White English' population thought of their City as holding many attractive features and experiences despite the slum-conditions and poverty that were rife in the Locations. During the British Royal Family's tour of the Union of South Africa in 1947, Grahamstown was one of the Cities visited. The loyalty that Grahamstown's 'White English' citizens felt towards the Royal Family and the United Kingdom is explored in connection with the regard that 'White English' Grahamstown held for the 1820 Settlers.

To highlight the Grahamstown City Council's activities during this period five events are analysed: The Grahamstown Financial Crisis, The Grahamstown Housing Crisis, The Beer Hall Debate, The establishment of a Tuberculosis Hospital and the granting of Full University Status to Rhodes University College.

It is shown, with regard to the politics of the period, that 'White English' Grahamstown, unequivocally supported the United Party and were vocally anti-Nationalist. The implementation of Apartheid policies within Grahamstown is explored, with specific focus placed upon the Group Areas Act. Finally the anti-republican sentiment espoused by 'White English' Grahamstown is reviewed.

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Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	
Acknowledgements	
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Grahamstown's Positive Social Perspectives	5
Charitable Funding within Grahamstown	11
Chapter 2: Grahamstown's Negative Social Perspective	15
Coloured Sport	30
Chapter 3: Grahamstown and the 1820 Settlers	33
Grahamstown and Great Britain	42
War Memorial	46
The Royal Family	48
English and Afrikaans	53
Chapter 4: City Council, Housing, Financial Deficit, TB Hospital, Rhodes University	57
The Grahamstown Financial Crisis	59
The Problem of De-Rating	63
An extra 1d in the pound	65
Chapter 5: The Grahamstown Housing Crisis	69
Free Hold Rights	73
Home Ownership Scheme	76
Refused Housing Loan from the Government	78
Makana's Kop Housing Scheme	80
Chapter 6: The Beer Hall Debate	84
Chapter 7: Tuberculosis in Grahamstown	99
The Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital	101

The 'Temba' T.B. Settlement	106
Chapter 8: Rhodes Full University Status	111
Chapter 9: Political Perceptions within Grahamstown	124
Introduction	124
The United Party	125
Grahamstown and the United Party	126
The Torch Commando	130
Grahamstown and the General national Elections during the period 1948 to 1960	133
1948 General Election	134
1953 General Election	137
1958 General Election	141
Grahamstown and Apartheid	142
The Civil Rights League	150
The Progressive Party	153
The Black Sash	154
The Group Areas Act in Grahamstown	156
Republic: Perspectives of Grahamstown	164
Conclusion	171
Bibliography	177

Introduction

This thesis analyses the perceptions of Grahamstown during the beginnings of Apartheid through the period 1946 to 1960. The main focus is on the 'English-White' perspective of Grahamstown because most of the material available came from the *Grocott's Daily Mail*, South Africa's oldest independent newspaper. This newspaper expressed the views of the English-South African and subsequently the views of the English-Grahamstonian, because it was located within the City. The *Grocott's Daily Mail* was used as the primary source of information for this project because the various Grahamstown City Council Committee documents were unavailable. Both the archives in Pretoria and Cape Town were visited, unfortunately only certain years of the City Council Committee minute documents were available for research. To date, a complete sequenced set of Council minutes has not been found. Unfortunately, neither the Pretoria, Cape Town, nor the Port Elizabeth Archives could provide information about where the rest of the City Council minutes might be located. Both Dr Keith Hunt (formerly of Rhodes University) and Ms Sandy Shell (Head of the African Studies Library for the University of Cape Town) were approached with regard to locating the majority of the City Council minutes, but were unable to provide assistance.

This thesis will be building on the foundation laid by Keith Hunt (1958), Melanie Gibbens (1982), Rose-Mary Sellick (1983), Nicholas Southey (1984) and Ann Torlesse (1993), each of whom have produced a thesis on earlier periods of Grahamstown's history. The last study of Grahamstown was produced by Torlesse in 1993 and dealt with the period 1918-1943. Her project analysed various aspects of the town such as the economy, municipal finance, public health, politics, race relations and social trends.¹ Hunt covered the period 1827-1862, focusing primarily on the development of Municipal Government within the Cape of Good Hope, with specific reference to Grahamstown.² Gibbens studied Grahamstown during the period 1862-1882 as a typical Victorian town, examining its political and economic development.³ Sellick continued where Gibbens left off, covering the period 1883-1904, analysing factors that affected late Victorian Grahamstown, specifically political, economic and racial issues and connected these local factors with national developments.⁴ Southey's thesis, covering the years 1902-1918, examines the increasing levels of racial segregation within Grahamstown in the context of black urbanisation. He also focuses on the lack of public works and inadequate health provision by the City Council. This, he argues,

¹ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., "A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]).

² Hunt, Keith S., *A Summary of: The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, with Special Reference to Grahamstown, 1827-1862*, Cory Library, Grahamstown: [s.n.], 1958.

³ Gibbens, Melanie., "Two decades in the life of a city: Grahamstown 1862 – 1882", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1982 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]).

⁴ Sellick, Rose-Mary., "A Study in Local History: Grahamstown, 1883-1904", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1983 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]).

resulted from limited municipal finance and the general dependence of Grahamstown on the state government.⁵

It must be noted that unlike the previous theses, which focused primarily upon Municipal history within Grahamstown, this thesis focuses on the 'White English' perceptions of Grahamstown society during the beginning of the implementation of Apartheid. While it does use Municipal records (where they were available) it should not be considered a Municipal history, but rather a social commentary on 'White English' Grahamstown.

Over the last three decades, increased attention has been placed on the analysis of urban centres as a means to study the implementation of apartheid. Much of this work has focussed on South Africa's major urban centres, such as Durban,⁶ Cape Town⁷ and Johannesburg.⁸ Little or no attention has centred on smaller, less industrialised, urban communities. Thus, more work on a variety of smaller urban areas is required to gain a wider view of South African Apartheid history, and it is hoped that this study of Grahamstown's urban environment during the years under review will add to the existing literature on urban Apartheid history.

Chapters One to Three specifically focus on the 'White English' community's social and mental perception of Grahamstown, with emphasis placed upon the perceived connection with the 1820 Settlers, Great Britain and the Royal Family. These chapters provide insights into the nature of the 'White English' community within Grahamstown and present dominant perceptions of the time. It will be shown that the 'White English' community took great pride in the English character of the city and highlighted its aesthetic beauty, while ignoring the terrible, unsanitary condition of its Locations. It will be argued that the majority of the 'White English' community held a paternalistic Victorian view of the different racial groups (especially the Africans), and considered that they required more education from the more 'civilized' White 'race'.

Chapters Four to Eight analyse five unique, important events which shaped Grahamstown during the period under review. The Grahamstown Financial Crisis (Chapter Four) brought the city to the verge of bankruptcy, handicapping its ability to perform the basic functions of a City Council. The lack of adequate housing for the African population of Grahamstown is the focus of Chapter Five, highlighting the City Council's inability and their lack of concern to provide decent housing and living conditions for poorer African citizens. Throughout the

⁵ Southey, Nicholas., "A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1984 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]).

⁶ Freund, Bill., "City Hall and the Direction of Development" in Freund & Vishnu Padayachee, (ed.), *(D)urban Vortex: South African City in Transition*, University of Natal Press, 2002.

⁷ Bickford-Smith, Vivian, Van Heyningen., Elizabeth, Worden, Nigel, *Cape Town in the Twentieth Century: An Illustrated Social History Volume 2*, David Philip, 1999.

⁸ Beavon, Keith Sidney Orrock., *Johannesburg: The Making and Shaping of the City*, Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2004.

period under review, lack of adequate housing and unhygienic conditions were a prevalent problem within the City's Locations. The Grahamstown Beer Hall Debate is the focus of Chapter Six. The Beer Hall Debate centres around protests by Grahamstown Location dwellers against the Municipal Beer Hall during the Defiance Campaign of 1952. It highlights the determination of Location residents to remove the Municipal Beer Hall, which was considered a social blight, and replace it with a positive institute; such as a Milk Bar, Vegetable Stall or a Recreational Centre. It also shows how little the City Council understood or cared to improve the state of living within the Locations. During the period under review, Tuberculosis was a huge concern within Grahamstown because of its high infection rate. Chapter Seven reviews the state of the disease, specifically within the different Locations, and presents the events which led to the establishment of the Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital, an attempt by members of the 'White English' community to combat the suffering caused by the disease. The final event to be viewed (Chapter Eight) gives an account of Rhodes College becoming a fully-fledged University through the support of the Grahamstown public and City Council. If 'full University status' had not been achieved the City would have suffered a serious financial loss, resulting in a lack of growth, both for the College and the City in general. While there were many events worthy of analysis during the period under review, these five stand out because of the negative implications that they held for the city.

The focus of the final Chapter is the 'White English' Grahamstown perspectives with regard to the politics that emerged during the period under review. It will be shown that en masse, 'White English' Grahamstown unequivocally supported the United Party. Details regarding the three National Elections during the period highlight this unchanging support and show how Grahamstown, as part of the Albany constituency, considered themselves a 'safe seat' for the United Party. The beginning of Apartheid within Grahamstown and the effects the implementation of Apartheid laws had for the City of Grahamstown will be investigated. The following section of the Chapter will view three different organisations present within Grahamstown during the period under review: the Civil Rights League, the Progressive Party and the Black Sash. These organisations opposed the National Party because of the implementation of Apartheid policies and because the National Party tampered with the Union's Constitution. These organisations will be analysed within the Grahamstown context. The attempted implementation of the Group Areas Act within Grahamstown will be presented as a unique event in the City's history due because all the different 'racial' groups united to oppose the Act. White, African, Coloured, Indian and Chinese all came together to stop what they considered an unnecessary, potentially harmful Act from gaining ground in their City. The consensus was total and even the City Council at this point opposed the Act. The final section focuses on 'White English' Grahamstown's absolute opposition to the National Party aim of creating a South African Republic. A National Party Republic was considered to be the biggest threat to the Union of South African and its connections to the Commonwealth of Nations and to Great Britain. It will be shown that because of

Grahamstown's English character (described within the first Three Chapters), the connections between the Union of South Africa and Great Britain were of paramount importance.

In summary, this thesis will analyse and define the social perceptions of 'White English' Grahamstown during the political upheaval at the beginnings of National Party Apartheid with reference to contextual events that threatened the stability of the City during the years 1946 to 1960.

The decision to focus on Grahamstown as the topic for my thesis is based on three points, two personal and the other academic. The first personal reason relates to the fact that my mother, Mrs Melanie Lancaster, completed her Master's thesis on the City of Grahamstown (1862 to 1882). This motivated me to continue her work and add new chapters to the history and understanding of Grahamstown. Secondly, most of my life has been spent in Grahamstown. I was born in East London, but my parents and I moved to Grahamstown when I was a year old. I was educated at Oatlands Preparatory School, Graeme College and Rhodes University. I have always been interested in the history of Grahamstown, especially the perceptions, the mind-set and the character of the City. These factors helped me decide on this thesis. The final point is my own interest in the beginning of the Apartheid era. How did this affect the perceptions of Grahamstown? While this thesis does not analyse every event that occurred between 1946 and 1960, (this would have been too ambitious a task for a Master's thesis), it does present an outline of the events, perceptions and atmosphere of the time, providing insights into the nature of the 'White English' community. This is important as it provides for a greater understanding of the 'City of the Saints'. This thesis will help to define Grahamstown's 'White English' character during the beginning of Apartheid as well as defining another period (1946 to 1960) in its History.

Chapter One

Grahamstown's Positive Social Perspective

Every community creates a 'social perception' of themselves and their town or city in relation to their personal context and history. From this, communities are able to define themselves and their equals and peers in relation to other communities or individuals, whose context differs. Thus a community will create or adapt 'social perceptions' (in relation to their views, beliefs, rules and understandings) to craft a unique group identity relating their ideas, opinions and beliefs through their general expression. A general example of this is as the difference between a community or culture that allows and supports polygamous relationships as opposed to one that prefers monogamous relationships as the social norm. Each will have arguments and justifications for their 'social perception', based on the communal influences that have shaped that society or community from an historical perspective. Thus, if one wishes to 'understand' or study a specific society or community, one must analyse their unique social expression. This Chapter will examine the different available social expressions of the community of Grahamstown, during the period 1946 to 1960, in order to gain greater insight into the town's perception of itself, and how the people of Grahamstown viewed themselves and their context in relation to the rest of the Union of South Africa. However, not all perceptions are positive.

This Chapter will focus on the positive perception and expression of the City of Grahamstown, in order to reveal the underlying factors influencing the community in relation to their social discourse. From this the negative perception and expression will be analysed in order that a balanced view of the City's social discourse may emerge. A study of the community's highlighted social perception is only useful in relation to the 'hidden' negative social expression and from this a holistic view of the City (both good and bad) will emerge.

In 1882, 62 years after the 1820 British Settlers had settled in Grahamstown, T. Sheffield completed his work, *'The Story of the Settlement'*, a text that focused upon the position of Grahamstown and its inhabitants. In it he describes the City in glowing terms:

The local devotion of Grahamstown men is at once unique and admirable. No other city, town or village in the Colony is so deeply rooted in the affections of its inhabitants, or stirs in them so superb a pride. It is not only the social, intellectual, ecclesiastical and judicial centre of the Eastern districts of the Colony, in the opinion of its children, but, to all South

Africa, the source of political, commercial, agricultural and educational energy and the rallying point of true patriotism.¹

Sixty-four years after Sheffield wrote this many aspects of his appraisal of Grahamstown were no longer true, yet strong elements of Sheffield's critique remained appropriate, specifically in relation to Grahamstown's view of its 'education' and 'intellectual' character as well as its 'pride' and 'patriotism'. The social expression of the time presents a City proud of its English character, its beautiful aesthetic qualities, its educational and ecclesiastical facets, but not of its fallen position of importance in relation to the rest of the Union of South Africa.

Aesthetic appeal is one of the most notable factors in one's initial perceptions of towns and cities. Visually, it is what one would 'see' first', hence one is able to draw minor conclusions about said town or city by how the inhabitants construct or define its visual features.

Of Grahamstown it can be said that its 'White English' citizens, during the period under review, took great pride in their City as "Grahamstown possesses great facilities in its hillside slopes for enjoying woodland attractions, the fresh air, the shade of the trees, the gentle ascent to the plateau and wide expansive views"² and:

Its atmosphere is soothing and the streets, with their well-kept strips of garden and grass, their avenues of flowering trees, and vistas of surrounding slopes, are some of the attractive features. There is charm also in the historic traditions of the old city and the amenities comprised in the municipal public services, with electric power supply, fresh water in good quantity and water-borne sewage system.³

Not only did the 'White English' citizens of Grahamstown take pride in their city's 'attractive features' but also its 'historic traditions' and historical landmarks. Grahamstown's history stirred a pride within its citizenry (for more specific information see the 1820 Settler Section) as highlighted by the importance it placed on the city's past:

Another approach was just as popular, namely from the Cradock road and this was used mainly by the military officers who were amongst the most active exponents of the open air factitive. Goodwill was fostered at such times between farmers, townspeople and the British soldiery but those homely olden days have gone and so are many landmarks of the spacious

¹ Sheffield, T., *The Story of the Settlement: Grahamstown as it was, and Grahamstown as it is*, Grahamstown: T. & G. Sheffield, 1882.

² Unknown Author, 'A Birds Eye View', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th February 1946 (Cory Library)

³ Unknown Author, 'An Ideal Town', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th January 1947 (Cory Library)

life of the past. The more reason we think for preserving what is possible of those links with the past that are steadily disappearing.⁴

This historic pride was most noticeable during the city's 135th birthday when it was stated that:

Today the city of Grahamstown attains the ripe age of 135 years. Many of South Africa's other towns can boast of being centenarians, but the capital of the Eastern Province has a far longer and perhaps more useful life than most. It has in its time been the host of many famous visitors and the scene of national gatherings, including a session of the Cape Colony Parliament when the importance of the then Eastern frontier was established.⁵

This passage indicates and attaches a sense of importance to the city, not merely civic pride, but important value in relation to the rest of the South African Union. Quoting Sheffield; "No other city, town or village in the Colony is so deeply rooted in the affections of its inhabitants, or stirs in them so superb a pride".⁶

This pride prompted citizens to take an active interest in the appearance of their town, for instance, in 1947, Mr N. J. Greathead of 116 High Street stated that he would like to say what a pleasure the display of 'dimorphotheca' on Market Street was to him, how the 'daisy bed' on the triangle near the station was such a beautiful site. But he goes on to say that he wished that he could be as equally complimentary about the hills around Grahamstown: "There used to be such lovely points on the hills now almost entirely blotted out by these dense growths of pines".⁷ This sentiment is again expressed by the public in 1951, when the pros and cons of a densely wooded mountain drive are considered for their different aesthetic virtues. Firstly, it was stated that the fact that the drive was hemmed in along most of its length by bushes and trees which blocked out the City gave it a very dramatic effect, which would be ruined by opening up a few viewpoints along its length. Secondly, the argument for removing trees from Mountain Drive was that it would open up magnificent views of the City, much better than the overgrown 'peeps' that people had to make do with at that point.⁸

In relation to these 'aesthetic virtues' however, Mr R. L. Gandy stated: "If tree felling is to start on the Mountain Drive for goodness sake let us have some person superintending who

⁴ Unknown Author, 'Olden Days', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th November 1946 (Cory Library)

⁵ Unknown Author, '135 Years Old', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th August 1947 (Cory Library)

⁶ Sheffield, T., *The Story of the Settlement: Grahamstown as it was, and Grahamstown as it is*, Grahamstown: T. & G. Sheffield, 1882.

⁷ NJ Greathead, 'Praise and Blame', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 25th August 1947 (Cory Library)

⁸ Unknown Author, 'The Mountain Drive', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th June 1951 (Cory Library)

has an aesthetic, sense to see that the beauty is not desecrated by wholesale lopping down just anywhere”,⁹ further highlighting the fact that not only did Grahamstown citizens take pride in the appearance of their city, but wished to make sure that it remained one of the most beautiful cities in South Africa.¹⁰

Outsiders’ perspectives of Grahamstown coincide with this aesthetic valuation of the City; a British airman stationed in Grahamstown during the 2nd World War stated that:

Arriving as I did somewhat apprehensively – naturally, when you think that it was my first trip out of England – I immediately felt at ease in your town. It was in some ways little different from our own country towns, except that the whole place looked infinitely cleaner and well laid out. South Africa, and especially Grahamstown is a grand place.¹¹

The *Cape Argus*, in its series ‘What the King will see in South Africa’ (which appeared during the British Royal Family’s visit to the country in 1947) emphasized Grahamstown’s English appearance, in that:

Many of the buildings survive from the time when the 1820 Settlers filled the land. They are not like most of the houses in our older towns, there are no Dutch gables and the stoeps on which the early burghers used to sit. Here many houses have either steeply pitched roofs, with very narrow eaves, or they are square in outline with flat Georgian parapets only slightly changed from those found in overseas country towns. Even the ubiquitous African stoep was not in favour with the men who founded Grahamstown. More than one distinguished visitor in the past has commented upon its English appearance, an English cathedral city of the veld.¹²

Grahamstown’s ‘English appearance’ is one of the first impressions of Mrs Rosemary Smith who moved to the City during 1966 and stated in her book, *Swimming with Cobras*, that: “in many ways Grahamstown seemed like a small English market town straight out of a novel”.¹³ While Mrs Smith only moved to the City six years after the end of the focus of this thesis, her first impressions reinforce the perception of Grahamstown English character and nature.

⁹ Gandy R.L., No Title, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 11th June 1951 (Cory Library)

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Mayoral Sunday Service in the Cathedral, A Splendid Ideal’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 24th October 1949.

¹¹ Unknown Author, ‘Memories of 44 Air School’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th August 1946 (Cory Library)

¹² Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown An Outsiders View of a Frontier Settlement’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th January 1947 (Cory Library)

¹³ Smith, Rosemary., *Swimming with Cobras* Modjaji Book PTY Ltd, South Africa, 2011. Pg. 25.

Sir George Parkin, first secretary to the Rhodes Trustees, further reinforces this perception in relation to the development of Rhodes University College in Grahamstown. He referred to the “‘very strong British influence’ which Grahamstown might be expected to exercise on those who came under the influence of that setting”¹⁴. Sir George made this statement in March of 1903, and, just as with Mrs Rosemary Smith’s 1966 perception, it is valuable in highlighting the ‘English’ nature of the City.

Members of the South African Museums’ Association, who visited Grahamstown during 1947, stated that the capital city of the Eastern Province was steeped in history and romance and considered it one of the most pleasant places of residence and one of South African’s great educational centres. It contained all the cultural and social amenities of a University town with many assets.¹⁵

Outside perspectives of Grahamstown, therefore, paint the picture of a beautiful, “English Cathedral city”, with superb education centres and an aesthetic residential atmosphere that is ‘steeped in history and romance’. This perspective draws connections between both the social perception of the city (during the period under review) and Sheffield’s 1882 critique of the city.

The position of the city in relation to education presents another ‘proud’ aspect of Grahamstown, affectionately referred to, in certain circles, as the “Oxford of South Africa”.¹⁶ Housing numerous schools and the Rhodes University campus, the citizens of Grahamstown considered their city to be “the educational centre of the Eastern Province”.¹⁷ Emphasis was placed on promoting and supporting the educational institutions in the city: “Grahamstown with its great educational institutions must give much of its attention to the welfare of such enterprises, this applying more especially to higher education”.¹⁸ Education, in the social context of Grahamstown, was awarded value and importance, as its nickname “The Oxford of South Africa”, suggests.

The social expression of Grahamstown also boasted a degree of ‘self – importance’, as shown by Sheffield’s quote. Grahamstown, in 1882, considered itself (and was considered) a very important civil centre, from a ‘intellectual’, ‘ecclesiastical’, ‘judicial’, ‘commercial’, ‘agricultural’, ‘political’ and ‘educational’ perspective. By the mid-20th century, however, this situation was considerably different, in that Grahamstown had not developed in the ‘judicial’, ‘commercial’ or ‘political’ arenas. Simply put, it had not developed or expanded

¹⁴ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 8.

¹⁵ Unknown Author, ‘A Fair City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 19th July 1947 (Cory Library)

¹⁶ Unknown Author, ‘Is Grahamstown on the Map?’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 10th August 1946 (Cory Library)

¹⁷ Unknown Author, ‘Governor Generals Tribute to Grahamstown, The City en Fete Civic Welcome’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 8th September 1950 (Cory Library)

¹⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Educational outlook’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th January 1949 (Cory Library)

further than the position of a small city. Yet from the social perceptions available for study it still awarded itself a large degree of 'self-importance'. During February of 1951 a group of young Cape Town College Music Students toured the Eastern Cape and Transkei; but did not visit Grahamstown. They gave no reason for not visiting the 'City of the Saints', merely a brief point stating, "Grahamstown is the only important Eastern Cape centre which will not be visited by four brilliant Cape Town College of Music students during their tour of the Eastern Cape and Transkei which began today".¹⁹ 'The only important Eastern Cape centre', indicates that the Grahamstown social expression (in relation to its importance) was still very much rooted in the quote of Sheffield's from the previous century. Three other points reinforce this idea. Firstly, during 1946 the Union Government organised a commission in relation to "Adult Education", yet Grahamstown was not consulted:

What better centre than Grahamstown – 'the Oxford of South Africa' as it has been called – could have been imagined to give suggestions to the Commission on Adult Education? Yet the Commission never visited the City at all!²⁰

The article stated further that: "Seeing the way that Grahamstown and district is so often left out of official and other programmes of development, the question above might fairly be asked as a means of awaking public interest in public affairs".²¹ The citizens of Grahamstown felt as though their town should have been more actively involved with public and national developments.

A City Council meeting in late 1948 reinforces this perception when Cr K. E. Davis recommended that publicity signboards be erected at the entrances of Grahamstown to allow the 'travelling public' to acquaint themselves with the city's various amenities. According to the City Council, there had been "dire neglect" of highlighting the City's tourist attraction features, since the old Publicity Association had closed down.²² The general theme from these points seems to indicate frustration, on the part of the citizens, towards their lack of public and national importance.

The city was also concerned with its international reputation, highlighted by the city council's attempts during March of 1951 to approach the 'Union Castle Company' (a British shipping company) in order that they named one of their ships after the city. Mr Ross-Nunn (a Councillor) presented the motion to the City Council and argued that "the fact that Grahamstown is the original British Settler City of South Africa and as such has close ties

¹⁹ Unknown Author, 'They will not Visit City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th February 1951 (Cory Library)

²⁰ Unknown Author, 'Is Grahamstown on the Map?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th August 1946 (Cory Library)

²¹ Ibid.

²² Unknown Author, 'City's Amenities', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd November 1948 (Cory Library)

with Great Britain”²³ should allow for one of the Castle Company’s new vessels to be named the Grahamstown Castle.²⁴ By the end of March the City Council announced that:

At the request of the City Council the Mayor of Grahamstown, Mr. A. T. Rivett-Carnac, is to write to the headquarters of the Union-Castle Company in London with a request that the next vessel completed by the firm be named Grahamstown Castle. Justification for this, said Mr Nunn, could be found in the fact that Grahamstown was the original settler city with many close ties with Britain, that it was the only Cathedral city in the Cape; that it was the only University city in the Eastern Cape; that it was the capital of the Eastern Province; and that large quantities of pineapples, citrus fruits, hides and other produce from this area were carried to Britain in Union-Castle vessels.²⁵

The above quote is filled with self-congratulatory’ points: “original settler city”, “very close ties with Britain”, “the only Cathedral City in the Cape” and “the only University City in the Eastern Cape”, all stressing the unique importance of the City. It was the then Mayor, Mr Rivett-Carnac, who personally appealed to the Union Castle Company. From this information it can be gathered that, by the beginning of 1946, the city of Grahamstown had lost many of the important aspects that Mr Sheffield had critiqued during 1882, but the memory of Grahamstown’s past significance remained, pushing citizens and the City Council to attempt to reinforce their perception of the city as one of South Africa’s central, vital centres.

The perception of Grahamstown, during the period 1946 to 1960, as presented by the city’s social expression is that it was a beautiful Cathedral city possessed of a English character, with a reputation as an educational centre, a visually pleasing English South African City, viewed with pride by its ‘White English’ citizens. The following section will analyse the various Grahamstown civic organisations that attempted to uplift the poorer sections of the population through charitable endeavours further resulting in positive expressions within the City.

Charitable Funding within Grahamstown

Another positive perception of the City of Grahamstown was the willingness of its more middle class and affluent citizens to organise and donate to various funds and charities within and without the city. This section will focus and view certain funds and charities organised within Grahamstown to help the less fortunate sections of the population.

²³ Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown’s Castle’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 19th March 1951

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Unknown Author, ‘City Mayor, Grahamstown Castel’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

The 'Non-European Soup Kitchen' was started in 1945²⁶ by the Grahamstown branch of the National Council of Women (N.C.W.) and attempted to provide at least one nutritious meal of soup to disadvantaged Africans and Coloureds. The National Council of Women organised and ran the soup kitchen from its conception, under the guidance of Mrs Dorothy Rivett-Carnac, the chairperson of the Council during the period under review. The Soup Kitchen originated as a general charity relief organisation with regard to the Grahamstown Locations. In 1946 the emphasis was switched from a general relief organisation to one specifically focused on Location children, in co-ordination with school-feeding schemes of the time, thus highlighting the crying need of Location children without decent nutritious food. Mr Rossouw's (Principal of the school that the Soup Kitchen was set up in, no information given in relation to which school) thanks to the National Council of Women further reinforces this point:

Mr Rossouw expressed the grateful thanks of the school. He was delighted with the kitchen and he greatly appreciated the committee's offer to assist in running the kitchen. It would be a valuable and most welcome addition to the School Feeding Scheme.²⁷

By 1959 the "Non-European" Soup Kitchen scheme (both for children and adults) had expanded to include three different Grahamstown Locations: the Coloured Location, Makana's Kop Location and the Tantyi Location.²⁸ As the Soup Kitchen Scheme was a purely local enterprise, it received no support or subsidies from the Government, either the previous United Party Government or the then-current National Party Government. Thus, the fact that over the course of fifteen years the Soup Kitchen scheme not only continued but grew in size, clearly indicates that a section of the Grahamstown population (the members of the National Council of Women) was actively trying to improve conditions within the Locations.

The Good Samaritan Association was another such group of Grahamstown citizens who attempted specifically to help the African and Coloured aged within the city. The Good Samaritan Association was founded during October of 1916 by Rev S. J. Helm to combat poverty amongst Grahamstown Coloureds.²⁹ During 1947 the Good Samaritan Association (Mrs Jacques as President of the Association) entered into an agreement with the Grahamstown City Council to build eight semi-detached cottages for aged Africans and Coloureds. However, a condition of the loan raised from the Government for the

²⁶ Unknown Author, 'Plight of Underage Children Stressed by Soup Kitchen', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th March 1957 (Cory Library)

²⁷ Unknown Author, 'School Feeding Scheme, Soup Kitchen at Primary School', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 23rd July 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁸ Knowles, B.S.C., 'Soup Kitchens re-opening', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th January 1959 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Southey, Nicholas., *A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918*, Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.], 1984. Pg. 228.

construction was that a Grahamstown charitable organisation would be responsible for paying the rent on the cottages and seeing to the general welfare of the residents.³⁰ This condition was agreed upon by the Good Samaritan Association which subsequently appealed to the Grahamstown public for help in the form of donated furniture, clothes, blankets and funds. The Good Samaritan Association, like the National Council of Women, received no subsidies from the Government, relying on the good will of Grahamstonians to help provide for the welfare of their charges. During 1947 the Association provided twenty-six aged Coloureds with six shillings a month and thirty-two aged Africans with one shilling, six pence per week.³¹

The longest running charity in Grahamstown during the period under review was the Grocott's Daily Mail Annual Christmas Cheer Fund.³² This was a specific fund set up every Christmas which raised money for four different needy causes, the Port Alfred Hospital, Fort England Hospital, the Mjanyana Institution for Lepers and the African and Coloured communities of Grahamstown.³³ During the month of November every year, the *Grocott's Daily Mail* would open the fund to the public and subsequently publish the various donations over the course of November and December. The point of the scheme was to provide for a happier Christmas for most of the people in the above four groups. It must be noted that by the end of the period under review the fund had reached the ripe age of fifty-three years and has continued to date.

Grahamstonians also provided funds to various National and International charities; during 1949 the Ciskei region of South Africa was hit by the worst drought it had ever experienced with deaths among large stock amounted to 23365 out of a total of 160000 head. There were nineteen appeals for funds to help relieve conditions in the Ciskei region during September to December of 1949. The final appeal for funds during December (1949) stated, that while there was still urgent need for donations to the Ciskei drought relief fund, the crisis had passed its highest point. The general living conditions of the Africans in the worst struck rural areas were by then beginning to improve.³⁴

With regard to International funding, during 1948, the Mayor of Grahamstown, Mr Mather-Pike organised a public meeting to discuss his proposal of initiating the 'Light-night Campaign' with the aim of providing relief to White and Asian children still suffering from

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'Good Samaritan Association, Old Age Homes for Natives', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st November 1947 (Cory Library)

³¹ Unknown Authors, 'Homes for Aged Natives', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st November 1947 (Cory Library)

³² Unknown Author, 'Grocott's Daily Mail 49th Annual Christmas Cheer Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th November 1956 (Cory Library)

³³ Unknown Author, 'Grocott's Daily Mail Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 23rd December 1960 (Cory Library)

³⁴ Unknown Author, 'Ciskei Relief Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th December 1949 (Cory Library)

the effects of the Second World War. The meeting was attended by a small but enthusiastic group of 'White English' citizens who were asked by Mr Mather-Pike to consider forming a local committee to support the United Nations Appeal for Children. "He (the mayor) said it was one of the ghastly aftermaths of the world war that there were literally millions of children without homes, without parents or money, actually starving".³⁵

It is undeniable that many people in Grahamstown (during the period under review) attempted to organise and support various local and International charities for the purpose of uplifting those less fortunate than themselves; however, this section of the population was a minority. It will be shown in the following 'Negative Social Perception Chapter' that a bigger majority of the opulent citizens of Grahamstown did not consider or even care about the Grahamstown Location populations, let alone national or international charities. The various charities and funds that were established in Grahamstown were established by a minority of the population, usually attached to one of the various charity organisations, who actively attempted to uplift those less fortunate than themselves.

³⁵ Unknown Author, 'For 40000000 Starving Children', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th July 1948 (Cory Library)

Chapter Two

Grahamstown's Negative Social Perspective

The 'positive' social affirmations of the city are merely half of the story. The citizens of Grahamstown highlighted many different factors that instilled a sense of civic pride and importance in their community, however the focus remained on the 'White English' section of the population. Little or no mention is made in these 'positive perceptions' of the living conditions of a large section of the Grahamstown community, that of the African and Coloured populations living in the various municipal Locations surrounding the city. Simply put, the conditions of what was described as the "Non-European" population of Grahamstown not only left little for the civic community to be proud of, upon would have detracted from the 'positive perception' that 'White English' Grahamstown spent so much time emphasising. This section will examine the 'negative perceptions' inherent within Grahamstown during the period under review, specifically focusing on Location conditions and 'White' Grahamstonian perceptions of Africans. Positive features present only a single facet; one requires both the good and the bad in order to reach a balanced, realistic conclusion.

One of the few factors that appears to have detracted from the community centre of Grahamstown with its "well-kept strips of garden and grass, their avenues of flowering trees"¹ (as opposed to the Townships or Locations surrounding it), was the social blight of begging. This was first brought up by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, a society dedicated to improving local conditions and uplifting the poor and needy of Grahamstown, regardless of race. The society became concerned with an apparent increase in beggars plying their trade in the city centre of Grahamstown,² and subsequently expressed concern about the state of their living conditions. Apart from this concern, however, the Benevolent society presented no further information in relation to the number of beggars or what their living conditions were. Within the 'positive' expression of 'White English' Grahamstown there is no reference to begging on the streets of the 'City of the Saints'. The only other mention of the plight of beggars within Grahamstown occurred a year after the Benevolent Society voiced concerns about the increase in begging, this increase showed a lack of interest on the part of the wider community. This second mention focused on the definite increase in begging within the centre of Grahamstown and called for a concerted effort by the City Council and the community in order to improve this social blight. Indeed that everything pointed towards the creation of a Community Chest for Grahamstown with a minimum of delay.³

¹ Unknown Author, 'An Ideal Town', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th January 1947 (Cory Library)

² Unknown Author, 'Beggars Great Concern in City, Ladies' Benevolent Society wants to know about them', 28th June 1957 (Cory Library)

³ Unknown Author, 'Begging on the Streets', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th July 1958 (Cory Library)

The call for a community chest to be established 'with the minimum of delay' indicates that the problem of beggars was serious, even though there was no specific information about their numbers or living conditions. Whether or not this 'community chest' fund was actually created is unknown, as there is no further information about it. Perhaps this is because the existence of a serious begging problem, within the centre of Grahamstown, would have detracted from the perception of Grahamstown as "one of the most beautiful cities in South Africa".⁴ Begging has its roots in poverty and it will be shown that far from the perfect City, that the 'White English' section of the community highlights again and again, Grahamstown possessed huge inequalities which resulted in terrible slum conditions. It must be emphasised that these conditions did not affect the actual city of Grahamstown, but rather the Locations and townships surrounding it.

The first reference, during the period under review, about slum conditions in the Grahamstown Locations came from Mr Mac Vicar Ngxiki, a Location resident, who had attended a lecture on housing development by Mr Schauder. Mr Ngxiki stated:

We are really housed in a manner that promotes neither physical nor moral health and the sooner our local authority approves of the magnificent and progressive scheme propounded by Mr Schauder the better will it conduct its duties with perfect harmony. It is no cant or sentimentalism, it is an obvious dictate of ordinary prudence that if Grahamstown expends more energy on improving the living conditions of the poorer section of its community and eradicates, or better still submits to utter destruction the obnoxious seed of colour or racial discrimination which is trying to germinate in many hearts and minds, it will rise into a golden era.⁵

While he did not go into detail regarding housing conditions in the Location, Mr Ngxiki indicated that both physically and emotionally conditions in the Locations needed to be improved. He made it clear that it was the City Council or "local authority's" duty to uplift the poorer section of the Grahamstown population (see Housing Chapter for more detail in relation to this). His earnest plea to "submit to utter destruction the obnoxious seed of colour or racial discrimination", indicates that not only were there serious physical concerns within the Location (in relation to social services and amenities) but also racial tension. Interestingly this contradicts a statement made by the Mayor of Grahamstown (Mr A.K. Rautenbach) thirteen years later (1959) in which he stated that "the city of Grahamstown prided itself on the cordial relation which has always existed between Europeans and

⁴ Unknown Author, 'Mayoral Sunday Service in the Cathedral, A Splendid Ideal', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th October 1949.

⁵ Ngxiki, Mac Vicar., 'Mr Schauder's Lecture', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th October 1946 (Cory Library)

Africans”.⁶ This seems to show a lack of understanding on the part of the ‘White English’ Grahamstonians in relation to the African section of the community, in that thirteen years after Mr Ngxiki’s plea against racial discrimination (during which time Apartheid racial principles took hold) the Mayor (Mr Rautenbach) appears to be ignorant of any racial tension existing in Grahamstown. Further, Mr Rautenbach stated that the Grahamstown City Council “realise that, in order to have a healthy and contented African Community, they must be properly housed”;⁷ this, thirteen years after Mr Ngxiki’s plea for better housing conditions.

During 1947, the Grahamstown City Council hired the services of two Town Planners, Messrs Bowling & Floyd,⁸ to compile an outline of the city’s spatial area in an attempt to create a better structured and organised city. In March 1948, Messrs Bowling & Floyd released their first report relating to Grahamstown’s Town Planning Schemes, in which they selected three main points that they considered were crucial in improving the structural organisation of Grahamstown. These three points were: firstly, the disregard and lack of appreciation of Grahamstown’s surroundings and the educational and cultural tradition of the City. Secondly, the unplanned, urban area of Grahamstown, which was due to the many unoccupied lots and the large numbers of schools within the City. And thirdly, the “appalling slum” conditions of the Grahamstown Locations, in particular, Fingo Village.⁹

Messrs Bowling & Floyd use of the term “appalling” indicates that Location conditions, and particularly those of Fingo Village, required immediate and desperate attention. The fact that “there is no sewage scheme in the Location nor are there laid on water installations in hundreds of slum houses”,¹⁰ clearly supports this point. Blame, however, was not laid at the feet of the City Council because it was “realised that the slum conditions have arisen partly because of Grahamstown not being financially strong enough to carry the burden of housing and services”.¹¹ While it is true that during the period 1946 to 1960 Grahamstown finances suffered a large deficit due to the de-rating of educational and ecclesiastical institutions (see Chapter Five for more details), if these conditions had existed in the centre of Grahamstown itself, it would be highly unlikely (given the high level of pride that white Grahamstonians placed on their city) that the City Council, regardless of expense, would not have rectified them. After all, Grahamstown considered herself ‘one of the most beautiful cities in South Africa’. The Locations appear to have been conveniently left out of this description.

⁶ Unknown Author, ‘Cordial relations exist in Grahamstown says Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 10th October 1959 (Cory Library)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Town Planning, *Land and Works Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/2/1/21, 20/5a, 16th June 1947

⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Our City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th March 1948 (Cory Library)

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Municipal Affairs’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 23rd August 1948

¹¹ Unknown Author, ‘Our City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th March 1948 (Cory Library)

A year later the Medical Officer of Health for Grahamstown, Dr P Boekstein, in his annual health report stated with regard to housing, that re-housing African families living in the overcrowded conditions in the Locations would require doubling the number of erven that they occupied.¹² While this report did not go into detail regarding the actual conditions of the Locations, the fact that Dr Boekstein recommended a doubling of the number of erven (the plots of land on which the houses are built) should be an adequate indication that slum conditions prevailed. Dr Boekstein also stated that “in the African area, the question of the number of Africans who should not be living there deserves earnest attention”,¹³ which suggests an underlying presumption that it was not the lack of decent housing or sanitary conditions that were to blame for the slum conditions within the Locations, but rather the number of illegal residents who created overcrowding.

Both the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Boekstein, and the Town Planners, Messrs Bowling & Floyd, described the slum conditions using terms such as “overcrowding” and “appalling”, yet neither report presents an adequate outline of actual living conditions. H.N.H. (only initials given no full names), in an appeal to the Grahamstown public for support and involvement in the Location, presented a far more compelling and detailed account. H.N.H. described how, during the Christmas Holidays of 1951, a matron from the Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital (see Chapter Eight for more information on the Tuberculosis Hospital), visited the house of one of her child patients. During Christmas holidays the hospital would close and reopen at the beginning of the New Year; consequently the patients had to return home during this period. The matron was concerned about one child in particular and visited his home to check on him. H.N.H. describes the physical structure of the house 6 ft by 7 ft, as: “the home was made of bits of wood, bits of wire netting and of hessian, the roof of an old bit of tarpaulin and the door of the top of a water tank, short of closing the doorway by about 18 inches”.¹⁴ Because the house was so small, TB patients slept in the same room as the other members of the family. From the information available these terrible living conditions were the norm for the majority of people living in the Locations. H.N.H. then made a plea to the Grahamstown community, asking that they get involved to help the struggle against poverty:

So in our own interests and in the interests of humanity, let us urge the Municipality to hasten the work of building new houses. This is the only way to eliminate slums. Every administrative body needs assurance that its efforts to improve conditions of life have the support of the public. So

¹² Unknown Author, ‘City Health Report, MOH surveys twelve months, Overcrowding and Bad Housing’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th November 1949 (Cory Library)

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ H.N.H., ‘Home Conditions of our Africans’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 6th June 1952 (Cory Library)

see for yourself and then speak or write to your representative on the municipal council.¹⁵

Interestingly H.N.H. did not consider that the lack of action on the part of the City Council and the general public, to relieve Location conditions, occurred from a lack of interest, but rather believed, or chose to believe, that it was ignorance, in relation to the slum conditions, that negated action by the general community.

The people of Grahamstown are well known for the many excellent charities so well supported in the city. It can therefore only be a lack of true appreciation of the slum conditions in which many of their fellow citizens are existing that hinders the strongest support of the Municipal council in their plans of houses.¹⁶

However, even if the reason for the lack of action on the part of the Grahamstown community stemmed from a position of ignorance of the true living conditions of the Location dwellers, one should question 'how this could be', in that, the White community and the Location dwellers were very closely linked, spatially. The vast majority of domestic workers, Municipal workers and beggars present in Grahamstown, came from the Locations. If the 'White English' section of the city did not fully appreciate the appalling conditions found in the Locations, it is probably more likely that this was because of a lack of interest in how African or Coloured people lived.

The idea of a lack of interest, on the part of the White Grahamstown community towards the Location dwellers, was further reinforced by Mr A Badenhorst (Probation Officer and Head of the Social Welfare Department) when he analysed the root causes behind juvenile delinquency in the Locations. Mr Badenhorst believed 'Non-European' juvenile delinquency was because of squalid living conditions and neglect from parents, callous mothers and hard drinking fathers.¹⁷

While he did link delinquency with squalid living conditions, the emphasis he placed was on the parents of the juveniles, the callous mothers and hard-drinking fathers', both of which could be considered effects of squalid living conditions. He also argued that White youths within Grahamstown had endless sporting activities and recreational centres to occupy them, while African or Coloured youths had very little to occupy them.¹⁸ In addition, very little was done by the City Council, during the period under review, to provide Location

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Unknown Author, 'Making Juvenile Delinquents, Lack of Proper Home Life is Main Cause, Welfare Man', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th July 1952 (Cory Library)

¹⁸ Unknown Author, 'An Unsolved Problem-Care of the Native's Baby', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th April 1956 (Cory Library)

youths with sporting or recreational centres (see Coloured Sport section), which appears to highlight the lack of interest on the part of 'White English' Grahamstown towards the welfare of Location dwellers.

This is not to say that the entire 'White English' community of the city of Grahamstown possessed a lack of interest in Location conditions. There were indeed some individuals, specifically those individuals involved in one of the various charities discussed in the previous Chapter, who attempted to get the public involved in the less fortunate section of the community.

Information about the high level of malnutrition present within the townships showed an ever higher level of despair. Simply put, during the period under review, children were starving in the Grahamstown Locations. The first mention of children starving within the Locations occurred during 1941 when it came to the 'White English' community's attention that the high rate of Black infant deaths was, in actual fact, caused by malnutrition.¹⁹ Five years later however malnutrition was still prevalent within the Location. 'Monkey Corns' in a sarcastic letter published in the *Grocott's Daily Mail* during April of 1946 expresses this desperate situation. The letter was in response to a decision by the City Council to spend £-820 for the purchase of 120 "soft chairs" for the City Hall. 'Monkey Corns' stated:

Sir – May I add my protests to that of Major Mullins regarding the spending of 820 pounds on soft chairs for the City Hall? We are still most of us extremely well padded in spite of the wheat shortage and breadless day and can always arm ourselves with soft cushions stuffed with the feathers of the fowls we slaughtered in our back yards on the recent meatless Wednesdays.

Good old South Africa! You still eat well and sit soft!

May I suggest that the ragged 'golden' fringe on the drop curtains be repaired enabling us to feast our eyes on things of beauty and not of tatters? While I for one am still prepared to sit with a benumbed posterior on the rare occasions which I visit our City Hall.

I believe native children are still dying from malnutrition in our Location? – I am etc 'Monkey Corns'.²⁰

Unfortunately 'Monkey Corns' concerns about starving African children were reinforced by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr B.A. Coghlan, ten years later. According to Dr Coghlan: "Poverty, with its associated malnourishment and ignorance of the most rudimentary principles of hygiene and sound feeding, are the two most important factors in the high

¹⁹ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., "A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]).

²⁰ Monkey Corns, 'City Hall Chairs', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th April 1946 (Cory Library)

incidence of deaths among Native babies in the Grahamstown Location".²¹ Dr Coghlan indicated that, with regard to income, the average Location family required £-10 per month to purchase the necessary food to stave off malnutrition; however the average income that the vast majority of Location dwellers were able to obtain was only £-6. Therefore, the average Location family would have required a 40% increase in their monthly wages in order to attain a level of proper nutrition.

Mrs Rivett-Carnac, President of the Location Soup Kitchen, founded in 1945 as an attempt to alleviate the malnutrition in the Locations, further expounded upon the plight of Location children. In an appeal to the Grahamstown public for funding, she stated that there were cases of children's hair going red due to the results of insufficient nutrition.²²

The final point relating the terrible slum conditions of Grahamstown's Locations and their poverty, child malnutrition and death, was Dr Coghlan's reference to the 1959 infant mortality index. Unfortunately no statistics were given in this index but Dr Coghlan stated that the infant mortality rate was probably the best index available to analyse social circumstances. He went further to state that the infant mortality rate for Grahamstown would give any person with a conscience "considerable food for thought".²³ This certainly emphasized the dire situation. In his 1960 medical report, Dr Coghlan's further expanded upon the situation in the Location as he explained that the extreme poverty of Africans and Coloureds living in the Grahamstown Locations made it impossible for them to help themselves or take advantage of the guidance provided for them at the Child Welfare Clinics with regard to hygienic practices and the correct level of nutrition for their families.²⁴

In summary, with a prevalence of slum conditions, a high level of malnutrition (specifically of children) and an insufficient level of income, living conditions within the Grahamstown Locations during this period could only be considered as dangerously inadequate.

Returning to the contention that, in general, public opinion towards the Locations was defined by a lack of interest, two different letters, appearing in the *Grocott's Daily Mail* newspaper deserve comment. While various individuals took note of the despicable plight of the Location dwellers and called their fellow citizens attention to it, others opposed their assertions. It should be considered that the individuals who attempted to focus attention on the Locations represented a minority within the White community, if they had represented a majority of the White community conditions would have been changed.

²¹ Unknown Author, 'Babies Starved to Death in City, Poor Nourishment is underlying cause of deaths says M.O.H.', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th August 1956 (Cory Library)

²² Unknown Author, 'Plight of underage children stressed by Soup Kitchen Story', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th March 1957 (Cory Library)

²³ Unknown Author, 'Infant Mortality rate an index, Grahamstown figures give food for though-Need for more Crèches', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th March 1959 (Cory Library)

²⁴ Unknown Author, 'The Frustration of Poverty, Bantu Infantile Mortality a disgrace says M.O.H.', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th March 1960 (Cory Library)

Mrs Edith Hunt, a relative newcomer to Grahamstown, unintentionally began the correspondence when in her letter 'City Sparrows, A Newcomers Impressions of Grahamstown', she referred to the Location as an "Abomination".

If true facts about conditions in the Location were fully known and understood, with all their implications and dangers, so great would be the outcry that in one year these abominations would be swept away and in their place houses would be built, fit dwelling places for human beings. There are financial and other difficulties it is true, but if the tide of public opinion were sufficiently strong it would rise so high that all obstructions would be swept away before it.²⁵

A very scathing statement, which again highlights the fact the citizens of Grahamstown were either ignorant of the suffering going on, or did not have much interest in it.

The very next day, 9th November 1950, C.H.W. (no names given) sent a letter to the *Grocott's Daily Mail*, titled "The City Beautiful" in which he stated: "He would be blind indeed who did not observe the renewed spring beauty of our High street especially from the Drostdy end in the late afternoon. Who will disagree that our High Street is the most beautiful in South Africa?", and which ends "How lucky we are to be here (Grahamstown)",²⁶ clearly shows the lack of interest in Location conditions. It is almost as if C.H.W. was attempting to draw attention away from the fact that Grahamstown Location conditions were horrific.

As if in response to this on the 10th of November (a day later), Winifred A. Jones sent in a letter, which like Mrs Hunt's presented a scathing attack on the public of Grahamstown, in that she considered it everyone's responsibility and duty to uplift conditions in the Location.

Do the citizens of the City of the Saints know what the conditions are? I would like to suggest that all those who are fortunate enough to own cars should go for a drive through the side streets of the Locations and see for themselves. Why not go on a Sunday after church before retiring to your comfortable homes. It is not the fault of the municipality alone. It is everyone's fault. We should have a meeting of all householders to try and solve the problem of dirt disease and overcrowding. Just talking won't help; just building more houses won't help. It will only offer more room for those flocking to the town and increase unemployment. We must do something now before it is too late.²⁷

²⁵ Hunt, Edith, 'City Sparrows, A Newcomers Impressions of Grahamstown', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th November 1950 (Cory Library)

²⁶ C.H.W. 'The City Beautiful', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th November 1950, (Cory Library)

²⁷ Jones, Winifred, A., 'Native Location Conditions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th November 1950 (Cory Library)

Clearly Mrs Jones understood the enormity of the conditions that were prevalent within the Locations, and that it would have required a considerable effort, both on the part of the City Council and the Grahamstown public, to rectify them.

In response to C.H.W.'s letter, 'The City Beautiful' on the 9th of November 1950, both Mrs Jones and Mrs Hunt wrote addition critical commentary connected to his 'positive perception' of the City of Grahamstown.

Mrs Hunt stated that she would like to remind C.H.W. of a different view to the one presented within the 'City Beautiful', that of the squalor and poverty of the different Locations. She then presented an account of a typical day in the Locations, how people (children included) regularly searched through garbage bins for left over scraps, how dirt and waste were everywhere, how the women (mothers and wives) tried to improve conditions but did not have the resources to do so. She described how in one 'hovel' "old newspapers have been cut into frills to ornament the shelves. Somehow the sight of those paper frills made me more ashamed than anything else I saw".²⁸ She concluded her argument with a final point:

It is good that some of the 'dreary spots' have been made beautiful and the land that was so desolate has become as the garden of Eden; but while we congratulate one another on pleasantly patting one another on the back do not let us forget this plague spot, this cesspit, this abomination of desolation in which dwells the greater number of the inhabitants of 'The City Beautiful'.²⁹

The statement "while we congratulate one another on pleasantly patting one another on the back", seems to highlight the point that while Grahamstown citizens were proud of the state of their city, the horrific conditions within the Locations were ignored. 'White English' Grahamstown did not wish to allow the slum conditions within the Locations to taint their perception of 'beautiful' Grahamstown.

Mrs Jones's commentary, as in her earlier letter on the 10th of November, pushed for potential action to be taken in order to uplift the Location populations. "It is quite time something was done to improve these conditions. There are many unemployed and those who won't work in the Location. Could they not be rounded up to mend the roads if they are not fit to build houses?"³⁰ Mrs Jones also brought the argument closer to home by pointing out that the vast majority of domestic, municipal and causal labour employed within the city, were from the Locations. Grahamstonians should therefore be worried

²⁸ Hunt, Edith, 'The City Beautiful', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th November 1950 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Jones, A. Winifred, 'Location Conditions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th November 1950 (Cory Library)

about their health, in that the workers might have brought 'Location' conditions to the city. Her philanthropy was mixed with self-interest.

On the same day as Mrs Jones's 'Location Conditions' letter, I.E.M. published 'Another view', responding to Mrs Hunts letter "The City Beautiful" from the 14th of November. In 'Another view', I.E.M. stated that to truly understand the reasons for the conditions in the Locations one needed to live in Grahamstown longer than Edith Hunt had done, and that, in his or her opinion, one of the main causes for such squalor and poverty related to the hundreds of Africans living there who could not find jobs. He or she therefore implied that the terrible conditions prevalent in the Location were not the fault of the Grahamstown public or City Council. Then, however, I.E.M. suddenly began to talk about how "ungrateful" and "lazy" servants from the Location were and how impossible it was to find a good servant. They were not prepared to give value for money but instead attempted to do a minimum of work for a decent wage and everything else they could get away with. "They refuse to eat sweet potatoes and brown bread which thousands of white families throughout the Union are grateful to still be able to afford".³¹ I.E.M. did not give any logical reasons for this assault on Location domestic servants, indeed he or she appeared to jump from criticising Mrs Hunt to criticising the servants without any connection between the two points. Clearly this correspondence within the *Grocott's Daily Mail* allowed him or her to vent unthinking comments about Location domestics, revealing his or her lack of understanding of less fortunate individuals attempting to earn a living from the more fortunate of Grahamstown's citizens.

He or she did however state that he was not in favour of Location conditions:

By writing this letter I do not want to give the impression that I am not in full agreement that the Location as it stands is a disgrace to our town and I think could successfully compete for the title of the worst in the Union. I consider that no further work should be done to our many churches (excepting necessary repairs) while the Location is so sadly in need of houses.³²

I.E.M.'s comments were subsequently opposed by Mrs Katherine P. Grantham, who felt "bound to challenge immediately...".³³ She challenged I.E.M.'s critique of 'native servants':

She says-'It is impossible to get a good servant' and by inference describes such a one as a man or woman who is honest hard-working, loyal and willing to eat brown bread. I should like to put on record that my husband and I had a young maid in Grahamstown for well over a year who never

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Grantham, P. Katherine., 'Native Servants', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st November 1950 (Cory Library)

took extra food or anything else, worked steadily and reliably, was loyal and devoted to our interests and always ate brown bread!³⁴

Mrs Grantham shows sympathy for the case of 'native servants', but considered them in a very paternalistic light. Quoting Mrs Grantham: "I suggest that IEM remember that he or she is dealing with a child race, for it is a platitude that children react well in most cases to kindly affection combined with wise leadership. We need not employ those who do not react well".³⁵ Even though Mrs Grantham opposed I.E.M.'s contention, in relation to 'native servants', from the information available, she did not do it from a liberal mind-set (focusing on equality), but rather a paternalistic point of view. She considered that Africans deserved decent treatment but did not consider them to be equal to civilised 'English White' Grahamstown.

While this conflict of opinions was occurring between I.E.M. and Mrs Grantham, 'Sunny South Africa' published a letter titled 'So Tired', illustrating again a callous lack of interest, possibly even of the majority of Grahamstown, towards the Location conditions. In it he stated:

Let us be our cheerful South African selves. We live in a sunny country where 95 per cent of the people have sunny natures. Our natives have a wonderful sense of humour and natures as sunny as the sun in which they bask most of the time. Let us live and laugh and be happy there is enough trouble in all the world for everybody to moan about but let us be different. Quit moaning and groaning. Make the long face broad and smile.³⁶

In other words, don't worry about the problems facing the Locations, be happy and smile.

Immediately two citizens, Mr R.W.H. Griffiths and Mr S.H. Graham, responded. Mr R.W.A. Griffiths believed that much could be done to improve the conditions within the Locations as long as there were enough people in Grahamstown with a humane outlook.

He considered, however, that more information was required before action could be taken, and suggested a survey undertaken by Rhodes University perhaps. "With the information gleaned by such a survey before them, a shocked and horrified citizenry would be stung into effective action and ways and means could then be devised to put apartheid into humane and civilised practice".³⁷ While he apparently wished to improve conditions in the Grahamstown Locations, the above quote indicates that he supported Apartheid, again presenting the paternalistic view of decent treatment but with different levels of equality.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Sunny South Africa, 'Location Conditions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th November 1950 (Cory Library)

³⁷ Griffiths, R.W.A., 'Location Conditions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st November 1950 (Cory Library)

Mr S.H. Graham merely commented on 'Sunny South Africa's' letter in a sarcastic manner, criticizing the poor taste inherent within the suggestion that those who have nothing should 'smile and be happy': "He urges us to 'live laugh and be happy' not too difficult perhaps provided you have something better than a hovel to live in. And he tells us that our natives have a wonderful sense of humour. They need it but I doubt if there is much humour to be found in most of the houses in Grahamstown Location".³⁸

The final correspondence in relation to the debate that Mrs Hunt's letter 'City Sparrows' began, presents a paternalistic, chauvinistic point of view. No name was given in relation to the letter 'the City Beautiful' published on the 27th November 1950, but it presented the opinion of someone who had been following the correspondence since its beginning. In it the writer expressed the opinion that:

The letter written by 'R.W.H. Griffiths' and 'L.E.M.' are the only sensible ones written on this topic. Probably because they are written by men. Women generally confuse the issue and love to rush into print to express their personal experiences which usually have no direct bearing on the subject under discussion.³⁹

Simply put, this unknown author sided with the two letters that presented aspects of segregation, Mr Griffiths who advocated Apartheid in a 'humane and civilised' manner, and I.E.M. who suggested that African domestic workers were all "lazy" and "ungrateful" (it must be noted that the author assumes that I.E.M. is a man without evidence). With regard to the other letters he merely discarded their advice based on the premise that "women confuse the issue". His attitude is certainly patronising: "South Africans know that the only way to treat the natives is with firmness. Certainly kindness too, but always bearing in mind that they are apt to mistake kindness for weakness and take advantage of it".⁴⁰

This correspondence, which took place during November 1950, showcases different aspects of the perceptions of Grahamstown's citizens. There were those like Mrs Hunt, Mrs Jones and Mr Graham who attempted to motivate their fellow citizen's action concerning the terrible conditions within the Locations, trying to meet this vast need within the City's Locations. And there were those like I.E.M., Mr Griffiths, 'Sunny South Africa', and the unknown author who either attempted to deflect attention away from the appalling Locations onto 'the City Beautiful' or merely highlighted their paternalistic opinions of Grahamstown. Even Mrs Grantham, who attempted to oppose the perception of African domestic servants as being lazy or ungrateful, considered Africans a "child race", needing "kindly attention" coupled with "wise leadership".

³⁸ Graham, S.H., 'Location Conditions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 23rd November 1950 (Cory Library)

³⁹ Unknown Author, 'The City Beautiful', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th November 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴⁰ Ibid.

This correspondence during November 1950 about the conditions in the Locations presented a split with regard to 'White English' Grahamstonian opinion. While some concerned citizens did indeed attempt to motivate public opinion for positive action for Location conditions, they appeared to represent a minority opinion. At no point during the period under review, did a strong, positive united citizens' assault on Location conditions appear. Instead the dominant expression towards 'life in the Locations' appears to have been a lack of interest. The correspondence which has been detailed in this Chapter supports this view as individuals such as 'Sunny South Africa', in the face of evidence expounding Location slum conditions attempted to draw attention away from said conditions and onto the 'positive' perception of Grahamstown. A sense of paternalism also appears to pervade both sides of the split; even the defenders of African rights (such as Katherine Grantham) appear to have considered Africans as a "child race".

Clearly the 'City of the Saints' did not possess as many 'saints' as the citizens of Grahamstown would have liked to profess. The following section reinforces this concept of a paternalistic attitude towards Africans, as well as how some individuals in Grahamstown possessed a far more racist mind-set.

During May of 1950 a letter written by E.L.M. sparked off another correspondence in the *Grocott's Daily Mail*, which further highlighted the paternalistic, racial attitude of most of 'White English' Grahamstown. E.L.M. began the correspondence by calling attention to the apparent impoliteness of Africans towards whites.

In the short time that I have lived in the Union of South Africa I have witnessed more deliberate and cold-blooded insolence from Natives to White people than I saw in the whole period that I spend in India – 24 years. The White people do much for the Natives in the way of medical care, soup kitchens, clothing etc., but if we do not cultivate an 'Imperialistic attitude of mind' and ensure a measure of respect and ordinary decent behaviour towards us we shall soon have reached a state of altruism in which we shall no longer be able to live in comfort or safety.⁴¹

In calling for an "imperialistic attitude of mind", E.L.M. appears to have been calling for paternalism, in that Africans had to learn to respect a 'more civilized race'. Clearly E.L.M. was considering this in the context of an English imperialistic attitude, in the context of English South Africa.

Three letters were printed in response to E.L.M.'s claims of insolence by Africans towards Whites.

⁴¹ E.L.M., 'Flagrant Insolence shown to whites', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th May 1952 (Cory Library)

A.T.C.S.'s letter, "Attitude between White and Black, Racial Prejudice", countered E.L.M.'s opinion completely. A.T.C.S. considered E.L.M.'s statements to be arrogant and full of "racial prejudice" and believed that E.L.M.'s attitude was completely the wrong manner in which to view White and black interaction.

The sentiments expressed by "ELM" in your correspondence columns of 20th May must have been repugnant to all readers who hate racial prejudice. His letter was not only a despicable example of racial incitement, but it revealed a pathological touchiness and longing for respect which has led him to regard every instance of African exuberance or rowdiness as a personal insult and as a challenge to his "God given" supremacy. I have always understood that the British qualities which have earned the respect of dependent peoples are fair-mindedness and a willingness to protect the underdog. The cult of racial arrogance which your correspondent advocates can only fan the flames of racial hatred and encourage the "insolence" which offends him so deeply.⁴²

Thus, A.T.C.S. considered that E.L.M.'s "racial arrogance" would only help increase the "insolence" and disrespect which E.L.M. believed was not appropriate within the social context of Black and White. Unfortunately A.T.C.S.'s view of E.L.M.'s racial, paternalistic attitude seems to have been that of the minority.

Both the other letters, by Mr H.F. Sampson and Mr L.W. Staple, agreed with the sentiments espoused by E.L.M. Mr Sampson agreed with E.L.M.'s opinion and considered that the majority of Whites living in Grahamstown would have experienced this 'impolite behaviour'.

The letter of ELM in last Tuesday's issue will reflect the experience of the majority of the European public in this town. It seems to be their habit when in the street at all, to walk, (or loiter making as much noise as possible) at least three abreast and to maintain their rank against all comers. Such conduct is foreign to the nature of older Natives, who still adhere to the courtesy observed in primitive customs and deserve respectful consideration as pedestrians.⁴³

Interestingly Mr Sampson viewed the 'problem' as a result of the younger generation of Africans, considering that the older generation "adhere[d]" to the old traditions of courtesy. However this view is itself paternalistic in nature as Mr Sampson considered that courtesy in the older generations came from their "primitive customs". By linking courtesy in older Africans to their apparent "primitive customs" he deliberately cast them in the role of being less civilized than the 'White English' culture in Grahamstown and South Africa. The English

⁴² A.T.C.S., 'Attitude between White and Black, Racial Prejudice', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th May 1952 (Cory Library)

⁴³ Sampson, H.F., 'Good Manners Lacking', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th May 1952 (Cory Library)

attitude of the time also makes it clear that polite manners are crucial to the character of a civilized individual, yet Mr Sampson did not draw links between older Africans and English 'civilized manners'.

Compared with Mr L.W. Staples's view, Mr Sampson's opinions appear positively mild. Mr Staples's opinion was racist, pro-apartheid and had elements in line with Nazi racial characterization. After stating that E.L.M.'s letter focused on the "truth" which he read with "whole hearted approval", he went on to state:

I was born in Grahamstown and I am ashamed of the town that I was born in. The position has deteriorated tremendously since the United Nations begun meddling in our affairs, and the trend has been accelerated by local politics who have espoused the Native and Coloured people aspirations for absolute equality in order to get their vote in the elections, which by the way may never be held if those people get in power gain full control. People talk glibly about these people being "human beings" and entitled to equal privileges, but they are not yet ready for greater freedom and responsibilities. I contend that there are more than one species of the animal known as Homo Sapiens and you have only to examine the skull and note the difference.⁴⁴

Not only did Mr Staples consider Africans to be less than "human beings" but to prove his point he evidenced 'physical racial characteristics', specifically skull shapes and sizes. It is interesting to note that 17 year's earlier Grahamstown men fought and died fighting against Nazi Germany, which defined human beings based on their racial characteristics.

Mr Staples then stated that it was time to take notice of where the country was heading, mentioning that it was long overdue to have Apartheid in the Banks and public offices of Grahamstown, clearly showing his support for the Apartheid ideology.

Therefore, of the four letters presented in connection with 'White English' Grahamstown's attitude towards Africans, three presented paternalistic attitudes, and one revealed extreme racial prejudices, including support for Apartheid. Only one Grahamstonian opinion did not include racial paternalism.

This correspondence highlights 'White English' Grahamstown's attitude towards 'Non-Europeans' (specifically Africans). A minority within the 'White English' community attempted to improve and help the less fortunate African and Coloured populations within Grahamstown but generally from a paternalistic point of view. It appears however, that most of 'White English' Grahamstonians did not have any interest in the living conditions or lives of the Africans and Coloureds, caring more about the physical and social appearance of their city than for some of the racial groups living in it. Within this section of 'White English'

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Grahamstown there were individuals with a more extreme mind-set, espousing racial principles as once expounded by the Nazi party and in keeping with the National Party's Apartheid principles. This shows racial tension within Grahamstown, and in the light of this, one should consider the 'positive social perceptions' presented within the first Chapter to be nothing more than a veneer concealing the problems and conditions within the Grahamstown Locations and hiding racist lack of interest attitudes of the 'White English' section. Clearly Grahamstown was not as saintly as certain citizens of the 'City of the Saints' would have had one believe.

Coloured Sport

Interestingly, this lack of interest in the welfare of the African and Coloured sections of the population did not extend to Coloured or African sport. During the period under review there are numerous references to, for lack of a better term, Location sport. These references, however, took the form of basic information with regards to "Bantu Rugby"⁴⁵ and "Coloured Football",⁴⁶ providing the winning score of past matches and giving the names of those who were involved, but with very little detail. The Grahamstown City Council was also concerned about providing sporting facilities for Location residents and wanted to cater for as many sports branches in Grahamstown as possible, even wishing to provide sport for the Africans who lived on the Flats beyond the Location.⁴⁷ Evidence for this is found in a *Land and Works Committee* report for February of 1948, which stated that the Coloured Rugby Ground had been "top-dressed" and the large stones on the field removed, while the "Native" Playing Field had had two rugby grounds marked out with chalk and goal posts erected, as well as having been cleaned up and flattened. The Committee considered that is was: "better than City Lords".⁴⁸

Unfortunately no further mention of providing 'sporting facilities for natives' has been found, indicating either that the matter was left alone after this reference or because the Municipal records studied were incomplete. Although the City Council did move the Grahamstown sports field (for district and local sports games) from the old City Lords field to the new sports centre at Fiddlers Green, the reasons given for "removing the rugby field from City Lords to the proposed sports centre are that it would be more convenient for spectators".⁴⁹ This was clearly meant to cater for white convenience as Fiddlers Green was

⁴⁵ Unknown Author, 'Bantu Rugby', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st July 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, 'Coloured Football', 14th July 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁷ Unknown Author, 'Sports Centre', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st July 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴⁸ Parks & Gardens, Curators Report for February 1948, *Land and Works Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/2/1/22, P.9/1, 9th March 1948

⁴⁹ Unknown Author, 'City Council Meeting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th July 1948 (Cory Library)

situated within the city centre of Grahamstown, while the City Lords field was located between the city centre of Grahamstown and its Locations.

Two possible reasons for this increased focus (in comparison to the general lack of interest by most of the 'White English' section of Grahamstown towards Location conditions) on Coloured and African sport were; firstly, a desire to curb juvenile delinquency within the Locations. As stated earlier White youths within Grahamstown had a variety of recreational and sporting facilities while African and Coloured youths had almost nothing. Providing sporting facilities and publicising the victories and losses of the Location teams could have been an attempt to focus the Location youth towards positive activities, thereby decreasing the number of delinquents within the Grahamstown area. However, with regard to the lack of interest perpetuated by most of 'White English' Grahamstown, towards the welfare of Location dwellers, this seems unlikely. Secondly, perhaps a more likely reason however, relates to Grahamstonian civic pride, in that, regardless of the fact that the sports teams were from the Location, they were still part of Grahamstown and hence any victories or losses consequently reflected upon Grahamstown. As they carried Grahamstown's name when they competed against other towns and districts, they aroused civic interest in whether they won or lost, or more specifically, whether Grahamstown won or lost.

Unfortunately even this attitude towards Location sport did not prevent the more vocal, racist members of the 'White English' community from bringing racial perceptions to local sports games and again highlights the opinions of Grahamstown's more opulent citizens.

Mr J.R. Van Niekerk after an Adelford vs. Albany rugby game, expressed his opinion to the City through the medium of *Grocott's Daily Mail*, asking "cannot something be done about the disgraceful behaviour of the natives and Coloureds at the City Lords football field at Grahamstown".⁵⁰ Mr Van Niekerk apparently did not appreciate the enthusiastic physical displays or the shouting, considering it "disgraceful behaviour" at a district game. This racist opinion did not go unchallenged however, Audi Alteram Partum responded to Mr Van Niekerk's opinion.

It should be remembered by your correspondent that admission to City Lords is not reserved. The authorities have not yet brought politics on to the field to such an extent as to say: 'Non-White-out-of-Sight'. If aimed at the unfortunate and unprivileged non-Europeans, it indicates that your correspondent has not seen the excited enthusiastic and almost unrestrained outbursts of cheering at famous grounds where rugby is played. Is it not just that wild excitement given vent to by all sections which has 'carried' a player 'over the line' and placed rugby in its unique position in South Africa.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Van Niekerk, J.R., 'A Complaint', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th July 1947 (Cory Library)

⁵¹ Audi Alteram Partem, 'City Sport', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th July 1947 (Cory Library)

While Mr Van Niekerk viewed this excited enthusiasm as “disgraceful behaviour”, Audi Alteram Partem considered it to be part of South African rugby; clearly Mr Van Neikerk’s attitude sprang from a racist perception.

Regardless of this more accepting attitude in relation to Location sport, Grahamstonians were still divided by racist paternalistic attitudes. Thus be stated that the information analysed in Chapters One and Two shows the high value placed by ‘White English’ Grahamstonians on the positive perceptions of the City, despite the fact that, in reality, the situation for most Africans and Coloureds was deplorable. Conditions in the Locations were the opposite of the perceptions voiced by most of the ‘White English’ section of the population. The following chapter will analyse the perceptions of ‘White English’ Grahamstown towards the connection or link between Grahamstown, the 1820 Settlers, Great Britain and the Royal Family.

Chapter Three

Grahamstown and the 1820 Settlers

In addition to the civic perspective of Grahamstown as the 'City of the Saints', there existed a more enthusiastic view of the City the 'White English' section of Grahamstown as the "City of the Settlers"¹ because of its intimate association with the arrival of the British Settlers. This self-styled name Grahamstown occurred because of the perception that the 1820 British Settlers "had more to do with Grahamstown than any other town in the old Cape Colony".² Indeed the unknown author of *The Blazed the Trail* states that "the Zuurveld was but very sparsely inhabited by Europeans before the arrival of the Settlers dating from April 10th 1820 and though the City was founded in 1812 it was for eight years but a military stronghold".³ The Albany district and Grahamstown in particular, had strong links to the 1820 British Settlers and consequently the British Settlers helped to define the social historical perception of Grahamstown. Ann Torlesse, whose thesis covered the period 1918 – 1945, reinforces this contention when she writes that Grahamstown's English community were "exceptionally proud of the achievements of the 1820 Settlers and of the past glory of Grahamstown".⁴

Grahamstown's 'White English' social perspective defined the 1820 British Settlers in glowing terms: "if there is one thing we in Grahamstown never forget it is the memory of the 1820 British Settlers and their arrival in South Africa which event is ever green in our minds".⁵ Indeed, during the period under review, there appeared to be a note of hero worship whenever a Grahamstonian spoke about the 1820 British Settlers. With a sense of high ideals and purity of purpose, they came to darkest Africa and 'civilized' the land, gradually winning it "from barbarism and brought into line with world-wide civilisation".⁶ These points find validation in Mr Webb's statement, with regard to the 1820 British Settlers: "the undying 1820 British Settlers who turned their faces to where they could lay the foundations for a future, and greater than all the past, and their innate pulsations gave them no rest until they could use their inspiration".⁷ Mr Webb's language, "undying", "greater", "inspiration", are all very flowery, heroic terms, creating a very stylised, almost mythical perspective of the British 1820 Settlers. In the view of 'White English'

¹ Unknown Author, 'They Blazed the Trail', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th April 1946 (Cory Library)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., "A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 7.

⁵ Unknown Author, 'Settlers' Memory', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th August 1952 (Cory Library)

⁶ Unknown Author, 'Founders Day', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st December 1949 (Cory Library)

⁷ Webb, T., 'Least We Forget', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th July 1949 (Cory Library)

Grahamstonians, the 1820 British Settlers, with “their will to survive against overwhelming odds in a land utterly strange and foreign to them”,⁸ became the symbol of Grahamstown. Seen as a symbol of all that was great and good about the British people settling in South Africa, Grahamstown as the “City of the Settlers” consequently inherited these great and pure ideals.

To this degree Grahamstown placed value on any reference to the 1820 British Settlers; for instance, when a Graeme College teacher, Mr F.C. Metrowich, published ‘Assegai over the Hills’ in 1953 *Grocott’s Daily Mail* reviewed the book as follows: “a fitting tribute on South Africa’s second official Settlers Day has been paid to the memory of our sturdy pioneering 1820 Settler stock, by a Grahamstown Schoolmaster Mr FC Metrowich of Graeme College”.⁹ Such was the passion with which Grahamstown viewed the 1820 British Settlers that plans were made for a 1820 Settlers’ Relic Museum. Mrs Rivett-Carnac took the lead in this endeavour with the aim of collecting all the 1820 Settler relics available (china, glassware, furniture etc) to form the core of the 1820 Settlers’ Relic Museum. It was decided to begin the collection after an 1820 Settlers’ Memorial Lecture presented by Professor Maxwell of Rhodes University the following week,¹⁰ the end of August 1955.

This passion for the memory of the 1820 British Settlers extended to the monuments that were raised to honour them, in order to “enshrine their preservation through the early struggle of their settlement”.¹¹ Grahamstown was not alone in her reverence of the 1820 British Settlers. An 1820 Settlers’ Association existed within the Union of South Africa (the Association originated in Grahamstown in 1919¹²) and like the “City of the Settlers”, it attempted to honour the early British pioneers. To this degree a memorial had been built on the main street of Grahamstown (High Street) by the Association with the City Council’s blessing. However in November of 1949 the Association expressed concern about the monument’s dilapidated appearance. The City Council had accepted custody of the memorial but the soft stone used in its construction had subsequently begun to crumble and break. The Association therefore asked the Grahamstown City Council to prepare a plan and estimated cost for the construction of a new Memorial built from hard stone. The design of the memorial was to resemble the original.¹³

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Settler Story is told again in City, Schoolmaster gives monument to 1820 history’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th September 1953 (Cory Library)

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘118 Years Old Municipal Records found intact to be handed to Cory Library on Settlers’ Day-City Councils Fine Lead’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 22nd August 1955 (Cory Library)

¹¹ Unknown Author, ‘Founders Day’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 1st December 1949 (Cory Library)

¹² Unknown Author, ‘Mayor Opens Meeting of 1820 Association, Calls Grahamstown the Movements Spiritual Home’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 14th October 1953 (Cory Library)

¹³ Historic monuments 1820 Settlers’ Memorial in High Street Condition of, *Land and Works Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/2/1/24, H.2/3, Item 8, 21st November 1949

The Grahamstown City Council accepted this request and subsequently informed the 1820 Settlers' Memorial Association that a new memorial would cost approximately £-2000,¹⁴ but emphasized that the Grahamstown City Council would not be able to help finance it. The 1820 Settlers' Memorial Association accepted this and informed the council accordingly.¹⁵ It would, however, take a further three years before the new Monument would be unveiled. By September of 1953, enthusiasm had gripped the City of Grahamstown with regard to their City's new 1820 Settler Memorial: "it is hoped that the monument when it is unveiled next month will meet with the full approval of all citizens and descendants of 1820 Settlers. If it turns out to be what we think it will be then a very big 'thank you' will become due to Mr Tom Bowker and Mr Lennox-Short"¹⁶ (the General manager of the 1820 Settlers' Memorial Association). Such was the enthusiasm about the new memorial that a local business, owned by Messrs Clark and Brown, produced a replica of the monument to be viewed in their shop window. The replica was based on the trilithon found at Stonehenge and was described as being more elaborate and dignified than the previous design.¹⁷

It is interesting that the Settler Association decided to design the monument as a replica of Stonehenge thus creating a deliberate link with between the 1820 British Settlers and one of the most ancient of Great Britain's Stone Age monuments. This would emphasise the connection between the 1820 British Settlers, Grahamstown and all Settler descendants within the Union of South Africa with their ancestor's motherland.

A day before the unveiling of the new monument (October 14th 1953), general enthusiasm was still dominating the City, as the following very complimentary description of the monument shows:

Standing amid surroundings equalled only by the pristine beauty of its own shape, this trilithon memorial to the 1820 British Settlers is ready to be unveiled tomorrow. Its simple yet dignified lines, following the shape of the prehistoric stone monuments in Willshire [sic] England, lends an air of tranquillity and novelty to High Street where the natural beauty of our city is nowhere more powerfully evident.¹⁸

A day later Mr H.H. Gilfillan, President of the 1820 Settlers' Association, unveiled the Monument calling it the "spirit of the Settlers" and going on to say that "this monument

¹⁴ Historical Monuments 1820 Settlers' Memorial, *Land and Works Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/2/1/24, H.3/6, 10th July 1950

¹⁵ Historical Monuments 1820 Settlers' Memorial, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/16, H.3/2, 20th November 1950

¹⁶ Unknown Author, 'Settler Monument', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th September 1953 (Cory Library)

¹⁷ Unknown Author, 'New Design of 1820 Monument, Trilithon of Stonehenge decided upon by Settler Association executive', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th September 1953 (Cory Library)

¹⁸ Unknown Author, 'Memorial to Faith', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th October 1953 (Cory Library)

epitomises the rugged determination and independence of spirit of the 1820 Settlers. That same independence of spirit is shown today by their descendants who have subscribed to the erection of this monument thereby making it possible to do so without State aid”.¹⁹ This further highlights the connections between the 1820 British Settlers and their ‘indomitable spirit’ with their descendants, linking their positive characteristics with the “City of the Settlers”. The *Grocott’s Daily Mail* even went so far as to state that not only did it wish to be associated completely with the Settlers’ Association but it desired to further the aims and objectives of the movement in any manner it could. *The Daily Mail* referred to the Association as the inheritor of all that the Settlers had done in the Eastern Cape, and therefore they (*Grocott’s Daily Mail*) “take pride today in still presenting the views of the people of this area”,²⁰ the descendants of the Settlers.

This Stonehenge Monument situated on High Street represented the people of Grahamstown and the 1820 Settlers’ Memorial Association’s desire to honour the memory of the 1820 British Settlers who came to South Africa. After its successful unveiling, plans began being discussed for a National Monument in honour of the Settlers. This desire for a National Monument could have had its roots in the celebrations of the National Voortrekker Monument (1949) and the Van Riebeeck Festival (1952). Both these events were national events with government funding and country-wide interest focused upon them. Considering how the Grahamstown ‘White English’ population and the 1820 Settlers’ Memorial Association revered the 1820 British Settlers there is little doubt that they viewed a National Monument as crucial to honour the memory of their ancestors, especially in view of the Afrikaans National Monuments.

Mr T.B. Bowker, the Member of Parliament for the Albany district, first announced the possibility of for a National Settlers’ Monument at the beginning of 1957. He stated that: “Grahamstown may yet become the site of the most imposing and at the same time most imaginative monument to honour the memory of the 1820 Settlers”.²¹ Mr Bowker indicated that his vision of the Monument included a “granite dome made of marble”, making clear his desire for a most impressive visual representation of the Settlers. The citizens of Grahamstown responded to Mr Bowker’s suggestion with passion and it was decided to hold a public meeting in order to mobilise support for the Monument’s placement in Grahamstown.²² This support for a National Settlers’ Monument in Grahamstown extended beyond South Africa’s borders: descendants of British Settlers in Kenya and Rhodesia, as well as Great Britain, sent letters voicing their opinions and suggestions about the style of

¹⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Spirit of Settlers’ Lives On, Impressive Unveiling of New 1820s Settlers’ Memorial’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 15th October 1953

²⁰ Unknown Author, ‘The 1820 Monument’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 15th October 1953 (Cory Library)

²¹ Pretorius, D.J.J., ‘National Monument to the 1820 Settlers’, Bowker reveals Imaginative Plan to tell their Story to Posterity’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 10th January 1957 (Cory Library)

²² Unknown Author, ‘City’s Claim to being Home of 1820 Monument, Committee Decides on public meeting to launch Scheme in April’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 21st April 1957 (Cory Library)

the Monument. They favoured “a pretentious scheme for a monument in Grahamstown to commemorate the Settlers and pioneers of this Country”.²³ In order to make the Monument a National icon for the 1820 British Settlers, financial and public support was required from the National Government. This was given by Mr Abraham (a National Party member) who publically supported Mr Bowker’s and Grahamstown’s scheme.²⁴ Such was the enthusiasm for a Settlers’ Monument within Grahamstown that Professor L.W. Thornton White (Dean of the Faculty of Fine Art and Architecture for the University of Cape Town 1937 to 1965)²⁵ published two articles detailing the various sites that could be used for it. Careful consideration was needed as “this is to be a National Monument and a Memorial to those pioneers who helped to build up our South African nation”²⁶ and thus a prime Location was required. Professor White suggested the Fort Selwyn Site, because “from the point of view of the proposed caretaker Institution Rhodes University I visualise that the vertical feature of the Monument will be on the main axis of the National Road”.²⁷ This would ensure that all who passed the city via the national road would have the Monument dominating their vision; it appears that Grahamstown wished to ‘present’ the symbol of the Settlers to all who would view it. Professor Thornton’s idea was eventually accepted when it was announced, “that the green light has now been given for a Settlers’ National Monument to be erected in Grahamstown on the hill just below Fort Selwyn in accordance with the proposals put forward in February by Professor Thornton White”.²⁸

The green light for the Settlers’ National Monument came from the National Party, during February 1960, when Mr Bowker (MP for Albany, member of the 1820 Settlers’ Association), received a message stating, “Build a monument worthy of your ancestors and we will give it our blessing”.²⁹ To show their support for the construction of a 1820 Settlers’ Monument, National Party supporters provided £-50 000 towards the costs of the Monument and in 1962 organised a fund-raising campaign, launched at a banquet held in the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg. Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa was the guest of honour. At the banquet Dr Verwoerd highlighted the good relations that had existed between English and Afrikaans:

²³ Unknown Author, ‘Wide Support for Settlers’ monument in City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 23rd April 1957 (Cory Library)

²⁴ Unknown Author, ‘Nationalist Supports 1820 Monument Scheme, Bowker asks when monument will be considered’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 31 May 1957 (Cory Library)

²⁵ UCT Library Online. IPS Adress too long.

²⁶ Thornton White, L. W., ‘A National Memorial to the Settlers’, The Search for a site’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 16th February 1960 (Cory Library)

²⁷ Thornton White, L. W., ‘A National memorial to the Settlers’, The Suitability of the Fort Selwyn Site’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 17th February 1960 (Cory Library)

²⁸ Unknown Author, ‘National Monument for Grahamstown, Green Light for Settlers’ memorial Proposal’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th September 1960 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Neville, Thelma., *More Lasting Than Bronze: A story of the 1820 Settlers National Monument*, The Natal Witness Printing and Publishing Company (Pty) Ltd, Pietermaritzburg, Natal, 1992. Pg. 1.

We eagerly seek greater friendship, more co-operation, goodwill in everything we do. We do not talk of the cultivation of something new. We sometimes don't realise it, but all we have to do is to recultivate something which has been ours so long ago.³⁰

This support from National Party supporters meant that professional plans for the Settler Monument could begin, although, it would take a further 14 years before it was completed (1974).

One of the final comments on the proposed National 1820 Settler Memorial stemmed from the 'White English' citizens of Grahamstown's desire to attempt to co-ordinate the inauguration of the Monument with the 150th Anniversary of the City of Grahamstown during 1962, further highlighting their desire for a momentous occasion for the unveiling of the National symbol of the 1820 British Settlers.

While the citizens of Grahamstown, living as they did in the "City of the Settlers", regularly paid tribute to these first English settlers, it wasn't until 1952 that the Union of South Africa, under the National Party Government, created a "Settlers' Day"³¹ to honour them. Needless to say the citizens of Grahamstown supported this National Government creation and even considered that Settlers' Day could have been a good opportunity to rename a "local spot" in Grahamstown after their memory.³²

A Settlers' Celebration Committee with Mr W. Ross-Nunn as the Chairman, was organised to plan for city events during this public holiday. This committee, with the support of the 1820 Settlers' Memorial Association, began to arrange "a fitting and proper celebration of Settlers' Day in 1953".³³ So enthusiastic were the committees that it was eventually decided to hold a Settlers' Week instead of a single Settlers' Day. This week long event began on the 7th of September 1953 with people coming from all over the Union to take part: "People will be here from many parts of the Cape Province and further afield to take part in Grahamstown's Settlers' Week which started officially today with a service of dedication at the site of the new 1820 Settler Monument at the top of High Street".³⁴ The highlight of the event was, of course, the 1820 Settlers and many moving, passionate speeches were delivered about them: "if we had no past to look back to we would be a poor people. If that past is filled with deeds which bear scrutiny in the light of present day values and assessments, it becomes a past which we are proud to own. Such a past is the heritage left

³⁰ Ibid. Pg. 5.

³¹ Unknown Author, 'In Memory of British Settlers', City Council will honour Unions First Settlers' Day', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th August 1952 (Cory Library)

³² Unknown Author, 'Settlers' Memory', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th August 1952 (Cory Library)

³³ Unknown Author, 'Plans for Big Settler Day Celebration in City Discussed', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th January 1953 (Cory Library)

³⁴ Unknown Author, 'They Come to Pay Homage, City becomes Mecca of 1820 Settlers' Decedents this week', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1953 (Cory Library)

to us by the 1820 Settlers".³⁵ Focusing on the terms used within this speech we see again the links that Grahamstown citizens created between themselves and the Settlers: "we are proud to own", "heritage left to us by the 1820 Settlers", are both examples of this. The Settlers' week finally drew to a close on the 11th September 1953 with a huge social gathering, "perhaps 2000 people gathered round cheery 'braaivleis' fires in City Lords to celebrate" the end to a successful Settler week.

This Settlers' Week Celebration was so successful that the following year the Settlers' Celebration Committee repeated it, with similar results. Grahamstown even earned the envy of other towns because of their fantastic Settler Week activities.³⁶

By 1957, "plans to hold the biggest-ever Settlers' Day celebrations this year were discussed by the Grahamstown Settlers' Celebration Committee".³⁷ The committee hoped to build a "tent town"³⁸ at Bathurst to provide accommodation for all those who might have travelled across the Union to attend. The event was opened by various speeches paying tribute to the Settlers, which again highlighted the 'historic importance' of their arrival: "to-day in the Eastern Province and the Border commemorate the unfailing courage and hardiness of these early Settlers who paved the way for civilization in our area".³⁹ The event seems to have been so popular that; "the local branch of the 1820 Memorial Settlers' Association feels the need to have a Publicity Bureau in Grahamstown to assist newcomers and provide information to visitors and tourists".⁴⁰

The City of Grahamstown proceeded to hold events and celebrations on each Settlers' Day for the rest of the period under review. Grahamstown took pride in her Settlers' Day celebrations, attempting to out-do herself each year as this comment by Mr Bowker (the member of Parliament for the Albany district) about both Settlers' Day and Grahamstown shows: "the Celebration of Settlers' Day in Grahamstown has set a standard for the whole country and any future programme arranged by the local organising committee must aim at maintaining that traditionally high standard".⁴¹

³⁵ Unknown Author, 'Settlers' week draws to successful close, City Lords and Dicks Halls final focal points', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th September 1953 (Cory Library)

³⁶ Unknown Author, 'Our Past and Our Debt', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1954 (Cory Library)

³⁷ Unknown Author, 'Three-Day Event for 1957 Settlers' Day, Committee to Build Tent Town at Bathurst for visitors from all over the Union', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd February 1957 (Cory Library)

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Unknown Author, 'They Pay Tribute to the Settlers', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd September 1957 (Cory Library)

⁴⁰ Unknown Author, 'More Interest wanted in Settlers' Association, Local Branch to Press of Greater Recognition for its Work', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th September 1957 (Cory Library)

⁴¹ Unknown Author, 'City has Set Standard for Settlers' Day, Committee will have full programme for whole week', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd May 1958 (Cory Library)

The Grahamstown public (at least the 'White English' section of the public) considered the 1820 British Settlers to be the founding 'fathers' of the City, bringing the rugged, civilized, English character to the Frontier and stamping out a small centre of Western, British 'civilization' in the unforgiving African country. They were considered to have been a hugely beneficial, positive factor in the development of South Africa as a nation and their descendants (if not all biological, then spiritual) living within the "City of the Settlers" ensured that they took any opportunity to sing their praises. It is most certainly clear that the 'White English' community of Grahamstown took pride in their association with the 1820 British Settlers and used them as a symbol to help define themselves and their character in relation to a multi-racial country, during a period when the mind-set of Afrikaner Nationalism was gaining in influence.

The contention that the 'White English' community of Grahamstown looked to the 1820 British Settlers to help define their character as English South Africans in relation to the emerging dominance of the majority Afrikaans National Party, finds validation in Grahamstown's role during the 1949 Voortrekker Monument celebrations.

Grahamstown's part in the Voortrekker celebrations occurred because of an historic meeting between Grahamstown citizens and Jacobus Uys's Voortrekker party just outside the city itself. On this occasion a Bible was presented to Jacobus Uys from the people of Grahamstown as a symbol of friendship and good luck to the Voortrekkers as they began their long journey. The following statement was taken from the Finance and General Purpose Committee:

The Border and Eastern Province were connected with the Voortrekkers as the Great Trek practically started from the Albany area. The 1820 Settlers in the district had presented Jacobus Uys with a Bible when he left on his Trek. It is suggested that this is an opportunity for the English-speaking section to be associated with the forthcoming celebrations. It had further been mooted that it would be a fine gesture if Grahamstown presented another Bible.⁴²

The Finance Committee considered the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument as an "opportunity for the English-speaking section to be associated with the forthcoming celebrations", based upon the historic meeting between Jacobus Uys and the 1820 Settlers who had made Grahamstown their home. Rather than focusing on the event itself, or the historical connotations of the Voortrekkers and their history, Grahamstown placed emphasis on the one instance where her founding fathers interacted with the trekkers.

⁴² Voortrekker Monument Inauguration Ceremony, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y., 1/2/3/1/15, 17th October 1949

On the eve of leaving for the Voortrekker inauguration, Grahamstown's representative, the Mayor Mr Rivett-Carnac, was presented with a bible in a small ceremony: "Itself a historic occasion the presentation of a handsomely bound Afrikaans bible to the Mayor (Mr AT Rivett Carnac) in front of the City Hall on Friday afternoon, recalled what is on record of the Jacobus Uys Bible that was handed to him by citizens of Grahamstown in 1837 bidding him good cheer on setting off to join the Great Trek".⁴³ It is interesting to note that the people of Grahamstown considered the presentation of the bible to Mr Rivett-Carnac as "itself a historic occasion".

Mr Rivett-Carnac's speech at the inauguration highlighted Grahamstown's attempt to be associated with the festivities, focusing on the fact that the City was closely connected with Voortrekker Leaders such as Louis Trichardt, Piet Retief, Karel Landman and Jacobus Uys.⁴⁴

During this speech, Mr Rivett-Carnac underlined the apparent friendship between the Voortrekkers and the 1820 Settlers while at the same time focused on Grahamstown and the close association between the City's citizens and the leaders of the Great Trek (not merely the Voortrekkers but the leaders who led them). Mr Rivett-Carnac's focus on Grahamstown and the 1820 Settlers, in relation to the Voortrekkers, highlights the view that the history and modern perception of the 1820 British Settlers, during the period under review, helped to define the character of Grahamstown's citizens as English South Africans, during a period where Afrikaner Nationalism was beginning to dominate the Union of South Africa. While it is possible that the citizens of Grahamstown merely wished to be part of the inauguration in order that they might show that they were part of an important national event, this does not seem likely in view of the numerous dialogues surrounding the 1820 Settlers. Specifically in relation to Settlers' Day, the effort and dedication that Grahamstown and her "1820 Settlers' Celebration Committee" placed on the events indicates that the celebrations were an affirmation of the English character of the Settlers and subsequently their descendants in the "City of the Settlers".

Regardless of the view that the citizens of Grahamstown might have wanted to be part of an important National event, it was a fact that the 'White English' community of Grahamstown considered themselves and their city as the spiritual successors to the 1820 British Settlers and this subsequently influenced their opinions of themselves and their opinion of the other races living in the Union of South Africa. Their view of the Settlers related to such concepts as 'civilized', 'rugged characters', 'indomitable spirit', 'their will to survive against overwhelming odds' and how they tried to "lay the foundations for a future greater than all the past"⁴⁵, are all poetic expressions of the pride and loyalty that the 'White English'

⁴³ Unknown Author, 'Bible for Voortrekkers Monument, Presentation Ceremony in City, Mayor takes Bible to Pretoria', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th December 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁴ Unknown Author, 'At the Monument, Our Mayor on Brotherhood', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th December 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁵ Unknown Author, 'Least We Forget', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th July 1949 (Cory Library)

community of Grahamstown felt for the people who gave Grahamstown her third title: the “City of the Settlers”. This observed connection with the 1820 Settlers makes it important to analyse the relationship that the ‘White English’ community of Grahamstown perceived between themselves and Great Britain, the original home of the Settlers. The following section will analyse this connection.

Grahamstown and Great Britain

During the period under review, Grahamstonians took great pride in both their city and their 1820 Settler heritage; they also took great pride in being British South Africans and the connection that this entailed to the “Motherland”,⁴⁶ Great Britain. The 1820 British Settlers settled South Africa during the height of the British Empire; the Settlers themselves were subjects of the Empire expanding into South Africa in its name. Thus their descendants living in the “City of the Settlers” perpetuated this perception of loyalty to ‘King and country’, despite the fact that the Empire (as it was when the 1820 Settlers arrived) had ceased to be. Torlesse takes note of this in her thesis, and writes that Grahamstown’s ‘White English’ community “prided itself on its loyalty to Britain and the British Royal family”.⁴⁷ Simply put, Grahamstown’s ‘White English’ section of the population considered themselves as ‘British South Africans’.

This British identity is highlighted by a speech in 1950 discussing the “position of the British South African”⁴⁸, by Dr Keppel-Jones, author of *When Smuts Goes*, given at a Civil Rights League meeting. Dr Keppel began his address by stating that it was “proper that this subject should be discussed in Grahamstown the “Settlers’ City”, clearly linking the heritage of the 1820 British Settlers to Grahamstown and thus to the ‘Motherland’. Dr Keppel-Jones continued with the topic of “the British South African”: “We are a people most of whose past lies in one country while our future lies in another. That is the position that has been misunderstood. Because our past and our heritage are British, many Afrikaners think we are not sincere in our claims to be South Africans”. The position, Dr Keppel-Jones considered, was a case of “double allegiance” on the part of the British South African: loyalty to the country of their ancestors and to the character of that country, but also loyalty to South Africa, their home: “but there remains the fact that we owe a loyalty to our past as well as a dedication to the future. We are charged as it were an offence, with a double allegiance”.

This concept of a ‘double loyalty’ appears to have been at the heart of ‘White English’ Grahamstown’s character. Not only were they proud to be South Africans, but they were

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, ‘British Colonial Policy’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 1st August 1946 (Cory Library)

⁴⁷ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., “A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945”, M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 7.

⁴⁸ Unknown Author, ‘The Civil Rights League, Position of the British South African, Dr Keppel Jones’s Address’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 15th September 1950 (Cory Library)

proud of being 'British South Africans', focusing on their 1820 British heritage. As such, anything to do with the English nation or Britain was perceived in a positive, at points, enthusiastic light. Hence a year after the end of the Second World War Grahamstown citizens were encouraged to "buy British"⁴⁹ goods in order to help revitalise the English economy. Funds such as the "People of Britain Fund"⁵⁰ and "Food for Britain Fund"⁵¹ (because Britain was crippled by the war years and thus required support from her former colonies) were supported whole-heartedly by the English population of Grahamstown to the detriment of the Locations. It must be noted that at the same time as the 'White English' section of the Grahamstown population was donating gifts of money and food to the British people, African children in the Grahamstown Locations were "dying from malnutrition".⁵² Slum conditions and poverty were rife in the Grahamstown Locations that were merely a few hundred metres from the centre of the City itself and yet the emphasis for the 'White English' sector of the community was for the British population living thousands of kilometres away. Clearly the 'White English' section of Grahamstown considered the "British Nation's" health and happiness far more important than their own African community. This point reinforces the contention that the 'White English' section of the community lacked interest in the plight of the African section of the population, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Connections between Grahamstown and Great Britain were highlighted with pride and much enthusiasm, a good example of this relates to the Grahamstown Cathedral:

In Grahamstown we have a link with the Liverpool Cathedral, for the same architect, Sir Gilbert Scott, designed the new nave and chancel of the Cathedral of St Michael and St George to link the old church. It is a happy thought that the higher aspirations of Grahamstown should have this link with the biggest Anglican Cathedral in Britain through the same genius of architecture in its best form.⁵³

This suggests that Grahamstown's spiritual aspirations were not only linked to British aspirations, but that these aspirations were measured, to determine their value, in relation to their British equivalents. Focus was even given to the various species of British trees found in the Albany area, emphasising their beauty and majesty.⁵⁴ Emphasis of more

⁴⁹ Unknown Author, 'Buy British', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th August 1946 (Cory Library)

⁵⁰ Unknown Author, 'People of Britain Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th April 1946 (Cory Library)

⁵¹ Unknown Author, 'Food for Britain', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th August 1946 (Cory Library)

⁵² Monkey Corns, 'City Hall Chairs', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th April 1946 (Cory Library)

⁵³ Unknown Author, 'Inspiration in Stone', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st April 1949 (Cory Library)

⁵⁴ Unknown Author, 'British Trees, Their Beauty and Value', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th April 1946 (Cory Library)

importance was placed on the memory of the “Battle of Britain”,⁵⁵ with Grahamstown observing its memorial in September almost every year during the period under review.

It must be noted that Grahamstown men had fought and died for Britain and her empire in both World Wars: the battle of “Deville Wood”⁵⁶ was commemorated every year during the period under review and the battle of “Chiust”,⁵⁷ six years after its end, was spoken about in glorious terms. Grahamstonians were proud that friends and family had defended the ‘Motherland’ during her times of crisis. In 1951, the Grahamstown servicemen who had fallen in both the First World War and Second World War were remembered at a memorial service of more than 900 people. At this service, held in Church Square, were cadets from Graeme and Kingswood College as well as ex-servicemen and women.⁵⁸ This sacrifice, on the part of Grahamstown men, explains a degree of Grahamstown’s dedication towards Great Britain, in that, friends and family of those living in Grahamstown, during the period under review, lost their lives in service to the ‘Motherland’. If Grahamstown (and the Union of South Africa) were to lose the links with Great Britain that motivated and compelled the ‘ultimate sacrifice’ on the part of her sons, then their deaths would lose emphasis and value. The sacrifice of Grahamstown’s sons created a deep bond between the city and Great Britain.

The English citizens of Grahamstown actively desired British immigration to the Union of South Africa one, perhaps for two reasons: one, the British immigrants would have helped South African industry to develop thereby strengthening the country; and two, the British immigrants would help to develop a larger English language group, strengthening the ‘British South African’s’ position within the country. When British immigration to South Africa began to decrease during 1950 the people of Grahamstown viewed it in very negative terms: it was “a matter of more than mere regret, it is disconcerting, disquieting in fact, because of the effect it is bound to have on the future of the union and its influence on the vital problems that are even now determining the shape of things to come”.⁵⁹ The belief that a decline in British immigration would lead to negative effects on the Union of South Africa, reinforces the value Grahamstonians placed on all things British.

The Union Jack, as a symbol of Great Britain, was well admired and loved by Grahamstown’s ‘White English’ citizens, to such a degree that when in 1957, the National Party finally passed legislation officially removing it from public and municipal buildings and areas, Grahamstown refused to comply: “to-day is the last day upon which the Union Jack will fly

⁵⁵ Unknown Author, ‘Battle of Britain Week’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 6th September 1950 (Cory Library)

⁵⁶ Unknown Author, ‘Deville Wood Anniversary’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 17th July 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵⁷ Unknown Author, ‘The Battle of Chiust, Six Years Ago, How the City Regiment Fared’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th June 1950 (Cory Library)

⁵⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Remembrance Day in City, Hundreds attend Ceremony in City Square’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th November 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Fewer Britain’s’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 6th September 1950 (Cory Library)

officially in South Africa. Unofficially it will continually to fly for many years".⁶⁰ This opinion was supported by the Grahamstown City Council's public announcement a month later that the Union Jack would continue to fly in Grahamstown at the City Hall and all other Municipal buildings. It must be noted that there was no discussion needed by the City Council on the removal of the Union Jack in that the point was unanimously agreed upon. A further point decided upon by the City Council during this specific meeting was the removal of any Afrikaans terms in relation to Grahamstown. In the future the City's name would be rendered only in its Anglicised form, 'Grahamstown', but not in its Afrikaans form, 'Grahamstad', as it had been in the past. No specific reasons were given for this abrupt decision, Councillors A.K. Rautenbach and C.G. Mullins both argued for the Afrikaans spelling from an historical perspective, but the Mayor, Mr G.J. Krige, overruled them stating "that it was not for him to say what was right or wrong but apparently there were some principles involved".⁶¹ No information was given in relation to what those principles might have been but a likely motivation behind the decision, could have been an attempt to strengthen and define Grahamstown's character as 'British South African'.

The British Commonwealth was also viewed with the same feelings of loyalty and dedication that linked Grahamstonians to Great Britain. The Commonwealth was, after all, the evolution of the Empire; while Great Britain might have lost power through this evolution she retained the prestige of Empire through the Commonwealth. Grahamstown's feelings towards the Commonwealth can be summed up in a statement made on Empire Day (1947): "Empire day gives all people who are fortunate enough to be under the care and control of the British Commonwealth of Nations reasons for a pause for contemplation of the great and glorious history of the constitution which brought about much of the world's civilization".⁶² The British Commonwealth of Nations was viewed as the culmination of Great Britain's contribution to 'world civilization'; how, through Commonwealth building, Great Britain was taking the initiative and leading the world. According to Grahamstown opinion, "may we say with all diffidence it is her destiny!"⁶³ More than this, however, Grahamstown wished for South Africa to take an active role in the development of the Commonwealth. During the 'Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers' (1948), which was considered one of the most momentous events of its type to have been held, Grahamstown opinion asked; "What part is the Union to play in the deliberations? This is of deep concern to every man and woman in the Union who is capable of thought at all",⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Unknown Author, 'A Symbol Drops by the way', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th April 1957 (Cory Library)

⁶¹ Unknown Author, 'Union Jack will still fly officially in City, The use of 'Grahamstad' on Municipal Notes, Accounts Etc, will also disappear City Council decides', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st May 1957 (Cory Library)

⁶² Unknown Author, 'British Empire', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th May 1947 (Cory Library)

⁶³ Unknown Author, 'All British Africa', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd October 1948 (Cory Library)

⁶⁴ Unknown Author, 'S.A. and the Commonwealth', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th September 1948 (Cory Library)

clearly defining the desire of the 'White English' community of Grahamstown to be a part of this 'Commonwealth building' process. Dr Malan's decision, however, not to attend generated harsh criticism from the people of Grahamstown who felt that: "the Country will greatly deplore this regrettable attitude on the part of its Prime Minister".⁶⁵

In summary, the 'British South African' population of Grahamstown possessed deep regard and affection for, and loyalty towards, the British nation and its Commonwealth, putting the needs of its Location dwellers second in relation to the British people, sending its sons to fight and perhaps die for the British nation, comparing their achievements (the Cathedral, the English character of the City, the 'Oxford' of South Africa) to Britain's equivalents and even defining their perceived city character in relation to Great Britain's. Grahamstonians considered themselves to be 'British South Africans' with a dual loyalty to both their home country and the Nation that their ancestors originated from. The following 'Memorial section' will further illuminate the loyalty and connection that 'White English' Grahamstown felt towards Great Britain through the annual commemoration of Delville Wood in which South Africans/Grahamstonians fought.

War Memorial

The continued commemoration of the anniversary of Deville Wood, while focusing on the fallen sons of Grahamstown, reinforced the links between Grahamstown and Great Britain. The argument has been made that the continued support and loyalty of Grahamstonians towards Great Britain was crucial to the memory of those who had fallen at Deville Wood because without the various connections between Grahamstown and Great Britain, the huge sacrifice made by the men of Grahamstown in the name of Great Britain would lose significance.

This section will therefore illustrate the regular commemoration of Delville Wood Day within Grahamstown to show the intense feeling that Grahamstonians felt towards it.

During the years 1946 to 1960, a public commemoration took place on the 14th of July (or as close to the 14th as was possible),-every year, to remember the South African men, specifically those from Grahamstown, who died at the horrific battle of Deville Wood. Members of the Grahamstown public as well as the local branches of the British Empire Service League ("B.E.S.L."⁶⁶), the "S.A. Legion",⁶⁷ "the Royal Air Force Association"⁶⁸ and

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Unknown Author, 'City Tribute to Heroes of Delville Wood', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st July 1952 (Cory Library)

⁶⁷ Unknown Author, 'Delville Wood Day, Parade and Service', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th July 1950 (Cory Library)

⁶⁸ Ibid.

cadets from “Graeme College and St Andrew’s College”⁶⁹ would always be in attendance. Poppies were sold every year to raise funds for ex-service men,⁷⁰ continuing the tradition started during the First World War, and even Coloured ex-service men would help to sell them,⁷¹ to honour their fallen comrades, regardless of race.

The City would even organise Delville Wood Day ceremonies occasionally, as described in the 1957 account:

Hundreds of people thronged Church Square yesterday for the Delville Wood commemoration ceremony arranged under the auspices of the Grahamstown branch of the British Empire Service League. A service of remembrance for the heroes of Delville Wood was held later in the Cathedral.⁷²

The Battle was spoken of with terms such as “heroic”,⁷³ highlighting Grahamstonians’ opinion of those who fell in the defence of Great Britain.

Public interest in Delville Wood was so great that ‘Grocott and Sherry’, owners of the *Grocott’s Daily Mail* organised a display in their shop window featuring First World War relics:

In the shop window of Messrs Grocott & Sherry are a number of relics and souvenirs of Delville Wood Battle which should be interesting to all observers. These include star shells, a Mills hand grenade, German gas mask and helmet, war histories and maps and photos of South Africans visiting the famous cemetery, also a bound volume of ‘The Wipers Times’.⁷⁴

Simply put, the people of Grahamstown considered the anniversary of the Battle of Delville Wood to be a day that necessitated commemoration and memorial, not merely to remember those who died in the Great War, but also to reinforce the loyalty to Great Britain that motivated Grahamstown’s sons to sacrifice their lives. The following section will analyse the specific dedication of the ‘White English’ section of Grahamstown towards the British Royal Family.

⁶⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Delville Wood Day, Impressive Memorial Services’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 19th July 1948 (Cory Library)

⁷⁰ Unknown Author, ‘City’s Poppy Day Takings Topped 87 pounds’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 23rd July 1957 (Cory Library)

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Unknown Author, ‘Deville Wood Anniversary’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 17th July 1948 (Cory Library)

⁷⁴ Unknown Author, ‘Delville Wood Relics’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 14th July 1949 (Cory Library)

The Royal Family

The pinnacle of Grahamstonians' loyalty to Great Britain, found enthusiastic expression in relation to King George VI and the Royal Family. The Royal family appears to have been viewed as the main 'symbol' of Great Britain, representing all that was good about the nation, but presenting human characteristics that people could connect too. The Grahamstown public was intensely interested in the British Royal family. During the period under review, pictures and very short articles focusing on the Royals would appear three to four times (during a week) in the *Grocott's Daily Mail*. Most of these articles were nothing more than a caption and a picture of the family or individual members of it, for example: "Princess Admitted to Royal Institution",⁷⁵ "First Picture of the Baby Princess",⁷⁶ "Mother of two kings"⁷⁷ and "A Royal Duke".⁷⁸ The sheer number of these, however, clearly indicates a very strong desire on the part of the Grahamstown public to be actively aware of the events that were affecting the Royal family, the victories, defeats and joys. For instance the death of King George on the 6th of February 1952 "stunned" the people of Grahamstown:

News of the King's death stunned Grahamstown just after midday yesterday. Most people only heard the news while sitting down to lunch. Many people failed to believe it and eagerly waited to buy the afternoon paper to get more detailed reports. *Grocott's Daily Mail* was partly made up when the first cables began coming through and immediate steps were taken to get up to the minute reports into the papers.⁷⁹

People not only "failed to believe it", but the *Grocott's Daily Mail* subsequently took immediate action to procure confirmed reports of the event.

Condolences and sympathy were immediately sent to the new Queen, Elizabeth, from the city; "we extend to her and to the Queen Mother and to the rest of the Royal Family our most humble condolences and trust that they may find strength and guidance in an hour that is dark to many millions in the world today".⁸⁰ The sympathy and sadness of the people of Grahamstown for the death of King George VI appeared to be genuine, in that the people

⁷⁵ Unknown Author, 'Princess Admitted to Royal Institution', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th April 1950 (Cory Library)

⁷⁶ Unknown Author, 'First Picture of the Baby Princess', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 25th October 1950 (Cory Library)

⁷⁷ Unknown Author, 'Mother of two Kings', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th May 1952 (Cory Library)

⁷⁸ Unknown Author, 'A Royal Duke', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th January 1953 (Cory Library)

⁷⁹ Unknown Author, 'First Reactions in Grahamstown, Memorial Services Arranged', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th February 1952 (Cory Library)

⁸⁰ Unknown Author, 'A Monarch Passes', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th February 1952 (Cory Library)

of Grahamstown were actually grieving for the passing of the Monarch, as nine days later Grocott's reporter wrote:

When this page is read the sad and sorrowing crowds will have paid their last homage to a mighty King. The praises will have been sung and humble obsequies made to the memory of one held dear in the hearts of millions of people of the English speaking world and their friends among other nations. So with the fall of the mighty Cedar of Lebanon, George the Sixth comes the dawn of a new day for those who are prepared to live on in the faith that guides nations. May it guide South Africa in its course of the greater unity with the Nations of the Commonwealth.⁸¹

This memorial to King George used very poetic, flowery terms to describe the monarch, "the mighty Cedar of Lebanon", and highlights the genuine feelings of loss of by the people of Grahamstown, in that they attempted to use 'poetic licence' to describe a very normal death from coronary thrombosis, a heart disease.

Perhaps the best example of the people of Grahamstown's intimate feelings towards the Royal family was the civic enthusiasm shown during the British Royal family's tour of the Union of South Africa in 1947. The first report in Grahamstown of the Royal visit occurred a year before the Royals arrived in South Africa and reveals a sense of excitement; "It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that the people of South Africa heard and read the news that the King and Queen have decided to visit the Union next year".⁸² Indeed, from this point till the end of the Royal tour frequent articles appeared within the *Grocott's Daily Mail* detailing the progress of the tour and highlighting the events that took place. Simply, Grahamstown went 'Royal crazy'.

The next mention of the Royal visit to the Union sees Grahamstown, in a humble tone, highlighting its beautiful aesthetic qualities, in an attempt to present its suitability as a city worthy of attention by the Royal visit.

Talking of modest attractions, those of the City are so like the violet that it seems to hold its head in shyness when visitors make much of its aesthetic qualities. While no raucous or strident claims to popular attention are required, there is room for a widespread effort to make the many qualifications known to visitors and would-be visitors. This point might well be observed also by any official or unofficial bodies that are formed to prepare for their majesties visit to the City and area, if such visit indeed becomes a reality, as it should.⁸³

⁸¹ Unknown Author, 'A Cedar has Fallen', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15 February 1952 (Cory Library)

⁸² Unknown Author, 'A Royal Visit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th March 1946 (Cory Library)

⁸³ Unknown Author, 'The Royal Visit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd March 1946 (Cory Library)

Not only does this statement present the citizens very high opinion of Grahamstown (despite their attempts at humility), but it also shows that Grahamstown believed that it 'should' have the honour of a Royal visit. This desire would become a reality and in preparation for the Royal family, two committees, "the General Committee and the Executive Committee"⁸⁴ were formed in order to plan for and organise the festive event. Special attention was given to the aesthetic preparations and, from the information available it appears as though the vast majority of the town were preparing in one manner or another:

Much has no doubt already been done in preparation by many people who have worked out their decorative schemes and purchased the materials available, and a wonderful show can be made with the addition of flowers and greenery. In Grahamstown we have many ardent gardeners and they will have made arrangements to have on hand at the end of next month a bountiful supply of floral decorations.⁸⁵

The people of Grahamstown (specifically the 'White English' section, but all the different groups (African, Coloured Asian etc., were part of the process) were uniting as a community to prepare for the Royal visit, although there was the question of who would be allowed to be introduced to their Majesties. In this regard the Grahamstown City Council had to submit a list of names of those wishing to be formally introduced to their Majesties to the Inter-Departmental Committee of the Prime Minister to confirm the order of introduction.⁸⁶ Because of the importance of the Royal family's visit the Union Government had prepared various rules and regulations to be observed in every city or town that they might pass through. Thus Grahamstown received a communication from Mr H. F. Gear, the Deputy Chief Health Officer of the Union Health Department, highlighting seven health-related points that the Grahamstown City Council would have to enforce. Point one of these regulations stated:

1. That the gathering of crowds, specifically school children, will require special supervision with regard to the provision of clean food and, water for them and with large numbers of campers the provision of extra sanitary facilities.⁸⁷

The City Council assured the Health Department that all necessary health and security regulations would be enforced.

⁸⁴ Unknown Author, 'The Royal Visit, Grahamstown Programme', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th January 1947 (Cory Library)

⁸⁵ Unknown Author, 'A Floral Welcome', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th January 1947 (Cory Library)

⁸⁶ Unknown Author, 'The Royal Visit, A Talk to Townspeople, Interview with the Mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd January 1947 (Cory Library)

⁸⁷ 'Health, Precautions to be taken during Royal Tour 1947', *Health and Market Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 15th February 1947

'Grocott and Sherry' created a pamphlet for the Royal tour in honour of the King's visit. The pamphlet of thirty-two pages presented the historic story of the founding of Grahamstown: "founded in the wilderness as a strategic frontier station and rising in the course of a century, a stately city and one of the great educational centres of the Union".⁸⁸ The pamphlet was written concisely and with a romantic touch, meant to present the positive aspects of Grahamstown's past in a favourable light while downplaying the more negative features discussed in Chapter Two.

The arrival of the Royal family in Table Bay on the 17th of February 1947 sent the city of Grahamstown into a fever pitch of excitement clearly expressed by:

God save our gracious King, Long live our noble King, God save the King,
Send him victorious, happy and glorious long to reign over us. On this
great and historic occasion, filled as it is with pride and jubilation, the
citizens of Grahamstown join with their fellow citizens throughout the
Union in welcome and thanksgiving, deeply conscious that it is given to
express their devotion, their loyalty and their affection to the Royal visitors
who have so honoured them and under whose reflective light all that is
noblest in the hearts of men and women from the highest to the lowest
shines forth as the motive power of duty and example.⁸⁹

The people of Grahamstown felt 'honoured' by the fact that the Royal family was not only visiting the Union of South Africa but also their "City of the Settlers".

The 28th of February signalled the arrival of the Royal party in Grahamstown, expectations expressed that "the Royal Party's visit to Grahamstown, the capital of the Cape Eastern Province will, we sincerely hope, be a very pleasant one. Visitors in general usually find this to be so for the City is delightfully situated amid tree-embowered hills and attractive scenery".⁹⁰ 'The General Committee and the Executive Committee' had organised a full day of events for the Royal family and as they made their way into Grahamstown, they were greeted by a "gathering of about 4000 Bantu children with thousands of adult natives who cheered and sang their praises of 'the Royal Rainmaker' to whom they attributed the fresh morning rain".⁹¹ From this they emerged into Church Square to greet the thousands of 'White English' Grahamstonians gathered there as they made their way to the City Hall for the speeches by the King and the Mayor, Mr H.A. Parry.

The King's speech was very complimentary of Grahamstown and his Majesty made specific mention of the link between the city and the 1820 Settlers;

⁸⁸ Unknown Author, 'Royal Visit Souvenir', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th February 1947 (Cory Library)

⁸⁹ Unknown Author, 'Welcome!', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th February 1947 (Cory Library)

⁹⁰ Unknown Author, 'No Mean City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st March 1947 (Cory Library)

⁹¹ Unknown Author, 'The Royal Visit, Grahamstown's Red Letter Day, His Majesty's Address to the Mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st March 1947 (Cory Library)

Your city has a distinguished place in the history of South Africa and I am pleased to hear that you are still proud to call yourselves ‘the Settlers’ city’ in honour of those hardy men and women from the United Kingdom who brought civilisation to this part of South Africa in the early part of last century.⁹²

The Mayor, Mr Parry, in his speech also made mention of the link between the 1820 Settlers and Grahamstown, specifically in relation to the traditions that Grahamstonians had inherited from them. Mr Parry also focused on the willingness of Grahamstown during the earlier part of the century to send its sons in defence of Great Britain and the Commonwealth:

During both the world-wide struggles of the present century against the forces of tyranny and persecution, the citizens and scholars of Grahamstown continued a distinguished record of service and sacrifice for the British Commonwealth of Nations, and all rejoice at this unique opportunity afforded by the gracious visit of Your Majesties and your Royals Highnesses.⁹³

Despite the sacrifices made by Grahamstown men for the British Commonwealth it is Grahamstown that is graced by the ‘unique opportunity’ to honour their King and Queen.

After these speeches of adulation, the Royal party moved onto a lavish Garden party, held within the Botanical Gardens. On the way to the Botanical Gardens, “flags and bunting fluttered in the westerly breeze and loud cheers came spontaneously from many hundreds of throats”.⁹⁴

The Royal tour of Grahamstown was an event that highlights the extreme love, affection and loyalty that the community of Grahamstown felt for the Royal family, thousands of people, regardless of race or creed, joining in celebration of their Majesties. When the Queen was heard to say “how beautiful it all is” with regard to the decorations of the City Hall, the citizens of Grahamstown considered it to be high praise; “That indeed is Royal tribute”.⁹⁵

The Royal family of Great Britain was a powerful symbol to the people of Grahamstown, representing all that was good and great about the country of their ancestors, as they considered ‘all things British’ to be beyond impeachment, their view of the Royal family was without blemish. Clearly Grahamstonians considered themselves to be ‘British South

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Africans', as the Royal visit marked a level of excitement and enthusiasm in the Grahamstown community (including Africans and Coloureds) that did not occur again during the period under review. This Chapter clearly describes the close connections that 'White English' Grahamstown felt towards the British nation; the following section will analyse the perceptions of 'White English' Grahamstown of the Afrikaans segment of the population, both of the town and of the Nation.

English and Afrikaans

As has been shown, the 'White English' section of the Grahamstown population considered themselves to be 'British South Africans', with a love of all things English. One must consider what the perception was on the part of English speaking Grahamstonians in relation to the Afrikaans-speaking population of the town and country. This section will focus on some of the perceptions of the English and Afrikaans sections of the population in Grahamstown during the period under review.

The first mention of tension, on the part of the English-speaking public, towards the Afrikaans language related to a National Party attempt to change the Eastern Province's English language radio service to Afrikaans:

Unless Afrikaans-speaking listeners on the "A" transmission which is relayed by Grahamstown, greatly out-number the English-speaking (and this is doubtful) the peculiar custom mentioned above calls aloud for explanation. Do they really think they will capture any Nationalist supporters from the United Party by such methods? After all, the Eastern Province, which is specially served by Grahamstown, is predominantly English-speaking.⁹⁶

While the main point of 'Bewildered's contention appears to have been related to Politics (the National Party attempting to gain votes), this statement still highlights the fact that 'Bewildered' does not wish to change the English language broadcast because the Eastern Province is 'predominantly English-speaking'. This suggests that the majority of the Eastern Province and Grahamstown especially (the City of the Settlers, the Oxford of South Africa) did not wish for a language change because of their English heritage. Bewildered's contention indicates that as there were more English-speakers than Afrikaans-speakers in the Eastern Province the radio should stay English. The tension does not appear to be directed towards the Afrikaans section of the population however, but rather the National Party.

⁹⁶ Bewildered, 'Radio Queries', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th August 1946 (Cory Library)

English and Afrikaans Grahamstonians appear to have co-existed within the city, quite amicably, unless National Party politics came into the equation (see Chapter Ten). However this is not to say that Grahamstown citizens were unaware of the tension that existed between the English and Afrikaans sections of the population; 'unity' between English and Afrikaans was often called for:

'Unity is strength' is a motto which has never been tried in practical form to its full limit of success in South Africa. There is still it is to be hoped a great future for this phrase which is so obvious and yet so easily put aside and forgotten. It is one of those attitudes of mind that should become habitual, especially in regard to our national affairs.⁹⁷

Indeed, unity between English and Afrikaans was even called for on behalf of the African/Coloured section of the population: "very few Europeans in this country have any conception of the extent to which the disharmony between the Europeans adversely affect the Non-Europeans, particularly the Africans".⁹⁸

Grahamstown does not seem to have had to suffer these problems as acutely as the rest of the Union of South Africa. Relations between the English and Afrikaans sections of the population appear to have been cordial and polite. Not only did English Grahamstonians actively cite their connection with the 'Voortrekker Memorial' (See Chapter Three, Mr Rivett-Carnac the then Mayor of Grahamstown presented a Bible to the Association in honour of Grahamstown's shared past with the Voortrekkers) but celebrated Covenant Day⁹⁹ with their fellow Afrikaans Grahamstonians as well, although there appears to have been less interest in celebrating 'Covenant Day' on the part of the English population in that:

A determined effort to interest English-speaking people in Covenant Day celebrations is going to be made, an official organiser of the day said in Grahamstown yesterday. He was Mr D.J.J. Pretorius hon Secretary of the Joint Covenant Day committee of Grahamstown and Riebeeck East who organised the recent successful Covenant Day at which the presentation of a Bible to the Voortrekkers by English inhabitants of Grahamstown was commemorated.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Unknown Author, 'Unity', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th October 1949 (Cory Library)

⁹⁸ Unknown Author, 'To Investigate Causes of Disharmony', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th December 1949 (Cory Library)

⁹⁹ Unknown Author, 'A Large Crowd at Covenant Day Celebrations', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th December 1957 (Cory Library)

¹⁰⁰ Unknown Author, 'English Speaking People called to Observe Day of the Convent', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th January 1958 (Cory Library)

While English Grahamstown might have respected and appreciated the Afrikaans population, they still considered themselves 'British South Africans' and thus were far more interested and passionate about the 1820 British Settlers and England.

The Afrikaans population of Grahamstown seems to have been dominated by their English neighbours in that there is very little information available that represents their views and opinions during the period under review. The two events initiated by the Afrikaans population of Grahamstown are mentioned: the founding of P.J. Olivier High-School and the erection of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Despite the fact that Grahamstown was considered the 'Oxford of South Africa', there were no school facilities for Afrikaans children to be taught in their home language. Dr De Vos Malan the Superintendent General of Education of the Cape Province, pointed out that, despite being a large educational centre Grahamstown, did not have a school to provide for the minority of Afrikaans children living in it, and presented the Albany School Board with a petition signed by the Afrikaans-parents desiring a Afrikaans junior and senior school: "We the undersigned Afrikaans-speaking parents being inhabitants of the Albany School Board area, here-with respectfully make the following requests of the Albany School Board".¹⁰¹ Construction began and P.J. Olivier High-school opened on the 23rd of January 1956. The fact that the Afrikaans parents of Grahamstown had to organise a petition, to the Superintendent of the Cape Province, indicates that their minority opinion was overlooked by the English majority of Grahamstown.

The new Dutch Reformed Church also "fulfilled a long-felt want"¹⁰² of the Afrikaans population of Grahamstown; despite the numerous churches within the city, this section of the population organised a church of their language. A possible reason for this 'long felt need' was the fact that the Afrikaans Grahamstonians were a minority community in the city and, by establishing a Dutch Reformed Church and a Afrikaans High-school, they were redefining their group identity in relation to that of the English section of the population, finding pride in their language and culture in a English-dominated city.

Relations between English and Afrikaans speakers in Grahamstown thus appeared to have been very civil and neighbourly; antagonism towards Afrikaners on the part of English Grahamstown seemed to only have occurred with regards to National Party Politics as highlighted in a letter by Mrs May Bell, focusing on the National Party:

They have made us disliked and despised abroad and have left us further than ever from solving our race problems. The darker people have drawn

¹⁰¹ Unknown Author, 'Afrikaans Medium School, School Boards Decision', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th June 1950 (Cory Library)

¹⁰² Unknown Author, 'New Dutch Reformed Church in Grahamstown, Work Progressing Steadily on 20000 pound edifice', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd February 1951 (Cory Library)

together into an angry dangerous block; the Whites are split; fear and hate are rampant. For the English-speaking section it has been ten years of persecution. Everything that is part of our tradition has been taken away, from crowns and cadet uniforms to flag and anthem. The dishonourable stratagems of the High Court of Parliament and the packed Senate were aimed at removing the Coloured voters because they voted for us. We, the robbed and defrauded, offer our sympathy to the Afrikaner friends who are having to blush for the things that have been done in their name.¹⁰³

This letter clearly presents the feelings of loss and frustration that the English section of Grahamstown felt towards the National Party, specific mention being made about the loss of English symbols, "Crowns, cadet uniforms, the Union Jack and the English Anthem". However, Mrs Bell did not consider all Afrikaners to have been part of this, indeed she offered her sympathy to those Afrikaners who were not National Party supporters for the embarrassment that they must have been feeling. Clearly Mrs Bell did not link all Afrikaners with the National Party. White English-speaking Grahamstonians appeared to have respected their Afrikaans neighbours as fellow pioneers in South Africa but they despised and hated the National Party which they considered to be Afrikaans in nature.

In summary, the English section of Grahamstown took great pride in their city, its aesthetic qualities, its link with the 1820 British Settlers and Great Britain, and in general, the British virtues that its people expounded. However, this pride was only made possible by ignoring and avoiding horrific 'slum conditions' within the various Grahamstown Locations and ignoring the racist points of view expressed by certain members of its community. Paternalism was rife in to the 'British Grahamstonian' section of the population and a lack of interest dominated its view of the Municipal Locations. Therefore the positive social perception that was analysed in the above sections should be considered as a singular point of view of one section of the Grahamstown population. The true state of Grahamstown during the period under review was far more negative than the 'British' section of the population would have had people believe. But because of the 'social perceptions' that the 'British' section held it would have been unlikely that said negative points would have gained much attention or concern. The following four Chapters will leave behind the 'English White' perceptions of Grahamstown and focus on five separate events that, during the period under review, which played a crucial part in the development of the City, with an emphasis on the ability and involvement of the City Council during these events. The following Chapters focus on these different events as they will provide a more general outline of the context of the City during the period under review.

¹⁰³ Bell, May, 'The English Speaking Section', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th April 1958 (Cory Library)

Chapter Four

City Council, Housing, Financial Deficit, TB Hospital, Rhodes University

When focusing on a town or urban community emphasis must be placed on the activities of its City Council or Municipality, because, it is the Council that approves or vetoes all official decisions, activities and constructions pertaining to the town's development. By its nature, a City Council is involved with all official business pertaining to the town it serves (the supply of water and electricity, the upkeep of roads, gutters and other public facilities etc.) and as such, produces a vast amount of information in relation to it. Attempting to analyse this information would prove an enormously time-consuming task, and in relation to this thesis, provide a magnitude of unnecessary information. I will therefore focus on five different events that occurred during the period under review and critique the City Council's participation. The specific focus of this review will relate to events which played a crucial part in the City's development during the years 1946 to 1960 in order to evaluate the actions of the City Council with regard to these events. Using the information available, three negative and two positive events will be analysed: the negative focus will critique the Grahamstown's City Council's treasury deficit which led to a dire financial crisis for the City,¹ the Grahamstown Housing Crisis² which occurred during the entire period under review, and the Beer Hall Debate which highlighted the City Councils lack of understanding or care Grahamstown's Location inhabitants. The positive analysis will focus upon the Grahamstown City Council's involvement with two important institutions of the town: Rhodes University College during its attempt to "obtain status as an independent University"³ and the Grahamstown Tuberculosis Hospital⁴ which filled a desperate need in the town (specifically in the Locations). This approach will avoid floundering in a sea of information pertaining to the City Council while permitting a closer view of the Council and its policies and actions with regard to the topics mentioned above.

Firstly a general overview of the City Council is required. The Grahamstown City Council elected its Councillors from five different wards⁵ which divided the City into voting sections. On average, it appears that three individuals from each of the wards would be elected to

¹ Unknown Author, 'Municipal Finance', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 31st January 1952 (Cory Library)

² Unknown Author, 'Growing Need for Housing in Grahamstown, Stressed in Official Report on Albany by Chef Magistrate', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th January 1957 (Cory Library)

³ Rhodes University College Private Bill to Obtain Independent University Status, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/15, E.1/1, 17th January 1949

⁴ Proposed Tuberculosis Hospital Grahamstown, *Finance and Lighting Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/14, (20/4), 21st August 1946 -1947

⁵ Unknown Author, 'City Council Standing Committees', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th September 1949 (Cory Library)

the City Council during the beginning of September,⁶ who together formed the 'general' City Council which approved or vetoed recommendations from the various City Committees. The Grahamstown City Council, during the period under review, had a total of four City Committees each with their own specific focus. These Committees were: The Finance and General Purpose Committee⁷ which dealt with everything requiring monetary finance, The Land and Works Committee⁸ which focused on the construction, renovation and organisation of building in Grahamstown, The Public Health and Non-European Committee⁹ which reviewed the conditions for Grahamstown public's health and any decisions relating to Grahamstown's African and Coloured populations and, finally, the Gardens and Forests Committee,¹⁰ which dealt with the Forests surround the City as well as the condition of the gardens, parks and verges within the City. (As seen in the Chapter One the citizens of Grahamstown took great pride in the appearance of their City).

Prior to the end of 1947, the Public Health and Non-European Committee was known as the Health and Marketing Committee,¹¹ but at the end of the Municipal year (September) during 1947 this City Council Committee was converted into the Public Health and Non-European Committee. No information was available to explain this shift in committees, but in analysing the situation of Africans and Coloureds during the period under review (see 'Negative Social Section' Chapter Two) and 'The Grahamstown Housing Section' (Chapter Five) a plausible explanation could be linked to the increased hardships faced by Africans and Coloureds in Grahamstown. This would explain the Grahamstown City Council's decision, from the end of 1947, to focus more attention on the plight of Grahamstown's African and Coloured population.

After deliberation in their separate meetings, each of these Committees would present their recommendations and suggestions for the various problems and projects experienced during said period to the 'general' Grahamstown City Council, at its monthly meeting. Ultimately however, the final decision on every subject rested with the 'general' Grahamstown City Council.

⁶ Unknown Author, 'Municipal Elections', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th September 1949 (Cory Library)
AND Unknown Author, 'Municipal Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th September 1950 (Cory Library)

⁷ *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/15, 1949

⁸ *Land and Works Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/2/1/23, 1949

⁹ *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/6/1/9, September 1947 to December 1948

¹⁰ Unknown Author, 'Mr R.T. Rivett-Carnac Re-Elected Mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1950 (Cory Library)

¹¹ *Health and Market Committee 1946 – 1947*, 3/AY, 1/2/6/1/7, 1946 - 1947

The Grahamstown Financial Crisis

The Grahamstown Financial Crisis covers an “eight year”¹² period (1944 to 1952) during which time the Municipal Treasury experienced a financial deficit of serious proportions. This subsequently hindered and limited its capacity to develop the City. It must be stated, however, that the Financial Crisis was not a unique event in the City’s financial history: Grahamstown suffered from a general lack of financial revenue. Nicholas Southey, in his thesis; “A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918”, argued that the primary reason behind this financial state related to the lack of industrial development within the City which hindered the City Council’s ability to raise funds and forced them to rely on rateable town property and the water rate as the primary source of income for the City.¹³ Torlesse also highlights the lack of industrial development within the City during 1918 -1945 as the primary reason for the City Council’s poor financial development.¹⁴

The first indication, during the period under review, that a problem existed with the financial considerations of the Grahamstown City Council was a recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee (Cr A.W. Parsons was the Chairman of the Committee and the Mayor of Grahamstown at this point), to the City Council that a request be sent to the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited for an increase of the overdraft allowed to the Council at that point.

To recommend to the Council THAT the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited be and are hereby requested to allow the General Account to become overdrawn from time to time the Amount of overdraft not at any one time to exceed the sum of £-25,000 (twenty-five thousand pounds) that a copy of this resolution be furnished to the Grahamstown Branch of the said Bank and that the Authority hereby given remain in force until the receipt by the said Branch Bank of a copy of a resolution to be passed by this Council rescinding the same.¹⁵

This clearly indicates that during 1946 the Grahamstown City Council expected to spend more money than was available from its revenue at this point, placing it in a dangerous financial position that would continue to increase in the years to come. Indeed, during

¹² Unknown Author, ‘The City’s Future’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1953 (Cory Library)

¹³ Southey, Nicholas., “A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918”, M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1984 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 93.

¹⁴ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., “A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945”, M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 61.

¹⁵Bank Overdraft General Account Standard Bank of S.A., *Finance and Lighting Committee 1946 - 1947*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/14, 1946 -1947

1948, the Mayor of Grahamstown, Cr G.W. Lucas¹⁶ announced with relation to finance that “there is an accumulated deficit of approximately £-14 000 and that will unfortunately be added to this year”.¹⁷ Thus £-14 000 would be added to the money already owed on the Grahamstown Overdraft, financed by the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited. No information was available at this point with regard to the total Overdraft owed by Grahamstown.

This unfortunate financial position continued to deteriorate and by the following year (1949), a request was forwarded to the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited, asking for a further increase allowed on the Overdraft. This increase was “not at any one time to exceed the sum of £-30 000 (Thirty-Thousand pounds)”¹⁸ and highlights the fact that the Grahamstown Municipal Treasury was steadily spending more money than it was receiving from its revenue accounts. This overdraft of £-30 000 was further amended the following month (April 1949) by a recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (Cr. J.A. Rademan, Chairman of the Committee¹⁹) to further increase the bank overdraft from £-30 000 (the amount that was approved at the last Finance and General Purposes meeting) to £-60 000.²⁰ The reason such a large increase in the Overdraft facilities was explained by Mr W.J. Lagrange, the Town Clerk, in his statement:

The reason for the considerable increase in the overdraft was due to the fact that the Electricity Loan amounting to £-53, 500 has as yet not been raised and expenditure on Power Station extensions is being temporarily met from revenue. As the overdraft has exceeded this amount, it is suggested that the Standard Bank be requested to allow the Council overdraft facilities up to an amount of £-60,000.²¹

To this degree the Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended to the Grahamstown City Council that the Standard Bank of S.A. Ltd, be requested to increase the maximum sum for overdrafts from £-30 000 to £-60 000, but not to exceed that sum.

Simply put, by 30th April 1949, a month after the City Council decided to increase their Overdraft facilities to the total of £-30 000 and the General Account became overdrawn “to

¹⁶ Unknown Author, ‘City Council Special Meeting Election of Mayor/Deputy-Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th September 1947 (Cory Library)

¹⁷ Unknown Author, ‘City Council New Valuations No Reduction in Rates’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th January 1948 (Cory Library)

¹⁸ Bank Overdraft, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/15, 2/3, 21st March 1949

¹⁹ Unknown Author, ‘City Council Special Meeting Election of Mayor/Deputy-Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th September 1947 (Cory Library)

²⁰ Unknown Author, ‘City Council Last Night’s Meeting Breezy Interludes’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 28th April 1949 (Cory Library)

²¹ Bank Overdraft, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/15, 2/3, 29th April 1949

the extent of £-45 000”,²² £-15 000 more than was allowed by the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited. The Grahamstown City Council had little choice but to resolve to request an increase in the Overdraft facilities that it possessed with the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited. As previously requested, the City Council asked the Standard Bank of South Africa to allow the Grahamstown General Account to be overdrawn occasionally up to the sum of £-60 000 and that a copy of this resolution be passed to the Grahamstown Branch Bank.²³

In relation to this resolution the Mayor (Cr H. A. Mather-Pike²⁴) stated;

That the position was clear-The overdraft in general account was now £-45 000. They had on the credit side £-30 000. The Standard Bank had to have a resolution to what amount the overdraft must be. It is not intended to use the whole amount if it was not needed, but the amount must be available and the resolution must be there for the bank”.²⁵

Clearly the Financial situation was causing grave concern for the Grahamstown City Council as the Mayor (Cr H.A. Mather-Pike) stated within his ‘Mayoral Minute’ for 1949 that: “During the year we have done everything in our power to curtail expenditure as far as possible”.²⁶ The accumulated deficit for the end of 1949 stood at £ -9000,²⁷ a decrease of £-5 000 from the accumulated deficit of £-14 000²⁸ for 1948, yet still a worrying amount, especially with the Grahamstown City Council’s attempts to “curtail expenditure as far as possible”.

By the beginning of 1951 the Financial Crisis had deteriorated to the point where the Grahamstown City Council felt it necessary to form a three-man survey committee to tackle the situation by reducing Municipal expenditure.²⁹

The three-man committee organised for the survey was composed of Councillors Mr G. Nel (a member of the Gardens and Forests Committee), Mr B.T. Liddiard (a member of the Land

²² Special Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/Ay, 1/2/3/1/15, 2/3, 2nd May 1949

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Unknown Author, ‘The City Council Mayor re-elected’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th September 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁵ Unknown Author, ‘The Municipalities Overdraft City Councils Special meeting To Regularise Position’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 3rd May 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁶ Mather-Pike, H.A., ‘The Mayoral Minute Activities of the Past Year, Accumulated Deficit’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 2nd September 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Unknown Author, ‘City Council New Valuations No Reduction in Rates’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th January 1948 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Move to Better Working and less Expense City Council appoint Committee to Survey Municipal Administration’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th January 1951 (Cory Library)

and Works Committee) and Mr R.F.C. Mortimer (a member of the Gardens and Forests Committee).³⁰ The Financial Crisis was escalating; in just over a year (the end of 1949 to the beginning of 1951) the accumulated deficit had increased from £-9 000 to £-30 000, an increase of £-21 000. Clearly the Council's methods to decrease its debt had failed.

The Financial Crisis reached a head on 3rd of April 1951, when the Council requested the Provincial Administrator to authorise the Standard Bank of South Africa Limited to further carry forward the City's Overdraft. The situation with the Standard Bank had reached the point where, without the approval of the Provincial Administrator, the Bank could refuse to carry forward the Grahamstown City Council's Overdraft and subsequently call in the debt owed to it. The Provincial Administrator had taken notice of the crisis in Grahamstown and had decided that it was "not prepared to authorise the carrying forward of the overdraft until the Council undertook to levy an emergency rate of 1d in the pound for 1951",³¹ thereby increasing their revenue and allowing them to start decreasing their overdraft. The Grahamstown City Council subsequently organised a sub-committee composed of the Mayor (Cr H.A. Rivett-Carnac) and Messrs P.D. McGahey, J.J. Cooke and G.S. Nel to interview the Provincial Administrator on his visit to the City (during April) with regard to the problem. The City Council subsequently asked the Provincial Administrator for a committee of inquiry to investigate the complication and during that period hold in abeyance the question of levying an emergency rate. The Provincial Secretary replied on the 25th of June 1951 to state that the Executive Committee had determined that to delay the increase of 1d in the pound would only serve to increase the total amount owed; it was therefore announced that the Executive Committee 'insisted' that the Grahamstown City Council raise the rate by 1d in the pound³².

Despite the insistence of the Provincial Administrator to institute an emergency rate of 1d in the pound for 1951, the Grahamstown City Council refused to comply with the emergency rate:

A special meeting of the Grahamstown City Council yesterday afternoon declined to comply with the Cape Provincial Council Executive Committee's insistence that a penny emergency rate be imposed here to eliminate the Council bank overdraft as at December 31st 1949.³³

Instead the Grahamstown City Council organised a three-man delegation, consisting of the Mayor (Mr Rivett-Carnac), Cr P.D. McGahey (Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'Mr R.T. Rivett-Carnac Re-Elected Mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1950 (Cory Library)

³¹ Unknown Author, 'City Council Rejects 1d Emergency Rate Deputation to see the Administrator', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th July 1951 (Cory Library)

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

Committee) and Cr J.J. Cooke, with the purpose of interviewing the Provincial Administrator to explain the City's unique financial problems. It is probable that at this point of the Financial Crisis the Grahamstown City Council did not necessarily think that an emergency rate of 1d in the pound would alleviate the situation. Grahamstown did indeed have unique financial problems.

The Problem of De-Rating

The roots of Grahamstown's Financial Crisis can be traced to two distinct causes; the first being the fact that Grahamstown "being predominantly an educational centre"³⁴ did not have the resources that larger industrial towns/cities could call on. There were no major industries within the town that could provide large revenue in the form of rates or electricity and water consumption. Simply put, the majority of revenue received by the City came from the rates paid by individual property owners.

And the second was that, by law, the only properties exempt from the payment of Municipal rates were Schools, Colleges, Church properties, Railway facilities and Government buildings. While Grahamstown took pride in its names "the Oxford of South Africa" and the 'City of the Saints' (see Chapter One), it had no means of gaining any revenue from the numerous schools and churches that called the City home. This lack of rateable property that still, nevertheless, required Municipal expenditure can be considered the root cause of the Financial Crisis, during the period under review.

During 1946 the Gross Total Valuation of the City's properties stood "at £-2 780 234, of this £-1 204 968"³⁵ was non-rateable. In relation to this problem the then Mayor of Grahamstown Mr A.W. Parsons stated: "no other town in the Union suffers more as the result of de-rated property than Grahamstown".³⁶ Even after the Financial Crisis was over, the position of non-rateable property in Grahamstown remained problematic. In 1954 the City had a Gross Valuation of £-5 039 620 with property exempt from rates totalling £-2 360 650, which was "considered to be the highest in the Eastern Cape".³⁷

Throughout the period under review applications for properties to be de-rated were fairly common. Examples of this include the following:

In November 1946 the Grahamstown Training College applied for 'Truro House', a students' residence, to be exempt; it was resolved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee:

³⁴ Mather-Pike, H.A., 'The Mayoral Minute Activities of the Past Year Accumulated Deficit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd September 1949 (Cory Library)

³⁵ Unknown Author, 'Changing the Guard', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1946 (Cory Library)

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Unknown Author, 'City's Rateable Property Value Grows Equals more than half of Gross 5 Million Total', 12th August 1954 (Cory Library)

To place it on the schedule of properties exempt from payment of rates.³⁸ During March 1950 the Diocesan School for Girls completed a new Sanatorium, which as it was classified as a school building the Grahamstown City Council had to accept its de-rated application.³⁹ In July 1955 one of the longest lists of applications for de-rating of properties in Grahamstown was approved at a meeting of the Grahamstown City Council. The list contained no less than ten applications and concerned school and education properties, the University, churches and the Library for the Blind.⁴⁰

The process of de-rating new and old educational, religious and governmental buildings was an on-going procedure during the period under review. As the educational industry developed in Grahamstown so too did the loss of revenue for the City Council in the form of de-rated properties. Because of the constant process of de-rating, the Grahamstown City Council was permanently attempting to effectively manage the City from a position where approximately 50% of the City's rateable property was unavailable to them. Because of this, and the fact that Grahamstown had no industry and therefore no revenue from it, when the Financial Crisis began in 1944,⁴¹ the Grahamstown City Council had no means by which to increase their revenue income to offset the beginning of the deficit and overdraft. Each year following these and more buildings would be de-rated, further increasing the deficit. This is not to say that the Grahamstown City Council regretted having a surplus of educational industries in the City; they were proud to be, the "Oxford of South Africa", and from a financial point of view, the educational institutions of the town spent £-368 000 a year in Grahamstown, an estimated 80% of this amount was spent in Grahamstown businesses.⁴²

These financial figures were taken from the expenditure of Rhodes University, the Grahamstown Training College, the Leather Industries Research Institute and the various private schools and colleges within the City. Governmental Educational Institutions were not included in this report. To this degree the Grahamstown City Council considered that:

Grahamstown's main industry was education and that the town was not being ruined by the de-rating of properties to assist schools, colleges and

³⁸ De-rating of Truro House Grahamstown Training College', *Finance and Lighting Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/14, 20th November 1946

³⁹ 'De-rating of Property New Sanatorium for Diocesan School for Girls', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/16, R.1/2, 20th March 1950

⁴⁰ Unknown Author, 'Properties De-rated by City Council Meeting Passes Ten Applications from Local Institutions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th July 1955 (Cory Library)

⁴¹ Unknown Author, 'The City's Future', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1953 (Cory Library)

⁴² Unknown Author, 'Grahamstown Schools Spending 500 000 pounds a Year Most of it come to the City 45000 is pocket money', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th February 1951 (Cory Library)

the University to expand wherever possible and necessary, was warmly approved at a meeting of the City Council last night.⁴³

It must be noted however that the City Council took this resolution 1955, three years after the Financial Crisis had come to an end.

The root cause of the Financial Crisis in Grahamstown can be said to have been brought on by the huge amounts of rateable property that the City Council by law could not tax due to "Ordinance No 29 of 1935 (as amended)"⁴⁴ in combination with a slow increase of their deficit and the increased overdraft facilities. However, while rates were the case of the crisis they would also help solve it.

An extra 1d in the pound

When the Provincial Administrator became involved in the Grahamstown Financial Crisis during April 1951, his solution to the problem was to insist that the Grahamstown City Council increase, all rateable property by 1d in the pound, meaning that for every pound a property was worth its owner would have to pay an extra penny. However the Grahamstown City Council originally refused to accept an increase of 1d in the pound for rateable property and instead requested a Provincial Committee of Inquiry into Municipal affairs in order to understand Grahamstown's unique rating problem. A second reason for the reluctance of the Grahamstown City Council to increase the amount of money paid on rateable property, stemmed from the opposition from both individual ratepayers within the city and the ratepayers association, the "Citizens' Union".⁴⁵

The Citizens' Union was formed as the Municipal Affairs Ratepayers Association⁴⁶ on the 29th July 1947, in order to 'watch Municipal affairs', to "exercise a disciplinary effect upon municipal and divisional affairs as well as other public matters",⁴⁷ but later changed its name to the Citizens' Union. From its inception, this association from its inception placed pressure on the Grahamstown City Council with regard to the rateable position in Grahamstown, and attempted to keep rates steady in order to protect ratepayers from having to increase the amount of money paid on rateable property, even at the expense of

⁴³ Unknown Author, 'Education is Grahamstown Primary Industry City Council reverses its decision over St Andrews Prep bid for Cradock Road Dwelling', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th October 1955 (Cory Library)

⁴⁴ De-rating of Property New Sanatorium for Diocesan School for Girls', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/16, R.1/2, 20th March 1950

⁴⁵ Unknown Author, 'Citizens Union', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th August 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, 'Municipal Affairs Ratepayers Association Formed', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th July 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴⁷ Unknown Author, 'Municipal Watchdog', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st August 1947 (Cory Library)

the Municipal Treasury. During January 1948 (which can be considered the mid-point of the Financial Crisis) a request was sent to the Grahamstown City Council from the Citizens' Union stating:

That this Association urges the City Council when considering the Estimates for the ensuing financial year to proportionally so reduce the assessment rate that it will ensure that the total amount accruing to revenue under this head does not exceed the collections made during the present financial year.⁴⁸

In layman's terms, the Citizens' Union was asking the Grahamstown City Council to make sure that ratepayers did not have to pay more than they did for their properties the previous year. At this point the Grahamstown City Council thought it was the "wrong time to increase the rate on many poor ratepayers who are finding it very difficult to live let alone pay rates",⁴⁹ and so kept the property valuation rate at its original level.

However, by the middle of October 1951 the Grahamstown City Council had "no alternative"⁵⁰ but to increase the expenditure on all rateable property by 1d in the pound to become due and payable by the 15th December 1951. This decision was decided by the report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry who had been analysing the state of finances for the Municipality.

With the rate increased to 4d in the pound the Provincial Committee of Inquiry hoped that within six years the "accumulated deficit of approximately £-31 000"⁵¹ would be paid back, the assumption being that if the Grahamstown City Council could find additional revenue of approximately £-5 200 per annum (from the increased rate) the City would be able to liquidate its deficit.

The Provincial Committee of Inquiry's position with regard to the increase in rates was that they were unable to recommend an alternative course of action towards Grahamstown's financial stability, and the general rate should be increased to 4d in the pound.⁵² The Mayor, Mr Rivett-Carnac, hated the idea of an increased rate: "this town is dying a slow death. What are we going to do about it? No we will fight for Grahamstown, this is the first round".⁵³ Clearly the Grahamstown City Council considered the situation to be dire.

⁴⁸ Unknown Author, 'City Council New Valuations No Reduction in Rates', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th January 1948 (Cory Library)

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Unknown Author, '1d Emergency rate for City from December 15th Council has 'No Alternative' Majority Decision Town is Dying says mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th October 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

Despite the severity of the situation (as presented by the Mayor Mr Rivett-Carnac), a petition was drawn up by the Grahamstown ratepayers (not the Citizens' Union) insisting on a ratepayers meeting to discuss the increased rate. This petition consisted of more than 70 leading businessmen and property owners.⁵⁴ By the 13th November 1951 the ratepayers had decided at a special ratepayers meeting to oppose the new rate of 1d in the pound but to offer the City Council a proposal of ½ d increase in the pound rate instead.⁵⁵ The Grahamstown City Council did not however, accept their recommendation. The former Mayor, Mr Rivett-Carnac, strongly supported the 1d rate proposal: "Mr Mayor I am not so mad as to want to impose a rate which I would probably have to pay part of myself, if I could possibly dodge it but the fact remains that we can't".⁵⁶ Very simply put, the Grahamstown City Council had little choice but to follow the Provincial Committee of Inquiry's advice if they wished to liquidate their debt.

The only way to adjust matters is to adopt the Committee of Inquiry's recommendation which states that we should impose a 1d rate, half of which would be used to gradually liquidate the accumulated debt and the other half to carry on the running of the Municipality. The word 'suggest' that we levy a 1d rate used by the Administrator means absolutely nothing in the sense of the word. What it really means is 'levy that penny rate or else'.⁵⁷

Despite the added burden on the ratepayers of Grahamstown, the City Council pushed through the new rating valuation making 4d in the pound the general rate for the City. However, the liquidation of the accumulated deficit did not take the six years that the Provincial Committee of Inquiry had stipulated. As early as September 1953 it was announced that;

Perhaps the most important feature from the point of view of a ratepayer, emerging from the Mayoral Minute is the fact that the City's accumulated deficit has been liquidated and the position reversed so as to reflect a small surplus after balancing account for 1952. During the eight years that the Municipal Treasury struggled between a deficit and a balanced

⁵⁴ Unknown Author, 'Meeting of Ratepayers is Demanded Petition handed in to Town Office Today', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 23rd October 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵⁵ Unknown Author, 'City Ratepayers New Rate Suggest Levy of ½ d in the Pound', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 13th November 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵⁶ Unknown Author, 'Ratepayers Might Have to Pay Extra ½ d in Pound Ratepayers Request as it Appears in Paper is Ludicrous says Councillor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th November 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵⁷ Ibid.

account, much heartburn was evident in certain quarters. Now that the Civic ship is again running on an even keel there will be general relief.⁵⁸

This 'small surplus' continued to grow for the Grahamstown City Council, and by 1954 it had increased from £-545 (the amount at the 31st December 1952) to £-6 467 by the 31st December 1953⁵⁹. By 1957 the surplus amount had further increased to £-13 000.⁶⁰ For eight years the Grahamstown City Council struggled to decrease their accumulated deficit and begin to stockpile a surplus of funds, at the heart of the matter was the fact that almost half of the rateable property within the City was exempt from the Municipal rate, due to Ordinance No 29 of 1935 (as amended), because of their classification as either educational or religious properties. Simply put, by taking the hard decision to increase the rate the Grahamstown City Council accepted they had no choice but to increase their Municipal rates, despite opposition from the City's ratepayers. At that point it was the only method to increase revenue and begin to decrease the deficit. The fact that two years after its inception the Grahamstown City Council had liquidated its debt and was starting to gain a small surplus indicates that it was the right choice, regardless of public opposition. The 'financial crisis' should not be considered the result of incompetence on the part of the City Council. As shown earlier the Council did not have adequate resources to decrease the deficit because of the unique nature of Grahamstown's primary industry: education. It could be argued that they should have taken the initiative first, and increased the amount paid on rateable property as the crisis started, but to do this would have increased the financial hardship faced by many Grahamstown citizens. The City Council only increased said the rate when it had no other choice which indicates that it was trying to protect the interests of Grahamstown ratepayers to the detriment of the City Treasury.

⁵⁸ Unknown Author, 'The City's Future', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1953 (Cory Library)

⁵⁹ Unknown Author, 'Steps to Ensure Future Progress of City Review of Municipal Activates in Mayoral Minute to be read tonight', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1954 (Cory Library)

⁶⁰ Unknown Author, 'An Increase in Municipal rates for 1957 Accumulated Surplus Totals 13 000 pounds', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th December 1957 (Cory Library)

Chapter Five

The Grahamstown Housing Crisis

During the period under review, the Grahamstown Housing Crisis refers to the perpetual lack of decent, adequate housing and the existence of “appalling slum conditions”,¹ for a large portion of the Grahamstown population, most specifically for African and Coloured Grahamstonians. The Housing Crisis is different from the other two ‘negative’ sections critiqued during this thesis, in that, unlike the ‘Financial Crisis’ and the ‘Beer Hall Debate’, by the end of 1960 the housing problem remained unsolved, the Grahamstown City Council was aware of the lack of decent housing in Grahamstown, which in the “Non-European Locations” promoted the “shockingly over-crowded”² slum conditions. Innumerable references from every year from 1946 and 1960 highlight this fact, for examples:

...the housing question has also proved a dire problem:³

...a critical state has been reached with regard to Native housing. The conditions in certain parts of the Location are appalling and more and more unauthorised shanties are springing up. 75 per cent of the existing buildings should be demolished and replaced. Many even accommodate from 30 persons upwards and there are barriers [sic] to the spread of tuberculosis and other infectious diseases⁴

...overcrowding of houses and sites in the Native area is the general rule. Living in such conditions with, in many instances, several families occupying the same room it is impossible to hope for any improvement in the physical and moral welfare of the people.⁵

These references present the terrible conditions existing in the Grahamstown Locations, “overcrowding”, “appalling”, and a “lack of hope” for betterment. It must be noted that while there existed a small section of the white Grahamstown population who were poor enough to warrant the City Council’s consideration to provide them with “sub-economic

¹ Mr Daniels, T. C., ‘Our City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th March 1948 (Cory Library)

² Unknown Author, ‘Location Crowding is Shocking, 600 New Houses Needed, Role of Registration Regulations’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 7th March 1951 (Cory Library)

³ Mr Parry, H.A., ‘Mayoral Year’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th August 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴ Dr. Boekstein, P., ‘City Council Discusses Native Housing, M.O.H. says 800 New Homes are Needed, Europeans need about 40 New Dwellings’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 27th September 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵ Dr. Boekstein, P., ‘City Gaining in Fight to Overcome Slum housing, M.O.H. Lifts Veil on Location Conditions in Report to Council’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 26th November 1954 (Cory Library)

housing”⁶ schemes, they were very much in the minority. In part this is explained by the fact that during the years 1946 to 1960 (the beginning of Apartheid), the emphasis for improved living conditions and betterment of life in general, was primarily extended to Whites rather than the African and Coloured populations, but in Grahamstown population densities played a crucial role. African and Coloured population groups in Grahamstown outnumbered their White counterparts. In 1946 Whites, living in Grahamstown numbered at 8 900 in comparison to Africans who numbered 10 942 and Coloureds 2 791.⁷ Five years later (1951), the White population had decreased to 8 659 while the African and Coloured populations had increased to 11 694 and 2 828 respectively.⁸ Thus far more dwellings were required to house the African and Coloured sections of the Grahamstown population than to the White section, a situation which promoted overcrowding and slum conditions.

An added factor that increased the terrible conditions of the Locations was the growing influx into the Grahamstown Locations of Africans moving from impoverished rural areas looking for work in an urban environment. It is estimated that there were hundreds of Africans who were illegally ‘squatting’ within the Grahamstown Locations, thus adding to the already overcrowded, squalid and filthy conditions,⁹ thereby further aggravating the shortage of housing in said Locations.

Originally, in 1946, there were four Grahamstown Locations: the Fingo Village Location, the Municipal Location, the Tyantji Location and the Coloured Village.¹⁰ The Fingo, Municipal and Tyantji Locations were predominantly African residences, while the Coloured Village (as the name indicates) was reserved for Coloureds. It must be noted that at this early point (1946), two years before the National Party came to power and began implementing their system of Apartheid, that the various Locations existing in Grahamstown were already divided according to race. This is not to say that ‘Apartheid’ as was defined by the National Government was in place in Grahamstown before the 1948 election, as there was mixing of the races in the Locations. Fingo Village had 504 Coloured people living there besides the 3 936 Africans who called it home, while the Coloured Village’s population consisted of 1 788 Coloured people, 498 Africans, 42 Asiatic and four Whites.¹¹ Despite these ‘lax’ racial divisions a housing consultant’s report stated that “It is always advisable, and it is the policy of the Native Affairs Department, to keep native Locations well separated from residential

⁶ Mr Muscott, W., ‘European Sub-Economic Housing’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 23rd February 1948 (Cory Library)

⁷ Unknown Author, ‘Census’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th July 1946 (Cory Library)

⁸ Dr. Boekstein, P., ‘Mr Nel Mayor of the City, Mr H.A. Mather-Pike Deputy Mayor’, 6th September 1951 (Cory Library)

⁹ Unknown Author, ‘To Stop Native Influx to City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 24th July 1952 (Cory Library)

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Census’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th July 1946 (Cory Library)

¹¹ Ibid.

areas occupied by other races”,¹² indicating that (regardless of the fact that multi-racial co-habitation existed in the Grahamstown Locations) an element of racial segregation most certainly existed in Grahamstown before the National Party’s Apartheid policy began to be implemented.

The Grahamstown City Council (as shown earlier) was well aware of the ‘appalling’ conditions which existed in the Location, how 75 per cent of the existing buildings¹³ should be torn down due to their dilapidated condition, and they did over the period under review attempt to produce various housing schemes, many with support from the Government to alleviate the situation. An example of one of these ‘housing schemes’ would be: in 1948 the Grahamstown City Council informed the National Housing and Planning Commission that the City’s immediate housing needs for African and Coloureds were 300 cottages for African families and 100 cottages for Coloureds families. The City Council wished to collaborate with the National Housing and Planning Commission in order to fund a housing scheme to construct the 400 cottages.¹⁴

In 1949 *Grocott’s* reported that “to reduce overcrowding and to replace dwellings unfit for human habitation for which it is estimated that some 200 new dwellings will be needed for European citizens, 200 for Coloured people and about 1000 for Natives”.¹⁵ In 1952 the newspaper reported that “negotiations for the establishment of a 25 000 pound Coloured National Housing Scheme are under way between the Grahamstown City Council and the Government”¹⁶ and in 1956 “at present the National Housing Commission are considering an application for a further £-80 000 from the Municipality who propose to embark on the biggest native housing scheme yet to be under taken in the city”.¹⁷ However, despite these various applications for Housing Schemes between the Grahamstown City Council and the Government housing institutions of the period, very little development occurred with regard to housing in the different African/Coloured Locations. The comments of two of White Grahamstown citizens highlight this state of affairs: Mr S.H. Grantham and H.N.H. who stated, respectively; “since 1928 only 75 houses have been built in the Location under the National Housing Schemes, and what avail is this when the Native population has increased

¹² Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown New Housing Scheme Consultants Report’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 31st March 1949 (Cory Library)

¹³ Dr. Boekstein, P., ‘City Council Discusses Native Housing, M.O.H. says 800 New Homes are Needed, Europeans need about 40 New Dwellings’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 27th September 1951 (Cory Library)

¹⁴ Unknown Author, ‘The City Council, Housing’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th September 1948 (Cory Library)

¹⁵ Unknown Author, ‘City Housing’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th April 1949 (Cory Library)

¹⁶ Unknown Author, ‘Housing Scheme under way, Council may embark on 25 000 pound project soon’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th September 1952 (Cory Library)

¹⁷ Unknown Author, ‘City Facing 19 0000 pounds Building Program, Housing Schemes Blocks of Flats take Toll of open lots and Waste land’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th February 1956 (Cory Library)

by 2 499 in the past fourteen years”,¹⁸ and “I look in vain for a mention of any building either erected in the last few years or contemplated in the future for those whose need is greatest, the Coloureds and Africans”.¹⁹

The reason for this lack of housing development in Grahamstown was caused by two different factors. Firstly, the fact that, as we have just seen, the Grahamstown City Council (during 1946 to 1952) experienced for an “eight year”²⁰ period a serious financial crisis which severely limited its ability to spend money on the development of Grahamstown, including African and Coloured housing. Secondly, a lack of consideration and help from the Government’s “National Housing and Planning Commission”,²¹ delayed and hindered the City Council’s attempts at housing development.

This is not to say that the City Council did not continue to attempt to provide decent dwellings for its Location population, the most successful development was the extension of the Grahamstown Native Locations to include the site of Makana’s Kop. This housing plan was to eliminate ‘slum conditions’ in the Locations as it was planned that, upon completion of the housing scheme at Makana’s Kop, all slum housing in the Location area would be condemned,²² thereby cleaning up and redeveloping the original Locations and at the same time, providing homes for Africans at Makana.

This section has attempted to show the limited success of housing projects and schemes to improve Location conditions by providing decent, adequate housing for the African and Coloured populations of Grahamstown, and so reducing overcrowding and improving physical living conditions. Many references at the time show that the Grahamstown City Council applied for numerous ‘housing loans’ from the ‘National Housing and Planning Commission’, yet despite these ‘plans’ very little actually took place. It would be very difficult to provide a comprehensive study of all of these attempted, failed housing schemes and, at the end of the day, all they would show was that, while the Grahamstown City Council did apply to Government housing commissions for numerous schemes, very little actually accrued from them.

The rest of this Chapter will deal with four specific events that occurred in Grahamstown during the period under review with regard to the development of housing in the City. These events are:

¹⁸ Mr Grantham, S.H., ‘Native Housing’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 7th November 1950 (Cory Library)

¹⁹ H.N.H, ‘Why No Word of Coloured Housing?’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 15th January 1953 (Cory Library)

²⁰ Unknown Author, ‘The City’s Future’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 3rd September 1953 (Cory Library)

²¹ Unknown Author, ‘Native Housing Bomb in City Council, 63768 Pound Loan Refused by Housing Commission – Deplorable Ignorance of Local Conditions – Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th April 1954 (Cory Library)

²² Unknown Author, ‘The City Council Native Housing Scheme, Opposing Opinions’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th April 1948 (Cory Library)

1. The Free Hold rights held by inhabitants of Fingo Village
2. The Home Ownership Scheme developed by the Grahamstown City Council
3. The development and extension of the Grahamstown Locations on the Makana's Kop area
4. The refusal of the National Housing and Planning Commission with regard to a £-63 768 housing loan for Grahamstown Africans and Coloureds

Free Hold Rights

The question of freehold rights refers to the fact that in the Fingo Village Municipal Location, contained many residents who held deeds of title to the land making up the Fingo Village. These title deeds were "granted by Her Majesty Queen Victoria through Sir George Grey to the veterans of past wars, namely the territory known as Cape Corps Camps",²³ and the deeds were passed down based on a hereditary title condition that allowed the family to legally own the deed. During 1946 the total population of Fingo Village was 4 440 people of which 504 were Coloureds.²⁴

The first reference to these 'title deeds' occurred in 1946 with a visit of the Government's Coloured Advisory Council,²⁵ a Government organised committee whose goal was to travel the country gaining information about Coloured people's grievances and subsequently giving advice on the development of their communities to both Coloured people and the City Council' or Municipal areas in which they lived. The 'Coloured Advisory Council' had been invited to Grahamstown by the Coloured Ratepayers Association and the European and Coloured Joint Council²⁶ in order to present their complaints about bad living conditions, housing problems, sanitary matters, general health and education, recreation and sporting facilities as well as street improvements²⁷ and to present their requests for an improvement in general living conditions. A further item that they wished to discuss with the Advisory Council a problem related to the hereditary title deeds that provided 'Free Hold Rights' to their owners:

The City Council, it was stated, had adopted sub-economic housing schemes which threatened these existing rights. Speakers emphasized that the bodies represented at the meeting (The Vigilance Committee of

²³ Unknown Author, 'Coloured People Grievances, Advisory Council in the City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th January 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁴ Unknown Author, 'Census Figures', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th July 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁵ Unknown Author, 'Coloured Advisory Council, Achievements and Hopes, Last Night's Meeting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th January 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁶ Unknown Author, 'Coloured People's Grievances, Advisory Council in the City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th January 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁷ Unknown Author, 'The Call of Democracy', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th January 1946 (Cory Library)

the Joint Council, Ratepayers Association and the Coloured ex-servicemen's Legion of the BESL) while opposing what they considered unreasonable interference with the rights of the coloured people, were desirous of assisting the City Council to the best of their ability in improving the living conditions of the Coloured community; but under no circumstances would they agree to permit any interference with the titles to their land in a manner that would change them under any housing scheme, from owners to merely tenants of the council.²⁸

The report refers to the fact that because of the very bad housing conditions in the Grahamstown Locations the City Council were considering demolishing around seventy-five per cent of Fingo Village,²⁹ in order to improve conditions in Fingo Village (as well as every other Grahamstown Location during this period), but because of the Free Hold Rights of many Fingo residents, they did not have the legal permission to go ahead with various building plans ('sub-economic' or otherwise). As indicated above, the Coloured people of Fingo Village refused to allow "unreasonable interference with the rights of the coloured people". The CAC had encountered difficulties regarding old titles in other parts of the country and consequently stated that it was not their intention to allow land to be taken away from people whose forefathers had legally earned it.³⁰

The Grahamstown City Council found themselves in a 'catch-22' situation: they wanted to improve Fingo Village, as did the residents of the Village, but this was impossible as it was highly unlikely that the Council could produce a 'improvement plan' that would have been accepted by the title deed holders. Whatever plan the City Council produced would probably have been a general plan for improvement of the whole Village (because of limited resources and money), which would have been unable to take into account 'individual' preferences of those people who had title deeds. Simply put, it would have been impossible for the City Council to improve Fingo Village with the approval of all the residents that had title deeds.

The inability of the Grahamstown City Council to improve 'slum conditions' and promote construction of decent housing within Fingo Village helped to promote the expansion of the Municipal Location towards the Makana's Kop area. Makana's Kop was considered as the only possible area for expansion which would not infringe upon other City Council developments and would allow further Location expansion in future.³¹

²⁸ Unknown Author, 'Coloured People's Grievances, Advisory Council in the City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th January 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Unknown Author, 'City Council Meeting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th February 1948 (Cory Library)

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'Coloured People Grievances, Advisory Council in the City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th January 1946 (Cory Library)

³¹ 'Native Housing, Location Schemes', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, 21st March 1949

It is interesting to note that the Grahamstown City Council considered it a “moral obligation” to respect the Free Hold Rights of individuals with title deeds:

We accept it as an axiom that the Fingo Native Village wherein Natives have freehold rights will remain as such for we believe that a moral obligation of replacing Freehold land that might be needed for other purposes will be respected and any preplanning work for bettering Housing conditions will prove too costly to be entertained.³²

It is quite possible that this “moral obligation” felt by the City Council was based on the fact that the title deeds were, technically, granted to the forefathers of the Fingo Village inhabitants, by Queen Victoria. The ‘White English’ Grahamstown public held very patriotic sentiments with regard to the English Royal Family and the British Empire in general (see Chapter Three) and would no doubt have considered it their duty to ensure that the ‘trust’ represented between the Royal Family and the Empire which the title deeds represented, would not be broken.

For this reason, the Grahamstown City Council did not attempt to change, remove or acquire the title deeds promoting Free Hold Rights in the Fingo Village Location, until, in 1955, the National Government that Grahamstown prepared a draft plan for the implementation of the Group Areas Act:

Old histories and titles to property dating back to the times succeeding the earlier Kaffir Wars [sic.] when land was granted in freehold to veteran soldiers by virtue of services rendered to the crown in the wars, are part of the legacy of the past which the presentation of a draft plan for the zoning of the city into zones for occupation by different racial groups has brought to light.³³

This is the only reference available during the period, in relation to Fingo Village that considered the preplanning of the Village in relation to the Group Areas Act of 1950. While many objections were presented to the City Council with regard to the re-zoning of Fingo Village, no action on the part of the City Council occurred during the next five years (1955 to 1960) to re-zone the area (see Chapter Nine, Group Areas Act section). It is possible that this was because of the City Council’s sentiments towards the Fingo Village title deed holders, or just as possible that the time and effort required to re-zone various Grahamstown areas would have been too great an economic and financial strain on the City Council, especially considering that during the latter period of the 1950s the Council was expending resources on the new Makana’s Kop Location.

³² Ibid.

³³ Unknown Author, ‘City Zoning Plans will touch old Legacy, Will uproot Titles going back three Generations-Possible economic upset also’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th April 1955 (Cory Library)

Whatever the reasons, the unique title deed ownership positions of the Fingo Village inhabitants presented the Grahamstown City Council with complications in regard to housing development and 'slum clearance'. Despite the desire of the City Council to improve the physical conditions of Fingo Village, their 'moral obligation' to respect the deeds of ownership held by residents of Fingo Village meant that they were unable to implement various housing schemes which did not meet the approval of the residents.

Home Ownership Scheme

The Grahamstown Home Ownership Scheme³⁴ refers to a specific housing scheme created by the Grahamstown City Council (on their own initiative) to provide Africans with the resources to construct new homes for themselves, by themselves, during the year 1954. It appears that, because of the many delays and numerous failings of the City Council and National Housing and Planning Commission to provide adequate housing for Grahamstown Location dwellers, the Grahamstown City Council decided to try a different tactic with regard to their housing plans. The Home Ownership Scheme was created to provide those Africans and Coloureds who were in a better financial position than the majority of their peers to build their own homes. Mr Oliver (Manager of Non-European Affairs (sic.) in Grahamstown) stated that "it was not only the better-off type of Native but also the ordinary working class who worked for a few pounds a month who were reaping the benefits of the new scheme".³⁵ Very simply, with regard to the Home Ownership Scheme, the Grahamstown Municipality set aside a sum of £-25 00 to help Africans who wished to own their own homes. The Municipality also provided timber, corrugated iron doors, windows complete with panes and wire for fencing. Those Africans who took advantage of the scheme were required to repay the Municipality in monthly instalments over a period of ten years.³⁶ The Grahamstown Municipality subsequently provided between £-150 and £-200 in money and material (iron doors, window panels etc.) for those Africans who wished to attempt to construct their own houses and made sure that a ten-year period was given to them in order to pay back the loan (in materials and money) that they had taken from the City Council.

The Home Ownership Scheme, during the early part of its inception, was a great success: and by May 1954 the City Council had distributed the allocated £-25 00 to forty-four African loan applicants who took advantage of the scheme by and the funds had run dry. On average each applicant received a loan of £-50 per unit. The Scheme appeared so successful

³⁴ Unknown Author, 'City Revises Plan to House Native, 63 768 pounds Native Loan to be Split between two Schemes – and Resubmitted', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th May 1954 (Cory Library)

³⁵ Unknown Author, 'They Build Their Own Homes, City Councils Home Ownership Scheme made Native Thrifty', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th July 1954 (Cory Library)

³⁶ Ibid.

that it was recommended to the Financial and General Purposes Committee that they should consider the possibility of attempting to raise a larger loan in order to enable 100 Location residents to take advantage of the scheme.³⁷ However, until more funds became available from the National Housing Commission the Municipality had no further resources to provide plots and materials for housing construction. Those who had received funds and material from the City Council however were beginning construction of their homes. Mr Thomas Boydell, a *Grocott's Daily Mail* reporter, reported on the home building on a visit to the Location, where he found about forty new houses being constructed from brick within two areas of the Location, with their owners working "feverishly" to complete them.³⁸

The Home Ownership Scheme, was designed to serve "to alleviate some of the disease and discomfort experienced by these people (the Africans) and would give them something to work for and gain a sense of responsibility by looking after a home which they know is theirs".³⁹ A noble aim, but unfortunately a year later (1955) and the scheme became less tenable for the poorer sections of the Grahamstown Locations:

Prospective owners of homes built under the National Housing Scheme in Grahamstown have been astounded by the latest move of the Grahamstown Municipality who have not only increased the down payment owners will be required to pay before moving in but have also charged them with surveying and fencing costs. In addition, these owners are being told that they will have to pay interest on the loan raised by the Municipality. This means that they already have to pay 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent interest in spite of the fact that they have not yet moved into their homes.⁴⁰

This increase in price was so great that many of the Home Ownership Scheme participants considered that "it would have been cheaper to build their homes under the loan schemes made available by building societies in the City".⁴¹ After this increase in price, very little information was available with regard to the Home Ownership Scheme, suggesting that it failed as a useful self-building program. In 1956 Mrs Sampson stated that the Municipality's Home Ownership Scheme had so far fallen very short of its expectations.⁴² Despite the

³⁷ Unknown Author, 'City Revises Plan to House Native, 63 768 pounds Native Loan to be Split between two Schemes – and Resubmitted', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th May 1954 (Cory Library)

³⁸ Unknown Author, 'They Build Their Own Homes, City Councils Home Ownership Scheme made Native Thrifty', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th July 1954 (Cory Library)

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Unknown Author, 'Home Ownership Scheme Criticised, Down Payments and Interest Charges Not as Thought Out', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th June 1955 (Cory Library)

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Mrs Sampson, 'N.C.W. Annual Meeting in City, Information Report on Housing', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th November 1956 (Cory Library)

usefulness of the scheme and the positive reaction from Location dwellers to its original unveiling, the increase in the total price of the scheme ended its usefulness both on the part of Africans who were desperately trying to better their living conditions, and the Grahamstown City Council who were attempting to improve general living conditions in the Location. Unfortunately no information is available as to why the Grahamstown City Council decided to increase the general price of applying for the loan, but it is clear that after the increase, the Home Ownership Scheme lost its usefulness to those who needed cheap housing.

Refused Housing Loan from the Government

This sub-section will focus on an application by the Grahamstown City Council to the National Housing and Planning Commission for a loan of “£-63 768 for a sub-economic housing scheme for Natives”⁴³ within Grahamstown which was refused by said National Housing and Planning Commission thus showing the difficulties that the Grahamstown City Council had in dealing with the National Housing and Planning Commission. However, this focuses on an extreme case and should not be considered to be the norm in relation to dealings between the City Council and the Commission. Never-the-less it is important to highlight the fact that the provision of housing in Grahamstown was the City Council’s responsibility and it was therefore their responsibility to shoulder the blame for the housing crisis. Without the resources and help of the Commission, the City Council would not have had the ability or finances to provide housing for their citizens, especially in view of the Financial Crisis that they experienced during 1946 to 1952.

The Grahamstown City Council’s original request of the National Housing and Planning Commission was for a loan of £-63 768 for the development of a sub-economic housing scheme for Africans.⁴⁴ However after much correspondence between the City Council and the Commission it was announced that the Commission had rejected the application for funds for a sub-economic housing scheme as it considered that provision should first be made for Africans in the economic group before focusing on those in the sub-economic group.⁴⁵

This did not sit well with the Mayor Mr P. D. McGahey or the rest of the City Council:

⁴³ Unknown Author, ‘Native Housing Bomb in City Council, 63768 Pound Loan Refused by Housing Commission – Deplorable Ignorance of Local Conditions – Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th April 1954 (Cory Library)

⁴⁴ Unknown Author, ‘Official Side-track’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th April 1954 (Cory Library)

⁴⁵ Unknown Author, ‘Native Housing Bomb in City Council, 63768 Pound Loan Refused by Housing Commission – Deplorable Ignorance of Local Conditions – Mayor’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th April 1954 (Cory Library)

The irate Mayor said that the drawing up of this scheme had meant many years of hard work for the City Engineer and Councillors and it was deplorable that a letter of this nature should come from so important a body as the National Housing Commission.⁴⁶

Apparently the City Council had been considering this scheme for about ten years and once they had finally agreed upon it the matter was turned down. The Mayor considered the Commission's reasons as "ridiculous" as the Council "were making homes available to the economic classes most of whom live in the Fingo Village and were supplying them with material and land on which to build their own houses",⁴⁷ through the City Council's 'Home Ownership Scheme'. The City Council believed that Grahamstown urgently need sub-economic housing rather than economic housing. The Mayor felt that the Commission's decision to refuse the application for the loan "showed a gross lack of knowledge concerning the Native question in Grahamstown, a thing the officials knew very little about".⁴⁸ *Grocott's Daily Mail* reported this lack of knowledge of Grahamstown's conditions as "an unpardonable sin committed by the Native Affairs Department".⁴⁹

African people in the sub-economic bracket earned € 12 10 shillings per month or less,⁵⁰ an amount that would not allow them to take advantage of the 'Home Ownership Scheme' and therefore the group which required most provision in the way of housing and consequently their only chance of a better living environment lay with the City Council.

In order to explain the seriousness of the Commission's refusal of the sub-economic housing loan, that Professor D. K. While (member of the City Council) personally travelled to Pretoria to have an interview with the Native Affairs Department about the sub-economic loan. The Commission's refusal was presented to the Grahamstown City Council on the 29th April 1954, and Professor D.K. White returned from the meeting with the Native Affairs Department on the 10th May 1954, thus a total of eleven days separated the City Council's outcry at the refusal of the loan with the return of Professor D.K. White from the Department. This promptness indicates the urgency the City Council felt to rectify the refusal of the loan.

Professor White informed that City Council that the Native Affairs Department was willing to proceed with the £-63 768 loan if the City Council revised its application for the loan to include housing development for the African economic class living in Grahamstown. Simply put, the loan would be split, providing a portion to be spent on a sub-economic housing scheme for Africans and a portion to be spent on economic housing for Africans as directed

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Unknown Author, 'Official Side-track', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th April 1954 (Cory Library)

⁵⁰ Ibid.

by the Housing Commission. The City Council decided to split the amount of £-64 768 into two segments, £-45 000 of which would be expended on sub-economic housing as originally planned by the Council while the rest of the loan, £-18 768, would be spent on economic housing.⁵¹ Professor White assured the City Council that the Native Affairs Department was anxious to see the scheme completed once the Council had resubmitted their application supported by appropriate data.

The City Council agreed to the conditions of the loan and, it can be assumed, subsequently it acquired it; unfortunately no information was available about how the loan was implemented for African housing. What this incident shows is that the Grahamstown City Council did not have the power to fully decide what to do with the funds received from the National Housing and Planning Commission. The Housing and Planning Commission and the Native Affairs Department could withhold finances to City Councils if they did not consider the requests to be appropriate. The National Housing Council's decision shows lack of understanding of Grahamstown's specific needs for sub-economic housing. At this point the Home Ownership Scheme was underway providing the economic section of Grahamstown with the ability to construct their own homes. It was the Africans who could not capitalise on this scheme that required the most help, a factor that the Commission does not seem to have taken into account.

The Grahamstown City Council's problems with the Commission: a refusal of funds, a lack of understanding of local conditions, an insistence of promoting the Commission's ideas with relation to housing, did not absolve the City Council of the responsibility to ensure the development of housing in Grahamstown, but the preferences of the National Housing and Planning Commission most certainly hindered them in their task.

Makana's Kop Housing Scheme

The Makana's Kop housing project is one of the few housing projects that the Grahamstown City Council adequately developed during the period under review. Makana's Kop was considered the best possible position for the development of a new Location (extending from the old ones):

The site above Makana's Kop is the one most favoured for Native housing as it is on level ground and houses could be erected cheaper. It would also provide for unlimited extensions in the future. When these houses are erected it is proposed to condemn all slums in the Location area, the

⁵¹ Unknown Author, 'City Revises Plan to Housing Natives, 63 768 pound Native Housing Loan to be Split between two Schemes – and Resubmitted', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th May 1954 (Cory Library)

Council to undertake the rebuilding of the Location under existing legislation and in accordance with existing financial arrangements.⁵²

As indicated above, the City Council considered the construction of the Makana's Kop housing project to be the first stage in slum clearance in the Locations. The new Location would help to decrease the overcrowded nature of the Grahamstown Locations and provide the City Council with the opportunity and space to begin redeveloping the structural layout of the Locations (street plans, size of plots, water and sewage connections etc.). At this point the City Council estimated that the immediate requirement for housing for African families was about 300 cottages.⁵³ A new housing scheme in a new area was urgent.

Major Collings (who was appointed Housing Consultant of Grahamstown at the end of 1948)⁵⁴ agreed with the City Council's assessment of the Makana's Kop area as potentially the best site in Grahamstown for a new housing scheme. Major Collings supported this new housing scheme because "whatever the actual shortage for the different races may be, it is obvious that it is considerable"⁵⁵ and therefore required immediate action. By March of 1951 the City Council had decided that, depending on the consent of the Minister of Native Affairs, the Municipal Location's boundaries would be extended to include Makana's Kop.⁵⁶ This decision was not unanimous but was won by eight votes to five. Councillor Shaw disagreed with the Council's decisions based on three different factors that he considered would reduce the positive value of the project. Firstly, the added distance between Makana's Kop and Grahamstown would greatly increase to the hardships experienced by Africans living there. Councillor Shaw estimated that it would cost an extra shilling a day to go to and from work, which would add a cost of 30 extra shillings a month to their expenses. Secondly, Councillor Shaw believed that the financial effort of developing a new housing scheme at Makana's Kop would prove too great for the City Council to bear, in that it was beyond their means to complete a project of such scale. Thirdly, he did not believe that the proposed new housing scheme was the best method of the City Council to remove the terrible slum conditions that existed in the current Grahamstown Locations. Councillor Shaw's motion was seconded by Councillor Cooke who further stated that instead of attempting to extend the boundaries of the Location the City Council should have rather attempted to improve the slum conditions already existing in the Locations.⁵⁷

⁵² Unknown Author, 'The City Council, Opposing Opinions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th April 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Major Collings, 'The Mayoral Minute Activities of the Past Year, Accumulated Deficit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd September 1949 (Cory Library)

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Unknown Author, 'Extension of Locations Boundaries Sought, Demolish the Shanties First, Urge Dissenting Councillors', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Regardless of these dissenting opinions, the City Council decided to proceed with the proposed housing schemes, based on two factors. Firstly, the opinion of Major Collings (the Grahamstown Housing Consultant) who emphasised “that the process of building on a completely new site until overcrowding is relieved always proves more practicable than gradual extensions from existing developments and subsequent deplaning become the simpler”.⁵⁸ Secondly, Councillor McGahey stated that:

[T]his question of extending the boundaries of the Location had arisen about four years ago. At that time the opinion of leading Native opinion had been summed up in the questions: ‘What is an extra mile to and from work if it leads us to better homes?’⁵⁹

An added incentive to begin development of Makana’s Kop was most certainly the fact that to “relieve overcrowding approximately 650 new houses are required and at least 600 houses in the Locations should be torn down”.⁶⁰ Comparing this to the estimated ‘300 houses’ that the City Council believed they required to decrease overcrowding in 1949, indicates that the housing situation was getting worse.

Five years later the Minister of Native Affairs had granted his permission to begin building at the Makana’s Kop, a total amount of £-63 372 had been earmarked for the construction costs and it was estimated that about 1 500 Africans would be furnished with new houses. Concern, however, was expressed as to whether many Africans would be able to pay the high levels of rent for the houses.⁶¹ Nevertheless, building began on the Makana’s Kop area and the work was scheduled to be finished in March 1957.⁶²

On the 28th March 1957, Mr G.J. Krige (Mayor of Grahamstown) officially opened the Makana’s Kop housing site and presented the first twelve residents with their house keys,⁶³ formally beginning the new Location’s existence. Four months later (during September 1957) it appeared that the new housing scheme was proving a complete success, with a

⁵⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown New Housing Scheme Consultant’s Report’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 31st March 1949 (Cory Library)

⁵⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Extension of Locations Boundaries Sought, Demolish the Shanties First, Urge Dissenting Councillors’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

⁶⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Views of the Committee’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

⁶¹ Unknown Author, ‘City’s 63372 Native Housing Scheme, New Township going up at Makana’s Kop site – ready-made walls fit like side of box’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 25th June 1956 (Cory Library)

⁶² Unknown Author, ‘Native Housing Scheme Ready in March’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 2nd October 1956 (Cory Library)

⁶³ Unknown Author, ‘City Gave Priority to the Native Housing, Mayor Hands over Keys of First 12 Houses to lucky Occupants’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 28th March 1957 (Cory Library)

further 36 houses⁶⁴ having been completed and occupied and plans being developed to further extend the area.

However, problems began to occur with regard to the lack of payment on the Makana's Kop houses by their residents, as many Africans began to find the high rents impossible to pay ("native housing rentals in the Native Locations range from £-1 12 shillings 9 pence to £-2 15 shillings per month"),⁶⁵ and subsequently were 'ejected' from the new houses at Makana's Kop for failing to keep up with their rent. In fact, some of these families were attempting to move back into their old homes in Fingo Village because they could not afford the rentals. Two years later in 1959, Mr Freeman, the Manager of Non-European Affairs in Grahamstown, stated that 15 to 20 families were ejected monthly from Makana's Kop houses because they were unable to pay the rents.⁶⁶

With regard to the Makana's Kop scheme, the Grahamstown City Council made a critical mistake in the construction of the new Location. While they provided decent accommodation for Africans in a new, clean environment, they did not adequately consider all the factors involved in the development of Makana. The general level of home rentals was too expensive for a large portion of the Grahamstown African population, who were subsequently 'ejected' from their new homes. It must be remembered that the section of the African and Coloured population that the City Council was having difficulties housing were the 'sub-economic' section who, by definition did not have readily available funds.

Throughout the period under review, the Grahamstown City Council struggled to house the African and Coloured sections of the population. Factors hindering this advance included the Grahamstown Financial Crisis, a lack of co-operation on the part of the National Housing and Planning Commission and the Native Affairs Department, and a high rental and interest rate on houses and buildings. The general bad state of housing in Grahamstown was not entirely the City Council's fault, but at the end of the day the Grahamstown City Council failed in their duty to provide adequate housing for the African and Coloured population of Grahamstown. Chapter Six will focus on the controversy of the 'Beer Hall Debate', a second instance where the Grahamstown City Council failed to consider adequately the effects of its plans on the African and Coloured population.

⁶⁴ Unknown Author, 'More Housing for City Natives, Makana's Kop Scheme being steadily extended', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th November 1957 (Cory Library)

⁶⁵ Unknown Author, 'Housing Scheme Ejectments Backfiring?, Families said to be looking up their former homes in Fingo Village', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th November 1957 (Cory Library)

⁶⁶ Unknown Author, 'Our Native Housing Position, Ejectments are few-Another 400 houses in prospect', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th April 1959 (Cory Library)

Chapter Six

The Beer Hall Debate

This section will examine the controversial decisions that the Grahamstown City Council took towards the Municipal Location's Beer Hall, during the period under review, despite the various social protests made against it by sections of the community. Despite continuous public outcries and community dissatisfaction, which the City Council was aware of, their attitude towards the Municipal Location Beer Hall remained completely inflexible. The 'Beer Hall Debate' is a clear example of a town's City Council completely ignoring the desires and requests of a section of its public, in the Council's efforts for community improvement, and implementing their own plans regardless of criticism.

The primary reason for Municipal Beer Halls during the early apartheid period was to help finance the African townships through the profit raised from the sale of government-sanctioned beer,¹ which could only be procured through the Municipal drinking Halls. Traditionally, African women brewed beer for ceremonial occasions² but this practice became illegal with the implementation of Government and Municipal Beer Halls, thus removing the option of choice (in relation to their drinking habits) for the majority of Location dwellers.

The Grahamstown Municipal Beer Hall was situated on the corner of Albert Road and Wood Street and commissioned during 1939 despite strong protests from the community:

When that institution was begun by the then town council in 1939 it was in the teeth of strong opposition. Two large meetings, one of men and the other of women were held in protest in the Location. In addition, the council was approached by representatives of the Temperance society, Toc H men, Toc H Women and the National Council of Europeans and Africans. In March 1939 the last of these bodies passed at a public meeting a unanimous resolution recording 'its emphatic protest against the building of a Beer Hall and against the attitude of the City Council in ignoring public opinion'.³

¹ Helen Holleman, Lynette Paterson (Eds.), 'Grahams Town the Untold Story: A social history and self-guided tour', A Black Sash Publication, 2002. Pg. 26.

² Ibid. Pg. 26.

³ M.E. Kerron, 'Forgotten Facts', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th October 1952 (Cory Library)

The Native Advisory Board and the National Council of Women also opposed the Beer Hall and over 207 signatures were gathered by the South African Temperance Society to fight the Hall's establishment.⁴

Regardless of these protests the Grahamstown City Council completed the erection of the Beer Hall arguing that firstly, the Beer Hall would stop illegal brewing in the Location and secondly, that the profits from the establishment would be used to finance various other Location services and building.⁵ It must be noted that the Grahamstown City Council had been attempting to curtail homemade brewing and selling of illegal beer within the Location from the beginning of the 20th century.⁶

Seven years later, in November 1946, the Grahamstown Branch of the National Council for African Women sent a memorandum protesting the continued existence of the Municipal Beer Hall.

The Memorandum states:

The Beer Hall:

This was put up in this town in the teeth of strong opposition from the African section of the population and some Europeans. It has not eliminated the brewing of poisonous concoctions. It has not lessened crime. It is the worst public building in this town. We have no evidence that the profits which accrue from the sale of beer are used specifically for the benefit and improvement of the Location. If it was intended to satisfy Native custom in the matter of beer drinking it has failed in that respect. Any African of any age or sex may go in to drink as long as he or she has the requisite cash. This is contrary to native custom which does not allow boys and girls to visit public places of beer drinking and drink with their seniors. In many ways it has only helped to further lower the personal dignity and self-respect of those of our women folk who frequent these places.

Recreational Centres

We feel that rather than have Beer Halls the personal dignity and self-respect of our people would be enhanced by the opening of Milk Bars, Soup Kitchens and Recreational centres in the towns. Some years back milk was sold to the people at subsidised rates in the Grahamstown

⁴ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., *A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945*, Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.], 1993. Pg. 163.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Southey, Nicholas., "A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1984 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 195.

Location. The scheme was fully supported by the African people. We feel sure that milk bars and soup kitchens would meet with the widest approval among the Africans. We wonder why at present such schemes have not received the same public support and propaganda in the Press and elsewhere as have these Beer Halls. We recommend very strongly Milk bars, Soup Kitchens and Home Brewing.

Again we are confident of your full support in these proposals and hope that you will find it possible to submit them in our behalf to suitable quarters.⁷

The memorandum leaves very little doubt that sections of the Municipal Location (specifically the local branch of the National Council of African Women) considered the Beer Hall an unwanted, dangerous establishment promoting social evils at the cost of valuable, much needed, institutions such as “soup kitchens”, “milk bars” and “recreational centres”. Specific mention was made in relation to the two arguments used by the City Council for the construction of the Beer Hall during 1939, how it (the Beer Hall) had not “eliminated the brewing of poisonous concoctions”, and how there was “no evidence that the profits which accrued from the sale of beer are used specifically for the benefit and improvement of the Location”. Despite this strongly worded protest memorandum, the City Council did nothing to implement the suggestions, made by the National Council of African Women. Indeed there is no evidence to suggest that the City Council even took the time to respond to the memorandum. This attitude of the City Council, of ignoring social protest in relation to the Municipal Beer Hall, was its predominant attitude during the years under review, and it hindered community development in the Municipal Location.

This attitude is again evident during 1951, when on the 29th March the Council announced that it had decided to construct a new Beer Hall and brewery at a cost of £-8 000 on the existing site in the Location of the original Beer Hall, which would have a production capacity of 500 gallons a day.⁸ This decision was based on the recommendation of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, which emphasized:

1. That the present Beer Hall constructed in 1938 was merely a temporary structure.
2. The beer produced at the Beer Hall was made using “unhygienic methods” and subsequently it was not very popular with Africans.
3. It was considered that Municipal brewing was the only reliable means of supplying beer to Africans and to allow domestic brewing was out of the question as it could not be properly controlled.

⁷ B.E. Newcombe, ‘Location Conditions and the Beer Hall’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 16th June 1952 (Cory Library)

⁸ Unknown Author, ‘8000 pound Beer Hall for Location’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

4. It was further considered that the profit accrued from the new Beer Hall would meet the interest and redemption charges on the loan gained to construct the new building as well as help removed the deficit on African revenue.⁹

Councillor J.J. Cooke stated that “the existing beer hall is a thorough disgrace to the city and it is allowing conditions to exist under which the shebeens are being encouraged”. He said, “we should clear this position up as soon as possible”.¹⁰ Professor D.K. White agreed with him in order to “promote hygienic conditions in the Location”. However not all Council members approved of this decision. Councillor B.T. Liddiard stated that he was “really surprised to see this recommendation especially when the financial position of the town was borne in mind”,¹¹ while Mrs D.M. Bayes doubted whether the new hall would produce profits to help with other Location amenities as the “present Beer hall had never shown any appreciable profit”,¹² focusing on a concern that the National Council of African Women had presented four years earlier. It must be noted that the City Council did not mention any of the points made by the National Council of African Women in their memorandum, clearly ignoring the strongly worded ‘recommendations’ made four years earlier. It is also interesting to note that the two main arguments for the construction of the Beer Hall in 1939 that it would firstly, stop illegal brewing within the Location and secondly, use the funds from the Beer Hall to improve amenities in the Location, had been proven false. The points that Councillors Cooke and Bayes brought up during this Council Meeting, “that shebeens are being encouraged” and “lack of funds from the Beer Hall to provide improved Location amenities” highlight this.

Despite these failings however, the City Council announced on the 30th November 1951 that Messer’s Brooke and Woodland would be paid £-3 379 for the construction of a Beer Hall in the Location, to be built according to the Council’s specifications.¹³ Both the ‘Public Health and non-European Affairs Committee’ and the ‘Finance Committee’ recommended accordingly.

This decision did not go unchallenged however as, in the following month (December), three Grahamstown citizens in the expressed their dismay at the Council’s decisions. Mrs Lillian M. Britten wrote:

If the councillors would investigate fairly the real influence of this beer hall in the life of the people, they would, even at this late stage, cry a halt and

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Unknown Author, ‘Beer Hall will cost 3379 pounds’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th November 1951 (Cory Library)

ask their contractors to transfer their work to housing. It is not only what happens in the beer hall that is important but what the men do after they have drunk what they can there. I hear that work has already been started in this bigger and better beer hall, so the council must be hurrying – a strange contrast to the case of the TB hospital, which took the council over three years to make and it was only an existing building which had to be adapted. Increase in the consumption of beer will inevitably mean more TB.¹⁴

This comment highlights the severe need for housing in the Locations (see Chapter Five) and the existing Tuberculosis epidemics (see Chapter Seven).

Mr K.C. Ngxiki of St Phillips Mission not only used very strong imagery to express his opinion of the Beer Hall but also questioned whether the money raised from said Hall was actually being used for the Location:

The sight of the beer hall is a genuine one for money mongers, but a disgraceful and malignant sight to those who advocate social and health welfare. The very atmosphere is polluted, let alone the mischievous character of this area! Yet the Council is fully determined that the beer hall shall thrive, a treacherous enterprise indeed. I suspect the beer hall is run at a loss as there is no material gain in any way or form each year and the money spent on the beer hall could have been and still can be spent utilised in some other profitable way which would promote good health and good social behaviour. I submit that this state of affairs that exists in the Grahamstown Location is beyond tolerance. Will the City Council find a remedy that such unprofitable undertakings should cease to have any reason to exist.¹⁵

M.D.B. (no record of his real name) not only agreed with the points that Mr K.C. Ngxiki made but when further to state:

Are the council quite out of their right sense thus to put such an obstacle in the way of those who are striving their best for higher ideas but are yet struggling with so called civilised ideas? Civilised! God defend them from all evil and this the greatest! Cannot they possibly realise what this move may mean not only to the Location but beyond into our city? To the Location it will bring further poverty and sickness.¹⁶

All three concerned citizens adequately indicated not only their strong opposition to the newly proposed Beer Hall, but also their belief that such an institution was harming the

¹⁴ Lillian M. Britten, 'Beer or Houses?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th December 1951 (Cory Library)

¹⁵ K.C. Ngxiki, 'Location Beer Hall', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th December 1951 (Cory Library)

¹⁶ M.D.B., 'Beer Hall is Obstacle', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th December 1951 (Cory Library)

community to which it was attached and would continue to do so, despite the City Council's contrary attitude. Again, the City Council did not engage with these apprehensive citizens, ignoring them and their concerns.

Further public outcries arose during the early part of 1952 when the City Council voted on the resolution to keep the Beer Hall open on Sundays. Despite the fact that Councillors D.N. Bayes, B.T. Liddiard, E.C. Dicks, W. Ross-Nunn, G. I. Shaw and P.D. McGahey all voted against this (for a variety of reasons – Councillor Shaw stated that there would be more assaults because of it, Ross-Nunn did not believe that public opinion would want this and McGahey because the Location Superintendent was not available on Sundays).¹⁷ Regardless of these dissenting opinions however, the resolution was pushed through on the Mayor's (Mr Nel) vote. No reason is given for this decision; the City Council did not provide any information as to why such a measure was necessary, despite the fact that six of its members were opposed to it.

A possible reason can be deduced from Mrs L.D. Mahlasela's (President of the Grahamstown Branch of the National Council of African Women) comments in regard to this decision; she stated that "it would appear if a Beer Hall is opened on Sunday people are encouraged to indulge in beer drinking on this day".¹⁸ Indeed this is the only reason why the City Council would open the Beer Hall on a Sunday, so that people could go and pay for alcoholic beverages, thus providing revenue for the City Council. During this period the City Council's finances were in deficit (see Chapter Five) and, as indicated by Councillor Bayes earlier; the "present Beer hall had never shown any appreciable profit".¹⁹ In fact, the City Council's 'Beer Account' figures showed the surplus and deficit during the period 1947 to 1951. The deficit incurred from the Beer Hall during the period under review was: 1947 – £-12 2 shillings, 1948 - £-151 6 shillings 8 pence, 1949 – £-84 6 shillings 8 pence, 1950 £-74 15 shillings 11 pence, for a total deficit of £-323 4 shillings and 4 pence.²⁰ The only surplus recorded during this period was for 1951 which produced £-175, 6 shillings and 6 pence,²¹ giving a total deficit of £-148 during the years 1947 to 1951. Hence a likely reason for the decision of the City Council to keep the Beer Hall open on Sundays could have been an attempt to increase revenue raised from the sale of beer.

¹⁷ Unknown Author, 'Mayors Casting Vote in Beer Hall Debate', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th May 1952 (Cory Library)

¹⁸ L.D. Mahlasela 'Opposed to Opening of Beer Hall on Sundays', *Grocott's Daily Mail*. 10th June 1952 (Cory Library)

¹⁹ Unknown Author, '8000 pound Beer Hall for Location', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

²⁰ Unknown Author, 'Beer Hall is for good of Natives, Town Office Memorandum Gives Councils Views', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th September 1952 (Cory Library)

²¹ Ibid.

Mrs Mahlasela criticism's referred directly to the same points that the National Council of African Women's 1946 memorandum presented: it requested that the Beer Hall be converted to a "soup kitchen", "milk bar" or "recreational centre":

I am voicing the opinion of many African citizens here when I say they would appreciate very much the action of our City fathers if the beautiful building newly built was to meet the above needs. Here, not only children would get nourishing soup and milk, but the older people too could be catered for as malnutrition is rife amongst them as well.²²

B.A. Newcombe seconds her protest at the decision to open the hall on Sunday and insisted on publishing (with the National Council of African Women's consent) the 1946 memorandum because:

This was written in November 1946 and today owing to the high price of food and clothing, conditions are even worse. While the cost of everything has soared, the wages received by African workers in our City have not increased proportionately. It have been estimated that at least 75% of non-Europeans in the Location suffer from malnutrition as a contributor cause of ill-health and if it were not for the soup kitchen and other charities, many small children would die of starvation. Surely the Municipality should work in co-operation with existing organisations for the betterment of conditions, yet the African mothers regard the Beer hall as contributory factor to the unhappiness of their homes.²³

Another Grahamstown resident, Mr Gross, was also concerned with the decision to open the Beer Hall on Sundays. He protested:

Now that there is a shortage of sugar and consequently less illicit brewing in the Location it seems that there should be a chance of turning some Africans from the evil habit of drinking. But instead we hear that they are being encouraged to attend the beer hall and they are doing this in ever increasing numbers.²⁴

While there is no evidence to suggest that the City Council actively attempted to encourage people to the drinking hall, the fact that they allowed its use on Sunday should be viewed as

²² L.D. Mahlasela, 'Opposed to Opening of Beer Hall on Sundays', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th June 1951 (Cory Library)

²³ B.E Newcombe, 'Location Conditions and the Beer Hall', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th June 1952 (Cory Library)

²⁴ A.H. Gross, 'Why not a Milk Bar', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th June 1952 (Cory Library)

encouragement. As Mrs Mahlasela wrote: “it would appear, if a Beer Hall is opened on Sunday, people are encouraged to indulge in beer drinking on this day”.²⁵

The City Council did not respond to these protests or recommendations.

Since the end of 1939, Grahamstown residents, specifically Location dwellers, had protested, opposed and resented the Municipal Location Beer Hall, and yet the City Council had done nothing in response to their requests. Quite the contrary. The Grahamstown City Council had actively encouraged and renovated the Municipal Location Beer Hall, spending thousands of pounds to improve its facilities and production. Despite continuing public disapproval and running at a loss, the City Council refused to remove it. However with the beginnings of the Defiance Campaign in South Africa, the Municipal Location Beer Hall became the focal point for a serious boycott that would last the better part of a year, expressing the resentment that large sections of the Municipal Location felt for it and decreasing revenue from it.

The Defiance Campaign began in Grahamstown on the 5th August when 58 people were arrested at 1 a.m. in Hill Street because they were out at night without night passes.²⁶ Between the 5th August and the 4th September, a total of 407²⁷ people were arrested in Grahamstown for actively supporting the Defiance Campaign.

The Beer Hall Boycott began on the 9th August 1952, four days after the Defiance Campaign began in the city. Three hundred Africans arrived at the hall, removed all those who were inside and then refused to allow anyone else into the establishment,²⁸ “they were demanding a milk bar instead of a beer hall and preventing people from using the beer hall”.²⁹ According to a report by the Police Constable who was in charge of dispersing this protest:

One of the leaders of the crowd addressing the Police Head Constable said that he and his people wanted to brew their own kaffir beer at their homes and that the natives in the Location required a milk bar. He was told by the police officer that it was not the duty of the police to grant certificates for a milk bar in the Location. The officer further added that the crowd was not to resort to violence in preventing any person from

²⁵ L.D. Mahlasela ‘Opposed to Opening of Beer Hall on Sundays’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 10th June 1952 (Cory Library)

²⁶ Helen Holleman, Lynette Paterson (Ed’s), ‘Grahams Town the Untold Story: A social history and self-guided tour’, A Black Sash Publication, 2002. Pg. 40.

²⁷ Ibid. Pg. 40.

²⁸ Unknown Author, ‘City Native ‘Defers’ sent to Fort Glamorgan’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 11th August 1952 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Helen Holleman, Lynette Paterson (Ed’s), ‘Grahams Town the Untold Story: A social history and self-guided tour’, A Black Sash Publication, 2002. Pg. 40.

entering the beer hall. He ordered the crowd to disperse which they did within a matter of minutes.³⁰

It must be noted that from the evidence available the crowd who began the boycott on the 5th August did not link their protest to either the Defiance Campaign or to political principles; when the Police arrived to disperse the people the only 'slogan' that was expressed was, 'We want a milk bar'. Added to this is the fact that Grahamstown was the only City in the Union where a boycott was considered to be part of the Defiance Campaign,³¹ indicating that in view of the general campaign it was an anomaly, probably caused by local considerations.

Eleven days later, on the 22nd August, the boycott was still actively continuing, with no mention of political motives. The sole aim of the boycott seems to have been to stop the Beer Hall from functioning and to this end, hundreds of Africans were gathering at night outside the Hall to prevent people from using it. A municipal official stated that:

All our sales at the Beer Hall have been done on the quiet, most natives are scared to buy at night so they slip in the early morning buy a few pints and drink it before the crowd congregates.³²

This indicates that those who were in favour of the Beer Hall were in the minority, so it would be logical to conclude that the large majority of Location dwellers supported the Boycott, either actively or passively.

A month later, on the 30th September, the City Council released a memorandum detailing their position in relation to the Location Beer Hall. The two main arguments that the City Council presented for the continuation of the Beer Hall were the same arguments that the Council had been making since the Hall's construction in 1939. Firstly, the beer produced at the Beer Hall was made in clean hygienic conditions with a "high nutritional value containing proteins, vitamin B etc."³³ and secondly, "the establishment of milk bars and eating houses can only be undertaken when it is possible to subsidise these amenities from profits derived from the beer hall".³⁴

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'City Native 'Defers' sent to Fort Glamorgan', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th August 1952 (Cory Library)

³¹ Helen Holleman, Lynette Paterson (Ed's), *Grahams Town the Untold Story: A social history and self-guided tour*, A Black Sash Publication, 2002. Pg. 40.

³² Unknown Author, 'Council Facing Beer Hall Boycott', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd August 1952 (Cory Library)

³³ Unknown Author, 'Beer Hall is for good of Natives, Town Memorandum Gives Councils Views', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th September 1952 (Cory Library)

³⁴ Ibid.

However, as has been shown the profits from the Beer Hall in years past were practically non-existent. Interestingly the memorandum links the supporters of the boycott with firstly, illegal shebeen traders:

There will always be municipal beer halls and the unjustifiable criticism came from people who are obviously not conversant with the purpose of the undertaking. These unjust criticisms seem to champion the cause of illicit brewing and shebeens which the Council is endeavouring to stamp out by brewing wholesome kaffir beer manufactured and supplied under hygienic conditions.³⁵

And, secondly, the Beer Boycott was part of the “resistance movement” of the Defiance Campaign.

Grahamstown is the only centre in the Union where the boycott of the Municipal Beer hall is part of the resistance movement by Natives. In no other centre have the Natives boycotted a Beer Hall, as it is realised that it is there for their own benefit.³⁶

Both of these assumptions did not consider that, perhaps, the Boycott had nothing to do with illegal activities or a political outcry, but was merely a social protest against an amenity that had handicapped the community in their efforts for positive development.

The City Council’s assumption, that the boycott was part of the “resistance movement” does not seem to hold water if one considers certain information. Firstly, when the Boycott began on the 5th August 1952 it was not linked in any manner to the Defiance Campaign; the boycotters had clearly demanded “milk bars” and “home brewing”. If the boycott was planned as part of the Defiance Campaign then surely the protest would have had a political undercurrent?

Secondly, on the first day of the boycott, the police ordered the crowd to disperse, “which they did within a matter of minutes”.³⁷ In contrast, “The aim of the Defiance Campaign was to contravene selected laws and regulations and thus overburden the state’s law-enforcement machinery”; the Campaigners wished to be arrested in order to achieve their goals. But in the case of the Beer Hall Boycott, “they left within a matter of minutes”. If the boycott was indeed part of the Campaign why did protesters leave so quickly? Surely they would have remained at the hall until they were arrested if they were part of the Campaign?

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Unknown Author, ‘City Native ‘Defers’ sent to Fort Glamorgan’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 11th August 1952 (Cory Library)

Thirdly, the 'Beer Hall Boycott' continued on after the Defiance Campaign had ended, into May 1953.

These points show it is highly unlikely that the 'Beer Hall Boycott' was part of the Defiance Campaign, as the City Council said it was. It is far more likely that the boycott was a purely social protest by inhabitants of the Locations against what they considered an obstacle³⁸ to better welfare.

This is supported with the passing of the Beer Hall Resolution³⁹ by residents from both the Fingo and municipal Locations.

[The] residents of the two Locations the Fingo Village and the Municipal Location unanimously wish to put on record their strongest protest at the action of the City Council in forcing the Beer hall on and the sale of beer to the people of these Locations. Further, the people wish to petition the council to close this hall forth-with and discontinue the sale of beer, the present building to be put to other and more useful service to the community. That copies of this resolution be sent to the City Council, the Native Commissioner, the Chief Native Commissioner and also to the local Press.⁴⁰

While there is no evidence of a reply from the City Council, this 'resolution' shows that, while the boycott took place during the Defiance Campaign and after it, it was actually a local community social protest. No mention is made in the resolution of political motives, merely social ones. By October 1952, when the two Locations drew up their 'Beer Hall Resolution', they had been fighting to adapt the Beer Hall for better community services for twelve years.

By the beginning of 1953 the City Council was experiencing a serious deficit because of the continued boycott of the Beer hall as an objection, expressed in Councillor B.T. Liddiard to the 1953 Council Financial Estimates for Finance shows;

An objection to the sum earmarked for the municipal beer hall this year, was raised by Cr B.T. Liddiard. He said the income from this source was practically nil, whereas the municipality was spending hundreds of pounds on paying wages and the maintenance cost of the hall.⁴¹

³⁸ M.D.B., 'Beer Hall is Obstacle', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th December 1951 (Cory Library)

³⁹ Unknown Author, 'Beer Hall Resolution Passed', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th October 1952 (Cory Library)

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Unknown Author, 'City Council Adopts 1953 Estimates', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th January 1953 (Cory Library)

Clearly the boycott was effectively stopping people from buying from the Hall. Indeed Councillor Liddiard states further that, if conditions and sales do not begin to improve, “it appears as though we (the City Council) might have to sell this white elephant in the future”.⁴² Clearly the City Council were anxious about the increased expenses that would occur if there was no revenue from the Beer Hall.

From this point, the Fingo and Municipal Locations consolidated their position by sending a petition signed by 1 691 people to the Town Clerk of Grahamstown (Mr Languare) requesting that the City Council remove the Municipal Beer Hall from the Location⁴³ and replace it with an amenity that could serve community interests. This request had been repeated many previous times by the Location communities, but this was the first time that a petition was organised.

The three main points of the Petition for the removal of the Municipal Location Beer Hall were:

- (a) The Beer Hall was established in 1939 against strong opposition from Location residents who have resented the institution;
- (b) That residents of Grahamstown be allowed home brewing like other towns in the Cape Province;
- (c) That the City Council forthwith close the Hall and the stop the sale of beer in the Location, and instead put the building to more useful service to the community in the form of Milk Bars, Vegetable stalls, etc.⁴⁴

These arguments are the same as those presented by the Location Community in 1939, the National Council of African Women in 1946 and various concerned citizens, such as M.D.B, Mrs M.E. Kerron and B.A. Newcombe. It is clear, then, that the Beer Hall Boycott was not the outcome of the action of the Defiance Campaign, but rather the explosive expression of a community that for 13, years had tried to present their complaints in a peaceful manner. However the Grahamstown City Council seems to have ignored even these petition requests.

In reply to the petition, the City Council focused on (b) of the petition, “that the residents of Grahamstown be allowed home brewing”. An official in the Municipality’s ‘Non-European Affairs department’ stated:

The Grahamstown Location could under no circumstances be given home brewing powers even if the residents want it (sic), in view of the fact that inhabitants of the Fingo Location (central Block) are ratepayers and the

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Unknown Author, ‘Natives Petition City Council, Wants Location Beer hall put to other uses’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th March 1953

⁴⁴ Ibid.

same laws would apply to them as to Europeans rate-payers. It would therefore be a contravention of the law if they were allowed home brewing, and if they did, trouble would inevitably arise, as half the Location would be allowed home brewing and the other not.⁴⁵

No mention was made of points (a) and (c) of the petition. In fact, the City Council appeared to have assumed that the entire reason behind the boycott related to Location citizens desiring a return to “home brewing”. “The whole purpose of the boycott is an attempt to get home brewing instated and they cannot at any stage be granted this in accordance with the law”, the official said.⁴⁶ Again, this is an example of how the Grahamstown City Council did not take the time to investigate the context of the boycott, thereby understanding the desire of the Location community for ‘better’ amenities that would not promote drunkenness and violence. The petition can be considered the highest point of the boycott, for seven months demonstrators had boycotted the hall, gaining support and motivation to allow for over a thousand people to sign the petition to protest the hall. The petition can be considered the end point of 13 years of accumulated criticism and protest on the part of the Location community towards the City Council and their insistence on keeping the Beer hall.

Unfortunately for of the boycott mention was made during this reply to the petition that “Natives are still boycotting the beer hall but sales are improving”.⁴⁷

Within the next five months the Beer Hall Boycott ended, not with promises or action on the part of the City Council to remove the Beer Hall and improve the area with better amenities, but with a return to the normal state of affairs. According to a City Council report during August 1953, £-1 030 16 shillings and 3 pence had been taken in from beer sales since the beginning of January, while revenue for May only amounted to £-68 6 shillings and 4 pence. However, figures rose sharply in June to £-353 16 shillings and 9 pence.⁴⁸ According to the City Council:

Sales are mounting steadily at the beer hall as natives begin to realise that the cheap but well-brewed municipal beer is healthier and nutritious and better than the concoctions brewed nightly by the shebeen queens in the Location.⁴⁹

From the evidence available Mr Freeman of the Non-European Affairs Department at least did indeed believe that ‘municipal beer’ was ‘good’ for Africans as he presented a paper

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Beer Sales rise as Prejudice ends’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 28th August 1953 (Cory Library)

⁴⁹ Ibid.

entitled *Kaffir Beer Domestic Brewing v. Beer Hall or licensing system* at the annual Non-European Affairs conference, in which he praised the value of the concoction for the continued health of the African people. However the assumption of the City Council that the boycott ended because of the realisation on the part of the African people that 'municipal beer' was actually good for their health appears to be naïve. While it could have elements of truth, it is far more likely that because of the complete lack of dialogue or action on the part of the City Council during the boycott period of August 1952 to June 1953, that the Location community stopped the protest out of sheer despair over actually convincing the City Council to follow their requests.

Simply, the Beer Hall Boycott failed to motivate the City Council to remove the Hall from Location life.

From August 1953, no further protests, public outcries against the Beer Hall took place and in 1954, the City Council announced that the Hall would undergo renovation to accommodate both men and women in separate drinking areas. They also mentioned that the Beer Hall had been taking an average of £-400 per month for the last five months.⁵⁰ And three years later, during 1957, Mr Freeman (the Manager of Non – European Affairs in Grahamstown) recommended the establishment of a second Beer Hall at the new Makana's Kop housing scheme to provide for its residents⁵¹ (see Chapter Five).

While this proposal was put before the monthly meeting of the City Council during 1957 it was only in 1958 that action was taken to plan a new Beer Hall for the Makana's Kop housing scheme. The primary reason for the plan, according to the City Council, was that:

Revenue from the existing Municipal Beer hall in the Grahamstown Location has dropped considerably since the removal of hundreds of native families from the old Location to the new housing scheme at Kings Flats near Makana's Kop.⁵²

This further indicates that revenue from the Beer Hall was considered by the City Council to be necessary for the Location to function correctly.

No recorded protest occurred in relation to this 'new improvement' for the Makana's Kop housing scheme, suggesting that, with the failure of the boycott to remove the Beer Hall four years earlier, the energy and motivation of the Location residents to try and persuade the City Council to listen to their requests, was leached dry. After fourteen years of protest with no sign of any progress, it seems that they simply did not have anything left to give.

⁵⁰ Unknown Author, 'Beer Hall extension nearly Ready', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th July 1954 (Cory Library)

⁵¹ Unknown Author, 'Another Beer Hall for City Africans?', *New Scheme at Makana's Kop Under Consideration*, *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th April 1957 (Cory Library)

⁵² Ibid.

The Beer hall Debate is a startling example of how, for fourteen years, the Grahamstown City Council ignored the protests and requests of a section of the Grahamstown community, while actively implementing policies in opposition to the said community. Public outcries, a boycott and a petition all directed against the Beer hall, all occurred during the period under review, with little to no effect. The public focused on the harmful effects of the Beer Hall, showing that drunkenness was handicapping community development within the Municipal Locations, and yet the City Council actively encouraged an increase in the sale of beer. Evidence has been presented to suggest that the City Council believed that the locally produced Municipal Beer was healthy for Africans and through the profits from the sale of this 'health' beer money would be available for the creation or improvements on various Location amenities. No information was available to support the contention that the beer produced was 'healthy' but from the evidence from private protesters (such as Mrs L.D. Mahlasela of the National Council for African Women, Mr B.E. Newcombe and Mrs Lillian M. Britten) it is obvious that Municipal improvements occurred rarely.

The Beer Hall Debate is as a startling example of a City Council's lack of understanding, empathy and care of the residents of the Locations section of the Grahamstown community. They failed to meet their needs and listen to their concerns, refusing to consider that their 'ideas and plans' for the Locations might not be in the best interests of a large portion of the community. Very simply, the situation appears to have been one of 'my way or the highway' and unfortunately for the Location Community it was the 'highway'. The following Chapter focuses on the crippling problem of Tuberculosis infection within Grahamstown and the efforts of Mrs Katherine Webb of the Tuberculosis Society to combat this scourge.

Chapter Seven

Tuberculosis in Grahamstown

Dr J.C. Gilroy, Senior Physician at the Baragwanath Non-European hospital (sic.), commenting on the Tuberculosis situation in the Union of South Africa in 1951, said that:

The death rate among Europeans from T.B. in the Union was 32 per 100 000 – the lowest in the world, while the Non-European death rate from the disease was estimated at 800 per 100 000. On that basis 3200 Non-Europeans died every year from T.B in Johannesburg alone.¹

This statement goes a long way in presenting the seriousness of the Tuberculosis situation in South Africa. These statistics reveal that while the death rate for the disease in percentage form was an acceptably low 0.32% in the case of Whites, it was 8% in the case of Africans or Coloureds, about twenty-four times higher than the White total. These statistics present the terrible effects of Tuberculosis on the population of South Africa, specifically the African population. Dr Gilroy highlighted this danger by stating in his speech that; “Tuberculosis, though a less drastic disease than poliomyelitis, was a far greater danger to the health of a city, so much so, that the position should be frightening”.² The City of Grahamstown, during the period under review, was no exception.

Grahamstown was no stranger to the disease of Tuberculosis. During 1914 Tuberculosis caused the highest rate of deaths amongst Location dwellers of any other infection and in the same year it was reported that the rate of Tuberculosis infections within the Grahamstown Locations was the third highest in the Province after Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.³ During Torlesse’s period, 1918 -1945, Tuberculosis “continued to be a major problem in the Location”.⁴

In January 1946 the Medical Officer of Health for the City, Dr G.F. Heathcote, reported that the total number of deaths that month was fifty-three people. Of these, thirteen were classified as White, six were Coloured and the remaining thirty-four were African. Of this total number however, one Coloured and eight Africans died from Tuberculosis.⁵ During

¹ Dr Gilroy, J.C., ‘The T.B. Danger’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 14th December 1951 (Cory Library)

² Ibid.

³ Southey, Nicholas., “A Period of Transition: A History of Grahamstown, 1902-1918”, M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1984 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 208-209.

⁴ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., “A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945”, M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 133.

⁵ ‘Medical Officer of health report for December 1945 and January 1946’, *Health and Market Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 15th February 1946

May 1947, one Coloured and seven Africans died from Tuberculosis;⁶ in March 1948, a total of ten people died from Tuberculosis, one White, one Coloured and eight Africans,⁷ and in May 1950, six Africans died.⁸ These medical figures show that Grahamstown, like the rest of the Union, suffered from the scourge of Tuberculosis, most specifically the African population of the City. While Whites and Coloureds fell prey to the disease, the highest concentration of infections from it occurred in the African population which regularly lost just under ten people a month.

It can be argued that population densities in Grahamstown obviously influenced these numbers. There were 9 054 Whites, 181 Asiatics, 2 884 Coloureds and 10 794 Africans,⁹ and as the largest population group it could be expected to have the highest infection rate. However, when one views the death rate per 1000 of the population it becomes clear that the physical conditions of their lives predisposed Africans to contracting the disease (see Chapter Two). During 1947, the death rate per 1000 of the population groups was: White 17.3, Coloured 34.8 and African 50. This high rate of 50 deaths per 1000 of the African population of Grahamstown when taken with infant mortality rates, (of infants under one year), White 62.5, Coloured 190.1 and African 429.3,¹⁰ clearly indicate that while Africans were the largest population group their mortality rate far outstripped the other populations. Dr G.F. Heathcote, Medical Officer of Health for Grahamstown clearly linked living conditions in the Locations with the high death rate from Tuberculosis:

The bad housing, overcrowding and poverty of the Non-Europeans alone with an absence of means of efficient isolation of open cases are sufficient to explain the prevalence of this disease.¹¹

During the period under review, the majority of people living in the Locations were living in horrific 'slum conditions' (See Chapter Two). Unhealthy living conditions resulted in an ideal breeding ground for the Tuberculosis infection and "the only way to really tackle this disease is better housing, better living conditions and better food".¹²

The Grahamstown City Council was, to a very large degree accountable for these appalling housing conditions, and thus the high Tuberculosis rate, in the Locations as it was the

⁶ Medical Officer of Health's Report for May 1947', *Health and Market Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, H.2/1, 13th June 1947

⁷ 'Medical Officer of Health's Report for March 1948', *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/9, 5th April 1948

⁸ 'Medical Officers Report for the Month of May', *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/10, H.2/1, 5th June 1950

⁹ Unknown Author, 'City Population', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th November 1947 (Cory Library)

¹⁰ An Ordinary Citizen, 'Vital Statistic', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd February 1947 (Cory Library)

¹¹ Dr Heathcote, G.F., 'City's Health Report', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th October 1949 (Cory Library)

¹² Goss, H.A., 'A Better Idea', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th July 1951 (Cory Library)

Municipal institution responsible for ensuring the provision of decent social services (housing, sewage, drainage etc.). However, because of a lack of revenue (see Chapter Four), and problems sourcing housing loans from the Government (See Chapter Five), these 'slum conditions' prevailed throughout the period under review. The Grahamstown City Council did not spend the appropriate amount of attention on the living and social conditions of its Location inhabitants, as shown in the 'Beer Hall Debate' (see Chapter Six) where, despite opposition from Location inhabitants, money was spend to construct a new Municipal Beer Hall. Simply put, during the period under review, the Grahamstown City Council generally failed in their responsibilities to the Grahamstown populations in the Locations.

In the case of Tuberculosis infections however, the Grahamstown City Council and the Grahamstown Tuberculosis Society made a concerted and motivated attempt to combat and, preferably, eradicate the infection rate as "the growth of the disease in the Location grows more serious daily".¹³ The Grahamstown City Council took note of the Tuberculosis death rate in the Union of South Africa and the full eight per cent of the African population which was infected with it each year, and actively began to combat it.

The Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital

On the 7th July 1945, the Grahamstown City Council sent a letter to the Public Health Department for permission to begin erection of a Tuberculosis Hospital in Grahamstown. On, 23rd of July 1946 the Secretary for Public Health responded that, because of the problems facing Grahamstown with regard to the disease, the Public Health Department was prepared to favourably consider the construction of a Tuberculosis Hospital a separate site to the Settlers' Hospital. The Public Health Department stated that it would refund the City Council two-thirds of the overall cost of construction and that the City Council would subsequently become responsible for one-eighth of the maintenance cost of the Tuberculosis Hospital.¹⁴

With support from the Department of Public Health the Grahamstown City Council began looking for a suitable site for the proposed Tuberculosis hospital. The City Engineer, Medical Officer of Health and Mrs Katherine Webb (a Member of the City Council and Finance and General Purposes Committee, as well as a member of the Tuberculosis Society) were organised into a sub-committee¹⁵ to review the potential sites for construction. Eventually the sub-committee decided to recommend to the City Council "that an area on the Western slope of Sugar Loaf Hill above Fitzroy Street be approved as a site for the erection of a

¹³ Unknown Author, 'Menace to City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th March 1947 (Cory Library)

¹⁴ 'Proposed Tuberculosis Hospital Grahamstown', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 20/4, 9th August 1946

¹⁵ 'Tuberculosis Hospital', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 8th November 1946

Tuberculosis Hospital".¹⁶ This was considered the best site with the only requirement being that the City Engineer would have to install a 48-hour water storage tank as the site was on a slope which could create water problems in the future.¹⁷ The Hill was considered optimal as the hospital needed to provide easy access to Whites and Africans as well as not being too far away for the hospital staff.¹⁸

It is interesting to note the speed and efficiency that the City Council began the process of developing a Tuberculosis Hospital: within six months (21st August 1946-6th December 1946) of receiving the support of the Department of Public Health, a suitable site had been proposed and construction plans begun, thus highlighting the City Council's belief that a Tuberculosis Hospital was essential for the welfare of the City, specifically the Location populations, as the City Council generally appeared to take its time with Location development projects (social services, housing etc. See Chapter Five). However, a proposal for the establishment of a Tuberculosis isolation hospital and sanatorium originally occurred during 1913, recommended by both the Medical Officer of Health (for the City) and the District Surgeon due to the spread of Tuberculosis.¹⁹ On that occasion, the City Council did nothing relation about the proposal.

Not everyone in Grahamstown, however, was happy at having a Tuberculosis Hospital in the Fitzroy Street, Sugar Loaf Hill area. Kingswood College (a private school in Grahamstown) had developed down the road that led to Sugar Loaf Hill and was especially unhappy at the prospect of a Tuberculosis Hospital so close to its property, and consequently sent a letter to the City Council voicing their complaints. In response to this, the Medical Officer of Health reassured them that there would be no danger to students of the College if the hospital were erected at Sugar Loaf Hill.

However the Committee decided to review subsequent sites and discuss their feasibility at the next City Council meeting the following month. Further resistance to the proposed Tuberculosis Hospital by Grahamstown residents however, forced the City Council to reconsider their building plans. Mr P.J. Guest, a Grahamstown resident opposed the construction plans for the Sugar Loaf Hill area (which was in close proximity to the City pound) because said area was earmarked for potential future White residential construction and accommodation. He also, indicated in his letter (dated 18th January 1947) that White Grahamstown residents would be at risk if the Tuberculosis Hospital was situated close to

¹⁶ 'Tuberculosis Hospital', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 6th December 1946

¹⁷ 'Tuberculosis Hospital', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 8th November 1946

¹⁸ 'Tuberculosis Hospital Site For', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 13th January 1947

¹⁹ Torlesse, Ann Catherine Marjorie., "A History of Grahamstown, 1918-1945", M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1993 (Cory Library, [S.l. : s.n.]). Pg. 209.

the City. Mr Guest suggested that the hospital be moved three miles away towards a different Municipality.²⁰

It is clear that segregation practices were operating in Grahamstown during this period, in that people (like Mr P.J. Guest) considered that different areas should be reserved for different 'racial' groups. More than this though, Mr Guest believed that a danger existed for Grahamstown residents because of the close proximity of the Hospital to them; clearly Mr Guest was considering the danger to the White residents rather than the African residents. From this it should be considered that if Mr Guest had been truly concerned for the welfare of Grahamstown residents (rather than just the White population), he would have encouraged the construction of the Tuberculosis Hospital near to Sugar Loaf Hill rather than opposing it based on residential segregation and the possibility of infection for White residents. It must be remembered that while Tuberculosis was running riot through the Locations, white Grahamstown had a very low infectious rate.

Unfortunately for the proposed Tuberculosis Hospital, Mr Guest's opinion seems to have been shared by many of his fellow White citizens, and a petition of 264 signatures of residents was sent to the City Council opposing the building site at Sugar Loaf Hill.

We the undersigned are most gravely concerned at the decision to erect a Tubercular and Infectious Diseases Hospital on the Municipal Commonage adjacent to the top of Fitzroy Street and the Mayfield Farm Road. We feel this concern because the Tubercular section of the Hospital will, it is understood, deal wholly or mainly with Native Patients and this will mean that:

- (a) There will be no further development of the good residential district of Grahamstown which is growing up in the neighbourhood;
- (b) The good houses already situated near the top of Fitzroy Street, Trollope Street and Ayliff Street, are likely when the present housing shortage is over, to be sold and their grounds subdivided with the result that the district will steadily deteriorate.

We wish respectfully to suggest, therefore, to the City Council as an alternative site the ground marked on the 1934 Contour Plan of the City of Grahamstown as the Fort England Mental Hospital Annexe. This, it is understood, was formerly Municipal Commonage but was granted to the Mental Hospital for purposes of pasturage. Alternative arrangements for pasturage could perhaps be made to the North on the other side of the Railway line.

As this site faces north it seems to us to be eminently suitable and the fairest to European Coloured and Native alike.

While we fully appreciate the urgent need for a hospital of the kind in Grahamstown and wholeheartedly support the City Council in its move to

²⁰ 'Tuberculosis & Other Infectious Diseases Hospital', *Health and Marketing Committee, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 15th February 1947*

secure its erection, in view of the fact that an alternative site is available and convenient we urge with all the force at our command that what we view as a grave error should not be made in determining the site.
(Sgd) E.H. Seal, 10 Frances St & 263 others.²¹

The main point of Mr E.H. Seal and the other 263 petitioners related to the degradation of the White residential area because the Tuberculosis Hospital would deal “wholly or mainly with Native Patients”, and while they support the construction of said hospital it is quite clear that they did not wish it to be anywhere near their homes. So elements of racial and residential segregation most certainly existed in Grahamstown before the development of the National Party’s Apartheid.

Because of this residential opposition, Mrs Katherine Webb recommended to the City Council that a temporary Tuberculosis Hospital should be converted from an old Mission School in Lady Grey Street; the increase of Tuberculosis within the Locations was becoming urgent and needed immediate attention.²² A sub-committee (comprising Cr Mather-Pike, Cr Mrs Bayes, Cr Ellis, Cr Mrs Webb, the Medical Officer of Health, the Town Clerk and the City Engineer)²³ began the search for an alternative Location. The City Council agreed to refurbish the old Mission School buildings as a temporary Tuberculosis Hospital at an estimated cost of £-900, while they requested a visit from the Chief of the Division of Tuberculosis Services,²⁴ Dr Dormer, to advise the City Council on the plans for a permanent hospital.

Dr Dormer visited Grahamstown on the 16th January 1948 and, after surveying the potential sites available for the erection of the hospital, decided that the building being refurbished should not become a temporary structure but rather the permanent Tuberculosis Hospital approved of by the Minister of Health.²⁵ Dr Dormer considered that the former Mission School situated on Lady Grey Street, off of Raglan Road, would be adequate for the purposes of a Tuberculosis Hospital as its location allowed easy access to Location dwellers. On completion, the Hospital would be able to accommodate 20 cases of communicable Tuberculosis and would become an essential part of the Tuberculosis services within Albany. Dr Dormer recommended to the Public Health Department that that two-thirds of the

²¹ ‘Proposed Tuberculosis and Infectious Diseases Hospital Objections to proposed Site’, *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, H.4/3, 16th May 1947

²² ‘Temporary T.B. Hospital in Location’, *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 14th March 1947

²³ ‘Hospitals’, *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, H.4/3, 11th July 1947

²⁴ ‘Proposed Tuberculosis Hospital’, *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, H.4/3, 7th October 1947

²⁵ Proposed Tuberculosis Hospital report by the Chief of the Division of Tuberculosis Services’, *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/9, H.4/3, 5th April 1948

capital cost of the structure be refunded to the City Council in terms of section 50(1) (b) of the Public Health Act 1919 as amended by the Public Health Amendment Act 1946.²⁶

In order to complete the isolation hospital, the City Council employed Messrs Allen & Oosthuizen on a tender of £-388 19 shillings and 18 pence for the construction of the Tuberculosis Hospital, to include all drain laying according to the City Council's specifications.²⁷ On 3rd May 1948, the Medical Officer of Health for Grahamstown (Dr G.F. Heathcote) considered, that at the current rate of erection that the isolation hospital would most likely be completed within three months' time.²⁸ Unfortunately complications delayed the completion of the hospital for a further three years. Reporting to the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee on the reasons for the delay, Mr R.W. Grant (the City Engineer)²⁹ stated that a portion of the construction work had been put out to contractors without proper supervision, resulting in the City Engineering Department having to undertake additional construction.³⁰ It is quite probable that the Financial Crisis affecting Grahamstown (during this period) limited the availability of money and resources for the hospital.

Despite these complications and the opposition from white Grahamstown residents, the Grahamstown Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital (named after Mrs Katherine Webb in honour of her services with regard to the hospital)³¹ was opened by the Mayor of Grahamstown, Mr R.T. Rivett-Carnac,³² during the month of July 1951. The Hospital comprised of two large wards able to accommodate thirteen patients each, a well-equipped kitchen, bathrooms, a laundry room and a morgue.³³ Its staff consisted of one White sister, Mrs P. Eatock, as Matron of the hospital, four African ward-trained nurse aids, a cook, a ward maid, one male African and a washerwoman.³⁴ The Katherine Webb Tuberculosis

²⁶ 'Proposed Tuberculosis Hospital Grahamstown', *Health and Marketing Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 20/4, 9th August 1946

²⁷ 'Tenders for Completion of Tuberculosis Hospital Off Ragland Road', *Land and Works Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/2/1/22, H.4/3, 18th June 1948

²⁸ ²⁸ 'Staff Tuberculosis Hospital', *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 3rd May 1948

²⁹ 'Confirmation of Appointment City Engineer Mr W.R. Grant', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/1/15, S.1/69, 22nd September 1949

³⁰ 'Tuberculosis Hospital', *Land and Works Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/2/1/22, H.4/3 18th September 1950

³¹ Unknown Author, 'T.B. Hospital to be Enlarged', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th September 1951 (Cory Library)

³² Unknown Author, 'Mr R.T. Rivett-Carnac Re-Elected Mayor', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1950 (Cory Library)

³³ Unknown Author, 'Location Tuberculosis Hospital has 12 Patients', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th July 1951 (Cory Library)

³⁴ 'Staff Tuberculosis Hospital', *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Department*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/6/1/8, 3rd May 1948

Hospital began to have to have an immediate effect as it was reported that deaths from Tuberculosis in Grahamstown had fallen from thirty-two in 1951, to seventeen in 1952 and finally to seven people in 1953.³⁵ It must be noted that the Grahamstown Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital was “a purely Municipal concern and would be maintained by the Municipality”,³⁶ in that the Grahamstown Municipality would provide it with all the essential services required to operate a hospital.

The Tuberculosis infection rate has been shown to have affected the whole of the Union of South Africa resulting in innumerable deaths; Grahamstown was no exception to this, experiencing 253 known deaths from 363 cases over a period of nine years (1946 to 1953). The establishment of a Tuberculosis Hospital in Grahamstown should be viewed as a ‘effect’ of the City Council against the ‘cause’ Tuberculosis. While the City Council made many mistakes during the period under review (the Financial Crisis, the lack of decent housing available for Location dwellers and the lack of understanding towards the ‘Beer Hall Debate’), it cannot be denied that the provision of a Tuberculosis Hospital in the Grahamstown Location was an essential factor in the well-being and health of its Location dwellers. While the Grahamstown City Council could be said to have failed its responsibilities to the City, with regard to finance, housing and the development of a Location Beer Hall, the establishment of the Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital was not one such failing, it filled a most desperate need. It must be noted however, that the City Council only provided a sum of £-900 for the development of the Temba Hospital while, during the same year (1951), setting aside £-8 000 for the construction of the new Beer Hall (see Chapter Six).

The ‘Temba’ T.B. Settlement

The Grahamstown City Council were not the only people who viewed the spread of Tuberculosis in the Locations with concern. In 1944 the Grahamstown Tuberculosis Society³⁷ was formed with the intention of helping those with Tuberculosis who did not have the means to help themselves. The Society was a non-profit organisation and relied heavily on the support of the public to provide resources for their work.³⁸ The Society was

³⁵ Unknown Author, T.B. Deaths Show a Decline SANTA Adviser sees Dramatic Change in Grahamstown’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th March 1953 (Cory Library)

³⁶ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Hospital Opening Soon’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 1st June 1951 (Cory Library)

³⁷ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society Hold Annual Meeting’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th March 1953 (Cory Library)

³⁸ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society Hold Annual Meeting’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th March 1953 (Cory Library)

affiliated to the Cape Province Tuberculosis Council and was a “founding member of the newly formed South African Anti-Tuberculosis Association” (SANTA).³⁹

The Society arranged food, clothing, blankets and, occasionally, even rent money for both individuals with Tuberculosis and families that were in difficult situations because of a member being infected. In 1953 the Society was (at that point) assisting 49 families (White, Coloured and African) at a monthly cost of 70 pounds.⁴⁰ The Society even went so far as to provide food and rations to patients at the Katherine Webb Tuberculosis Hospital about three times a week.⁴¹

However, with a very high percentage of deaths from Tuberculosis in the Locations,⁴² the Society wished to do more for those suffering. When information reached them about how the Natal Tuberculosis Society had established a T.B. Settlement “for sufferers seeking recovery and rehabilitation”⁴³ including their families if the situation dictated, they were inspired to approach the Grahamstown City Council for a grant of land, consisting of 5 morgen, in order to begin development of their own ‘Tuberculosis Settlement’.⁴⁴

The Grahamstown City Council considered their request and subsequently organised a sub-committee comprised of the Mayor (Mr G.W. Lucas), Cr Knowling and the Medical Officer of Health (Dr G.F. Heathcote) to find a suitable site for the proposed settlement. After due consideration, the City Council provided a grant of land “between ‘A’ street and the road to ‘Sunnyside’”, to the Tuberculosis Care Society⁴⁵ for the purposes of establishing the settlement. The area in question comprised of 5 ¾ acres and would be sold to the Tuberculosis Care Society at a cost of £-1, including costs of transfer and advertising.⁴⁶ In other words, the City Council provided this area to the Society for free, in that it was sold “at a very nominal sum”;⁴⁷ clearly they viewed the development of the isolation settlement as a further means to combat Tuberculosis in the Location (the Tuberculosis Hospital was being erected during this period) and thus attempted to help its development in any manner that they could. Unfortunately for the Society, their scheme co-incided with the City Council’s Financial Crisis (see Chapter Four), which limited the amount of help that the Council could

³⁹ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th April 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Tuberculosis Care Society Needs 500 Pounds’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 19th July 1953 (Cory Library)

⁴¹ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society Hold Annual Meeting’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th March 1953 (Cory Library)

⁴² Unknown Author, ‘Tuberculosis’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 13th July 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴³ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th April 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁴ Application for Grant of Land Grahamstown T.B. Care Society’, *Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 5th April 1948

⁴⁵ ‘Land’, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, L.1/8, 20th June 1949

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, ‘The City Council’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 1st July 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴⁷ Unknown Author, ‘T.B. Care Society Fifth Annual Report’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th October 1949 (Cory Library)

provide. Despite this, the Society had help from the Grahamstown public: Messrs Alexander and Tait donated their surveying services free of charge to the Society Messrs Pioneers Motors donated a 'Ford Prefect'⁴⁸ to be raffled off by the Society (tickets cost 2 shillings and 6 pence) and, in general, the Grahamstown public donated money to the Settlement Fund Raising (a fund created by the Society to gain funds), which by July 1949 had amassed a sum of £-713⁴⁹ (the fund began at the end of 1948).

At this point, it is important to discuss the concept of the 'Sanitation Syndrome'. Very simply, the Sanitation Syndrome was the perception of White South Africans towards African, Coloured and Asiatic communities (specifically Location communities) as places where disease and sickness developed and resided. As perceived by White South Africans, disease and sickness were defined by 'race' rather than social class and living conditions. In his article, *The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909*, Mr Maynard W. Swanson stated that the Sanitation Syndrome equated "black urban settlement, labour and living conditions with threats to public health and security",⁵⁰ and "urban racial relations came to be widely conceived and dealt with in the imagery of infection and epidemic disease"⁵¹. The Sanitation Syndrome therefore, can be linked to the development of the Tuberculosis Settlement in that it was removed from the City with little interaction between the patients and Grahamstown's citizens (with the exception of the Warden and his wife). Some Grahamstown White citizens appeared to have agreed with the concept of the Sanitation Syndrome: two points made earlier in this Chapter with regard to the development of the Tuberculosis Hospital highlight this. Firstly, Kingswood College complained of the risk to its students of a African and Coloured infectious disease hospital so close to the School. Secondly, Mr P.J. Guest, based his objections towards the Location of the Hospital on what he felt was a potential infectious 'danger' to the City. His recommendation that the Hospital be moved to a 'neighbouring Municipality' three miles distant can be linked with the Sanitation Syndrome in that the African and Coloured Hospital would subsequently have been far enough away from Grahamstown to have removed any risk of infection on the part of White Grahamstown. Thirdly, the petition of 264 signatures presented to the City Council by a Mr E.H. Seal requesting that the Council develop the Hospital elsewhere further reinforces this point. While the petition did not specifically focus on the perceived health risk towards Grahamstown it is possible that the White petitioners were not worried about the spread of disease. Because the Sanitation Syndrome described disease in terms of race, it is probable that many of the petitioners were worried that an African and Coloured Tuberculosis

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Unknown Author, 'T.B. Care Society Fifth Annual Report', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th October 1949 (Cory Library)

⁵⁰ Swanson M.W., 'The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909', *The Journal of African History*, XVIII, 3 (1977). Pg. 410.

⁵¹ Ibid. Pg. 387.

Hospital would spread the risk of Tuberculosis to White Grahamstown. In the end, the Tuberculosis Settlement that White Grahamstown supported and donated towards its completion, however the Settlement was situated outside of the City and therefore presented little risk towards White Grahamstown.

By March 1951 the Council had decided to provide the Settlement with 17 housing units, with the first house nearing completion, but the estimated cost of constructing the Settlement amounted to £-6 000, most of which would have to be raised within Grahamstown.⁵² Despite this large financial amount, the 'Temba' (Hope) Settlement was formally opened on the 22nd April 1953 with five of the six⁵³ completed cottages housing Tuberculosis patient's families. Development continued at the Temba Settlement with SANTA providing the funds necessary to complete two new ward blocks by March 1954 to house additional housing of patients.⁵⁴

The Temba Settlement was so successful that its reputation prompted Mr Basil Cory and his wife to move from Natal to take up residence at the Settlement as Wardens: "My wife and I have come from Natal to put our weight behind a wonderful project you have in Grahamstown – the Temba Settlement".⁵⁵ Mr and Mrs Cory appear to have been genuine in their motivation to help rehabilitate those individuals and families who were living at Temba; for example when two donations of material were presented to the Settlement, one of 100 Lbs. of bedspread cut-offs, from Messrs Harris Cotton Mills Ltd, and the other of 10 Lbs. of assorted wools, from Messrs Union Spinning Mills (Pty) Ltd,⁵⁶ Mr and Mrs Cory began to organise knitting groups from the families and individuals residing at the Settlement. This offered the residents a distraction from boredom and provided them with a modicum of income as Mr Cory appealed to the Grahamstown Public to support the Temba knitting project by purchasing the garments made by the women residing there.⁵⁷ Mr Cory and his wife even applied to the Grahamstown City Council for permission to construct a Warden's house at the Settlement in order to be available to the residents twenty-four hours a day as well as ensure the appropriate level of discipline.⁵⁸

⁵² Unknown Author, 'Cement Lack Delays T.B. Project One Cottage Near Completion on Location Site', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th March 1951 (Cory Library)

⁵³ Unknown Author, 'T.B. Care Society Hold Annual Meeting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th March 1953 (Cory Library)

⁵⁴ Mr Cory, B., 'Wardens Report on Temba Settlement Patients Responding well to treatment', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th March 1954 (Cory Library)

⁵⁵ Mr Cory, B., 'Support to Temba Settlement', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th March 1953 (Cory Library)

⁵⁶ Mr Cory, B., 'Generous Donation to Temba', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th January 1954 (Cory Library)

⁵⁷ Mr Cory, B., 'Temba will do the Knitting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th February (Cory Library)

⁵⁸ ⁵⁸ Unknown Author, 'Wardens House at Temba Settlement', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th October 1954 (Cory Library)

The development of the Temba Settlement was a co-ordinated attempt by both the Grahamstown City Council and the Grahamstown Tuberculosis Society to combat the scourge of Tuberculosis within their City. During the period under review, the Temba Settlement was the pinnacle of social welfare for Tuberculosis, allowing the process of recovery to take place within proper conditions, and should be viewed as the Tuberculosis Society's greatest accomplishment. Despite the completion of the Settlement, the Tuberculosis Society did not rest on their laurels and they continued to provide for those who were affected regardless of colour or creed. During 1954, more than 60 families received attention⁵⁹ from the Society which, provided them with food, blankets, clothes, and even rent money. Members of the Grahamstown public saw the great desperate need in the Locations caused by this infectious disease; the result was the Tuberculosis Society, an organisation dedicated to the eradication of Tuberculosis in the City of Grahamstown.

It must also be acknowledged that the Grahamstown City Council, showed great foresight in realising that a Tuberculosis Hospital was a crucial necessity for the City. Even though the hospital was erected during the City's Financial Crisis when its resources were severely limited, the hospital was completed. Further, the land which made the completion of the Temba Settlement possible was a donation from the City Council, having been sold to the Tuberculosis Society but 'at a very nominal sum'. From the information available, it appears that the Grahamstown City Council considered it crucial to operate a hospital specifically for the care of Tuberculosis patients because of the high death rate caused by the disease in the Locations. During the period under review many negative situations occurred because of the City Council's actions or 'lack' of action (the Financial Crisis, the lack of decent housing, the Beer Hall Debate), but the action taken on the part of the City Council against the spread of Tuberculosis was a positive, well-motivated, crucial improvement to the City's state of health. Praise must be given when it is due and with regard to the City Council's action against Tuberculosis, praise is most certainly due. Chapter Eight will analyse the support of the City Council and the people of Grahamstown for Rhodes University College during its attempt to gain full University status, an event that would develop Grahamstown further as an educational City and increase its development from a material point of view.

⁵⁹ Unknown Author, '60 Temba Families had Assistance', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th March 1954 (Cory Library)

Chapter Eight

Rhodes College Full University Status

Grahamstown's nickname, "the Oxford of South Africa"¹ came about because of the many schools and College institutions that called the City home, for example, Graeme College, Victoria Girls High School, Kingswood College, St Andrew's College, the Diocesan School for Girls, the Grahamstown Training College, the Leather Industries Research Institute and the Rhodes University College. Indeed, apart from education, the City did not have any real foundation of industry, which led public opinion to define it predominantly as an educational centre.² However the Grahamstown public took pride in the fact that their City was considered a place of learning, defining it as "the educational centre of the Eastern Province".³ As related in Chapter Four, this brought about serious revenue problems for the Grahamstown City Council because Ordinance No 29 of 1935 (as amended),⁴ exempted schools, colleges, religious buildings, railway facilities and Government institutions from property rates. Despite this, emphasis was placed on providing for these educational institutions, for reasons of civic pride and because, annually, "Rhodes University and the private schools and colleges in Grahamstown spend more than £-368 000 a year in one way and another".⁵ It can therefore be said that, during the period under review, education was truly Grahamstown's industry.

In relation to importance however, emphasis was most certainly placed on Rhodes University College in that:

There is not a single aspect of agricultural, industrial and commercial life in the Eastern Province which is not benefited by the presence in Grahamstown of Rhodes University. Making invaluable contributions to every sphere of human endeavour in this area, Rhodes exerts a powerful influence on the progress of communities and on the outlook of the people in those communities. In several realms of activity and thinking, the University has broken new ground in the past and done some

¹ Unknown Author, 'Is Grahamstown on the Map?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th August 1946 (Cory Library)

² Mather-Pike, H.A., 'The Mayoral Minute Activities of the Past Year Accumulated Deficit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd September 1949 (Cory Library)

³ Unknown Author, 'Governor Generals Tribute to Grahamstown, The City en Fete Civic Welcome', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th September 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴ 'De-rating of Property New Sanatorium for Diocesan School for Girls', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/AY, 1/2/3/1/16, R.1/2, 20th March 1950

⁵ Unknown Author, 'Grahamstown Schools Spending 500 000 pounds a Year Most of it comes to the City 4500 pounds is Pocket Money', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th February 1951 (Cory Library)

magnificent pioneering work. The Education Department trains teachers not only for service in the Union but also for work in Rhodesia and Kenya. In numbers, the Rhodes department is one of the largest training centres in the Union.⁶

Before the opening of the Rhodes University College on the 21st July 1904 the Eastern Province lacked any tertiary educational centres. In fact, during the period 1873 to 1918 the only University that operated in South Africa was the University of the Cape of Good Hope which primarily accepted students from the South African College (Cape Town) and the Victoria College (Stellenbosch). The reason for this was that there were very few centres in South Africa capable of providing an education good enough to enable a candidate (applying to the University of the Cape of Good Hope) to cope with the University Examination system. The Eastern Province then, apart from St Andrew's College which had a 'College Department' active from 1879 which prepared students for degree courses, had no real tertiary educational institutions. This situation changed during 1893, when the St Andrew's authorities received word from the Superintendent-General of Education for the Colony that he wished to make the College Department a more permanent institute. After this however, the question of where the educational institute would be came to the fore, and the question was asked 'Why should it be Grahamstown?' Judge Twentyman-Jones, a member of the Eastern Districts Court, expressed his opinion that Grahamstown was the ideal choice, "in view of its healthy environment - physical, social and moral, Grahamstown is likely to retain its supremacy"⁷. However, it was only during 1902 at a public meeting in Grahamstown called by Mr Josiah Slater (editor of the *Grahamstown Journal*), that proper planning began to take place. The following year (1904), a grant of £-50 000 was provided for the construction of the College by the Rhodes Trustees. Sir George Parkin, the first secretary of the Rhodes Trustees, stated with regard to constructing the institute in Grahamstown that:

I am satisfied that the ideas of Mr Rhodes will be carried out better than in any other way by building up an institution of higher learning at Grahamstown, the educational centre of the Eastern Province.⁸

The following year (1905), the University College moved from its former residence at St Andrew's College to take up residence at its new home, the Drostdy buildings.⁹ As early as

⁶ Unknown Author, 'Supplement to Grocott's Daily Mail, Grahamstown, Cape Province SA, March 8th 1951, Rhodes University's Role in Eastern Cape Development, The Farmer, Industrialist and Commerce all Benefit', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th March 1951 (Cory Library)

⁷ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 4.

⁸ Ibid. Pg. 8.

⁹ Ibid. Pg. 8.

1904 Grahamstown was considered “the educational centre of the Eastern Province”, an idea that would only grow and develop (see Chapter one).

From a financial point of view the institution was estimated to be worth around £-188 000 per year for Grahamstown¹⁰ and that, on average, Rhodes University students spent around £-25 000 of their personal money per year within the City.¹¹ Not only did the University College provide a large amount of revenue to the City (despite the fact that its property was de-rated and thus did not contribute to the City Council Treasury), but it added an element of prestige to the “Oxford of South Africa”, as it was the only College University situated in the City.

At the beginning of the period under review, Rhodes University College was not technically a fully-fledged University, but a University College; the difference being that a University College is not a fully independent autonomous institution; it must take its orders from the Department of Education. A University, on the other hand, is a completely independent entity that answers to no other institution. Founded in 1904, Rhodes University College had, by 1947, developed to the point where Dr Alty (Registrar Rhodes University College)¹² and the College Council believed that it was time to apply for Full University Status. This was after a period of eight years in which time the College had embarked on an active construction program¹³ which had more than doubled the College in its extent prompting its application for full status via the “passage of the Private Bill through Parliament”.¹⁴ With response to their application, the Minister of Education (Mr J.H. Viljoen) stated that he was very well satisfied with the College according to its academic standards and the number of students attending it, but not with regards to the financial position of the College. Consequently, he would only fix the date for independence once he had been satisfied that the financial position of the College was considered acceptable.¹⁵ The ‘financial position’ that the Minister referred to relates to the fact that at this point the Rhodes University College had a debt of £-561 015,¹⁶ incurred from the heavy building program that began

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Town and Gown, The R.U.C. Appeal, Rhodes is Worth 188 000 pounds A Year to Grahamstown’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 26th October 1949 (Cory Library)

¹¹ Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown Schools Spending 500 000 pounds a Year Most of it comes to the City 4500 pounds is Pocket Money’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th February 1951 (Cory Library)

¹² ‘Special Meeting’, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, 24th August 1949

¹³ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 104.

¹⁴ ‘Rhodes University College Private Bill to Obtain Independent University Status’, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, E.1/1, 17th January 1949

¹⁵ Unknown Author, ‘R.U.C. Appeal’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th August 1949 (Cory Library)

¹⁶ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 107.

during 1941, and an annual income of £-100 000 which would not be enough to pay the debt off. In order to gain full university status, Rhodes University College would have to balance this debt. While the Government would help the College with funds it was not prepared to cover the whole amount.¹⁷ Dr Alty described the situation of increasing debt as “one of acute crisis”.¹⁸

The College was given a target of £-100 000¹⁹ to raise on condition that once the sum had been achieved, the Government would contribute £-200 000 to help remove the interest incurred on the College’s debt and begin to pay back the loans making up the total deficit, thus allowing the College to gain full University status.²⁰ The financial position of the College at the time when it appealed for full University status, however, was such that not only would “it be impossible for it to obtain University Status, but it may be necessary very shortly to reduce or even discontinue the services it is performing at present”.²¹ The situation was thus that Rhodes University College would fail to gain full University status and, if something was not done to begin balancing its debt, the subsequent lack of funds would force its eventual closure. For these reasons, it appealed to the Grahamstown City Council as well as the Grahamstown public to support it in its time of need. The following chapter will detail the contributions and support given, specifically by the Grahamstown City Council, to Rhodes University College during this time.

The first mention of the College attempting to gain full University status occurred in September of 1947 when it was announced to the general public that:

Grahamstown citizens as well as the whole population of the Cape Eastern Province will welcome the report on the Commission on the University of South Africa, which, inter alia, recommends, unhesitatingly that Rhodes University College be granted full university status and that the necessary legislation be proceeded with as soon as possible.²²

This statement, while it lacks information with regard to the problems and complications facing the College from a financial position, does indicate that the Grahamstown public as well as the people of the Cape Eastern Province would “welcome” the College’s change in status. This “welcome” is perhaps best explained in relation to the increase in ‘prestige’ that would occur with the change in status: the Cape Eastern Province and Grahamstown

¹⁷ Special Meeting’, *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, 24th August 1949

¹⁸ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 107.

¹⁹ Ibid. Pg. 112.

²⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Independent University Status for Rhodes’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 8th December 1950 (Cory Library)

²¹ Unknown Author, ‘R.U.C. Appeal’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th August 1949 (Cory Library)

²² Unknown Author, ‘R.U.C. As University’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 16th September 1947 (Cory Library)

would subsequently become home to a fully-fledged University which would add to the Province's and the City's reputation. The population of Grahamstown, who considered their City to be the "Oxford of South Africa" and "the educational centre of the Eastern Province", would no doubt have judged the evolution of Rhodes University College as an evolution of the City of Grahamstown.

Unofficially the first people to begin contributing funds to help alleviate the College's financial position were two brothers, Messrs Hugh and Vincent Grocott, whose father had (forty-five years earlier) helped the original formation of the University College. The Grocott brothers visited Dr Alty at his home one evening and explained that they would like to help, in any manner that they could, to save the situation. They then handed Dr Alty a cheque "the like of which the Rhodes Accountant had not seen for some time".²³

The Registrar of Rhodes University College contacted the Grahamstown City Council officially on the 17th of January 1949 to request the Council's support in its attempt to gain full University status; the Council responded in very positive terms:

THIS council places on record its emphatic approval of the steps taken by the Rhodes University Collage to obtain status as an independent University. It recognises that the College has been serving an essential need of this area and considered that its conversion into a University is a step long overdue. This Council is prepared to extend its support to the University in every possible way and is confident that with similar support from other public and private bodies of the Eastern province and Border area as well as from individual members of the public the University will play an essential and ever-increasing part in the life and development of the area.²⁴

The Grahamstown City Council highlighted the importance of the College for the Cape Eastern Province, how it served an "essential need" for the area and, while the Council does not specifically mention its services to Grahamstown, it should be taken for granted that the Council viewed its application for full status as a positive development for the City. Grahamstown had no industrial capacity to promote its development and so relied on education as its primary industry,²⁵ thus the development of the College was most likely seen as an imperative condition, by the City Council, for the development of Grahamstown.

²³ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 109.

²⁴ 'Rhodes University College Private Bill to Obtain Independent University Status', *Finance and General Purpose Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, E.1/1, 17th January 1949

²⁵ Unknown Author, 'Education is Grahamstown Primary Industry City Council reverses its decision over St Andrews Prep bid for Cradock Road Dwelling', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th October 1955 (Cory Library)

For this reason, when Dr Alty approached the City Council with regard to extending Rhodes University College's loan payments on five existing short-term loans from the Council, the Council considered the request seriously. Dr Alty requested that, because of the financial strain that the College was experiencing, the five City Council loans be paid back over a period of 40 years.²⁶

The Port Elizabeth City Council had extended the period of repayment on the loans that it had provided Rhodes University College by a further ten years; so having promised support to the College during its attempt to gain full University status, the Grahamstown City Council resolved to accept the College's request for an extension of time to repay their debt. The total amount owed to the City Council by the College on 1st March 1949 was £-32 947 1 pence. The City Council resolved that although it could not extend the period of repayment to forty years it would further extend the repayment by twenty-five years to 30th June 1974, with the five short-term loans combined into two long-term loans, provided the Administrator consented. It was further resolved that with the extension period of repayment the City Council would increase the interest paid on the two long-term loans to 4 ¼ % and 4% respectively. In this way, both the City Council and the College would benefit, in that the City Council would receive an increased amount of interest over a longer period of time while the College would effect a saving of £-768, 17 shillings and 8 pence.²⁷ The willingness of the City Council to support the College indicates the value that was placed on developing the College to full University status. However, the financial position of the College, despite the extension of its loans by the Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth City Councils, remained dire.

Further help arrived from a London Insurance Corporation (no information found with regard to its name) who had been approached on behalf of the College. The Corporation, making enquiries about the College, decided to provide a loan for the College due, partly because seventy Rhodes College students had given their lives for Britain during the Second World War. The fact that the College had made a special effort to provide educational services to ex-servicemen after the war reinforced the Corporation's decision. Subsequently, a loan of £-200 000 pounds was made to the College, which would be repayable over a period of forty years at a modest interest rate of 4 ¼%.²⁸ This most certainly helped the financial situation of the College, but further aid was required for full-university status.

²⁶ 'Loans Rhodes University', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, 19/9J, 17th January 1949

²⁷ 'Loans Rhodes University College Proposed Conversion of Loans', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, 19/9J, 21st March 1949

²⁸ Currey, R. F., *Rhodes University: 1904-1970 A Chronicle*, Rustica Press, PTY., LTD., Wynberg, Cape, 1970. Pg. 110.

As stated earlier, the Minister of Education, while considering the Colleges facilities to be adequate for University status, refused to grant their request until the financial situation had been resolved by paying off most of the £-550 000 debt which incurred an annual payment of £-40 000. At the College's then current rate of income (£-60 000 for general purposes and £ 38 000 for scholarships and bursaries as well as any revenue received from student fees), of £-100 000 annually it would have been impossible to balance the financial situation to the Minister of Education's satisfaction. Given the College's existing financial position it would be utterly impossible to obtain University status.²⁹ Thus the Rhodes Endowment Fund³⁰ was created to try and tackle the financial problems; simply put, the Endowment Fund was "appealing to all public bodies, municipalities and the public generally in the Eastern Province and Border for assistance".³¹

During the same period when the Endowment Fund was created, Dr Alty (Registrar of Rhodes) requested an interview with the City Council in order to garner financial support for the College. Dr Alty hoped that the Grahamstown City Council would be at the forefront of supporting the College in its attempt to gain full University Status.³²

The City Council agreed to the proposed meeting and accepted the Rhodes delegation (consisting of Dr Alty and Messrs Hobson (M.P.C.) and Harker) at a Special Council Meeting on the 24th August 1949, organised specifically to hear the delegation's proposal. Dr Alty described in detail the financial difficulties that the College was then experiencing, how the debt of £-560 000 would not be able to be met with the College's annual £-100 000 income; how the College Council had raised hostel fees, decreased the number of staff, and raised attendance fees all in an attempt to decrease expense. However the situation had become untenable and without the support of the 'Rhodes Endowment Fund' it would become impossible, he therefore expressed his hope that the Municipality would be able to increase its support of the College. He pointed out that if the appeal was not successful the College would continue to run up its deficit, which would mean that Rhodes would subsequently have to close down. Mr Hobson:

pointed out that Grahamstown was not expected to raise the money alone. It was hoped that the Government would assist a great deal by granting on a pound for pound basis. Port Elizabeth Municipality was

²⁹ Unknown Author, 'R.U.C. Appeal', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th August 1949 (Cory Library)

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'Rhodes Endowment Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 31st October 1949 (Cory Library)

³¹ Unknown Author, 'R.U.C. Appeal', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd October 1949 (Cory Library)

³² 'Grants-In-Aid Rhodes University College', *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, G.2/1, 12th July 1949

approved for a grant and an endeavour was being made to raise another £-100 000 from the rest of the Easter Province and Border.³³

It was pointed out that various other centres would most likely give donations “according to Grahamstown’s contribution and more especially the Municipality’s contribution”.³⁴ It was therefore crucial that the Grahamstown City Council further support the College in its time of need.

The delegation presented the City Council with a list of estimates in relation to the financial benefits incurred by Grahamstown from the College: a total of £-176 550 (based on the 1949 estimates) spent yearly on items within Grahamstown.

Mr J.A. Rademan (the chairman of the Special Meeting) assured the delegation that the City Council would do its utmost for the College as the Council realised what a financial loss the educational institute would be for the City. Indeed the Mayor (Mr H.A. Mather-Pike) estimated that if the College were to close down, a total of “75 % of Grahamstown would go”.³⁵ It was felt that Grahamstown could afford the loss of a single school without too many detrimental effects to the City, but it would not be able to survive the loss of the College. It was therefore decided that it was critically important to provide the College with a grant of money spread over the course of a period of years, the maximum grant-in-aid to be decided at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting. It was also highlighted at the Special Meeting that the various other centres (that would be approached for funds or grants) would be influenced by what the Grahamstown City Council contributed to the College rather than the general Grahamstown public’s contribution, and it was recommended that the grant made by the Grahamstown City Council “should be an example to other centres”,³⁶ in the hope that it would prompt them to donate more.

At this period of the ‘Rhodes Endowment Fund’, it was considered that, without financial support from Grahamstown and as many other civic centres as possible, there was a very real possibility that the Rhodes University College would not be unable to obtain full University Status. The Mayor’s comment about 75% of the City closing down without the College’s presence, highlights the importance the City Council placed on the continued existence and development of the College.

For these reasons it was resolved at the following Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting (22nd September 1949) that, with the consent of the Administrator and the approval of the Grahamstown City Council, a grant-in-aid of £-10 000, payable at the rate of

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

£-1 000 per annum, over a period of ten years be made to Rhodes University College. Cr J.J. Cooke originally recommended that the grant-in-aid should rather be £-2 500 per annum for five years, in that “the Council must give a lead to the rest of the Province and the amount should be to the credit of Grahamstown”.³⁷ This supports the impression that the City Council believed that ‘other centres’ would donate money to the College based on what the Grahamstown City Council provided for it. The statement also reflects an element of ‘pride’ in relation to the amount contributed by the City Council, because it would reflect the apparent ‘value’ that the City Council placed on Rhodes University College. As the population of Grahamstown felt pride in their City as the ‘Oxford of South Africa’ (see Chapter One) the City Council’s financial contribution would reflect the pride and reputation of ‘the educational centre of the Eastern Province’. Unfortunately because of Grahamstown’s Financial Crisis (see Chapter Four) the City Council decided that the finances were such that “they could not afford more than 1000 pounds per annum”³⁸, dependent on the consent of the Administrator.

Interestingly the reply of the Provincial Secretary with regard to the City Council’s request to gain approval for its grant-in-aid to the College pointed out that according to the provisions of Section 13 of Act No 20 of 1917, the City Council did not require the consent of the Administrator to provide their grant. However the Provincial Secretary’s response then went on to that because of the City Council’s financial problems (see Chapter Four) the Administrator considered that the Council should perhaps reconsider their expenditure on grants to the College.³⁹

Despite the opinion of the Provincial Administrator, the City Council decided to go ahead with its £-10 000 grant over the period of ten years for Rhodes University College, despite the terrible financial strain it was currently experiencing. In response, Dr Alty sent a letter to the City Council conveying his appreciation and thanks: “Will you please convey to the Council the grateful thanks of the College for this most valuable support. It is of the greatest help to us in our appeal not only in itself but as an example to other public bodies”.⁴⁰

Support for the City Council’s decision also came from the Grahamstown public:

We are informed on excellent authority that the City Council is very pleased to do this (the grant of 10 000 pounds) recognising the fact of the

³⁷ ‘Grants – In – Aid, Rhodes University College Special Appeal’, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, G.2/2, 22nd September 1949

³⁸ *Ibid.*.

³⁹ ‘Grants – In – Aid, Rhodes University College’, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/16, G.2/2, 16th January 1950

⁴⁰ ‘Grants – In – Aid, Rhodes University College’, *Finance and General Purposes Committee*, 3/A.Y, 1/2/3/1/15, G.2/2, 14th October 1949

importance of this renowned education institution in our midst and the fine record it holds which has become traditional.⁴¹

Support from the Grahamstown public towards the 'Rhodes Endowment Fund' was unequivocal, with individual citizens donating whatever funds they could towards their 'renowned educational institution'. By the 31st October 1950, a total of £-20 234 12 shillings and 6 pence⁴² had been donated, specifically by the Grahamstown public, towards the 'Endowment Fund'. A month later (30th November 1950), the Grahamstown total contribution had exceeded £-24 000,⁴³ clearly indicating the desire and motivation of the Grahamstown public to support the College.

This motivation quite possibly increased in intensity with the announcement of the Minister of Education on the 17th August 1950 that, if the Rhodes University College managed to provide £-100 000 to its endowment fund by the end of 1950, it would become an independent self-governing University in March 1951.⁴⁴

By this point, all that the 'Endowment Fund' required to bring the total up to £ 100 000 was a further £-10 000, Dr Alty made a further appeal to donate to the fund which was received in a very positive manner by the Grahamstown public:

The appeal for the further £-10 000 to complete the amount required by the end of this year will we feel sure be forthcoming in due course and we join him (Dr Alty) in his appeal to any who are intending to make a contribution to the Appeal Fund but have not yet done so to, as he says 'do it NOW and so help us over this last hurdle'.⁴⁵

The citizens of Grahamstown (as well as other centres) took note of this appeal and by the 8th December 1950, the full total of £-100 000 had been raised in line with the Minister of Education's conditions for Full University Status. The raised £-100 000 would subsequently be combined with the Government's donation of the same amount to be used to repay the various loans raised for building purposes⁴⁶ by the College, thereby meeting the financial

⁴¹ Unknown Author, 'R.U.C. Appeal', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd October 1949 (Cory Library)

⁴² Unknown Author, 'Rhodes Endowment Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 31st October 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴³ Unknown Author, 'Rhodes Endowment Fund', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th November 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴⁴ Unknown Author, 'Rhodes University College Higher Status in Sight', 17th August 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, 'Independent University Status for Rhodes', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th December 1950 (Cory Library)

conditions for Rhodes to evolve to a full university. The grant of independent university status to Rhodes was:

Hailed with a deep sense of gratification by all who have followed the progress of the appeal, and with satisfaction by those who have sponsored it throughout all the strenuous efforts on its behalf.⁴⁷

On the 12th March 1951 Rhodes University College was officially and formally inaugurated as Rhodes University, a fully-fledged independent university. To mark the occasion the Minister of Justice, Mr C.R. Swart, the Minister of Economic Affairs, Mr Eric Louw, and the Minister of Education, Mr J. H. Viljoen, were all present during the inauguration. Statements the inauguration indicated a deep-seated sense of civic pride in and appreciation by the Grahamstown public for their newly recognised University and their City for being the home to it:

To those who were fortunate enough to attend the inauguration celebrations, a new and deeper appreciation was conveyed of the special dignity which Grahamstown enjoys in the Eastern Cape by virtue of the presence here of the University. At no time during the celebrations was this better exemplified for townspeople as a whole than in the slow and solemn procession down High Street on Saturday morning of students, professors, mayors, Cabinet ministers and others associated with the University's attainment of its new status. Here was symbolised the living soul of the University in this fair and historic city. The inauguration celebrations began with the graduation ceremony of the University of South Africa in the City Hall on Friday evening, the last to be staged in Grahamstown.⁴⁸

The appeals of Rhodes University College, during the period 1947 to 1951, to gain Full University Status should be considered as one of the highlights of the period under review, both because it was successful in its appeal and would therefore usher in a new positive relationship between the University and the City of Grahamstown; and because had its appeal not been successful there had been a very real possibility that it would have had to close down, possibly ruining 75% of Grahamstown. As it occurred however, attaining of Full University Status ensured the continued existence of Grahamstown as 'the educational centre of the Eastern Province' and further enhanced the City's reputation in relation to education.

⁴⁷ Unknown Author, 'A Notable Achievement', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th December 1950 (Cory Library)

⁴⁸ Unknown Author, 'Colourful Inauguration of Rhodes University, Distinguished Gatherings Attend Ceremonies', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th March 1951 (Cory Library)

Although the Grahamstown public fully supported the University in its appeal, donating over £-24 000 to the 'Rhodes Endowment Fund', specific praise must be granted to the Grahamstown City Council. Without the extended repayment period that it allowed the University to for its Grahamstown City Council loans as well as the grant-in-aid of £-10 000 (£-1 000 per annum) towards the 'Rhodes Endowment Fund' it is unlikely that Rhodes University would have been able to acquire its new status. The City Council's financial support to the University occurred during its Financial Crisis (Chapter Four), a time when the City Council itself was experiencing financial complications. However, despite these complications (and the Provincial Administrator's opinion that the City Council should not have provided a grant to the University because of its own perilous financial position), the Grahamstown City Council supported the University with every resource that it could muster. The achievement of Rhodes University College becoming a fully fledged University is therefore one of the positive actions of the City Council during the period under review.

Chapters Four through Eight have presented five different events that affected the City during the period under review, all of which required the City Council's attention and expertise. Of these the Financial Deficit, the Housing Crisis and the Beer Hall Debate presented the City Council with extreme problems which they failed to solve adequately. The Financial Deficit was only solved on the insistence of the Provincial Authority that the City Council raise the tax on rateable property. The Housing Crisis continued throughout the period under review and, despite the City Council attempts to better the standard of living for the Location dwellers no real improvement occurred. It can be stated unequivocally that a lack of funds, a lack of assistance from the Government and a complete lack of understanding of the circumstances surrounding the Housing Crisis caused the Council's inability to improve the housing situation. However, that the Beer Hall Debate presents a case in which the City Council actively ignored the wishes of the majority of the people living in the Location and proceeded with its own agenda. By doing this it deprived a section of its population which most required upliftment of a positive centre, such as a 'milk bar' or a 'vegetable stand', instead insisting that the Beer Hall remain and expand. This was not merely an ignorant action on the part of the Council, but an active decision to ignore the protests of its citizens. Only in its efforts with regard to the Tuberculosis crisis and the Rhodes Endowment Fund did the City Council positively affect the outcomes. In response to the Tuberculosis crisis however it must be noted that the City Council merely provided funds and land for the project; the motivation and determination to fight Tuberculosis came from Mrs Katherine Webb and the Tuberculosis Society. The only event where the City Council took the initiative was that of the Rhodes Endowment Fund. However considering the consequences for Grahamstown of the University closing this should be considered as a normal reflex to protect the City.

Chapter Nine will analyse the political expression of 'White English' Grahamstown with regard to the political climate and implementation of Apartheid during the period under review, specifically the attempted implementation of the Group Areas Act within the City and the anti-Republican sentiment held by 'White English' Grahamstown.

Chapter Nine

Political Perceptions within Grahamstown

Introduction

During the period, 1946 to 1960, events took place within the world that would affect and define the latter half of the twentieth-century in ways that could not have been foreseen by those who lived in the early part of the century. The defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 saw the rise of the Eastern and Western Superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States of America, and the Berlin Air Lift¹ witnessed the beginning of what would be become known as the Cold War between these two power blocs, and would only end in 1990 with the destruction of the Berlin Wall.

In the same manner, the events that took place in South Africa during the period 1946 to 1960, defined and created what would become known as the Apartheid regime, under the National Government. The late 1940s saw the emergence of the National Party as the victor in the 1948 National elections,² the 1950s saw the consolidation and development of the racial segregation policies that would become the foundation for the Apartheid regime, with new laws such as the Population Registration Act (1950), the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Separate Representation of Voters Act (1956),³ paving the way for complete segregation under the National Party. David Welsh in his book, *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, considers that “from 1948 to 1959 the emphasis was on entrenching NP power and extending discrimination”.⁴

This entrenchment cumulated in the 1960 Republican Referendum. Winning this allowed the National Party to fulfil its republican ambitions. Not only did this sever the link with the British Commonwealth of Nations, but it also made clear that South Africa was well and truly in the hands of the Nationalists. The years 1946 to 1960 can be considered the foundation stage of Apartheid South Africa, the beginning and consolidation of National Party power, and the emergence of Black resistance towards this power.

This chapter will centre on the political expression of Grahamstown during the period 1946 to 1960, focusing on the City’s support and loyalty to the United Party, its distrust and hostility towards the National Party, and the various political groups that were formed and influenced Grahamstown politically (The Torch Commando, The Black Sash etc). The actions

¹ Glees, A., *Reinventing Germany: German Political Development since 1945*, Berg, Oxford International Publishers Ltd, 1996, Pg. 39.

² Welsh, David., *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, Jonathan Ball Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 2009. Pg. 1

³ Ibid. Pg. 53 – 55.

⁴ Ibid. Pg. 52.

and reactions of the City with regard to the three General Elections which took place during the period under review, as well as analysing the City's opinion towards the 1960 Republican Referendum will be discussed. Apartheid policies and their effect on Grahamstown will be reviewed with an emphasis on the Group Areas Act (1950) and its attempted implementation in Grahamstown. This section will attempt to define the political expression of Grahamstown (both the dominant 'White English' attitudes and the lesser-known Black township attitudes) in order to gauge the opinions of 'White English' Grahamstown with regard to the beginning of Grand Apartheid, and the effects it had on the City.

The United Party

The United Party's foundation has its origin in the formation of the South African Party (SAP), established in November 1911 under Louis Botha and Jan Smuts.⁵ At its inception the South African Party stood for 'conciliation' between the 'White English' and Afrikaans-speaking populations of South Africa after the horrifying events of the South African War (1899 to 1902). Its mandate was based on the ideal of common loyalty of both English- and Afrikaans-speakers to South Africa itself.⁶ Unfortunately this attempt at conciliation did not have the desired effect of uniting South Africa, as three years later, on the 7th January 1914, "the National Party was born in Bloemfontein"⁷ under the guidance of its founder Mr J.B.M. Hertzog in opposition to the South African Party under Botha and Smuts. This divide came to an end in 1934 when, because of a national economic crisis, the South African Party (under Smuts) and the National Party (under Hertzog) agreed to a coalition between their parties,⁸ forming the United Party. This alliance of convenience did not however remain for any length of time, and in 1939 Hertzog and a number of his supporters left the United Party after it became clear that Smuts and the majority of the United Party were committed to entering the Second World War on the side of the British Empire and its Commonwealth of Nations.⁹

The United Party remained in power from its formation in 1934 to 1948 when it was defeated by Dr Malan's revitalised National Party. After this, the United Party remained as the official opposition to the National Party until its end in 1977, but never regained a big

⁵ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001, Pg. 158.

⁶ Ibid. Pg. 158.

⁷ Van Der Westhuizen, Christi., *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party*, Zebra Books, 2007. Pg. 11.

⁸ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001, Pg. 158.

⁹ Ibid. Pg. 183.

enough majority vote to replace the National Party. On its demise, its remaining members formed the New Republican Party.

The following section will focus on the United Party and its influence and effect on the people of Grahamstown, from the end of the Second World War when an attitude of confidence abounded within its supporters, and it was inconceivable that it could lose the 1948 elections, to its slow decline and stagnation during the 1950s culminating in its inability to prevent the ultimate National Party victory, the establishment of a Republican South Africa.

Grahamstown and the United Party

The City of Grahamstown in the Albany district (also known as the Cape Border, the Cape Frontier, and Setter Country) of the Eastern Cape and during the period under review (1946 to 1960) was considered and remained “a safe seat for the United Party”.¹⁰ Very simply put, the Albany district in general and the City of Grahamstown specifically were “consistent in its loyalty to the United Party”¹¹ and could be counted upon to add its voting strength to the United Party and its leader, General Smuts. The citizens of Grahamstown viewed the Albany district as a United Party stronghold¹² and it was apparent that Grahamstonians took a great deal of pride in demonstrating their loyalty and support of the United Party.¹³

This loyalty towards the United Party probably has its roots in two different factors: the original formation of the South African Party, and the relationship between South Africa, Great Britain and the Commonwealth of Nations. Firstly, the South African Party was formed at the advent of Union with the goal of ‘conciliation’ between the two white language groups of South Africa; of uniting English and Afrikaans and providing these language groups with equal opportunity and rights. The end of the South African War paved the way for the advent of Union¹⁴ and, while the leaders of the new South African Party were two former Boer Generals (Louis Botha and Jan Smuts), the party was very much in line with British policies. From this it can be assumed that the White citizens of Grahamstown, being predominantly English-language speakers (see Chapter One), would have supported the South African Party because of their conciliatory policies for English and Afrikaans speakers. It is quite possible that during the early part of the 20th century,

¹⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Albany Will Remain a Safe Seat for the UP, But Important to Vote Thickly to maintain Party’s Over-all Lead’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 9th October 1957 (Cory Library)

¹¹ Grocott, H.T., ‘Albany Election’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th April 1948 (Cory Library)

¹² Clarke, S.D., ‘Albany Election, Mr Bowker at Alicedale’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 11th May 1948 (Cory Library)

¹³ Grocott, T.H., ‘Prime Minister’s Appeal’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th May 1948 (Cory Library)

¹⁴ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001, Pg. 159.

Grahamstonian support went to the Unionist Party (a political party drawing its support from the English language section of the population); however the majority of the Unionist Party was absorbed by the South African Party in 1920,¹⁵ combining their members and policies. This meant that the South African Party was the only pro-British political organisation till the formation of the Dominion Party fourteen years later in 1934.

The formation of the National Party in 1914, under former Boer General J.B.M. Hertzog, which drew its support primarily from the Afrikaans-speaking section of the population,¹⁶ would have also influenced Grahamstonian support towards the South African Party because as the National Party, while not distinctly anti-British, was most certainly less supportive of the English-speaking section of the population. Grahamstown's support for the South African Party would continue to and after its fusion with the National Party in 1934 when it became the United Party.

The second point to focus on relates to the South African Party's, and later the United Party's, policies towards Great Britain and the British Commonwealth of nations. Not only were the majority of citizens of Grahamstown English-speakers, but many of them were descended from the original 1820 British Settlers who colonised the Eastern section of the Cape Province.¹⁷ Grahamstown's citizens were proud of this Settler heritage and took great pleasure in referring to their city as 'the Settler City' (see Chapter Three). This pride in the Settler heritage extended further however, to form a link of loyalty to Great Britain, its people and its Commonwealth of Nations. Simply put, English-speaking Grahamstonians considered themselves to be British South Africans with a dual loyalty towards their country of birth as well as the 'Motherland', Great Britain (See Chapter Three). Thus it can be presumed that the South African Party's, and later the United Party's, support of Great Britain during the early half of the twentieth century, specifically with regard to both the First World War and the Second World War, would have endeared it to most of the English-speaking citizens of Grahamstown, many of whom considered themselves British South Africans.

This theory is supported by the fact that, since the advent of Union, the Albany district had "never been represented in parliament other than by United Party members and before that time by the South African Party".¹⁸ Indeed the member for Albany during the period under review, Mr T.B. Bowker had represented the Albany district since the Provincial Elections of 1935,¹⁹ returning every election year after that by a majority of votes. While

¹⁵ Ibid. Pg. 188.

¹⁶ Ibid. Pg. 120.

¹⁷ Ibid. Pg. 80.

¹⁸ Unknown Author, 'Nats to Contest Albany, Alexandria Farmer to Oppose Candidate', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th January 1953, (Cory Library)

¹⁹ Unknown Author, 'Bowker's Clarion Call to United Party, Shake off Present Apathy and fight Nat's at own game he urges', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th August 1956, (Cory Library)

Grahamstown did not make up the entire voting population of the district, it was certainly the largest and most active City in the area, which shows that its citizens contributed a sizeable percentage of the winning United Party votes.

The organisation of this support was made possible in Grahamstown because of the various United Party organisations present. The City's United Party branch was functionally active by the beginning of the period under review and, despite the National Party victory in 1948, and the subsequent losses sustained by the United Party in later years, remained steadfast in its attempts to win votes for the General Elections and ensure that, at the very least, Albany would remain a safe seat for the United Party.²⁰ Mr E.S. Rivett-Carnac, a former and future Grahamstown Mayor and long-time member of the City Council, filled the position of Chairman of the Grahamstown United Party Branch during the period under review. Under Mr Rivett-Carnac the Grahamstown Branch Party was an organised, active office, arranging committee meetings, United Party events and funding drives,²¹ such as the 'United Party Week' which took place during the 23rd to the 30th of October 1947.²² The *Grocott's Daily Mail* appeared to be the primary medium through which the Grahamstown public was informed about local political developments and asked to support the various political meetings and fundraisers that the United Party organised. It is interesting to note that Mr E.S. Rivett-Carnac, published a letter of thanks in the *Grocott's Daily Mail* for every United Party fundraiser or fete that were supported by the Grahamstown public, indicating a high level of interaction and support between the Grahamstown United Party and the Grahamstown public. The Grahamstown Branch of the Party also organised various visits and meetings with influential members of the United Party when possible. For instance, Mr T.B. Bowker (the United Party Provincial representative for Albany during the period under review) was a familiar face at Grahamstown United Party meetings,²³ and in November 1951 Sir De Villiers Graaff,²⁴ the United Party representative for Hottentots-Holland and the United Party Leader during the years 1956 to 1977, addressed a Grahamstown United Party meeting.

The Grahamstown United Party was, however, not the only political organisation present within the town during the period under review. A Grahamstown Woman's United Party

²⁰ Cloete, J.D., 'Albany will remain a Safe Seat for the UP, But Important to Vote Thickly to Maintain Party's Over All Lead', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 9th October 1957 (Cory Library)

²¹ Rivett-Carnac, E.S., 'United Party Appeal for Funds', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd July 1948, (Cory Library)

²² Unknown Author, 'Political Outlook', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 23rd October 1947, (Cory Library)

²³ Osborn, F.H., 'Humiliation or Tonic, Varying UP views of the Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd August 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁴ Unknown Author, 'Sir De Villiers Graff Here Next Wednesday', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd November 1951 (Cory Library)

Branch was formed on the 12th of March 1946.²⁵ Unfortunately very little information is available with regard to the Women's United Party Branch, and it appears that the organisation filled a supportive role towards the main United Party Branch within Grahamstown.

A far more active United Party organisation, in comparison to the Woman's Branch, was the Junior United Party, an organisation dedicated to promoting political support for the United Party from the young men and women who were not yet old enough to take an active part in the Main Party functions. The first meeting of the Junior United Party took place during March of 1948 with a mere ten members present.²⁶ Nevertheless, by the following March (1949) the head of the Settlers' Club of the Albany United Party Youth Front in Grahamstown, Mr Stuart Armitage, announced that about 60 youths had been attending regularly. Albany United Party Members, Mr Bowker and Mr Rivett-Carnac, had also been present at various Club meetings.²⁷ The Settlers' Club took on a very active role within Grahamstown, focusing on getting the youth politically aware and active through various activities, for example, 'Braaivleis' evenings, annual sports days, and youth-related political rallies. Indeed Miss Roslyn Elgar, a member of the Settlers' Club, was crowned the United Party Youth Front Queen²⁸ during the Eastern Province Rally held in Port Elizabeth. The Grahamstown Settlers' Club also held the regular quarterly meeting of the Eastern Cape United Party Front during August 1949,²⁹ hosting some 20 leaders of the Eastern Cape branches of the Youth Front. In addition, during February 1952, it held a three-day United Party Youth Rally. This was attended by 150 delegates of the Eastern Cape Youth Fronts.³⁰ For this rally, Grahamstown United Party members, provided accommodation for many of the delegates making clear the connection between the two organisations. From the information available, it appears that the Grahamstown Settlers' Club was very active from its inception in 1948 till about the end of 1952. After this, little or no information was found about the Youth Club or its activities for the remainder of the period under review. From 1953 onwards, information relates largely to the main United Party and its attempts to oust the National Party Government from power. However during the period 1948 to 1952 the Settlers' Club was an active political organisation, not only within the confines of Grahamstown but also within the Eastern Cape in general. A final point to note with regard to the Settlers' Club relates to the timing of its inception: it was formed with an original

²⁵ Unknown Author, 'Women's United Party City Branch Formed', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th March 1946 (Cory Library)

²⁶ Armitage, Stuart., 'United Party Youth Front', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st March 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Unknown Author, 'United Party Youth Front: Grahamstown Girl is Chosen Queen', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th March 1949 (Cory Library)

²⁹ Smith, K., 'United Party Front Youth Council In City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th August 1949 (Cory Library)

³⁰ Unknown Author, 'Youth Front Rally In City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th February 1952 (Cory Library)

membership of ten youths two months before the National Party victory during the General Election of 1948. Within a year of its formation, the Settlers' Club had increased its attendance to around sixty youths. It is highly likely that this rapid increase in attendance was in response to the National Party victory of 1948, in that the United Party loss galvanised Grahamstown Youth into becoming more politically active and aware of the South African politics at that point.

The Torch Commando

Another organisation that formed a branch in Grahamstown during the period under review, which was not part of the United Party but retained close links with it, was the Torch Commando. An ex-servicemen's organisation, the Torch Commando was formed in 1951 in opposition to the National Party Government.³¹ Its original protest against the Government related to the National Party attempts to remove Coloured voters from the Common Voters Roll, which granted members of their community the right to vote, in terms of the 1853 Cape Franchise.³² As an organisation, however, the Torch Commando did not remain active for very long. After the National Party won the General Election of 1953, members of the Commando left the organisation to join the Liberal Party while others considered the Commando to have failed. A small majority attempted to continue with the Commando but by 1955 it had lost all influence within the country.³³

Despite its short life-span, the Torch Commando had a very active period in Grahamstown, from 1951 to 1953. The first mention of the possibility of organising a Torch Commando Branch in Grahamstown occurred during August of 1951, when it was announced that a meeting would be held on the 13th of August (1951) to allow the public an opportunity to voice their opinions on the formation of the Branch. Captain C.O. Rich was the acting chairman during this early stage and presented the Torch Commando's principles as:

To uphold the letter and the spirit of the solemn compacts entered upon at the time of Union as moral obligations of trust and honour binding upon Parliament and the people. To secure the repeal of any measures enacted in violation of such obligations. To protect the freedom of the individual in worship, language, and speech and to ensure his right of free access to the courts. To eliminate all forms of totalitarianism, whether Fascist or Communist. To promote racial harmony in the Union.³⁴

³¹ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 171.

³² *Ibid.* Pg. 73.

³³ *Ibid.* Pg. 171.

³⁴ Rich, C.O., 'Torch Commando Branch Planned Here, Meeting to be held in Grahamstown Soon', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 1st August 1951 (Cory Library)

The results of this first Torch Commando meeting were very positive: by 8 o' clock the hall was filled, every available seat taken, but more people proceeded to arrive to the point that people were sitting on the tables surrounding the hall or leaning against its walls.³⁵ Membership was restricted to men and women who had served in the South African or Allied Forces and those over the age of nineteen who wished to support the organisation. Over 400 Grahamstown citizens joined the Commando at the end of the meeting and it was unanimously decided that Captain C.O. Rich would stand as Chairman, with Mr C.G. Browning elected as Secretary. Less than two months later (during October), membership of the Commando had risen to 500 ex-service men, and six months later (during April of 1952), the Commando had risen to an impressive 1 000 members for the Grahamstown Branch. *Grocott's Daily Mail*, reported that with more than 1 000 members in Grahamstown, the Torch Commando was doing sterling work within the City.³⁶

This enthusiasm of Grahamstown residents to join the Commando was most certainly motivated by the fact that many veterans of the Second World War and the First World War were living in Grahamstown. Rhodes University, Graeme College and St Andrews College had all provided young Grahamstown men to fight for Britain against her enemies (see Chapter Three). As such, the Grahamstown community actively supported the sentiments of the Torch Commando. Supporting them from a political, anti-government stand, and most likely because of a sentimental connection towards ex-service men who fought and perhaps died for the 'Motherland', Great Britain (see Chapter Three). However, the Torch Commando did not consider itself a political party despite its quasi-political³⁷ anti-National Party agenda. C. G. Browning the secretary of the Grahamstown Branch, made it clear, as follows:

the Torch Commando is emphatically not a Political Party. Equally emphatically it is concerned with Politics. The things for which it stands and for which its members have fought and suffered and which they won at a great price are precisely the things which are now threatened by Politicians.³⁸

While the National and Grahamstown Branch organisations of the Torch Commando lost influence and eventually disbanded after the 1953 General Election, it must be emphasised

³⁵ Unknown Author, 'Over 400 Join Torch Commando Here, Crowd Paced Minor Hall to Capacity', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 13th August 1951, (Cory Library)

³⁶ Unknown Author, 'Torch Commando Is Active, Over 1000 Members In Grahamstown', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th April 1952 (Cory Library)

³⁷ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 171.

³⁸ Browning, C.G., 'Is the Torch Commando a Political Party', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th September 1951 (Cory Library)

that while the Grahamstown Branch was operational, it actively promoted the Torch Commando, its principles and its membership. The most interesting Commando promotion for recruits related to a long article published in the *Grocott's Daily Mail*, which described a Torch Commando recruiting table and the various people who passed it by and decided to join or not, as the case may be. The scene featured a normal passer-by, an elderly lady, a trio of young students and a recently-returned couple from overseas. Of these people, the only ones who wished to join the commando were the elderly lady and the young students; the passer-by merely took a pamphlet, and the young couple were too worried about potential Government repercussions. The point of the article appears to have been to force people to take a look at the reasons 'why' they would not want to join the Commando and fight for the rights that South African men and women died for. The reason the article presented is two-fold: firstly, they (the young couple) feared Government prosecution, and secondly, people (the normal passer-by) were not prepared to give their time and effort to the Commando's efforts to remove the National Party Government from power. The article makes it clear that the Commando expected people to join and take part in the just fight against the Afrikaner Nationalists because as Mr C.B. Browning, Secretary for the Grahamstown Torch Commando Branch, stated:

For too long, too many people, whether from selfishness or ignorance have been content to do nothing about politics, either local or national. And this apathy has brought us to the position we are in today.³⁹

The end of the article (after the recently-returned overseas young couple stop at the table but do not join for fear of reprisals), highlights Mr Browning's statement and emphasises the Commando's sense of outrage:

Well! By Jove I knew things were bad, but perhaps not quite so bad until I heard you say what you're convinced this Government is capable of. There is surely something wrong with people who are prepared to live in a country and remain silently afraid that its Government can condemn and deport them as Communists without just trial. I believed that that was the Russian scene, not the South African one. If we haven't the courage to raise our voices in protest, well we deserve all that comes to us. That is why this movement is so keen on recruiting the morally courageous only. I think perhaps you better not join it.⁴⁰

The Torch Commando also supplied much support to the Grahamstown United Party during its existence in Grahamstown. In 1952, during the build-up to the General Election of 1953,

³⁹ Browning, C.G., 'Many in Grahamstown are not Free from Fear', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th September 1951 (Cory Library)

⁴⁰ Unknown Author, 'Presenting At a Commando Table Starting the People of Grahamstown', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th September 1951 (Cory Library)

the Commando committee, together with a group of volunteers, began the slow arduous preparation of completing the Grahamstown voting rolls, arranging these names under the lists of their streets, ensuring that all eligible voters appeared on the voting rolls and noting which voters had moved from their previous residential addresses.⁴¹ The Commando again provided support to the United Party during 1953, when Advocate Donald Kannemeyer (the new chairman of the Grahamstown Torch Commando) called on Commando volunteers to begin visiting voter houses, ensuring that their names were on the voters' roll, whether they required postal votes, and if any assistance would be necessary for the voters to appear at the polls (in the case of old or frail voters).⁴² This support came from the desire to present the National Party with a 'United Front' of both the Commando and the United Party in order to 'turn out the Nationalist Government'. While this failed, it must be noted that Grahamstown's Torch Commando Branch, from the information available, was a pro-active organisation that went out of its way to provide the Grahamstown United Party Branch with support and attract members to its cause. For their part, the United Party appreciated the support of the Torch Commando⁴³ and viewed the organisation as an important ally in the defeat of the Government.

The following section will analyse Grahamstown's support for the United Party during the three National Elections during the period under review and demonstrate the loyalty Grahamstown's White English-speaking citizens felt towards what they considered the 'right' political party.

Grahamstown and the national general elections during the period 1948 to 1960

This section will focus on the Grahamstown political and social attitudes during the various national general elections that occurred between 1946 and 1960, of which there were three (1948, 1953, 1958). The section will also highlight the loyalty and dedication of the citizens of Grahamstown towards the United Party and General Smuts, and their pride in ensuring that the district of Albany remained "a safe seat for the United Party". The three elections will be discussed in chronological order, from the beginning of the build-up towards them and the results that occurred after their completion. Election organisation, anti-National Party election slogans and public demonstration will also be analysed.

⁴¹ Browning, C.G., 'Torch Commando is Active, Over 1000 members in Grahamstown', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th April 1952 (Cory Library)

⁴² Kannemeyer, D., 'Call to all Torch Men and Women', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th February 1953 (Cory Library)

⁴³ Rivett-Carnac, E. S., 'Nat's Build an Incubator for Communism, Sir De Villiers-Graff Speaks in City', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th November 1951 (Cory Library)

1948 General Election

The first reference to the General Election of 1948 occurred in Grahamstown during November of 1946 and related how the United Party should, “take a leaf from the opposition’s book” with regard to the National Party’s organisation, preparation and campaigning for their Election platforms. While concern was expressed with regard to the apparent laxity of the United Party, at this point, the likely probability of a United Party loss was not seriously considered. Indeed surprise was expressed at the fact that the principle National Party Election Platform focused upon the ‘race question’, raising the interesting point that, during this period, the United Party citizens of Grahamstown could not conceive of a National Party victory based on the ‘race question’.⁴⁴

Perhaps because this concern was so mild, Grahamstown was slow to begin her pre-election preparation, and during 1947 there were only two references to the Grahamstown United Party Branch, the first being a request by the Secretary of the Grahamstown Branch of the United Party, Mr E.S. Rivett-Carnac, to all those who subscribed to the principles of the United Party to join it formally and take a side. As of October 21st 1947, 600 people had joined the Party.⁴⁵ The second reference focused on a plea from the United Party for the first time, through its Grahamstown Branch, for funds from the public to help contest the General Election against the National Party during the following year (1948). The reason for this request related to the supposed Nationalist ‘Republican Battle Fund’, a fund set up by the National Party to ensure victory in the up-coming elections which would have thus allowed for the formation of a South African Republic. The article also indicated that the Broederbond had been influencing the National Party since 1933 as the Broederbond considered it, “the best instrument with which to attain the Republic”,⁴⁶ this was viewed as a dire threat to the Constitution and the political rights of United Party members (see Republican section) and would result in a ‘catastrophe’ for South Africa. As indicated in the United Party section above, Grahamstown was loyal beyond question to the United Party cause and viewed the Nationalist Republican agenda with concern (see Republican section).

The build-up to the General Election began in Grahamstown during April of 1948 with the publishing of an anti-National Party cartoon, linking the Nationalists to the Ossawa Brandwag, the Greyshirts (a South African Nazi Party)⁴⁷ and Hitler.

The cartoon is simple and easily understood; ‘The Nationalist Party represents everything that South Africa fought against, VOTE UP!’ This cartoon was published by the *Grocott’s*

⁴⁴ Unknown Author, ‘Opposition Tactics’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th November 1946 (Cory Library)

⁴⁵ Rivett-Carnac, E. S., ‘Join Up’. *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 21st October 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴⁶ Unknown Author, ‘United Party Week, Why Funds are Needed’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 22nd October 1947 (Cory Library)

⁴⁷ Bunting, B., *The Rise of the South African Reich*, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1964. Pg. 54.

Daily Mail multiple times between the 21st April to the 24th of May, focusing again and again on the negative connotations of a National Party victory. The cartoons, however, were merely one form of anti-Nationalist propaganda, a further three United Party campaign slogans joined it, each highlighting a different reason why people MUST vote UP during the election. An example of each is provided below.

The first political advertisement links the Afrikaner Nationalists with the fight against Nazi Fascism, which many Grahamstown men and women fought and died for, highlighting the importance the town placed on the events of the Second World War (see Chapter Three).

DO YOU REMEMBER?

- When certain Parties boasted that they had been instrumental in keeping part of our ARMY in the Union so that it could not take part in the struggle against Fascist tyranny? Now they ask you to hand over the reins of Government to them

Let your answer be: United Party

- We have a duty to the men and women who stood with us in the war.
- The Party which trusted in War, can be trusted in Peace.⁴⁸

The second advert focuses on the race question; how a National Party Government would destroy the delicate race balance that the United Party policy had created, with emphasis placed, by the National Party, on the supposed 'Black Peril'. What one must note is that the United Party, while vilifying the antagonistic racial principles of the Nationalists, did not itself wish to cultivate the principle of racial equality. In fact, Mr Hobson, the United Party Candidate for the 1949 Provincial Council Elections, stated that while he stood for the United Party's "Non-European Policy" and would do everything in his power to protect the entrenched clauses of the Cape Franchise, the United Party did "not stand for racial equality as between Europeans and Non-Europeans".⁴⁹ One should therefore view the political advertisement as an indication of the worry of United Party citizens, with regard to the National Party's antagonistic racial policies, not from a position of racial equality but rather from a sense of danger relating to the change from United Party racial policy and the implications that this might cause.

STAMP IT OUT! RACIAL POLITICS are a curse to any Country. It holds up progress. It sets race against race. Colour against colour

What the nationalists started as a Black Peril has turned out to be a political peril for all South Africans.

SOUTH AFRICANS MUST STAND TOGETHER

Racial Prejudice Begets Race Hatred

LET US ERADICATE NATIONALISM

⁴⁸ Oosthuizen, O.A., 'Do You Remember?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th May 1948 (Cory Library)

⁴⁹ Hobson, S., 'Civil Rights League', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd March 1949 (Cory Library)

VOTE UNITED PARTY.⁵⁰

The final anti-Afrikaner Nationalist advertisement focused on the potential economic decline for various sections of the population, while the United Party if it was re-elected, would provide 'a bright future for all'. It must be noted that there is no specific mention if people of colour would be part of this 'bright future'; no doubt the United Party believed that a return their policies of segregation would be a bright enough future.

NATIONALISM means STAGNATION

1. Nationalism in 1924/29 meant 3/6 per day for road workers.
2. Nationalism in 1929 meant 4/- per bag for mealies.
3. Nationalism in 1929/32 meant a loss of 50 000 000 to the farmers.

The United Party for Progress

1. Farmers assured of a good living.
2. More people employed.
3. National income doubled.
4. Increased Social Services.
5. A bright future for all.

VOTE UNITED PARTY.⁵¹

Despite the pre-election build-up, the United Party members of Albany did not consider there was a threat to their Party's pre-eminent position in the area; indeed it was reported that, "secure in its faith in General Smuts and consistent in its loyalty to the United Party, Albany has had no reason to doubt the issue of any challenge that might be made at any time".⁵² From the information available it appears as though Grahamstown did not, at this point, consider the National Party a dangerous threat. Certainly they saw it as more influential and powerful since the previous General election, but not enough to have prevented the victory of the United Party and the return of General Smuts to office. The level of political pride and determination was so high in Grahamstown that the *Grocott's Daily Mail* stated that it, as a newspaper, was giving unhesitating and unequivocal support to the United Party, considering it the only political party capable of uniting and securing South Africa.⁵³

The results of the General Election, however, caused mixed emotions for the Grahamstown population. While Mr Bowker had been returned as the United Party representative of Albany, by a majority of 3 482 votes,⁵⁴ distress was expressed over the defeat of General

⁵⁰ Oosthuizen, O.A., 'STAMP IT OUT!', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th May 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵¹ Oosthuizen, O.A., 'Nationalism means Stagnation', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th May 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵² Grocott, T.H., 'Albany Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 30th April 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵³ Rae, J.C., 'The General Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th April 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵⁴ Unknown Author, 'Albany Result', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th April 1948 (Cory Library)

Smuts on the National level as well as the constituency level. Despite this the United Party loss was stated as a fortune of war, a political war.⁵⁵ It was further expressed that with the National Party victory, not only the Union of South Africa but the entire World would be watching the developments and policies of the new government, indicating that regardless of the fact that Grahamstown was a United Party stronghold, judgment against the Nationalists would be reserved and based on the achievements that it achieved. The Grahamstown citizens would probably have considered the National Party Government's victory a 'once-off'. Many people no doubt believed that in the following election, General Smuts and the United Party would regain power. Indeed, an unknown writer to *Grocott's Daily Mail* stated that "when the Nationalists came into power in 1948 those who least of all expected this to happen were the members of the United Party".⁵⁶

1953 General Election

The build-up to the 1953 General Elections began earlier in Grahamstown than in the previous election year (1948). By March 1952, Mr R.A. Whitelaw, acting secretary of the Grahamstown United Party, made a general request to the public to begin the process of registering for the voters' roll. He also asked people to act quickly as he considered the next Election would either 'make' or 'mar' the future of the Union.⁵⁷ This early political campaigning by the Grahamstown United Party was stimulated by National Party Government meddling with the constitution, specifically with the Cape Franchise and the Separate Registration of Voters Act:

If ever a citizen of the Union had occasion to ask for a change of Government, the events leading up to the testing of the Separate Registration of Voters Act in the highest courts of South Africa, was such an occasion. Nothing could have convinced the voter so much of the necessity to put a government in power who would honour the basic law of Union.⁵⁸

The Albany United Party was also motivated to begin their campaign early because a National Party candidate, Mr H.A. De Ridder, a farmer from Alexandria, would be opposing the United Party candidate for Albany, Mr Bowker. Up until this point, Albany had never been represented in Parliament by any other party except the United Party and the South African Party before the formation of the United Party,⁵⁹ and the people of Grahamstown

⁵⁵ Grocott, T.H., 'Government Defeat', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th May 1948 (Cory Library)

⁵⁶ Unknown Author, 'Out Little Help', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st January 1953 (Cory Library)

⁵⁷ Whitelaw, R.A., 'Registration of Voters from: R.A. Whitelaw Acting Secretary of the Grahamstown United Party', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th March 1952 (Cory Library)

⁵⁸ Unknown Author, 'The General Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th January 1953 (Cory Library)

⁵⁹ Unknown Author, 'Nats to Contest Albany, Alexandria Farmer to Oppose Candidate', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 15th January 1953 (Cory Library)

took pride in this fact. Indeed it was hoped that, come the election day, Mr Bowker would be returned with such a huge and decisive majority of votes that no National Party candidate would ever again attempt to run for the Albany constituency.⁶⁰ To ensure the victory of the United Party in Albany, at the end of 1952, the Grahamstown Branch under its Chairman Mr Rivett-Carnac, devised a re-organisation plan for the party, dividing the original branch into five different branches, one for each of the Grahamstown Municipal wards with the plan to elect executive committees for each of the different wards in order to focus and organise the preparations for the up-coming election.⁶¹ The United Party Grahamstown Youth Branch, the Settlers' Club, joined with the main Party Branch to help the completion of the said different ward branches, and many Grahamstown volunteers offered their time and services to ensure that things ran smoothly. For instance, they checked the voters' rolls, ascertained from the old or infirm United Party supporters who would require assistance to 'make their mark' on Election day, and making sure that all those who, for whatever reason, would not be in Grahamstown on election day would get their vote by post.⁶² The information that is available suggests that many Grahamstown citizens, not merely the members of the United Party, provided their time and effort to help the preparations in any manner possible, to ensure that Albany remained a United Party 'stronghold'.

As with the previous General Election, the Grahamstown United Party Branch used a variety of political adverts and cartoons to promote their anti- National Party principles and the United Party agenda. Two of these political anti-Nationalist advertisements are discussed below.

The first example relates to a series of fourteen questions focusing on racial, economic, political and social principles, headed with the caption that "If you answer 'yes' to these questions, you must vote UP". While most of the points relate to economic factors, to the necessity of protecting South African Whites from being outnumbered, to increasing 'European' immigration and protecting the Constitution, two of the questions (1 and 14) focus on the tension between English and Afrikaans speakers. There is not a single mention of any United Party policy dealing with the racial repression of Africans, Coloureds and Indians, indicating that the United Party did not consider the beginning of Apartheid and the racial laws which followed to be an adequate voting platform, and suggesting that the United Party was only concerned with two issues: firstly, protecting South African whites and secondly, defeating the National Party Government.

⁶⁰ Unknown Author, 'Nationalist Handicap', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th April 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶¹ Unknown Author, 'United Party on the Job', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 24th February 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶² Ibid.

1. **Do you Believe:** Afrikaans and English speaking children should be taught in the home language of their parent's choice in the same schools?
2. **Do you Believe:** South Africa needs a white policy to save our 25 000 Europeans from being more and more outnumbered?
3. **Do you Believe:** That part of the cost of living allowances of State employees should be consolidated with the basic wages?
4. **Do you Believe:** That European families earning 30 to 50 pounds monthly should be able to rent houses for 4 to 7 pounds monthly?
5. **Do you Believe:** Higher paid employees should be able to buy their homes without paying a deposit?
6. **Do you Believe:** That the Nationalist Pass Law for Europeans should be abolished?
7. **Do you approve:** of the UP plan to use the Unemployment Insurance Fund to provide retirement pensions without a means test?
8. **Do you Believe:** That an UP Government will draw overseas capital and selected immigrants?
9. **Do you Believe:** That maize and cattle farmers should be guaranteed minimum prices in advance?
10. **Do you Approve:** the UP plan for a small-holders bank with 5 000 000 capital to finance smallholders?
11. **Do you Agree:** with the UP that we need ample native labour on farms and in industry?
12. **Do you Agree:** that besides anti-Communist laws the best way to root out Communism is to remove poverty and slums where it breeds?
13. **Do you Believe:** A Government should observe our law and our Constitution?
14. **And Finally Do you Believe:** That unity between Afrikaans and English speaking citizens is vital?⁶³

The second political advertisement highlights the fact that during the 1953 General Election the United Party, and subsequently the Grahamstown Branch Party and its supporters, were focusing on the 'White races' living in South Africa with no regard whatsoever for the suffering and repression of other groups. The advertisement promised that the United Party would do everything in its power to help "Europeans" in South Africa, even going so far as to promote immigration from 'our mother countries'. The specific highlight of the advertisement, however, related to White children, and the issue of language in the classroom, and how it was assumed that the National Party were creating a system that would divide the 'White races' of South Africa along the line of language. It is interesting to note that the advert stated "NO APARTHEID BETWEEN WHITE CHILDREN", indicating that while the United Party stood against Apartheid between Whites, it had no interest in resisting the National Party Apartheid policies against all those who were classified as 'Non-

⁶³ Unknown Author, 'If You Answer Yes To These Questions You Must Vote UP', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 27th March 1953 (Cory Library)

European'. This is reinforced by Mr Bowker when he reviewed the General Election where he first voiced his opinion that the United Party loss of the Election was connected to the Nationalist platform of racial segregation. Simply put, the National Party's "Native Policy" won votes from the United Party, but according to Mr Bowker, the United Party "Native policy" was just as good if not better than the Nationalist policy and consequently, "he was there to tell that the native could be kept in his place equally as well by a United Party regime as by a Nationalist one".⁶⁴ The fact that the United Party used the term 'White civilization' reinforces this point. The advertisement below reinforces this point, and in the original, featured a photograph of three White children holding hands and smiling.

For their sake.....GUARANTEE A WHITE SOUTH AFRICA! You can leave them a legacy of tension and dangeror through the white policy of the United Party, a future that is peaceful and secure.

More Europeans, The UP's White policy will increase the European population though allowances for children, improved maternity facilities, a bigger income tax rebate for parents, vocational training to enable our children to qualify for skilled work, selective immigration from our mother countries planned and encouraged over the years

NO APARTHIED BETWEEN WHITE CHILDREN

The reckless policy of dividing our children at school must be stopped. The UP will stop it for the sake of White Unity and a secure White civilisation

VOTE WHITE UNITY

VOTE UNITED PARY

And safeguard White Civilisation!⁶⁵

The Grahamstown United Party Branch were not the only organisations attempting to sway people to vote for the United Party. Reverent Andrew Farr of Grahamstown called on people to vote United Party for the welfare of South Africa; he believed it 'right' to vote against the National Party.⁶⁶ The final comment on the elections came from Mr Rivett-Carnac urging people not to become lax in their voting until the polls presented the results. Although Grahamstown was considered a safe seat, Mr Rivett-Carnac stressed that "no seat is safe until the last cross for the winning side has been counted".⁶⁷ The 1953 Election was during the period when the Torch Commando was active, so it can be assumed that the Commando took part in helping the United Party in Grahamstown during the 1953 Elections.

⁶⁴ Bowker, T.B., 'Mr Bowker Reviews the Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th June 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶⁵ Unknown Author, 'For Their Sake....GUARANTEE A WHITE SOUTH AFRICA', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 13th April 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶⁶ Farr, A., 'Prayer for the Election', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th April 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶⁷ Rivett-Carnac, E. S., 'Every UP Vote To Be Recorded Through Considered Safe UP Will Take No Chance In Albany', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th April 1953 (Cory Library)

The results of the polls become available on the 17th April 1953 and were released in the presence of a large crowd of Grahamstown citizens who had arrived at the magistrate's court for the results.⁶⁸ Mr Bowker had again been victorious with a majority of Albany votes (4 203 more than Mr De Ridder the National Party candidate), highlighting Albany's continued loyalty to and support of the United Party.⁶⁹ However apart from happiness expressed that Albany, and therefore Grahamstown, remained a United Party seat, little was said about the overall National Party victory. Considering the effort the Party itself put into organising their campaign, with the help of the Torch Commando and local volunteers, it can be assumed that the mood in Grahamstown was despondent.

1958 General Election

The 1958 General Election in Grahamstown was very different from previous elections, in that there appears from the information available (or the lack thereof) to have been a lack of motivation and a defeatist attitude. This view is supported by the lack of promotion of the United Party in Grahamstown through campaigning, political cartoons, advertisements, and organisation, compared with previous years. A series of articles was released between the 19th February till the 31st March, detailing and focusing on various United Party members who were standing against National Party candidates, but apart from providing information about these members, the articles provide little information. Despite the National Party victory, Albany remained a United Party 'stronghold', but in general, United Party voting figures were down across their constituencies, including Albany.⁷⁰

It seems that by 1958 the voters of Grahamstown considered a victory against the National Party at this time a hopeless cause. In 1948 Grahamstonians considered a National victory highly unlikely. By 1953 it was imperative to defeat the National Party and install a United Party Government, and the Grahamstown population was motivated and confident that this could be done with the help of the Torch Commando and the unity of the people. By 1958 however, the National Party had been in power for ten years and had brought about many different changes in the Constitution of South Africa, most of these related to the development of Apartheid. From this two points can be surmised as to why the Grahamstown public's motivation and enthusiasm was so deficient in 1958. Firstly, after ten years of National Party rule, it is conceivable that people had simply lost faith in the United Party. The National Party had gone from strength to strength while the United Party kept losing ground, and it is possible that Grahamstown citizens lost hope in a United Party victory. Secondly, it is possible that, by 1958, many United Party supporters had lost faith in

⁶⁸ Unknown Author, 'City Interested in Albany Result', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th April 1953 (Cory Library)

⁶⁹ Unknown Author, 'City Interest in Albany Result', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th April 1953 (Cory Library)

⁷⁰ Unknown Author, 'Increased Majorities Show The Swing Over To National Party, UP Also Down In Averages Per Constituency', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 17th April 1958 (Cory Library)

the United Party “Native Policy” and started supporting the National Party. The 1953 Election made it clear that the United Party was fighting for “White civilization”, which would necessitate repression and control of the African population, and it is therefore conceivable that the National Party Apartheid policies and their repressive measures would have influenced people who considered the ‘Black Peril’ to be the most serious threat to white hegemony in South Africa.

Regardless of these theories, it is a fact that before the 1958 General Election Grahamstown citizens were passionately motivated to combat the National Party threat and ensure that the ‘right party’ came into and remained in power, the information suggests that, by 1958 this passion had, for the most part, run its course. A combination of election losses and aggressive National Apartheid policies appear to have defeated it. Certainly, however, ‘White English’ Grahamstown (which was the dominant ethnic group in the City) supported the United Party of South Africa.

Grahamstown and Apartheid

The previous sections analysed Grahamstown's loyalty to the United Party and the effects that three National Party Election wins had on its population. It was demonstrated that Grahamstown was anti-National Party because of its main principles and the concern that South Africa would be altered beyond repair by these principles. Perhaps the main anxiety of Grahamstonians was connected to the Nationalist desire for a Republic, because not only would this provide the National Party with a high level of political control of the country but it would also redefine and perhaps destroy the links between the Union of South Africa and the British Commonwealth which the ‘White English’ section of the City population considered crucial (see Chapter Three).

The following sub-section will focus on the effects and actions of the National Party Apartheid policies on the people of Grahamstown, specifically the ‘White English’ citizens.

The pre-dominating social perception of ‘White English’ Grahamstown towards the different ‘races’ of the Union, specifically the Africans, can be considered one of Paternalism (see Chapter One and Two); they looked on the majority of Africans as children capable of learning and development but only through the influence of White leadership and teaching. To put it plainly the majority of ‘White English’ Grahamstown were quite happy with the segregation policies of the United Party, which Mr Rivett-Carnac described as a “‘middle of the road party’ in relation to racial mixing”.⁷¹ This view was taken further by Colonel Karel Rood, the United Party MP for Vereeniging, who stated that not only was the United Party system identical with that of the Voortrekkers and President Kruger, but also “it was, he

⁷¹ Rivett-Carnac, E. S., ‘Social Segregation is as Old as Our History, Rivett-Carnac Clear-Faced Exposition of United Party’s Racial Policy’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 22nd June 1957 (Cory Library)

declared, a policy of segregation both social and residential as applied to both Europeans and Natives on the basis of masters to servant relationships".⁷² This clearly defines the fact that, under the United Party, segregation in South Africa was an institutionalised system based on limited interaction between the races, even before the National Party started their system of Apartheid.

The first mention of the term 'Apartheid' within Grahamstown occurred on the 2nd April 1948, twenty-five days before the results of the General Election confirmed that the National Party had won the Election. The context was Dr Malan's political platforming of Apartheid during the build-up to the Election and it received criticism from the Grahamstown press, who not only highlighted the fact that he was appealing to prejudice, on the part of White South Africans against Africans, but also that the plan of Apartheid was just not feasible because of the immense area that would be needed for complete segregation between the races of South Africa.⁷³ More than this however, was the concern that complete and utter segregation would destroy the balance between the races as it existed at that point: "the so-called ideal of complete separation would take us back to the undeveloped days when Settlers had not yet made contact with the indigenous people and thus civilisation would be broken down".⁷⁴ So, while the ideal of complete segregation did not tempt Grahamstonians, the social and economic structure of South Africa at this time was itself one of limited segregation, and this system of repression was considered to be 'civilised'. Mr Bowker, Albany's representative in Parliament, expounded a similar view of Apartheid, stating that it was merely a "slogan" which allowed Dr Malan and the National Party to come to power but did not offer any real or lasting hope for the prospect of racial peace.⁷⁵ Despite these negative perceptions of Apartheid it must be remembered that many white South Africans were happy with the limited contact and interaction with the other 'races' showing that while they might not have been pro-Apartheid, they were definitely not pro-racial mixing. This is highlighted by the emergence of the 'Mixed Marriage Bill' within Parliament and the controversy surrounding it. General Smuts, the leader of the opposition in Parliament, declined to pass the new bill because of the potential difficulties arising from the legislation, but, despite this, the United Party was very much against racially mixed marriages.⁷⁶ General Smuts even went as far as to state that if there was one thing all South Africans were proud of it would be that "racial blood mixing was looked upon as evil". It was stated that while 'Natives and Indians' could be defined by law;

⁷² Unknown Author, 'The Native Problem', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 13th January 1949 (Cory Library)

⁷³ Unknown Author, 'Apartheid', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd April 1948 (Cory Library)

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Bowker, T. B., 'Mr T.B. Bowker MP on the Work of the Session', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th October 1948 (Cory Library)

⁷⁶ Unknown Author, 'Mixed Marriage Bill', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th May 1949 (Cory Library)

Coloured people represented a problem for legislation as they were a product of racial mixing and thus represented a matter of “infinite gradation”.⁷⁷

Regardless of these negative social perceptions, the proposed changes by the National Party to the constitution, with regard to the representation of ‘Natives’ in the House of Assembly and the removal of Coloured names from the voters rolls, caused grave concern in Grahamstown. In response to this concern, Professor D. Hobart Houghton of Rhodes University and Reverend A.H. Cullen, the Bishop of Grahamstown, called for a protest meeting to be held against the Government’s proposed removal of Native representation and Coloured voting. The meeting took place on the 29th October and was attended by a large number of the Grahamstown public. By the end of the meeting, a resolution had been agreed upon which would be sent to the National Party Government highlighting Grahamstown’s concern about the reorganisation of the constitution which would result in the removal of ‘Native’ and Coloured rights:

This meeting of registered voters of Albany gathering in Grahamstown earnestly requests the Prime Minister and members of the Government to reconsider their declared intention of repealing those sections of Act no 12 of 1936 wherein provision is made for the representation of the Native inhabitants of this Province in the House of Assembly and of removing the names of Coloured voters from the general voters’ roll. We believe that the policy thus announced constitutes a breach of faith with those who laid the foundation of the Union at the National Convention and with those political traditions of the Cape of which we today are the heirs and guardians.

We consider that the motives of those who are pressing for this policy are directed by the desire to see racial peace and harmony in South Africa but we are firmly convinced that this policy, if put into effect, will defeat its own ends. We believe that this peace and harmony are not to be achieved by the removal of rights of old standing which have been a source of justifiable pride and which has always been responsibly exercised.⁷⁸

While it appears as though the Grahamstown public were attempting to fight for African and Coloured rights, the wording of the resolution suggests that this was not their primary concern. Firstly this new policy was considered a “breach of faith with those who laid the foundation of the Union”, not with the ‘Natives’ or Coloureds but the so-called fathers of the Union, and secondly “the removal of rights of old standing” indicates that the Grahamstown public was not necessarily concerned with the actual people who would be affected by the change, but rather with the fact that these rights were part of the tradition

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Meeting of Protest, Fight for Non-European Political Rights’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th October 1948 (Cory Library)

of the Union. This is highlighted by Mr Rivett-Carnac's statement at the protest meeting that, "we must fight for our constitutional right for what is happening today is an indication of what may happen in the future". The emphasis is placed on the potential change to the Constitution rather than the political rights of Africans and Coloureds. Regardless of this, Grahamstown actively petitioned the Government to keep the limited rights of Natives and Coloureds as they were defined in the Union's Constitution.

During the period under review, there were a further three local protests were by the public of Grahamstown against the new legislation of the National Party Government. While the people of Grahamstown took a hard-line stance against any changes to the Union's Constitution, the emphasis of protest did not lie with the increased racial repression of 'non-Europeans'. Rather, the emphasis focused on the damage to the Constitution and the effects of changing the United Party system of segregation. In other words, while there was opposition within Grahamstown towards the new racial legislation (see section which focuses on the Civil Rights League, Black Sash and Progressive Party within Grahamstown), the most of the population was more interested in preventing the socio-political system from changing.

The second protest was against the 'Citizenship Bill', legislation that meant that foreign immigrants (specifically British) would have to live in the Union for a period of five years before they could attain full citizenship in the country. The public meeting took place on the 21st June 1949 in a City Hall that was 'crowded to capacity'. Mr Rivett-Carnac took the floor and presented a very negative perception of the Government legislation: "Was this bill in its present form designed to promote mutual respect and understanding cooperation? (Cries of NO!)".⁷⁹

When it was time to vote on the motion put before the Grahamstown public, there was only a single vote against it; the entire Hall bar one, supported the motion to go against the 'Citizenship Bill'. However, there was no mention of support for the 'non-European' section of the population against the increased racial repression of the National Party Government.

The third protest focused on the National Party Government's over-riding the South African High Court and the introduction of legislation that would subsequently allow them a high level of control over the High Court system. The public meeting was organised by a joint operation of the Civil Rights League (Mr R.F. Currey, Chairman and Headmaster of St Andrews College), the Grahamstown Torch Commando Branch (Captain C.O. Rich, Chairman and Headmaster of Kingswood College) and Mr S.B. Hobson (Committee Member of the United Party for Albany). Over 900 Grahamstown citizens attended the meeting and voted unanimously to send a protest resolution to Dr Malan in order to present their case. Mr Currey (Civil Rights League) focused on the plight of the Coloured people in the country,

⁷⁹ Unknown Author, 'Alleged National Breach of Faith, Albany Protest Meeting Unanimously Against Citizenship Bill, City Hall Crowded to Capacity', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd June 1949 (Cory Library)

highlighting the fact that those who were able to leave the Union were doing so in the hopes of finding a better life. Interestingly, Mr Currey made the connection that South Africa was “essentially the land of the Coloureds”, in that their religion, language and means of living were all taken from white colonists.⁸⁰ Despite Mr Currey’s sympathetic consideration however, no specific mention is made of the Coloured people’s plight in the Grahamstown protest resolution. The resolution read as follows:

LEARNING OF THE GOVERNMENT’S DECISION TO FLOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE HIGHEST COURT IN THE LAND BY OVERRIDING ITS RECENT JUDGMENT, AND OF ITS INTENTION TO BETRAY BY LEGISLATIVE ACTION THE HONOURABLE UNDERSTANDING ENTERED INTO BY OUR FATHERS WHEN THE UNION WAS FOUNDED, WE REGISTERED VOTERS IN PUBLIC MEETING ASSEMBLED IN GRAHAMSTOWN PLEDGE OURSELVES TO RESIST AND OPPOSE BY EVERY LAWFUL MEANS THE MEASURE NOW PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT.⁸¹

The resolution was sent to Mr Bowker to deliver personally to Dr Malan. No reply was received.

The final Grahamstown public protest took place during 1955 against the Government’s proposed ‘Senate Bill’, which would allow the National Party to increase the number of Senators from forty-eight to eighty-nine, giving them an opportunity to increase the number of National Party Senators while decreasing the number of United Party members of the senate.⁸² Over 800 Grahamstown residents attended the meeting and not a single person present voted against the resolution, highlighting the fact that, as a community, ‘White English’ Grahamstown was completely against the new National legislation. The resolution read as follows:

This meeting of citizens of Grahamstown and Albany places on record its sense of dismay and indignation at the action of the Government in asking Parliament to pass legislation which is admittedly intended to destroy the work of the founders of the Union at the National Convention. This the Government is seeking to do by sweeping away the Constitutional safeguards of the rights of the individual Provinces of minorities and of the

⁸⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Grahamstown’s Pledge to Uphold Constitution, Big Protest Meeting Endorses opposition to High Court’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 1st May 1952 (Cory Library)

⁸¹ Bowker, T.B., ‘City’s Protest Resolution Handed to Dr Malan’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 5th May 1952 (Cory Library)

⁸² Unknown Author, ‘City Protest Against Senate Bill Meeting Here on Friday’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 17th May 1955 (Cory Library)

Native and Coloured peoples of the Cape which are enshrined in the South African Act.⁸³

While emphasis was placed on the plight of the Coloured and 'Native' people, the main concern was still with the destruction of the "work of the founders of the Union". The difficulties of the Coloured and African populations appear to have been viewed by the people of Grahamstown as the effects of the destruction of the founding principles of the Union; from this, their primary concern again appeared to be the changing of the Constitution rather than the effects of these changes on the South African population. Regardless of these conjectures, it is a fact that the majority of Grahamstown's population resisted and fought against National Party Apartheid legislation.

The appearance of Apartheid laws, rules and regulations began occurring in Grahamstown in the latter half of the 1950s (from the information available). Before this there was little to no mention of Apartheid laws affecting the general state of life in the City. The first indication that life in Grahamstown was moving towards the National Party ideals of Apartheid occurred with the arrival of the new Grahamstown Non-European Affairs manager, Mr F.A. Freeman in January of 1956. Mr Freeman stated that all new developments in his department would subsequently begin moving forward in relation to the policy of "practical Apartheid", and segregation would begin in earnest by applying 'Group Areas' as much as it was possible at the present time.⁸⁴ From this point onwards, practical Apartheid becomes far more prevalent in Grahamstown; for example, by June of 1956 the City Council, in obedience to Apartheid curfew regulations, began to sound the City's fire siren every evening at nine pm (curfew would have come into effect from nine-thirty pm). Mr R. Griffiths, Chairman of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, went on record to state that while the fire siren would sound every evening it was not a warning to "natives" that if they were found in town at that time they would be arrested, instead it was to advise them of the time of the evening and that they subsequently had thirty minutes to leave town and return to their residences.⁸⁵ While Mr Griffiths indicated that the siren was merely there to help Grahamstown Africans and Coloureds ensure that they were out of the town and in their places of residence by the actual time of the curfew, it did not remove the fact that the curfew existed and any Africans or Coloureds found in the City after curfew would most likely be arrested. In spite of Mr Griffiths' attempts to put the curfew in a positive light, Apartheid in Grahamstown was being implemented.

⁸³ Unknown Author, 'Resolution for Tonight's Meeting', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th May 1955 (Cory Library)

⁸⁴ Unknown Author, 'Apartheid Applies in City, New N.E. Affairs manager Says Government Policy Carried Out', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 19th January 1956 (Cory Library)

⁸⁵ Griffiths, R., 'City Curfew Siren Is To Assist Natives, Councillor Explains Origin of the Recent Decision', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th June 1956 (Cory Library)

During the same month, there was a second incident related to Apartheid: the resignation of Grahamstown's Deputy Mayor, Professor Kenneth White. The Grahamstown Gardens and Grounds Committee decided to implement Apartheid principles in the Botanical Gardens by reserving park benches for the different 'races'.⁸⁶ Professor White stated as his reason for resigning that: "the question of introducing principles – in this case that of apartheid – by means of side-issues in Municipal Government is inconsistent with democratic procedure".⁸⁷ Professor White's resignation sparked a great deal of controversy in Grahamstown, motivating members of the public to come forward and appeal, and by the 25th June a petition had been organised and signed by more than 125 people, of which twenty-two were ministers, forty were lecturers from Rhodes University and seventeen were legal professionals. The protesters stated that they were not merely protesting at the change of seating policy in the Botanical Gardens but also "at the introduction of such a fundamental change without a mandate from the public who would know nothing of it until the change had actually been carried out".⁸⁸ The petitioners further appealed to the City Council that for 100 years the Botanical Gardens had been free to all regardless of race, and applying Apartheid to the Gardens would open controversy to the detriment of the peace and stability of Grahamstown. Furthermore, the petitioners stated that they had heard certain Councillors speaking to meetings of Coloured people fully assuring them of their interest and support, "but if the Council's present actions are fully revealed to the public, no Councillor will be able to repeat such assurances".⁸⁹ It is interesting to note that the petitioners were not only concerned with the decision to institute Apartheid in the Gardens, but also with the implications that such a decision would have for the African and Coloured populations of Grahamstown when they viewed and experienced the ramifications of practical Apartheid. Specifically, that trust between the Coloured section of Grahamstown and the City Council would be damaged beyond repair. Despite these rational protests, the Grahamstown City Council decided to abide by the recommendations of the Grounds and Gardens Committee and instituted a policy of separate seating in the Botanical Gardens. From this, one can surmise that there were a minority of Grahamstown citizens who resisted the institutionalization of Apartheid, and that the majority of the City Council, apart from Professor White, were quite prepared to implement Apartheid principles.

Indeed, from 1956 onward, references to Apartheid in Grahamstown become far more common. By December of 1956, three African men, Johnson Mali (48), Simon Mkalipe (43) and July Dyanti (50) were arrested and brought before the Magistrates Court on the charge

⁸⁶ Unknown Author, 'Apartheid Applied by Council Committee, Former Deputy Mayor's Reason for Resigning His Seat', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd June 1956 (Cory Library)

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Unknown Author, 'Council Petitioned on Apartheid, Former Deputy Mayors Step Backed by Influential Body of Citizens', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 25th June 1956 (Cory Library)

⁸⁹ Unknown Author, 'Botanical Gardens Free to All for 100 Years, Petition Urges City Council to Keep it so and Preserve Peace', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th June 1956 (Cory Library)

of contravening the Native Administration Act. The three plaintiffs were accused of holding a public meeting on Makana's Kop with more than ten people present without first gaining the approval of the native Commissioner for the District of Albany. While the plaintiffs defended themselves by stating that the meeting was religious in nature, the prosecutor (without any evidence) proclaimed them to be ANC members from Port Elizabeth who were furthering the party's cause. The defendants were given the option of a fine of £-100 or six month's imprisonment.⁹⁰

The following year (1957), Major A.J. van Zyl, the head of the Grahamstown Criminal Investigation Department, arrived at a Joint Council meeting for Whites and Africans, with the intention of ensuring that, as prescribed by the Native Administration Act, that there were fewer than ten Africans present.⁹¹ Mr Allan Thomas Comber Slee, a local Grahamstown man, presided over the meeting and subsequently appeared before the Assistant magistrate Mr C.D.N. van der Weshuizen after being charged with having 'contravened Reg 1(1) of Ordinance no 2017', in that he presided over the meeting which had a total of more than ten Africans present without permission from the Native Commissioner for the District of Albany.⁹² The case was postponed till the 6th June that year but because Mr Slee was White he would be free of all charges, since the law related to 'Natives', not Whites.

In 1958 quite a controversy erupted when Mr Freeman, the Head of the Grahamstown Non-European Affairs Department, began the slow process of issuing 'identity cards' to the African women of Grahamstown. While the issuing of documents went smoothly without any conflict or protest, the problem occurred when the hundreds of Grahamstown housewives were without housekeepers or maids for two days.⁹³ Their protests were not, however, based on the Apartheid identity book registration but rather because they were without servants for two days.

During the course of the following year (1959), Johannes Jacobus Vosloo, a thirty-eight year old White Grahamstown man, was sentenced to three months imprisonment with hard labour because of his repeated propositioning of a "native woman",⁹⁴ highlighting the fact that by 1959 Apartheid rules and regulations were common-place in Grahamstown.

⁹⁰ Unknown Author, 'Meeting At Makana's Kop', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th December 1956 (Cory Library)

⁹¹ Unknown Author, 'Names Taken at City meeting Last Night, Joint Council-Addressed by R.U. Professor on Bill- May Have been Illegal', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 12th April 1957 (Cory Library)

⁹² Unknown Author, 'City man Indicated Under Urban Areas Act, Presided at joint Council Meeting with 10 Natives', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd June 1957 (Cory Library)

⁹³ Unknown Author, 'Native Registration Act Applied in City, Hundreds of Housewives 'Servant less' this Week', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th January 1958 (Cory Library)

⁹⁴ Unknown Author, 'Immorality Act Conviction', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th March 1959 (Cory Library)

During the latter half of the 1950s, Apartheid principles and laws slowly became part of the fabric of Grahamstown life. While many citizens did not approve of this institutionalisation, the City Council and Non-European Affairs Department followed the National Party Government's orders to promote the ideals of Apartheid. While there is no information about how many 'White English' Grahamstown citizens opposed the implementation, it is probable that they represented a minority as the number of petitions and anti-Apartheid demonstrations did not have the numbers to confront the City Council. However this is not to say that there was no opposition to the implementation of Apartheid as demonstrated by the petition to keep the Botanical Gardens 'racially' free. The following section will focus on three organisations that opposed Apartheid, both in the City and against the National Party Government: the Albany Civil Rights League, Black Sash and Progressive Party.

The Civil Rights League

The Civil Rights League was an organisation that emerged in response to the increasing racial discrimination and oppression caused by the beginning of the National Party's Apartheid program, following their victory in the 1948 elections. The members of the Civil Rights League considered themselves Liberals, following men such as J.X. Merriman, J. W. Sauer, W.P. Schreiner, J.R. Innes and J.H. Hofmeyr, who espoused South African Liberalism based on unity and equality of race.⁹⁵ The League itself professed to be an organisation without any connections to the various South African political parties; while its members could be members of any political party they wished, the League itself was not a political party.⁹⁶ Mr Currey stated; "There is no Liberal party in South Africa. There may be one day, but that day has not dawned yet. South African liberalism today is rather a point of view, a body of principles, a certain spirit in politics".⁹⁷

The first appearance of the Albany Civil Rights League occurred during the 1949 Provincial Council Elections when the League, through its Chairman Mr Roland Currey (a Grahamstown Citizen) approached the various election candidates in order to determine whom the League would support. Such support would be based on the candidate's acceptance and promotion of the League's principles as set out in a five-point programme:

1. Respect for and safeguarding of the provisions of the entrenched clauses of the South African Act.
2. The defence of the established political rights of all races.
3. Resisting unconstitutional changes in the existing constitution.
4. Resisting excessive curtailments of the liberties of the individual.

⁹⁵ Currey, R., 'Civil Rights League', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th November 1949 (Cory Library)

⁹⁶ Beinart, B., Civil Rights League: Newsletters, Annual Reports, Miscellaneous, Annual Report of the Civil Rights League (Cape Town) 1953-1954, Folder 1, BRN 136767. (Cory Library)

⁹⁷ Currey, R., 'Civil Rights League', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 8th November 1949 (Cory Library)

5. Combating oppressive discrimination based on colour, race or creed.⁹⁸

The League's principles appeared to focus on two basic foundations: firstly, the protection of the South African Constitution (points one and three) and secondly, the defence of individual rights regardless of race, colour or creed (points two, four and five). Indeed, point five, with its use of the term "oppressive discrimination", seems to indicate that the League was not merely content with maintaining the racial status quo but were instead prepared to combat racial discrimination actively. Unfortunately no information was available to define exactly what the League would have considered "oppressive discrimination", but as they classified themselves as 'liberals' following the South African Liberal tradition, one should consider that they were opposed, not only to Apartheid principles, but also to the 'traditional' United Party racial system.

The Civil Rights League was specifically opposed to the implementation of the Group Areas Act within South African urban life. Highlighting this point was a meeting that took place in the Cape Province during February 1958, sponsored by the Institute of Race Relations, the Black Sash, the Group Areas Co-ordinating Committee and the Civil Rights League. The meeting's primary goal related to two points; firstly, to find ways of bringing the facts of the Group Areas Act to the attention of the White public, and secondly, attempting to find ways of defending the homes and livelihoods of those people who were affected by the Act.⁹⁹ The Civil Rights League's opinion can be stated as: "what is morally wrong cannot be politically right"¹⁰⁰. However during the 1950s Government attempt to introduce Group Areas to Grahamstown, no information was found with regard to the local branch's opposition of the Act. A second point to note with regard to the Civil Rights League relates to its opinion of the Republican Referendum proposed by the National Party Government. Interestingly, the League was not against the referendum based upon anti-Republican sentiment, rather it was against the fact that only White South Africans would be allowed to vote instead of all South Africans.¹⁰¹ The League considered that a South African Republic would be unacceptable unless it was based on a vote by all the people living in the country, regardless of race. Unfortunately no information was found with regard to the local branch of the League during the referendum period.

The Civil Rights League also focused on the so-called 'division' between the white 'races' of South Africa, English and Afrikaans. When Senator Edgar Brookes (the Representative in the

⁹⁸ Currey, R., 'Civil Rights League', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 2nd March 1949 (Cory Library)

⁹⁹ Civil Rights Newsletter, "Group Areas", Vol 4-10, 1957-1963, BP/88/1696, February 1958 (Cory Library)

¹⁰⁰ Civil Rights Newsletter, "Group Areas Conference", Vol 4-10, 1957-1963, BP/88/1696, March 1958 (Cory Library)

¹⁰¹ Civil Rights Newsletter, "The Republican Issue", Vol 4-10, 1957-1963, BP/88/1696, February 1960 (Cory Library)

Senate of the Africans of Natal and the acknowledged leader of South African Liberalism) attended a Grahamstown Civil Rights League meeting during November of 1949 he focused on what he considered the “real issue” plaguing South Africa. In his view, the issues were not Afrikaans speaking versus English speaking, and it was not White versus African, the issue was between a united South Africa and a divided South Africa. He considered it crucial to respect the traditions of both English and Afrikaans speakers in order to unite both the White ‘races’ together. Furthermore; “To all this we add something – respect and true caring for the rights of the Non-European groups”.¹⁰²

This focus on the lack of ‘unity’ between the various ‘races’ of the Union (specifically between English and Afrikaans) seems to have been the core principle of the Civil Rights League, promoting unity between English and Afrikaans to create a cohesive South Africa, with emphasis placed on ‘respect’ and ‘true caring’ for the other racial groups of the country.

This division between the English and Afrikaans groups of South Africa was the focus during a Civil Rights meeting where Dr Author Keppel-Jones, a History lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand, was invited to speak. The underlying theme of the address related to Dr Keppel-Jones statement that, ‘our white population is divided into two national or cultural groups. Is that an important fact?’ The meeting focused on the apparent lack of understanding on the part of South African Afrikaners, that so-called ‘British South Africans’ lacked true sentiment, love and commitment towards South Africa. Simply put, they (the Afrikaners) considered British or English South Africans to place a higher value of loyalty towards Britain instead of South Africa. Dr Keppel-Jones stated that this view was incorrect; while ‘British South Africans’ were still loyal to the British nation, this loyalty was for the past, while the loyalty towards South Africa was for the future. He pointed out further that it was “part of British sentiment and custom not to wear one’s heart upon ones sleeve”, but in order to show the Afrikaner public the true sentiments and loyalty of the British South African this had to change.¹⁰³ Dr Keppel-Jones ended the meeting with this statement: “But more importantly, even than this, is to explain to the Afrikaner our feeling for South Africa itself, our self-dedication in regard to the task of making South Africa a great country”.¹⁰⁴

While it is interesting to note that there is no mention at this meeting of ‘racial issues’ affecting the African and Coloured sections of the population, this should not indicate that the League was not considering their plight, ‘respect and true caring for the rights of the Non-European groups’. Rather, the meeting should be considered as focusing on a specific concern of the League.

¹⁰² Unknown Author, ‘The Civil Rights League Address by Senator Edgar Brookes’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 21st November 1949 (Cory Library)

¹⁰³ Unknown Author, ‘The Civil Rights League Position of the British South African, Dr Keppel-Jones Address’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 15th September 1950 (Cory Library)

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

In summary, the Civil Rights League was an anti-National Party, non-political organisation established in response to the nationalist tampering with the Constitution and the removal of rights from the African and Coloured sections of the population which attempted to defend the South African constitution and African and Coloured rights. Nevertheless, very little information was available with regard to the League promoting complete non-racial segregation; they expressly wanted Africans and Coloureds treated with “respect and true caring” but not to the point of equality. In this regard the League was similar to the United Party in that they wished to give Africans and Coloureds a ‘fair deal’ without any racial change. Despite this, the Grahamstown members of the Civil Rights League took a stand against the increasing National Party’s racial system which indicates that there was an active portion of ‘White English’ Grahamstown’s population that did not agree with the increased racial repression.

The Progressive Party

The Progressive Party was formed in 1959 when eleven Liberal United Party MPs broke from the party because it refused to challenge the National Party’s Apartheid policies more effectively. The newly formed Progressive Party rejected all forms of racial discrimination.¹⁰⁵ From its inception, the Progressive Party was the only White political party that unequivocally and constantly opposed racial National Party policies, and Helen Suzman, an advocate for human rights, was the only Progressive Party Member of Parliament for thirteen years.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, because the Progressive Party only emerged in November 1959, there is not much information during the period under review (1946 to 1960) relating to the Party in Grahamstown. The first mention of a Grahamstown Progressive Party branch occurred in April 1960, when it was announced that the organisers of the Progressive Party (Mr Reg Griffiths, the Branch Chairman) had been granted permission in terms of the “Emergency Regulations to hold a political meeting in the Graham Hotel at eight pm tonight”.¹⁰⁷ No information was available with regard to what the meeting focused on but that by this point (April 1960) National Party protocols are very much in effect to the point that Liberal Members of the Grahamstown Progressive Party had to go through Apartheid regulations to ensure that the meeting would not be interrupted by the police.

Little to no other information was available with regard to the Grahamstown Progressive Party during the latter half of 1960, but this could be explained by the fact that the party was still relatively new. It is quite probable that the Grahamstown Branch would have been

¹⁰⁵ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 138.

¹⁰⁶ Suzman, Helen, *In No Uncertain Terms: A South African Memoir*. New York: Knopf, 1993

¹⁰⁷ Unknown Author, ‘Progressive Party In City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 4th April 1960 (Cory Library)

far more active in subsequent years as their membership increased and their executive committee began the process of organising meetings, protests and rallies. The important point to focus on at this juncture is that, five months after the Progressive Party came into being, a branch existed in Grahamstown so, regardless of its lack of activities during 1960, support from the Grahamstown population must have been forthcoming for a branch to be established.

The following section will analyse the Black Sash's activities within the City.

The Black Sash

Perhaps the most active organisation against Nationalist Apartheid principles, within Grahamstown, was the Black Sash. The Black Sash was a national organisation comprised of White women, formed in 1955 originally from the Women's Defence of the Constitution League, to oppose the Nationalist Government changes to the Constitution and the repressive racial Apartheid policies.¹⁰⁸ The Black Sash practised non-violent protest, and the manner in which they protested was a simple yet effective action. They would meet dressed, in white clothing with a black sash worn across the torso, and stand in silence for a period of time (usually one hour). The Black Sash's pledge was: "We pledge ourselves to uphold the ideals by which Union was inspired; of mutual trust and forbearance of the sanctity of our word, courage to face the future, and of peace and justice for all persons and peoples".¹⁰⁹ The first Black Sash protest took place in Grahamstown on the 14th November 1955 and it was reported that:

Black-Sash women mourned in Church Square on Saturday. Standing silently erect they verged the outline of the triangle surrounding the First World War Monument and stood in the sun, which was particularly warm on Saturday, for an hour. The Black-Sashers, who commanded the respect and attention of all who passed in Church Square, began their 'protest' when they marched orderly and in silence from the Settlers' Club in Hill Street, where they had assembled, to their places around the monument, behind the Cathedral. Many members of the public stood on the sidewalks at attention and in silence as a token of the appreciation they had for the Black Sash women's efforts in the nationwide demonstration against the Senate Act.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 26.

¹⁰⁹ Unknown Author, 'Black Sash Birthday on Thursday', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 22nd May 1956 (Cory Library)

¹¹⁰ Unknown Author, 'Mourning in Church Square City: 'Women of the Black Sash' Protest Against Senate Act', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 14th November 1955 (Cory Library)

Throughout the period under review, the Grahamstown Branch of the Black Sash went from strength to strength, in relation to numbers of members and active protests. For the opening of Parliament (January 1956) the Grahamstown Branch had a total of ten members protesting, six at the Magistrate's Court and four at the post office,¹¹¹ by the end of February (1956) this number had increased as "thirty members of the Women's Defence of the Constitution League in Grahamstown wearing their black sashes stood in silence with bowed heads for over an hour last night to mark the end of the First Session of the New Senate".¹¹² Less than one month later, Mrs M. Pirie, Mrs T. Pagdon and Mrs I. Muirhead, all Black Sash members from Port Elizabeth who had been invited to attend the Grahamstown Branch meeting, stated that there were now over ninety members of the Sash within Grahamstown. During the period 1955 to 1960, the Grahamstown Branch of the Sash opposed and protested against seven Government laws or the amendment to said laws, including the Native Administration Act (1927) as amended, the Suppression of Communism Act (1956), the Group Areas Act (1950), the Passport Regulations Act (1955), the Native Urban Areas Amendment Act (1956), the Immigration Act (1956)¹¹³ and the Separate University's Education Bill (1957).¹¹⁴ During 1958 the Grahamstown Branch of the Sash added their signatures to the petition opposed to the development of pass laws for African women.¹¹⁵

Upon the Black Sash's formation, the Civil Rights League announced in their monthly newsletter that the League appreciated the Sash's courageous protest opposition towards the Nationalist Government policies and asked its members to actively support the Sash when they were able.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately no information was found to suggest that the Grahamstown local branches of the Black Sash and the Civil Rights League actively worked together.

Grahamstown opinion towards the Black Sash seems to have been generally positive:

¹¹¹ Unknown Author, 'Black Sashes' Mark The Day', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 13th January 1956 (Cory Library)

¹¹² Unknown Author, 'Women Morn Passing of Bill', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th February 1956 (Cory Library)

¹¹³ Unknown Author, 'Black Sash Demonstration Yesterday', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th October 1956 (Cory Library)

¹¹⁴ Unknown Author, 'City Black Sash Joins Country-Wide Protest', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th March 1957 (Cory Library)

¹¹⁵ Unknown Author, 'African Women and the Pass Laws, Significance of Recent Demonstrations-petitions of no Avail by M.C. Peters President the Black Sash', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 11th November 1958 (Cory Library)

¹¹⁶ Civil Rights League: Newsletter, "The 'Black Sashes'", Vol 1-3, 1954-1969, BRN 136764 (Cory Library)

Many of those who walked past cast uneasy glances their direction. Others looked on them with pride as warm as the zeal these women displayed. And here were women who shamed not to pose as the champions of a cause they believed was right and just. They are fighting for a cause for tomorrow and for a generation of tomorrow. Whether they will succeed remains to be seen. That they are champions without equal leaves no doubt. And we honour them for their bravery and their stand.¹¹⁷

While it is indicated that ‘many’ of Grahamstown citizens “cast uneasy glances” in their direction, the rest of the text awarded a very high level of respect towards the Sash, these “champions without equal”. The text praised them for their dedication and courage in taking a stand for the coming generations. This, together with the rapid increase in the membership of the Grahamstown Branch, indicates that, in general, Grahamstown citizens supported the Black Sash and their protests against the Nationalist Government.

There was also resistance to the implementation of the Group Areas Act which came from every racial group in the City.

The Group Areas Act in Grahamstown

When the Group Areas Act was passed in Parliament on the 7th July 1950, it was the fourth law to be passed by the Nationalist Government to implement their ideal of Apartheid within the country. It was preceded by the racial legislation of the ‘Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act’ (1949), the ‘Immorality Act’ (1950) and the ‘Population Registration Act’ (1950). These earlier acts focused on outlawing racial mixed marriages (Mixed Marriages Act), outlawing sexual contact between the races (Immorality Act) and enforcing racial classifications designed by the Nationalists on the population (Population Registration Act). The Group Areas Act was designed on the Nationalist principle of ‘total segregation’ of the Union’s population, based on their designated race, within urban environments.¹¹⁸ In other words, urban environments would be redesigned in order to ‘group’ the different ‘racial’ populations within specific areas within the cities and towns’ to decrease the amount of interaction between the races, especially of social residence. During the years following the formation of the act, every urban centre within the country was affected by the racial restructuring of residential areas and the city of Grahamstown was no exception, although was not until 1970, twenty years after the act was first passed, that Group Areas within the city were proclaimed.¹¹⁹ This considerable delay in implementation was a result of the

¹¹⁷ Unknown Author, ‘Salute to the Sash!’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 13th February 1956 (Cory Library)

¹¹⁸ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 83.

¹¹⁹ Davenport, T. R. H., *Black Grahamstown The Agony of a Community*, The South African Institute of Race Relations, 1980

complete lack of support for the act by the citizens of Grahamstown. The City Council's hesitation to reconstruct Grahamstown based on the Group Areas Act, must be seen in the light of comments made by the Mayor (Mr G.J. Krige) that the City Council was not opposing the Act based on any sort of moral ground in relation to its 'racial nature', but rather that it would "disturb the present status quo" which would subsequently create hardship for citizens of the town, clearly indicating that, regardless of the increasing racial repression because of the development of the Nationalist Apartheid principles, the City Council did not wish to change its urban structure.

Grahamstown did not want to implement the Act within its borders as the following section will show by analysing the complete lack of support and open protests against the Group Areas Act.

The first mention of a the possibility of restructuring Grahamstown under the Group Areas Act occurred during July of 1951 when a letter was sent to the Grahamstown City Council informing them that Adv. G.F. Vos Hugo (Vice-chairman), along with Messrs E.A. Wollaston and J.W.J Rous, of the Eastern Cape Committee of the Land Tenure Advisory Board would be travelling to Grahamstown to discuss the implementation of the Group Areas Act. The main reason given for the committee's visit was to survey the City in order to begin the process of defining different areas under the Group Areas Act. This was the first step in racially dividing Grahamstown under the terms of the Group Areas Act.¹²⁰

In response, the Grahamstown City Council appointed a committee comprised of Messrs H.A. Mather-Pike (Deputy-Mayor and Chairman of the Health Committee), R.C. Mortimer (Chairman of the Land and Works Committee), P.D. McGahey (Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee) and S. J. Claassens (a member of the City Council) to meet with and facilitate the visiting committee members. Despite this early attempt by the Eastern Cape Committee of the Land Tenure Advisory Board to begin the process of formulating a segregated residential environment, it was only four years later (1955) that Mr R.T. Morton (the Grahamstown City Engineer) provided a draft plan to the City Council for the zoning of Grahamstown on racial lines in accordance with the Group Areas Act.¹²¹ The plan provided areas for all five 'racial groups' (White, African, Coloured, Indian and Chinese) under the Group Areas Act. The City Council rejected by the plan as inaccurate and requested an "extension of time to consider the matter afresh".¹²² A committee was subsequently formed to consider the problem, consisting of Councillors R.J.A. Coates, W. Ross-Nunn and Professor K.D. White. The City Council appear to have been very hesitant in committing to a racial re-structuring of Grahamstown. This is highlighted by a comment

¹²⁰ Unknown Author, 'Group Areas Act for Grahamstown?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 26th July 1951 (Cory Library)

¹²¹ Unknown Author, 'City Race Zonal Plan Coming Council will Consider Recommendations this Week', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th March 1955 (Cory Library)

¹²² Unknown Author, 'Correct for Race Harmony', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 31st March 1955 (Cory Library)

made by the Mayor during the meeting that, “good relations” existed in the City between the races and the City Council desired to see these relations continue. It was considered that all the different race groups within the City (White, African, Coloured, Asian) bore a common responsibility within the City (all were rate payers therefore assisting in the prosperity of the City) and as such he (the Mayor) would not like to see the status quo disturbed merely to effect a regulation which would cause hardship to Grahamstown’s citizens. He hoped that a compromise would allow for the implementation of the Group Areas Act while at the same time causing as little hardship for property owners as possible.¹²³

Although the City Council hesitated to reconstruct Grahamstown based on the Group Areas Act, terms used by the Mayor (Mr G.J. Krige) suggest that the City Council was not opposing the Act based on any sort of moral ground in relation to its racial nature, but rather that it would “disturb the present status quo” which would subsequently create hardship for citizens of the town. This suggests that, regardless of the increasing racial repression occurring due to the development of the Nationalist Apartheid principles, the City Council did not wish to change its urban structure. The subsequent draft plan produced by the City Engineer’s department (produced a month after the first draft copy had been rejected by the City Council) met with citizen opposition. Mr V.N. Pillay, president of the British Indian Association, stated in an interview that “the Indian community wished its property status in the city to be left undisturbed”,¹²⁴ Mr Chan Henry, chairman of the Chinese Community within Grahamstown, expressed similar concerns and Mr F. McMaster, minister of the Union Church speaking on behalf of the Coloured community, stated that:

His first impression on seeing the land was that the Indian and Chinese communities would be the first to suffer by it, but the Coloured community would also be the sufferers by the application of the draft plan in its present form.¹²⁵

Concern relating to the Fingo Village freehold rights was also expressed at this juncture, in that many of the title deeds for property within Fingo Village were originally granted for services rendered to the British Crown during the various Xhosa and British conflicts (specifically in Hintza’s War and the War of the Axe¹²⁶) in the Eastern Cape, and if left unchecked, the Group Areas Act could deprive them of their property rights.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Unknown Author, ‘City Zoning Plans will Touch old Legacy, Will Uproot Titles going back Three Generations’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, April 5th 1955 (Cory Library)

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Maxwell, M., ‘City’s Group Areas Zoning will bring Hardship, History and Tradition Against it says noted Historian who calls for Protests’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 16th May 1957 (Cory Library)

The first meeting of the committee focusing on the implementation of the Group Areas Act occurred during May 1955 and a decision was taken to request an extension of time in order to consider the idea further. This extension was granted by the Eastern Cape Land Tenure Advisory Board till the end of September 1955.¹²⁷ However, because of constant complications with regard to grouping the various populations, an adequate draft plan had yet to be formulated by the beginning of 1957. This was most certainly in part due to a lack of motivation by the Grahamstown City Council to implement the Act within the City; indeed Councillor B.T. Liddiard stated that, in his opinion, it was not necessary for Grahamstown to be the first town in the Union to enforce the Act within its area. He added further that “the Council were not doing justice to the non-European ratepayers of Grahamstown and the Council should leave the matter in abeyance”.¹²⁸ This is however not to indicate that the Select Committee and the City Council, during the period 1955 to 1957, did not attempt to formulate a working model of the Group Areas Act for Grahamstown.

However these attempts did not relate to a desire by the Select Committee and City Council to develop racial residential segregation within Grahamstown, but rather from the fear that without a working model to present to the Eastern Cape Land Tenure Board Grahamstown would subsequently have no say in or control of the reconstruction of the city:

It would be in the interests of Grahamstown to submit its own Group Areas plan to the Land Tenure Board than to face the board without one and risk the danger of having a plan imposed on the city which could do more harm than good.¹²⁹

This fear was further highlighted by the Mayor of Grahamstown for 1955, Mr G.J. Krige, who said that, by presenting the City Council’s views they would be protecting Grahamstown ratepayers’ interests; if the Council had no area plans it was possible that the Government would attempt to force their own on the City. “‘This we do not want’ the Mayor said”.¹³⁰ The proposed plans of the Select Committee and the City Council for residential reconstruction focused on zoning the city into three main areas for Whites, Coloureds and Africans, but leaving the state of the Indian and Chinese communities as they were¹³¹, because these communities were situated in a position within the city that would see them

¹²⁷ Unknown Author, ‘City’s Group Areas Plans Extension Granted to September’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 12th July 1955 (Cory Library)

¹²⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Application of Group Areas Act in City, City’s select Committee to Interview Land Tenure Advisory Board’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th September 1955 (Cory Library)

¹²⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Revised Group Areas Plan Would be in City’s Interest’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 25th August 1955 (Cory Library)

¹³⁰ Unknown Author, ‘Application of Group Areas Act in City, City’s Select Committee to interview Land Tenure Advisory Board’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th September 1955 (Cory Library)

¹³¹ Unknown Author, ‘City’s Zoning Proposal-Three Areas’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 10th February 1956 (Cory Library)

surrounded by White residences in the event of racial urban zoning, which would have limited the possibility of future expansion by the communities and caused difficulties for the city; “it was wrong to establish a purely Asiatic block surrounded by white areas. This was a bad principle in any town and would be quite disastrous for Grahamstown”.¹³² Mr R.W. Griffiths (City Council Member) therefore proposed a motion that the Grahamstown City Council would accept the Group Areas Act as a ‘guide’ for further residential development, but would only make preparations for the zoning of the three main population groups within Grahamstown and “that the rights and privileges presently enjoyed by the Indians and Chinese in Grahamstown of this community shall not be altered or curtailed”.¹³³

Although the Grahamstown City Council did not wish to reconstruct the City based on the Group Areas Act, the primary motivation behind providing local plans for reconstruction came from a desire to limit the involvement of the Land Tenure Board with the re-zoning of the city. It was considered that a more limited plan produced by Grahamstown would reduce the difficulties and problems for ratepayers than a plan developed and implemented by the Land Tenure Board who had no real first-hand knowledge of the city and its structure (residential and economic). In summary, the Grahamstown City Council did not wish to change the residential setting of Grahamstown. While some members of the City Council appear to have been against the proposed re-zoning from a “fair-play” point of view (such as Mr B.T. Liddiard), it is quite likely that the main motivation behind resistance to the Group Areas Act came from a desire to retain the ‘status-quo’. Regardless of motivation, however, it is clear that the Grahamstown City Council had very little desire to re-zone their city based on the Group Areas Act.

Despite the opposition from the City Council and the various communities within Grahamstown, by May 1957, the Eastern Cape Committee of the Group Areas Board (formerly the Land Tenure Advisory Board), who were “empowered to demarcate areas in which members of any particular race group might reside or own property, and to expropriate property for this purpose”¹³⁴, decided to apply their own plans for the implementation of the Group Areas Act within Grahamstown. This decision was met by a complete lack of public support from Grahamstown. Mrs Katherine Webb (a founder of the Katharina Webb Tuberculosis Hospital) stated in response to the plans put forward by the Group Areas Board that, “having studied the plan submitted by the Eastern Cape Committee of the Group Areas Board for the zoning of the city into racial groups I feel urged to write and draw attention to its absurd lack of reality”.¹³⁵ Professor James Irving of the Rhodes

¹³² Unknown Author, ‘Far-Sighted Policy for City Group Areas, Chamber of Commerce may put up an Alternative plan to Land Tenure Board’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 7th October 1955 (Cory Library)

¹³³ Unknown Author, ‘The Group Areas Act, Councillor will propose that City Indians be left’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 30th October 1956 (Cory Library)

¹³⁴ Davenport, T.R.H., *Black Grahamstown The Agony of a Community*, The South African Institute of Race Relations, 1980. Pg. 17.

¹³⁵ Webb, K.M., ‘Zoning Lacks Reality’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 16th May 1957 (Cory Library)

University Sociology Department¹³⁶ said of the re-zoning plan: “there is nothing in this scheme but raw pain, suffering and the loss of an integrated community”. He went further to say that:

The effect of the application of the Group Areas Act in Grahamstown will mean that the entire community will be subjected to radical changes which will result in the complete elimination of certain very necessary services to the town, the elimination of portions of the community to certain restricted areas and will leave a trail of destruction in the form of ejected, crushed tenants. The shifting of all these people to different zones will create a serious housing shortage – a big problem which is already serious and will become worse.¹³⁷

Nor were Professor Irving and Mrs Webb the only vocal attackers of the proposed plan, on the 19th May 1957, the Cathedral Church of St Michael and St George announced at its annual parochial meeting a resolution addressed to the Group Areas Board condemning its re-zoning plans based on three points. Firstly, that the various ‘racial’ elements of the of the Grahamstown community had lived in ‘racial’ harmony over a long period of time and that any change to the context of the situation was likely to lead to ‘racial’ friction. Secondly, that the Indians and Chinese who lived in Grahamstown were considered as fine upstanding citizens and due to their numbers would have been difficult to move. Thirdly, those Africans who had freehold rights to land given to them by the Queen would lose them.¹³⁸

The Dean of Grahamstown, Rev J. Hobson, further called for a United Front of all Churches within Grahamstown to oppose the Group Areas Board. In addition to, the Cathedral of St Michael and St George, the Methodist Commemoration Church, the Sole Memorial Church, St Clements Church, the Congregational Union Church as well as St Mary’s all opposed the implementation of the Group Areas Act within the city.¹³⁹

The Minister of St Clements, the Rev B.S.C. Knowles, compiled a further protest against the Group Areas Board objecting to the proposed plan. Firstly, that the Coloured and Indians who were members of the Church of the Province of South Africa would be deprived of their place of worship, St Clements Church, if the Act were enacted. Secondly, the Reverend considered the removals of Coloureds and Indians from the Camp, Bell, MacDonald, Chapel and Kowie streets area had no moral justification. And thirdly, the removal of the Indian

¹³⁶ Davenport, T.R.H., *Black Grahamstown The Agony of a Community*, The South African Institute of Race Relations, 1980. Pg. 18.

¹³⁷ Unknown Author., ‘Group Areas Act Brings Raw Pain and Loss, It will Radically Change Community Picture says Prof James Irving’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 23rd May 1957 (Cory Library)

¹³⁸ ¹³⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Cathedral Church Askes for City’s Exemption from Group Areas Act’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 20th May 1957 (Cory Library)

¹³⁹ Unknown Author, ‘Dean Hobson Calls for United Front Against Group Areas Zoning in City’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 22nd May 1957 (Cory Library)

and Chinese traders from the Coloured area deprived the Coloureds of honest and efficient service.¹⁴⁰

It was not merely the Grahamstown Churches at this point who logged complaints and protests with the Group Areas Board; the City Council was equally appalled at the zoning plans and stated that it did not “accept as desirable or justified the proposed group areas for the groups demarcated” in the plans provided by the Group Areas Board. The City Council subsequently requested an opportunity to make representations before the Board based on their own policy:

- A. The Council’s own policy of future development for the White, Native and Coloured groups as evidenced by the establishment of separate White, Coloured and Native Townships and the willingness of the Council to set aside areas for the future occupation of the members of the Indian and Chinese groups when the occasion arises;
- B. The adverse financial implications to the Municipality consequent upon the proclamation of any group areas and border strip as proposed for Grahamstown;
- C. The complete absence of alternative accommodation for displaced persons with consequent over-crowding and danger to public health and the inability of the Council adequately to provide therefore;
- D. The small membership of Indian, 27 families, and Chinese, five families, Groups involved;
- E. The existing inability of the Indian or Chinese Groups to encroach into the controlled areas without permits;
- F. The severe economic and social distress, if not ruin and injustice, that would be inevitable be caused, particularly in the case of those Africans who will lose historic freehold rights of inestimable value.¹⁴¹

In addition to these public protests against the implementation of the Act by the City Council and Churches, the people of Grahamstown formed the ‘Group Areas Action Committee’ a committee dedicated to stop the Act from being implemented within Grahamstown. The Committee Members were: Dr J.L. Rennie (Chairman), Rev F. McMaster, Dr D. Madhoo (Joint Secretary), Rev C. Moore, Prof J. Irving, Rev H. Kirkbly, Rev L. Hewson and Messrs F. Naidoo, G. Naran, J. Naidoo, B. Patel, J. Chan and W. Chan Henry.¹⁴² The membership of the committee makes two interesting points: firstly, many of the members of the Committee held positions of respect and influence within the City; the Committee consisted of ministers, doctors and professors, indicating that protests towards the Act

¹⁴⁰ Knowles, R.S.C., ‘Group Areas Zoning-Protest to Eastern Cape Committee’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 27th May 1957 (Cory Library)

¹⁴¹ Unknown Author, ‘City Council does not accept Zoning Plans, Results Interviewed with Group Areas Board to Stay Application of Act here’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 29th May 1957 (Cory Library)

¹⁴² Rennie, J.L., ‘Group Areas Action Committee Formed’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 24th May 1957 (Cory Library)

came from every level of Grahamstown society, not merely those whom the Act would affect most drastically. Secondly, the names on the Committee represented nearly all 'racial' groups within the City, Coloured, Chinese, Indian, African and English-Speaking Whites.¹⁴³

Clearly, opposition to the Group Areas Act came from every level of the Grahamstown Community, both from a professional level and a racial level, and the Community was united against an Act that, in their opinion, had absolutely no relevance for Grahamstown; a Act which, if implemented, would cause racial, economic and social strife within the City.

The City Council finally rejected the Group Areas Board recommendations for implementing the Act within the City, stating the "City Council has demonstrated its ability to legislate for every section of the population and its desire to see justice done to all".¹⁴⁴

During the period under review, however, this was not the final attempt of the Group Areas Board to bring Grahamstown into compliance with the Group Areas Act. At the beginning of 1959, the Group Areas Board once again sent a committee to Grahamstown in an attempt to force compliance. This time the Committee consisted of the Chairman of the Eastern Cape Committee of the Group Areas Board, Mr W.J. Gouws, a member of the Board from Pretoria, Mr W.H.B. Steyn, and the secretary of the Eastern Cape Committee of the Board, Mr Du Preez.¹⁴⁵ But just as in 1957 public opinion was completely against implementation. Professor W.A. Maxwell, the Head of the Rhodes University Department of History stated that the "if the Group Areas Act were applied to the City, there would be nothing for the non-Europeans but slow stagnation and total demoralisation".¹⁴⁶ Professor Maxwell continued her opposition of the Group Areas Act beyond the period under review. During 1971, when the Group Areas Act was being applied within the City, Professor Maxwell presented a paper detailing the settlement history of the Fingo Village (and its inhabitants the Fingo) to the Grahamstown Historical Society. In it she stated, with regard to the removals of Fingo Village, that, "If misery must sometimes be endured, people would prefer to endure in familiar surroundings, in sight of their church and their school and their friends".¹⁴⁷

Mr J.D. Cloete (member of the City Council) pointed out that Grahamstown was unique in that it was virtually free from racial friction that dominated so many other urban centres,

¹⁴³ Davenport, T.R.H., *Black Grahamstown The Agony of a Community*, The South African Institute of Race Relations, 1980. Pg. 18.

¹⁴⁴ Unknown Author, 'The City Council', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th May 1957 (Cory Library)

¹⁴⁵ Unknown Author, 'Group Areas Board in Session, Chairman's opining Address', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th February 1959 (Cory Library)

¹⁴⁶ Unknown Author, 'Group Areas Board Session, Strong Pleas by Prof W.A. Maxwell – Council and Methodist Church submissions', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 18th February 1959 (Cory Library)

¹⁴⁷ Maxwell, W.A., 'The Fingos and the Fingo Village Presidential Address', *Grahamstown Historical Society Annals*, Vol 1, 1971-1974, 18th March 1971 (Cory Library)

but applying the Group Areas Act within the City “would be the worst catastrophe which could befall it”.¹⁴⁸ Once again, the City Council stood firm in the face of the Group Areas Board and refused to implement the Act within Grahamstown.¹⁴⁹ It would take a further eleven years before Group Areas were proclaimed within Grahamstown during 1970, so while it can be stated that Grahamstown was successful in opposing the Act during the 1950s, in the long term, the Group Areas Board won.

The resistance of Grahamstown to the Group Areas Act during the 1950s is unique in the City’s history in that Grahamstown’s population united completely against it. Not only the different ‘racial’ groups, but also the churches within the City and the City Council itself all fought against what was unanimously considered a potential ‘catastrophe’ for the City and its population. While the Act was eventually implemented the protests of the 1950s present the only time when the entire town population (regardless of race and profession) stood together against the implementation of an Apartheid law. Some people stood against the Act based on their principles, others merely wished to keep the status-quo and more were terrified by the ramifications of such an Act, yet regardless of these different motivations, it cannot be denied that the City unified to fight the implementation of the Group Areas Acts.

Republic: Perspectives of Grahamstown

This section will focus on the Nationalist aim of creating a Republic within South African and how this goal affected social perceptions of the people of Grahamstown. At its inception, the Union of South Africa held the position of a Dominion within the British Empire and the Commonwealth of Nations, this position was reinforced by the number of English-speaking South Africans who had deep ties with Great Britain and enjoyed the unity of the Commonwealth¹⁵⁰. However Afrikaans-speaking Nationalists desired a South African Republic, inspired by the old Boer Republics of the late 19th century, and during the Second World War, many Nationalists (H.F. Verwoerd among them) advocated the creation and establishment of a South African Republic with a Christian-Nationalist character in which English would be relegated to second-language status. After the war it was clear that such a goal would be unattainable without support from the English-speaking section of the population and consequently, Republicans changed their tack by arguing for a democratic Republic in which English-speakers would have full rights and privileges. It was not until the Nationalist election victory of 1948 that these plans began to be implemented, and Dr D.F.

¹⁴⁸ Unknown Author, ‘Case for the Status-Quo, Group Areas Could do Irreparable Damage’, *Grocott’s Daily Mail*, 19th February 1959 (Cory Library)

¹⁴⁹ Davenport, T.R.H., *Black Grahamstown The Agony of a Community*, The South African Institute of Race Relations, 1980. Pg. 18.

¹⁵⁰ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 144.

Malan told the country that a Republic would only occur through a referendum comprising of both the white 'races' of South Africa (English and Afrikaans).¹⁵¹ It would take, however, twelve years from the Nationalist victory of 1948 before the Party felt strong enough to call on the white population of the Union to decide through a referendum whether South Africa should become a Republic, but by 1960 for a variety of reasons (including the de-colonisation and independence of African countries), the Nationalists won the referendum and South Africa became a Republic.¹⁵²

During this period (1948 to 1960) Grahamstown was vigorously opposed to the creation of a South African Republic, and this section will analyse the reasons behind this opposition and show the form that opposition took.

The first anti-Republican sentiment in Grahamstown occurred when the Nationalist leader of the Transvaal, Mr J.G. Strydom, in welcoming the Prime Minister to the province in 1948, stated that the ultimate goal of the National Party "was a republic".

But Mr. J.G. Strydom in welcoming the Prime Minister, said the ultimate aim of the Nationalist party was a republic. What was his reason for making such a direct statement, when the question was carefully put in the election background can hardly be understood, and it may suggest that Mr Strydom has no time for diplomacy.¹⁵³

Clearly, English-speaking Grahamstown wished to keep the question of a Republic in the "background" and if focused upon they wished it to be 'diplomatic' because of its negative connotations. Although, at the time (1948), no truly negative statements appeared in relation to the proposed Republic it must be remembered that the 1948 election was the first one to be won by the Nationalists, and Grahamstown was still very confident that the following election would be won by the United Party (see election section), so, at this time the English-speaking community of Grahamstown considered the danger of a South African Republic to be an unlikely event. This perception began to change during 1950 thanks to the events that saw India attain Republican status but remain within the Commonwealth,¹⁵⁴ consequently motivating Nationalist Republicans to attain their goal. However, the case of India becoming a Republic was viewed as a threat by Grahamstown because:

We do not see what advantages Republicanism holds out for the English-speaking community and there are certainly many dangers to be faced, but there is now no need for racial antagonism or recrimination especially on

¹⁵¹ Unknown Author, 'What of that Draft', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 21st June 1951 (Cory Library)

¹⁵² Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 144.

¹⁵³ Unknown Author, 'New Ideas', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th November 1948 (Cory Library)

¹⁵⁴ Unknown Author, 'Commonwealth', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 3rd May 1950 (Cory Library)

the Afrikaans-speaking side. It would be better to drop Republicanism and other debatable issues and join forces to stem the tide of Communism and other noxious 'isms' in order to present a united national front for our very existence.¹⁵⁵

Thus, the English-speaking Grahamstown community had two main concerns in relation to Republicanism. Firstly, Republicanism was seen as the domain of Nationalists and the Afrikaans-speaking section of the population. What would happen to the English-speaking section of South Africa if, by becoming a Republic, South Africa lost its connection with the Commonwealth and Great Britain? Secondly, Republicanism was seen as a dividing factor within the country while English-speaking Grahamstown consider that a united front was necessary for their "very existence".

A Republican form of government would be considered 'antagonistic' towards English-speakers because "the tendency will be away from the Commonwealth and the British connection".¹⁵⁶

This should be considered the primary cause behind the resistance of English-speaking Grahamstown towards Republicanism: the possibility of losing connection and support from the Commonwealth of Nations and, more specifically Great Britain. As shown in Chapter One, residents of Grahamstown considered their City resembled a 'little English town'; it (Grahamstown) was also considered the "Settlers' City" because many of the original 1820 Settlers moved to the City after their initial settlement of the Eastern Frontier. Because of its very English character (see Chapters One and Three) Grahamstown residents (specifically the English-speakers) had a very strong connection and felt great loyalty towards Great Britain which they referred to as the 'Motherland'. The visit of the Royal Family to South Africa and Grahamstown during 1947 highlights this 'patriotic' character of Grahamstown citizens towards the Royal Family and Great Britain (See Chapter Three). English-speaking Grahamstown citizens, because of their strong connection with the 'Motherland', would have consequently considered Republicanism a threat to the good relations between the Union of South African and the Commonwealth of Nations and Great Britain in that a South African Nationalist Republic would probably decrease the interaction and good relations between the two. This was the last thing that Grahamstown 'White English' citizens wanted.

A anti-Republican sentiment during June of 1955 an anti-Republican meeting was held in the City Hall:

Any departure from the Union's constitutional status as a sister nation in the Commonwealth family of nations by having the country declared a

¹⁵⁵ Unknown Author, 'The Republican Dream', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 31st January 1950 (Cory Library)

¹⁵⁶ Unknown Author, 'No Idle Fears', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 16th September 1952 (Cory Library)

republic, either inside or outside the Commonwealth, will be resisted by every lawful means in their power citizens of Grahamstown will be asked to say to-night.¹⁵⁷

The meeting was attended by over 200 Grahamstown citizens who unanimously voted to resist the advent of a South African Republic by any means, and following the meeting, an anti-Republican League branch was formed in Grahamstown.¹⁵⁸ Support against the Nationalist Republic was boosted during 1958 when Sir De Villiers Graaff (the leader of the United Party) visited the city to speak about the ramifications of a Republic. It was decided at the meeting that Grahamstown's anti-Republic resolution would be; "We want first and foremost an uncompromising declaration of opposition to a republic in any shape or form".¹⁵⁹ This anti-Republican visit by Sir De Villiers Graaff drew one of the largest audiences ever to be have been seen in the City Hall, further emphasising the importance placed on the issue by the Grahamstown public.¹⁶⁰ Concerted efforts against National Republicanism really began to gain momentum within Grahamstown during 1960 when the Prime Minister of the Union, Dr Verwoerd, announced that the Republican question would be put before the people in a referendum in October 1960 and only White South Africans would be allowed to take part. Dr Verwoerd had decided that the time was right to force the issue of a Republic; the National party had won three consecutive National Election victories since 1948 and were thus confident that they had a large portion of support from the population. Other factors during 1960 also helped gain support for the advent of Republic: in April 1960 Dr Verwoerd was shot in an attempted assassination by Mr David Pratt during the Rand Easter Show, an event that aroused sympathy for the Prime Minister. During June 1960, the Belgian Congo obtained its independence, creating a panic among White South Africans due to the chaos which erupted in the Congo after independence. Based on this, Dr Verwoerd encouraged Whites to vote for a Republic as the only means to unite White South Africa in order to prevent the 'chaos' from the Congo from infesting the Union.¹⁶¹ Despite these events, Grahamstown remained completely anti-Republican and during June 1960 embarked upon an anti-Republican campaign within the City in order to garner as many anti-Republican referendum votes as was possible. The campaign involved a series of anti-Republican propaganda captions reminiscent of the anti-Nationalist propaganda developed during the various General Elections. These captions appeared in

¹⁵⁷ Unknown Author, 'City's First Anti-Republic Meeting Tonight Any Departure from Present Status is Betrayal Says Resolution', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 28th June 1955 (Cory Library)

¹⁵⁸ Unknown Author, 'City Raises Its Voice Against Republic', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 29th June 1954 (Cory Library)

¹⁵⁹ Unknown Author, 'Welcome', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th November 1958 (Cory Library)

¹⁶⁰ Unknown Author, 'Grahamstown Welcomes UP Leader Stimulating Address by Sir De Villiers Graaff Republic Idea Totally Rejected', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 10th November 1958 (Cory Library)

¹⁶¹ Saunders, C., Southey, N., *A Dictionary of South African History*, David Philip Cape Town & Johannesburg, Second Edition, 2001. Pg. 144.

the *Grocott's Daily Mail* from the beginning of June 1960 till the 4th October 1960, the day before the referendum. Examples of these propaganda captions appear below

1. Do you want a Verwoerd republic? Are you on the Roll? If not, see to it at once!
2. If you are turning 18 this month make sure of your vote! Do you want a Verwoerd Republic?
3. To whom it concerns - if you do not want a Verwoerd Republic, now is your last chance to enrol and thus to record your vote in the referendum. Do not procrastinate! Ten days to go!
4. Your vote may be decisive in the Referendum. You only have a week left to check the roll and make sure you can exercise your voting rights'.
5. The Wrong Republic at the Wrong time!
6. You Cannot Vote for a Verwoerd Republic!
7. A Verwoerd Republic? Definitely No!
8. We Need the Commonwealth. Vote NO!
9. A Verwoerd Republic will be outside the Commonwealth
10. Do not Gamble with our Future. VOTE NO!
11. A Republic will End Union. Vote NO!¹⁶²

These propaganda captions present the full extent that anti-Republican verve gripped the people of Grahamstown; not only are there a multitude of propaganda captions, but the majority of them are simple 'one-liners'. No effort was made to provide details of potential negative effects that would occur from a Republic, instead the propaganda consisted of a simple, single sentence denouncing 'Dr Verwoerd's' Republic. This propaganda helps to indicate the level of anti-Republican sentiment within Grahamstown, in that, no extra information was provided within the captions, no consequences of what would occur if a Republic came about, no lists of negative points that a Republic would bring about, indicating that Grahamstown citizens did not need further information to motivate their anti-Republican vote. The 'White English' citizens of Grahamstown simply had no desire to change the status-quo, especially if there was a possibility of losing the British and Commonwealth connections.

Beyond the various propaganda captions, a group of volunteer 'anti-Republican workers' existed within Grahamstown during the build-up to the referendum. Just as with the various General Election volunteer workers, these individuals ensured that all those who wished to vote against the Republic were on the voters roll, knew where the polling would take place, at what time and if they required help or transport to get there.¹⁶³ Just as with

¹⁶² Grocott's Daily Mail, 13th June to 4th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁶³ Unknown Author, 'Do not let them Down!', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 20th September 1960 (Cory Library)

the General Elections during the period under review, Grahamstown citizens did not wish to take any chances that the full voting weight of Albany would not be against the Republic. On the 4th October (the day before the referendum) a replica of the referendum ballot paper appeared in the *Grocott's Daily Mail* to ensure that the voters had an adequate idea of the correct protocol for voting. Emphasis was also placed upon the need for everyone to cast their vote: "we can win this contest hands down if everyone exercises his or her right to vote".¹⁶⁴ Below is the information relating to the replica ballot paper:

Above is a replica of the ballot paper which will be handed to you when you present yourself at the polling station tomorrow. Your task is simple. You have merely to put your X on it as shown above opposite the words NEE/NO to do your bit in saving South Africa. You live in what is politically known as a 'safe' seat but remember that it is these 'safe' seats on which the future of your country depends. We need a record poll, so get up a bit earlier tomorrow and make your first job a visit to the polling station. It opens at 7 am. Whatever your feelings are curb your imagination and stick to a X as shown. There may be other acceptable ways of indicating your choice but you are asked to record you vote by an X in the space opposite your choice. It is better to be sure than sorry.¹⁶⁵

During the referendum voting on the 5th October the polling booths were very active because of the hundreds of Grahamstown voters making their decision known.

'See you in the queue tomorrow at seven', was a widely used parting phrase in Grahamstown yesterday afternoon and evening and by half-past six this morning some 40 voters had already put in an appearance outside the Magistrate's Court to keep this assignation. By opening time there were more than 200 lined up.¹⁶⁶

Unfortunately for the people of Grahamstown and Albany, by the 6th October (a day after the referendum) it was announced that Dr Verwoerd's 'gamble' would win him the Republic "with a majority in the region of 80000 or roughly 4 ½ per cent"¹⁶⁷ of all votes. Despite this, Grocott's reported that "although at the moment, the exact figures are not yet known, we know full well that Albany's answer to yesterday's question is a very emphatic NO".¹⁶⁸ Out of a total of 10 496 Albany votes 2 448 were for a Republican South Africa but the vast

¹⁶⁴ Unknown Author, 'It's up to YOU!', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁶⁵ Unknown Author, 'Plans for Tomorrow', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 4th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁶⁶ Unknown Author, 'Polling in the City Half had voted by 11am', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 5th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁶⁷ Unknown Author, 'NO from Albany', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 6th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

majority, 8 148 votes, were against a Republic¹⁶⁹, in other words over two-thirds of the Albany constituency (of which Grahamstown formed the largest urban centre) were anti-Republican. Despite the fact that Albany decisively and confidently demonstrated their anti-Republican sentiment through the referendum, Grahamstown citizens were stunned that, on a national level, Dr Verwoerd had won the necessary votes to convert South Africa into a Republic. "What happened?" seems to have been the general question asked:

But what happened? This is a question which has been poised by thousands in the last twenty-four hours. The arithmeticians were more or less unanimous in their verdict. Give us a poll of ninety per cent and we are home and dry with a majority of six figures against a republic. Well we have achieved the necessary percentage poll and the result proves almost exactly opposite to that predicted! What has happened? It does not require a very close study of the results to show that whereas many Nationalists had been mentioned as intending to reject the Verwoerd Republic a very great many more folk who were confidently regarded as belonging to the Opposition parties have voted in favour of a republic. We recall a cartoon now about three months old which emphasised the extent to which a section of the public mind was obsessed by the Congo.¹⁷⁰

The reasons provided indicate that the referendum was won for two reasons. Firstly, it was believed that many people who belonged to various opposition parties did not follow through with their party principles and on this occasion supported the Nationalists in the referendum. Secondly, facts emanating from the independence of the Congo created a sense of fear, causing them to worry about similar events occurring in South Africa. Regardless of potential reasons 'why', the fact of the matter was that anti-Republican sentiment within Grahamstown lost the battle against Nationalist Republicanism. It could be argued that the question of a Republic was the most important political event to have occurred during the period under review within Grahamstown in that Grahamstown citizens were loath to dilute the connections between South Africa and the Commonwealth of Nations and Great Britain. Grahamstown citizens 'felt' a very strong emotional connection with Great Britain and while they considered themselves South Africans, they were also British South Africans with a rich heritage linking them to the 'Mother country'. A Nationalist South African Republic had the very real possibility of severing their link to Great Britain thereby isolating them within a country ruled by the Nationalists who represented the Afrikaans section and opinion of the population. While it must be stated that a small victory was gained from the overwhelming anti-Republican voting of Albany, the National victory eclipsed all the effort and dedication of Grahamstown citizens against the Republican question.

¹⁶⁹ Unknown Author, 'Albany's Vote Announced Counters Long Day', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th October 1960 (Cory Library)

¹⁷⁰ Unknown Author, 'What Happened?', *Grocott's Daily Mail*, 7th October 1960 (Cory Library)

Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the City of Grahamstown during the period 1946 to 1960 in order to gain perspective of the perceptions of a small 'English' South African city during the beginnings of the apartheid period. Chapters One to Three analysed the 'perceptions' of the 'White English' section of the population (of which it was the majority) towards Grahamstown, how the dominant social expression of the period viewed Grahamstown as a beautiful, aesthetically pleasing British City renowned for its educational institutions. It was shown that Grahamstonians considered themselves and their City to be the spiritual successors of the 1820 Settlers and how its 'White English' citizens placed great value and importance on the continued connection between the Union of South Africa and Great Britain. At the same time, the majority perception of 'White English' Grahamstown's attitude towards the African section of the population was one of paternalism, with a minority leaning towards outright racism. It was also shown that although the 'White English' population regarded the city centre of Grahamstown as 'aesthetically beautiful', only a minority of that population was concerned about the terrible, unhygienic state of the Locations. This thesis analysed the perceptions of 'White English' Grahamstown on two points: firstly, the 'White English' section of the City was in the majority in being about to expound its views on the racial outline of the City, and secondly, with regard to the information available no other group within Grahamstown was documented to the same degree as the 'White English' section. Simply put; Grahamstown was a City where the 'White English' section of the population dominated the other racial groups. These first three Chapters have therefore attempted to present the dominant perceptions of a very English South African city and its 'White English' citizens in order to provide insights into its social context between the years 1946 and 1960.

While Chapters One to Three focused upon the social context and character of Grahamstown, Chapters Four to Eight presented five different events that had the potential to affect the City positively or negatively, and documented the reactions of the City Council towards them. This was important in presenting a more general picture of the City during the period under review and the ability (or lack thereof) of the City Council to manage and provide services for its citizens.

The Financial Crisis showed that Grahamstown's unique situation of having 'education' as an industry drastically affected the Council's ability to run the City adequately from a financial aspect. This affected the City to such a degree that the Provincial Administration was required to intervene. It was shown that the Council's attitude towards the Africans and Coloureds within its Locations (Chapter Five and Six) lacked motivation, understanding or care, in that by the end of the period reviewed, the Housing Crisis for Grahamstown's

Locations was more serious with regard to overcrowding, high-rentals and unhygienic conditions than it was at the beginning of 1946. The 'Beer Hall Debate' further shows the Council's complete lack of understanding or respect of the wishes of its Location dwellers to remove the Municipal Beer Hall which was viewed by the African and Coloured residents as a "social evil". It must be emphasised that there were 'White English' individuals within the City who attempted to present the terrible conditions and administration of the Locations to motivate the City Council, and in some cases their fellow citizens, to improve conditions. These individuals were nevertheless a minority within the 'White English' section of Grahamstown.

The information available also shows that the City Council, actively provided support and financial assistance for the Tuberculosis Crisis and the Rhodes University College endowment fund far in excess of the Housing Crisis and Beer Hall Debate. However it is important to note the discrepancies between the City Council's support of these two institutions. With the case of Tuberculosis running rife within the Locations, the City Council provided a sum of £-900 to convert the Mission School in Lady Grey Street into the Katherine Webb Tuberculosis hospital. Subsequently the City Council classified the hospital as a purely municipal concern, which indicated that the Grahamstown Municipality would now shoulder the responsibility of maintaining the institute. The City Council also provided land for the Temba Tuberculosis Settlement at a nominal fee. From this it can be stated that the City Council provided support and assistance to the Tuberculosis Society in order to combat the Tuberculosis Crisis affecting Grahamstown. However with regard to this level of support two points must be made, firstly, during the same year (1951) that the Council provided £-900 for the renovation of the Mission School it also earmarked £-8000 for the construction of a new Municipal Beer Hall, almost ten times the amount reserved for the Tuberculosis Hospital. Chapter Six showed that this decision went directly against the wishes of the majority of Location dwellers. Secondly, the fact that the City Council provided the Rhodes University College endowment fund with £-25 000 (to be paid at a rate of £-1000 per annum) indicates that the Council did not place as much value on eradicating the Tuberculosis epidemic as it did on the continued sale of Municipal Beer (in the face of Location opposition) or the growth of Rhodes University College. Clearly, without the College Grahamstown would have lost a large percentage of its annual revenue, but no logical reason can be provided for the continued existence of the Beer Hall. Therefore while the City Council actively provided support to curtail the Tuberculosis Crisis this should be seen as lacking in effort and motivation when analysed alongside the Beer Hall Debate and the Rhodes University Endowment Fund. Thus it can be argued that the only truly positive action on behalf of the City Council related to their support of the Rhodes Endowment Fund. Without the City Council providing support in the form of financial assistance it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Rhodes University College would not have been able to reach the target of £-200 000 set by the Provincial Administrator. However, as presented in

Chapter Nine, the financial loss (as well the loss to the City's reputation as the "Oxford of South Africa") to the City of the University failing to develop would have seriously handicapped the City Council's ability to function as a Municipality and as such would have provided ample motivation for the City Council to take action. The support provided should be considered as a necessary measure to ensure the City's continued survival.

Chapter Nine analysed the different perceptions expressed by 'White English' Grahamstown with regard to the political atmosphere during the period under review. The dominant political expression of the City was in complete support of the United Party and its ideology. Indeed so complete was the support for the United Party that the district of Albany (of which Grahamstown was the largest centre) was constantly referred to as a United Party "stronghold" and during the period under review the United Party candidate for Albany, Mr Tom Bowker, was always elected by a large majority. This loyalty to the United Party was elaborated during the Election section of Chapter Nine, which analysed the political expression of Grahamstown during the three National Elections which allowed the National Party to gain control of South Africa and subsequently consolidate their powerbase. During the 1948 election, 'White English' Grahamstonions did not expect or consider the possibility of a Nationalist victory, because of the confidence placed in the United Party and General Smuts. The 1953 election created a flurry of activity within Grahamstown as the local United Party, coupled with the Torch Commando, began a very active campaign to support the United Party in its attempts to gain victory in the Election and oust the National Party from power.

The atmosphere of the City during the build-up to the 1953 election was one of enthusiasm to oust the Nationalist Government. The 'White English' perspective at this time was that the United Party would gain victory at the Election, and that the Nationalist victory of 1948 was a 'one-off' victory. The feeling was that since the country had experienced four years of Nationalist rule (which involved tampering with the Constitution), the White South African population would return to the United Party. During the 1953 Election one of the Grahamstown United Party campaign slogans was "no apartheid between white children" but not a single campaign slogan referred to apartheid with regard to Africans, Coloureds and Asians. 'White English' Grahamstown wished for a return of the United Party to power but did not wish to change the racial structure of the country, preferring to keep the United Party racial policy which was stated to be a "middle of the road policy". Hardly any information was available with regard to the defeat of the United Party during 1953, compared to the large amount of information available on Grahamstown's preparation for the 1953 Election. This absence would appear to indicate that the defeat of the United Party caused a loss of faith in the effectiveness of the United Party on the part of the 'White English' citizens of Grahamstown. This is further highlighted by the events of the 1958 Election. When compared to the build-up to the 1948 and 1953 Elections there was hardly any attempt by the Grahamstown United Party Branch or Grahamstown citizens to promote

the United Party and motivate Grahamstonians to 'go all out' for the Election. The perception of 'White English' Grahamstown at this point was defeatist.

The analysis after this focused on the implementation of Apartheid in Grahamstown and showed that, in the latter half of the period under review, Apartheid legislation became part of the fabric of the City. Members of the 'White English' community resisted these developments, and their response to the racial segregation of the Botanical Gardens provides an example of such resistance. However by 1960, Apartheid most certainly existed within Grahamstown despite resistance by a minority of the Grahamstown community.

Following this, the research focused on Grahamstown community resistance to Nationalist Apartheid policies by describing three different anti-Nationalist groups that existed in Grahamstown: The Civil Rights League, The Progressive Party and the Black Sash. Of these, however, only the Black Sash took an active anti-Apartheid stance. The Civil Rights League focused their attention on opposing the Nationalists because of the various changes within the Constitution, but did not take a specifically anti-Apartheid stance. The Progressive Party was opposed to Apartheid policies. However, since the Grahamstown Branch was formed in 1960, there is little information available to analyse during the period under review. There was a minority of 'White English' Grahamstown citizens who opposed the Nationalist government's Apartheid policies and their implementation within the City, and their resistance appears to have been based on the ethical position that Africans, Coloureds and Asians were not being given a 'fair deal'.

From this a unique event in the history of Grahamstown is analysed; the opposition of the City towards the implementation of the Group Areas Act. During the period under review every racial group within the City, including the City Council itself, united to oppose the Provincial Administration's attempts to redesign the City racially, based on the principles of the Group Areas Act. This unifying opposition was based on three points: firstly, many residents of the Fingo Village Location had title deeds for their properties granted to their ancestors by Queen Victoria in recognition of their services to the Crown. 'White English' Grahamstown, because of their connection with Great Britain and the Royal Family, considered it their duty to uphold the promise implied by the title deeds. Secondly, Grahamstown, unlike many other cities in the Union, had a very good relationship among the different 'races' living in the city, consequently it was believed that implementing the Group Areas Act would destroy the relationship and cause racial strife in the City. Thirdly, the restructuring of the City was seen as a potential threat to the continued growth and expansion of the City, especially with regard moving the Indian and Chinese families. Simply put, Grahamstown was content with the way the City was racially structured and did not wish to increase racial tension or handicap the City's growth and development. This event is unique during the period under review as it represents the only time when the City, regardless of race, united to oppose an Apartheid policy.

The final analysis in this thesis (Chapter Nine) presents the complete opposition on the part of 'White English' Grahamstown towards the Nationalist desire for a South African Republic. This opposition was based on the desire of 'White English' Grahamstown to preserve the connections between South Africa, Great Britain and the Commonwealth of Nations. Because of the City's close link with the 1820 Settlers and its perception of itself as an 'English South African City' the 'White English' community of Grahamstown did not wish to lose the connection with the 'Motherland'.

This thesis has analysed the perceptions of Grahamstown during the period 1946 to 1960, showing that the 'White English' community of Grahamstown (focused upon because this community dominated the City as well as the most documented one) considered themselves to be 'British South Africans', inheritors of the legacy of the 1820 Settlers with close links to the 'Motherland' (Great Britain). A paternalist perception prevailed within this community towards the different groups of the City, African, Coloured and Asian with some individuals openly espousing racism. However a minority existed, specifically the Civil Rights League, the Black Sash and the Progressive Party, that opposed these racial distinctions. It was shown that the Grahamstown City Council was unable to solve crucial problems in relation to Location housing because it lacked motivation and understanding, which subsequently compounded the problem by the end of 1960. The Beer Hall Debate highlights this lack of understanding and motivation. However the City Council did succeed in alleviating the Tuberculosis Crisis affecting the City by supporting the Tuberculosis Society. Praise must also be given to it with regard to the Rhodes Endowment Fund as it is unlikely that the College would have attained University status without the financial aid provided to it, specifically by the City Council, which set the level of donations from its contribution. With regard to politics, 'White English' Grahamstown completely supported the United Party and took pride in this fact. Despite the three National Election Defeats of the United Party against the Nationalists, the Albany district remained absolutely in the hands of United Party members. Indeed it was a point of pride that Albany remained a "United Party Stronghold". 'White English' Grahamstown also opposed the Nationalist Government with regard to the Republic referendum because of the 'British' nature of the City and its desire to maintain links with Great Britain (affectionately referred to as the 'Motherland'). During the latter half of the 1950s, Apartheid policies began being implemented within the City despite protests from a minority section of the 'White English' community, although in view of the political climate of the period this is hardly surprising. What is surprising and unique is the unification of every racial group present within the City against the implementation of the Group Areas Act which delayed the announcement of Group Areas within Grahamstown until the 1970s. Some people opposed the Group Areas based on their principles (those who opposed Apartheid within the City and supported the various anti-Apartheid, Nationalist groups) while others wished to maintain the status quo. Regardless of their reasons, the unification of Grahamstown citizens against the Group Areas Act ensured that it was not implemented during the period under review.

This thesis has attempted to provide the different perceptions of the 'White English' section of the Grahamstown community between the years 1946 to 1960. From this it can be stated that; Grahamstown was a uniquely 'British' South African City with a paternalistic state of mind towards Africans and Coloureds. Despite this a minority existed within this 'White English' community which went against this paternalistic (sometimes racist) perception.

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