'THE BOUQUET OF FREEDOM:
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN STELLENBOSCH DISTRICT
1870-1900'

by

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ABSTRACT OF MA THESIS

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The thesis explores the effects on the wine growing district of Stellenbosch of the transformations in the political economy of the Cape Colony in the late nineteeth century.

It is the first in depth study of Stellenbosch District and also contributes to other historical analyses concerned with the impact of industrialisation on rural society. Primary sources used include archival records, newspapers and the annual reports of the district branch of the Standard Bank.

Labour legislation passed in the aftermath of slavery was most successful in tying labour to the farms when the labour market was confined to the agrarian sector. The mineral and transport revolutions of the late nineteenth century brought about the first major reformulation of social and economic relations in the Western Cape since emancipation. Between c1878 to 1896 wine farmers were hit by the general recession of the 1880s, by the excise tax on brandy, by phylloxera and by periodic labour shortages. Farmers, especially those capitalising their agricultural production, looked to the Zuid Afrikaansche Boere Beskermings Vereeniging and later the amalgamated Afrikaner Bond to press for state aid to wine farmers.

In the late nineteenth century farmers finally experienced the implications of the proletarianisation of the rural underclass. Many labourers left to work in the growing urban

sector, on the Public Works or in self employment as market gardeners. Farmers in Stellenbosch, like their peers in other societies confronting the implications of industrialisation, regarded labour mobility as illegitimate. They felt threatened by outbreaks of arson and theft, but also by the labourers' new assertiveness.

For a time labour relations on the farms took place in a context where labourers had a measure of leverage against the power of the farmer. By 1910 the farmers' world had been righted and this was no longer the case.

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Farmers, Labour and the State

TABLES AND MAP

ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	Cape Colony Publications
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
ICS	Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London
MLA	Member of the House of Assembly
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
SCR	Select Committee Report
UCT	University of Cape Town
ZA	Zuid Afrikaan
ZABBV	Zuid Afrikaansche Boere Berskermings Vereeniging

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INTRODUCTION

In a recent article, Alan Mabin has written of the underdevelopment of the Western Cape in the late nineteenth century.[1] A similar claim could be made for the historiography of the region for that period. The capitalisation of agrarian production and relations in the Transvaal and Orange Free State has recently received attention from historians, but the cradle of capitalist agriculture in South Africa, the fields and vineyards of the South Western Cape, have so far remained largely untilled.[2]

The earlier decades of nineteenth century rural history have been better served. Nigel Worden's study of the Western Cape has shown the importance of slavery in forming the springboard for capitalist production; and a thesis by Mary Rayner, on the wine industry and labour relations in the decades prior to emancipation, enriches our understanding of the long history of stratification and accumulation within the wine districts.[3]

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1. Mabin A, 'The Underdevelopment of the WesternCape'[paper presented to the Conference on the Western Cape, Roots and Realities, Centre of African Studies, UCT, July 1986]
2. See Keegan T, Rural Transformations in Industrialising South Africa The Southern Highveld to 1914 [London, 1986], also Krikler J, Phd thesis in progress;also Beinart W, Delius P and Trapido S [eds],Puttinga Plough to theGround :Accumulationand Dispossession inRural SouthAfrica, 1850 -1930 [Johannesburg, 1986]
3. Worden N, Slavery in Dutch South Africa [Cambridge, 1985] Rayner M, 'Wine and Slaves. The Failure of an Export Economy and the Ending of Slavery in the Cape Colony, South Africa, 1806-1834' [Ph.D. thesis, Duke University, 1986]

For the period c1840 to 1890, recent work by Marincowitz has provided a valuable outline of a changing mid-nineteenth century political economy in the western districts.[4] However apart from a few recent honours dissertations, no work has yet been done at a local level in order to deepen our understanding of historical processes in the Western Cape in the nineteenth century.[5]

Local studies are needed to give us a "knowledge of the peculiar histories and divergent internal dynamics of differing communities and an analysis sensitive to consciousness and organisation as well as economic relations".[6] This thesis is an attempt to illustrate how the consciousness of both dominant and subordinate classes in Stellenbosch district in the period 1870-1900 was shaped not only by the heritage of slavery, but also and increasingly by the new forces of industrialisation that were generated by the discovery of minerals in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.

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4. Marincowitz J, `Rural Production and Labour in the Western Cape, 1838-1888 with special reference to the Wheat Growing Districts' [Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1985]; also see Mabin A, `The Making of Colonial Capitalism. Intensification and Expansion in the Economic Geography of the Cape Colony, South Africa 1854-1899' [Ph.D. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1984]
5. Host L, `"Die Hondjie Byt": Labour Relations in Malmesbury District c1880-c1920' [Honours dissertation, History Department, UCT, 1987]; Van Ryneveld T, `Merchants and Missions: Developments in the Caledon District, 1838-1850' [Honours dissertation, History Department, UCT, 1984]; Vienings T, `Stratification and Proletarianisation: The Rural Political Economy of the Worcester District, 1875-1910' [Honours dissertation, History Department, UCT, 1986]
6. Beinart W, Delius P and Trapido S,`Introduction' in Beinart et al, Putting a Plough to the Ground, p15

Ross argues that Cape agriculture was almost completely capitalist by the mid-nineteenth century. He, Worden and Rayner have certainly shown the existence of a capitalising elite within the dominant class in the Western Cape, from at least the late eighteenth century onwards.[7] With the entry of the Cape into the fold of the British Empire in 1806, farmers in the South Western Cape became part of an increasingly hegemonic capitalist economy, based on the export of wine and later of wool, dependent on slave labour, and later on a predominantly proletarianised wage labour force.

One must not, however, exaggerate the extent to which capitalist relations had penetrated the South African countryside prior to the mineral discoveries in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Helen Bradford has shown that even in the 1920s only a minority of South African farmers could be described as capitalist.[8] The data for Stellenbosch supports this conclusion. It would be difficult to ascribe a capitalist or enterprising mentality to the majority of farmers in the district. Most of them did not keep record books, nor did they invest in machinery or in intensified use of their land.

The minority of capitalist or rather capitalising farmers in Stellenbosch district in the late nineteenth century came mainly from established families with direct links to the District Bank,

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7. Ross R, `The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape Colony: A Survey' in Beinart et al, Putting a Plough to the Ground, pp56-100; Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; Rayner, `Wine and Slaves'
8. Bradford H, `The ICU of Africa in the South African Countryside' [Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985], p47

and thus with easy access to credit, as well as from business and industrial backgrounds. It was these latter agrarian entrepreneurs who were to give direction and substance to the intensification of agriculture in Stellenbosch district from the 1890s onwards.

The work of Keegan and Trapido also shows that the investment of capital originally acquired in business or professional ventures into farming was a trend followed both in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.[9] The pattern of owner-occupied farms relying on a black labour force bound by ties of debt also occurred on the farms of Southern Africa, while the Masters and Servants Acts first used in an African setting in the Cape, were later applied in Kenya.

The history of the Western Cape does not just suggest comparisons with later developments in Africa. Nigel Worden has shown the commonality of the Western Cape and other slave holding societies in the eighteenth century. This comparative perspective is worthy of extension into the post-emancipation era.[10]

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9. Keegan T, 'White Settlement and Black Subjugation on the South African Highveld: The Tlokoa Heartland in the North Eastern Orange Free State, cal850-1914' and Trapido S, 'Putting a Plough to the Ground: A History of Tenant Production on the Vereeniging Estates, 1896-1920' in Beinart et al Putting a Plough to the Ground, pp218-258; pp336-372 also see Ross, 'The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture' in the same volume
10. Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; also see Worden's preliminary thoughts in 'Cape Slave Emancipation in a Comparative Context'[unpublished paper presented to the Africa Seminar of the Centre for African Studies, UCT 1983]

Stellenbosch district shared many features of other colonial societies, as well as those of metropolitan agrarian communities confronting the advent of industrialisation. Within the context of a comparative approach, this thesis looks at the transformation and experience of one rural district in a period when members of both the dominant and subordinate classes were wrestling with the implications of the expansion of the colonial economy.

In order to avoid an unwarranted emphasis on change in an era in which continuity is also marked, a thematic approach has been adopted for this study. This has resulted in some overlap as we look at the processes of capitalist intensification in Stellenbosch district, through successive focus upon agriculture, political mobilisation and labour relations.

Eendrag Maak Magt

Chapter one charts the sweep of rural history from emancipation up to the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West in 1867. It deals with labour legislation, describes Stellenbosch district before the mineral revolution and ends by outlining the key developments in the district up to 1900. The former master classes and ex-slaves of other colonial slave holding societies shared many perceptions with their peers in the Cape regarding the process and implications of emancipation.

The former masters everywhere pressed for state legislation to help maintain their labourers in conditions of servitude similar to those which they had endured under slavery. Ex-slaves attempted to avoid the net of this legislation through gaining

independent access to the means of production, with varying degrees of success.

Landholding and Agriculture in Stellenbosch District 1870-1900

The major focus of the dissertation is on the last three decades of the nineteenth century when both farmers and labourers in Stellenbosch were affected by the intensification and expansion of capitalist relations in Southern Africa subsequent to the discovery of diamonds and gold in the interior. Chapter two examines changes in agriculture and landholding in Stellenbosch.

Many features of the period 1870 -1900 closely resemble those of the first three decades of the century. The most obvious similarities are the search for favourable markets, the planting of vines in response to good prices, overproduction, the decline of prices, resulting in insolvency and economic collapse among wine farmers. Essentially the last three decades of the nineteenth century provide yet another chapter in the history of the vicissitudes of wine farming in an undercapitalised rural economy. The chapter concludes by showing the alliance which intensified in the 1890s, between capitalising members of the traditional elite and newcomers to the district who invested capital accumulated from business and speculation into agriculture, particularly fruit farming.

Agrarian Politics, Agrarian Concerns c1878-1900

Chapter Three illustrates the issues around which farmers could still be mobilised as a group. These include the excise tax

as well as concern about the leverage that distillers and wine merchants operated in the market place at the expense of wine farmers. However a crevice was increasingly opening up between those farmers struggling merely to maintain their position in the face of narrowing markets and those farmers with access to capital and sufficient labour who perceived the need for technological improvements and an alliance with merchants in order to secure markets.

Wine farmers had been politically mobilised in the 1830s around the issue of emancipation and compensation. The 1870s also witnessed the political mobilisation of the capitalising group within the dominant class in Stellenbosch, around agricultural and labour issues. However the different political and economic context created by the granting of responsible government in 1872, and by the mineral discoveries, helped carve new political channels for the expression of class conciousness.[11] The growth of party politics in the late nineteenth century was thus a response to the new competition for access to state power and capital.

The growing stratification in the western districts also contributed to the nature of political mobilisation among Dutch -

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11. Giliomee H, `Farmers and Ethnic Politics: The Cape Boers during the late nineteenth century with special reference to the wine farmers and the Standard Bank', [unpublished paper presented to the tenth biennial national conference of the South African Historical Society, January 1985]
See Trapido S, ``The friends of the natives';merchants, peasants and the political and ideological stucture of liberalism in the Cape, 1854-1910', in Marks S and Atmore A [eds], Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa; also Lewsen P, `Cape Liberalism in its Terminal Phase' in Hindson D [ed], Working Papers in Southern African Studies Volume 3 [Johannesburg, 1983], pp33-50

speaking farmers in the late nineteenth century. The racial boundary that had been created and sustained between the white dominant class and the 'mixed' underclass had ensured that marginalised members of the dominant class still remained within a social if not an economic fold. However the ascendancy of the capitalising agrarian elite and the concomitant decline of other wine farmers threatened to carve deep contradictions within the ideological framework of the dominant class, an ideology which stressed uniformity and equality within that class.

The increased layering of the dominant class in Stellenbosch thus found a political parallel in the formation in 1877 and 1878 of two organisations with different agendas, appealing to different sectors within the dominant class of the rural Western Cape: The Afrikaner Bond and the Zuid Afrikaansche Boere Berskermings Vereeniging.

Labour Relations 1870-1900

The relations of production were also undergoing a transformation in the Western Districts of the colony, the first major reformulation since those of the 1830s when slaves were freed in to wage labour. It was only in the 1870s though that the implications of this freedom were brought home to farmers. With the growth of the state employment sector and of the urban areas, many labourers took their labour to where the wages were highest. Farmers were only to confront the practical significance of a proletarianised labour force decades after legal emancipation had occurred.

Chapter Four concentrates on labour relations in the last

three decades of the nineteenth century. It looks at changes in the composition of the labour force, in the nature of employment contracts, and at the way that extra economic mechanisms such as debt and the ability of a farmer to offer a house to the labourer became increasingly important in securing labour.

The chapter also examines the perception of farmers towards the new labour mobility of their work force and their attitudes regarding the employment of African labour. Stellenbosch farmers shared perceptions with farmers in other capitalising agrarian societies of the status and place of proletarians within society. Many farmers resorted to coercion and debt bondage at the very time that the process of capital accumulation and investment in agriculture was becoming ever more crucial. Capitalising farmers wanted the benefits {profits} that a capitalist economy could give them as well as those of a more inelastic, hierarchical society in which relations between labourers and masters or between the peasantry and the gentry were defined and unassailable.

The View from the Farm

Both structure and actions gave meaning to the rural world. Architecture and visible symbols of power and ownership were important in framing the reference points both for domination by farmers and for resistance by labourers.[12] Even when resisting

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12. See Rhys Isaac's evocative work on The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790 [North Carolina, 1982], for an imaginative illustration of the way that symbols of authority and power invest the rural world with specific meaning

domination, labourers were forced through circumstance to use the language of their masters, and the materials provided, be it through the labour process or around the theft of farm produce. But farmers themselves were bound by strictures. The final chapter examines the rural world and daily life as well as attempting to chart the changing forms of class conflict in the context of a wider economic transformation.

The intensification and expansion of the colonial economy subsequent to the mineral discoveries, helped to bring about a realignment of the margins within which labourers in the district were able to operate. What has to be shown is the manner in which the rural world was constantly reconstituted by the struggles of both under and dominant classes to give meaning to that world. It is only once the labourer has been rendered a criminal and the farmer a prosecutor, that either really emerge in the archival records of Stellenbosch district. Crime is the avenue through which we come to the world of the farm.

The experience of Stellenbosch in the late nineteenth century was not merely that of a society lying at the tip of Africa. The ways in which members of the society reacted to the coming of industrialisation, the relationship between farmers and the state, the nature of labour relations, all these processes can be seen as part of a wider pattern. Above all, a study of Stellenbosch district in the years 1870 to 1900 illustrates the implications for an agrarian society of incorporation into the net of an urbanising and industrialising capitalist economy.

CHAPTER 1

"EENDRAG MAAK MAGT": UNITY IS STRENGTH

The victory of the anti-slavery abolitionists in 1834, created a spectre for slave-owners in the Cape Colony. Their recoil from this prospect of a free labour force was remarkable only in its similarity to that of slaveholders in other colonial societies. Ownership of and control over labour had formed the bedrock of the political economies of the slave holding colonies. In the decades after emancipation, the question of labour control was thus perceived by the former master classes to be the key to the maintenance of the established social order.[1] Slaveholders wrestled with the problem as to how they could harness new mechanisms to exert old powers in a changed context.

The former slave-holders solicited the state's aid to retain the essential features of society ante-emancipation. The judiciary expanded dramatically as the prescriptive net of `criminal' behaviour was made to fall wider and harder.[2] This occurred in most capitalising agrarian societies, where access to labour {and land} formed the basis for capital accumulation. Failure by ex-slaves and other members of the underclass to engage in wage labour was rendered idleness. Idleness was defined as vagrancy. Vagrancy was then labelled a crime.[3] "The legal

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1. Foner E, Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy [Baton Rouge, London, 1983], p22
2. Foner, Nothing But Freedom
3. See Linebaugh P, `Eighteenth Century Crime, Popular Movements and Social Control', Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History 25 1972, p12, for a rather determinist view of the `needs of capitalism' which then

code, taxation policies, government expenditures and administration of justice were all moulded with one idea in mind: to maintain the plantation economy".[4]

In the Cape, most of the former master class also looked to the state to provide the mechanisms for the continuation of the political, economic and social domination that they had enjoyed as slave holders.[5] Ironically farmers looked to the metropolitan state which had stripped them of their slaves, to render assistance in the new era of wage labour. Members of the rural underclass might no longer be slaves, but this did not mean that they were free to refuse to work as wage labourers. It was this common perception which bound the state and farmers in an uneasy unity after the struggle over emancipation.

A rural proletariat was thus wrenched into being by the forceps of state legislation. Labour legislation played a particularly important role in the case of the Cape since the Colonial Office refused to pass Vagrancy Laws as they had in the West Indies, saying that it violated the provisions of Ordinance 50.[6]

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require the capitalist ruling class to criminalise customary property rights. Also see Innes J and Styles J, `The Crime Wave: Recent Writing on Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century England', Journal of British Studies 25 [October 1986], pp380-435, for a critique of this position; Also see article by Slatta on similar processes of criminalising the Argentinian rural underclass. Slatta R, `Rural Criminality and Social Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Buenos Aires Province', Hispanic American Historical Review 60 3 1980, pp450-472

4. Foner, Nothing But Freedom, p 24; See Cooper F, `The State and Agricultural Labour: Zanzibar after Slavery' in Hindson D, Working Papers in Southern African Studies, pp1-12
5. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves', conclusion
6. Ross, `The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture', p81

In the pre-industrial Cape economy, it was mainly independent access to land which gave members of the underclass, a broad category which includes artisans in the villages, peasants and rural workers, some freedom from permanent labour on the farms. In theory, Ordinance 50 had made settler and Khoi equal before the law, while emancipation `freed' slaves from bondage to their masters. On the eve of emancipation however, the prospects of slaves enjoying such independent access were slight. By the close of the eighteenth century the Khoi had been dispossessed and good agricultural land was in short supply in the south western districts of the Cape.

Mission stations thus provided ex-slaves with virtually the only opportunity for independent access to land. A plot on a mission station such as Pniel in Paarl district or Genadendaal in Caledon provided enough for subsistence. This enabled people to then work as seasonal or temporary, rather than permanent wage labourers on the farms. The hiatus between emancipation and the discovery of minerals thus saw a marked increase in the casual rural labour force.[7]

The preference of members of the rural underclass for the position of part-time rather than full-time proletarian, is demonstrated by the doubling of the mission population in the decade after emancipation. By the 1850s, nearly 20% of the rural underclass was living on mission stations.[8] For farmers

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7. Van Ryneveld, `Merchants and Missions'; Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour'
8. Marincowitz J, `Proletarians, Privatisers and Public Property Rights: Mission Land Regulations in the Western Cape between Emancipation and Industrialisation'[unpublished paper presented to ICS African History Seminar, University

wantinglabour the stations carried not the banner of protection but rather of threat. Petitions demanding the closure of the mission stations thus litter the pages of the colony's Blue Books. This happened particularly in the 1840s and 50s, which witnessed periods of acute labour shortage in the agrarian economy of the south western districts. Farmers who found it either monetarily or morally difficult to reconcile themselves to wage labour were the main complainants. Wealthier farmers on the other hand saw stations fulfilling a useful function as labour reserves for seasonal labour which could be utilised when necessary.[9]

"Squatting" on crown land provided virtually the only alternative to permanent labour on the farms for members of the rural underclass. Occupation of this land was rendered illegal by the exclusion of ex-slaves and other members of the under class from a government sponsored land system. Squatting was thus partly a function of lax and lopsided land allocation.[10] However, the measures taken against squatting particularly after the introduction of representative rule in 1854, were also part of a broader intention to engineer a process of proletarianisation.[11]

This process was often neither as smoothly nor as quickly

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of London, 1985], ppl; 3

9. Van Ryneveld, `Merchants and Missions'; Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour'

10. This was inititiated by Cradock's perpetual quitrent system in 1813 which rejected the granting of squatting leases. See Duly LC, British Land Policy at the Cape, 1795-1844 [Durham NC, 1968], ppl79; 180; 187

11. Government Gazette 31 October 1856

accomplished as farmers seeking an abundance of cheap labour would have wished. More direct anti-vagrancy and squatting measures failed to be enacted due to the intervention of the Colonial Office in the case of the former, and widespread protest by members of the rural underclass against the latter. But if the process of rural proletarianisation in the Western Cape was incomplete, it was certainly in the making as access to a subsistence plot on the mission stations became increasingly difficult to acquire after the middle of the nineteenth century.[12]

The concern over access to rural workers on terms favourable to the employer, occurred in a period of changes within the Cape economy. Farmers in the South Western Cape had been involved since the seventeenth century in commodity production for overseas and local markets. This was facilitated primarily by the proximity of Table Bay and predicated upon the existence of slave and other forms of coerced labour. The regions to the north, the Roggeveld, the Bokkeveld, the district of Graaff Reinet, were less directly in contact with the world economy, partly due to their distance from the commercial centre of the colony.

Pastoral production for the market was certainly underway though in the Graaff Reinet district by the last three decades of the eighteenth century.[13] Livestock was produced for

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12. Bradlow E, `Capitalists and Labourers in the Post-Emancipation Rural Cape - Part 11', HISTORIA 1 [May, 1986], pp57-68; Marincowitz, `Proletarians, Privatisers and Public Property Rights'
13. Neumark SD, Economic Influences on the South African Frontier, 1652-1836 [Stanford, 1957];Newton-King S, `Commerce and Material Culture on the Eastern Cape Frontier, 1784-1812' [paper presented to the ICS Seminar on the

farmers needing draught oxen, for the population of Cape Town and for the crews of the increasing number of ships calling at Table Bay. For at least the first two decades of the nineteenth century however, the wheat and wine districts of the Western Cape continued to form the economic heartland of the colony.

The relaxation of British duties on Cape wine in 1813, favoured colonial wines at the expense of former competitors such as the Spanish and Portuguese, who had paid identical import duties, and the French who had paid a higher rate. The 1813 Act lowered the duties on Cape wines to a third of those formerly imposed, while the duties on wines of French and Rhenish origin were increased.[14]

In response to these favourable market conditions, farmers in the south western districts of the colony put more land under vines with an increase of between 800 000 and 1 million vines per year until 1825 while the number of vines in Stellenbosch district rose by 78% between 1813 and 1823.[15] Specialisation in agriculture was thus encouraged and by the 1820s the majority of farmers could now be classified as **bona fide** wine farmers. Production rose in the Colony from 7707 leaguers in 1814 to 19 250 leaguers by the end of the decade.* While in Stellenbosch

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Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries, University of London, 21 June 1984; Ross R, `Capitalism, Expansion and Incorporation on the South African Frontier' in Lamar H and Thompson L [eds], The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared [New Haven, 1981], pp218-232

14. See Rayner, `Wine and Slaves' chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of wine prices and marketing in the period 1806 to 1825
15. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves', chapter 2, pp16; 32

* 1 leaguer equals 127 imperial gallons and 152 Dutch gallons Dutch gallons were more frequently used in the Cape Colony

district the yield rose from 4 134 to 6 518 leaguers.[16]

However in the early 1820s the sweet times for wine farmers had already shown the potential for turning sour. In the first half of the decade the prices fetched by Cape wines on the British market began to fall.[17] This was partly in response to over-supply, but also owing to the poor quality of these wines.

In 1825 the preferential duty on Cape wine was reduced to 2 shillings per gallon {until 1830} thus forcing it to compete with European wines. The duty on French wines was reduced to 6s per gallon, on other foreign wines to 4s. Six years later the import duty on Cape wines was fixed at 2s 9d per gallon. In 1861 any protection enjoyed by Cape wines on the British market was finally erased. The immediate result was the decline of exports from 579 42 gallons to 319 194 between 1863 and 1875.[18]

This decline was accompanied by the concomitant rise of wool as an export commodity. The colony had been transformed in the years after emancipation from being mainly a provision station of agricultural produce, to an important exporter of raw wool to Britain. By the 1840s, the Cape's economic centre of gravity in the South West was being rivalled by the emerging commercial

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16. Van Zyl DJ, `Economy', chapter 8 in Smuts F, Stellenbosch Three Centuries, [Stellenbosch, 1979], p190; the 1865 census lists 227 wine farmers and 15 corn farmers. CCP G20-'66; figures quoted by Newton-King S, `The labour market of the Cape Colony, 1807-1828' in Marks S and Atmore A [eds], Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa,[London, 1980], p173
17. Between 1844 and 1849, exports to Britain declined from 349 257 gallons, to 241 845. Leipoldt L, 300 Years of Cape Wines [Cape Town, 1952], p123
18. Giliomee, `Farmers and Ethnic Politics', p9

centres in the Eastern Cape. Wool became the dominant export commodity of the colony with exports rising from 5 900 000 pounds in 1830 to 28 200 000 pounds in 1860.[19]

The development of pastoral production in the Eastern Cape, the continuing ability of the Xhosa to resist wage labour because of their control of land, and the attendant rise of an influential gentry helped create the conditions for the passing of labour legislation in the infancy of representative rule in the colony.[20]

In the Cape, the issue of labour control was partially resolved with the passing of the Masters and Servants Ordinance in 1841 and of the Masters and Servants Act in 1856. State power now entered the realm of the working place and of the person, by ascribing rules of behaviour, discipline and punishment in order to regulate the relationship between master and servant.

The intervention of the state assured that contorted patterns of violence and compliance which had marked slave society were reactivated and given legal substance after emancipation. Class privilege and class power were now to be endorsed by contract rather than by ownership of labour. This resulted in tension with those farmers who had previously relied heavily on the coercive power of physical force, in order to discipline their labourers. The interests of farmers and the state were not always identical. As Frederick Cooper has stated

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19. Forbes Munro J, Africa and the International Economy, [London, 1976], p59
20. Crais C, 'Gentry and Labour in Three Eastern Cape Districts', South African Historical Journal 18 1986, pp125-146

in connection with Zanzibar, "The state stressed control of work, the planters power over people"[21] However wealthier farmers who were in a position to exploit the new legal mechanisms saw their interests well represented by the colonial state.[22]

With the introduction of masters and servants legislation in the Cape, "the State could now be called on to exercise systematically, publicly and on a large scale, the sort of control which the farmers had formerly exercised haphazardly, in private and on an individual basis".[23] However this did not mean the total emasculation of the farmers' authority over their labour force. It seems rather that they continued to exercise it albeit in a minor key. The legislative power of the Masters and Servants Acts was thus often invoked only when more private disciplinary measures failed to yield results.

These Masters and Servants laws were striking in their inclusivity. They stipulated the existence and length of contracts, the terms of employment, the upper age limit of apprentices. They also rendered criminally chargeable, certain behaviour when it occurred within the context of the employer/ employee relationship. The key note as regards power distribution was contained in the definition of what constituted a breach of contract by the servant. Behaviour such as negligence, drunkeness, insolence, immorality, violence, damage to the masters property, and neglect to perform work, were all rendered

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21. Cooper, `The State and Agricultural Labour', p8
22. See Chapter 2 for a discussion as to how both the allocation of judicial posts as well as the legal process benefited the wealthy
23. Sachs A, Justice in South Africa [Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973], p40

criminally chargeable in the 1841 Ordinance. This effectively forced the labourer to live his life in the constant shadow of prosecution on criminal charges.

The differences between the 1841 Ordinance and the 1856 Masters and Servants Act are instructive as to farmers' increasing difficulty in gaining access to labour as well as to the hold that commercial farming interests had on the legislature of the new representative government. It was the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Beaufort, Molteno, who ushered in the 1856 act.* This intervention was possible mainly because the mercantile class which had been boosted by the British takeover, was prepared to support measures like this in which it had little interest. In issues related to labour control and not of central interest to merchants, commercial farmers were able to dominate the legislature.[24] Although of course, investment by merchants in farming often united these interests.[25]

The Masters and Servants Act of 1856 confirmed the bias in favour of the employer by making the breaking of a contract by him liable to civil procedure at private cost on the part of the servant. This legislation crystallised the concerns expressed in the 1841 ordinance. What might be termed `free' labour in theory could not remain so in practice.

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* Molteno was later first prime minister of the Cape after responsible government, also an important wool farmer

24. Marincowitz, `Proletarians, Privatisers and Public Property Rights', p2

25. See Crais, `Gentry and Labour '

Servants now became bound by a five year written contract, thus aiding farmers in tying labour to rural employment on the farms. With similar intention the age limit of apprentices was increased from 16 to 18 years. Even more access to labour was obtained through the abolition of the penalty for illegally apprenticing a child without the approval of the parent or guardian.

Probably the most acute symptom of the manner in which labour legislation came increasingly to favour the master at the expense of the servant is contained in the regulations pertaining to `criminal' behaviour on the part of the servant. The list of offending behaviour grew from 8 clauses in the 1841 Ordinance to 28 in 1856. Punishment itself also became more severe. A two times offender could look forward to 2 months in solitary confinement with or without hard labour. For the labourer the `protection' conferred through legislation must have appeared elusive at best, false at worst.

It was not only the provisions of labour legislation which helped the former master class to reassert and maintain control of the labour force after emancipation. The structure of the legal system itself also facilitated continued domination. In 1827 Justices of the Peace were appointed to act in a judicial and policing capacity in the rural areas while in the year of emancipation, Field Cornets were given powers of subordinate magistrates and were permitted to arrest criminal offenders.[26]

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26. Sachs, Justice in South Africa, p51

This devolved authority over labourers on to members of the class and in some instances, the very individuals who had most to gain from disciplining the labour force. Farmers did not have to rely upon the performance of neutral state functionaries to apprehend and discipline defaulting labourers: the judicial system entrusted these powers into the hands of the dominant class. The Colonial Office itself was sceptical of the justice administered by people with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.[27]

In effect, the reconstruction of post-emancipation society particularly in the Western Cape, left much economic, legal and social power in the hands of the former master class, although there was of course differential access to that power.[28] In their hands resided control over land and labour, and they continued to harbour perceptions of status and power that were not incompatible with their position ante 1834. The racist wash which had coloured and exacerbated the relationship between master and slave, continued into the era of increasing wage labour.[29]

The transition to a `new' society moulded in the image of the old was indeed successful. This was especially true of Stellenbosch district where the same patterns of land ownership

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27. Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour ', p63]
28. Crais suggests that Eastern Cape farmers experienced a more ambiguous transition, partly owing to the existence of black communities with independent access to the land. Personal Communication
29. Both Worden and Rayner have shown that even in the slave era, farmers did utilise some wage labour especially in peak times. Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; Rayner, `Wine and Slaves'

continued after emancipation, and where collective hostility to emancipation and disappointment with the compensation given fostered the maintenance of a class unity. Farmers and labourers experienced the birth pangs of the South African mineral and transport revolutions from the vantage point of a rural society much chained by the traditions of its slave holding past.

The View from the Hill: Stellenbosch District c1865

Had one stood on the summit of Stellenbosch mountain in the 1860s, the circumference of the district would have lain before one's gaze. An aerial view would have exposed both the geographical and social realities of Stellenbosch district. Concentric circles of landholding moved outwards in decreasing concentration from Stellenbosch village where there was great competition for land. They arched across the flat rich soil of Moddergat in the south east, reaching the boundaries formed by the Hottentots Holland Mountains where farms of up to a thousand morgen dominated the landscape and across the poor sandy soil of Bottelary in the west, to the peak of the Klapmuts hill near Mulders Vlei.[30]

Population patterns were more even. The largest population was in the municipality of Stellenbosch village, but it was closely followed by that of the Hottentots Holland, Moddergat and

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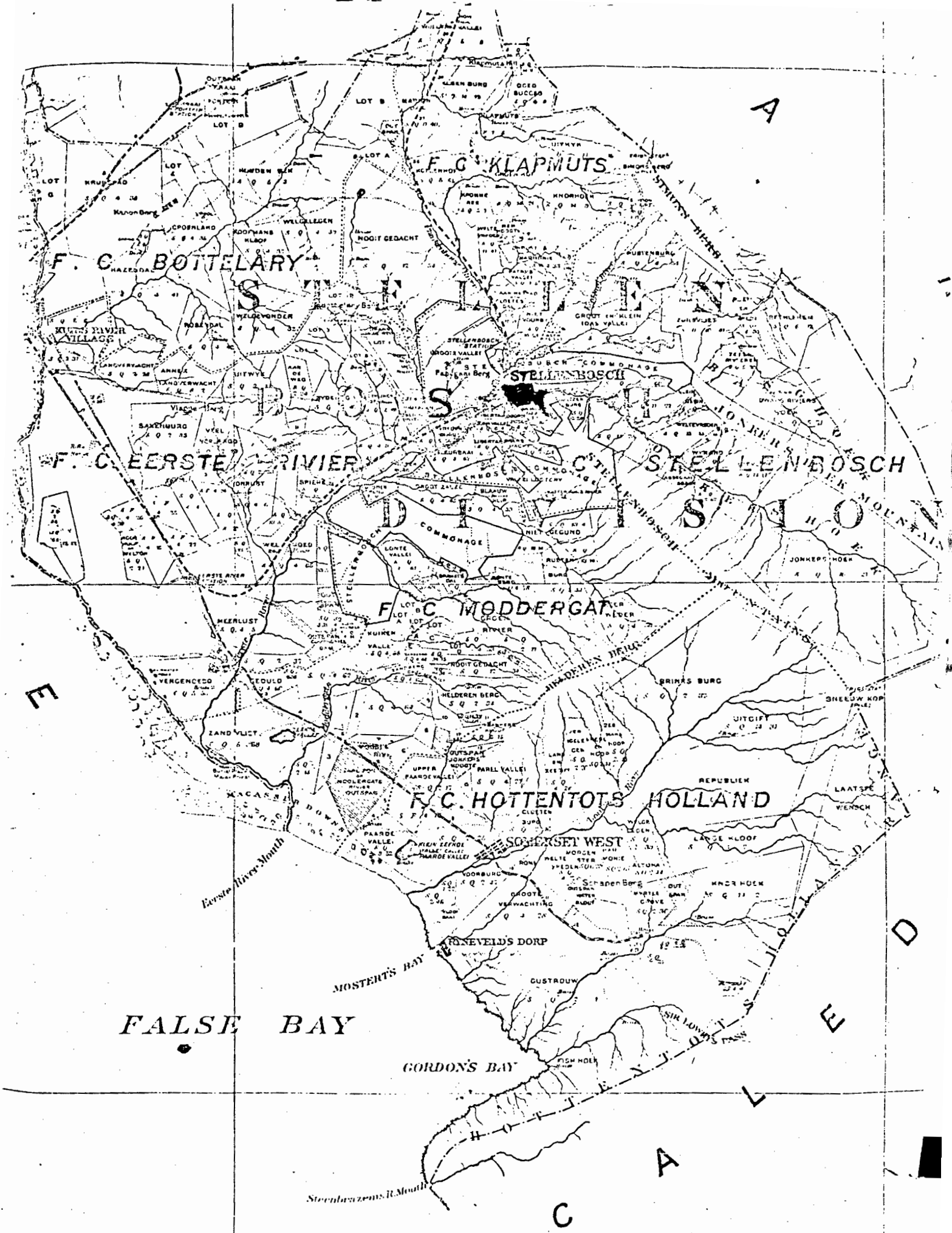
30. QRR 191 f189; QRR 195 f852; 1/STB 11/5 f5; f57; Van Zyl, `Economy', pp177-239


F. C. KLAPMUTS
F. C. BOTTELARY
F. C. EERSTE RIVIER
STELLENBOSCH
F. C. STELLENBOSCH
F. C. MODDERGAT
F. C. HOTTENTOTS HOLLAND
SOMERSET WEST
FALSE BAR
GORDON'S BAY
MOSTERT'S BAY
Eerste River Mouth
Steenbrazems R. Mouth
DIVISIONAL BOUNDARIES
FIELD COERETCY BOUNDARIES
RAILWAYS
COMMONAGE
Nov 14. 1890
DIVISIONAL MAI
STELLENBOSCH

Eerste Rivier field cornetcies.[31] The Eerste Rivier divided the district roughly in two. In the winter rainfall season it flowed especially hard from the catchment area of the Jonkershoek mountains east of the village, through the sandy soil of the Cape Flats into False Bay, a few miles away from the village of Somerset West.

This village and the hamlet of Mosterts Bay sat at the bottom of Sir Lowry's pass which wound down over the Hottentots Holland range, linking the wheat-growing Caledon district with its neighbour. Clinging tenaciously to the shifting sands of the Cape Flats were the hamlets of Eerste Rivier and Kuils Rivier, but the nerve centre of the district was Stellenbosch.

Until the 1870s when a bank and the Victoria College was established, Stellenbosch village served mainly as the nexus for commercial activity between farmers and merchants, as a religious centre, and as the location for judicial appeals by masters and servants.

Established in 1679, 27 years after the founding of the Dutch settlement at the Cape, Stellenbosch in the 1860s very much reflected ruling class perceptions of the existence of a secure and stable community, predicated upon the successful regulation and control of relations between dominant and subordinate classes in the district. The prominence given to religion, to the maintenance of law and order by members of the dominant class, is helpfully shown by the positioning of the Moeder Kerk, the

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31. 2975 Municipality; 1003 Environs; 1269 Eerste Rivier; 1605 Hottentots Holland; 1029 Moddergat; 674 Klapmuts; 352 Bottelary, CCP G20-'66 Census 1865

Drostdy and the gaol in the center of the town.

In this period, prior to the discovery of minerals, and responsible government, the arena of religion occupied the energies of this group. Theological divisions and wrangles defined the boundaries of the political discourse of the dominant class to a far greater extent than it did in later years.[32] In the 1870s, access to markets, to labour and to the source of capital, became a major concern of the elite in the district, and created the conditions for a more overt expression of political consciousness.

In 1865, the village and its immediate environs had a population of 3978 with 1223 whites, 2686 `mixed'and 69 Africans. The fault line of class fell fairly neatly in this period along a racial division with very few members of the black underclass making inroads into those spheres such as trading and farming which were essentially the domain of the white ruling class.[33]

In the aftermath of slavery, the population of Stellenbosch had been swelled by the influx of ex-slaves who rejected the farm life they had known in favour of residence in the villages of the Western Cape.[34] They moved into houses to the North`West of the town in an area known as Fonteintjesdorp, or

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32. For example the mid 1860s trial of three clergy for heresy. Davenport TRH, `The Consolidation of a New Society: The Cape Colony', chapter 7 in Wilson M and Thompson L [eds], A History of Southern Africa to 1870 [Cape Town, 1982], p277;
33. CCP G20-'66 Census 1865, lists 1 `coloured ' wine farmer in comparison to 226 whites, and 28 merchants as against 62 whites; out of 2712 whites and 6205 blacks. Any precise comparison with a later period is difficult because subsequent censuses do not retain the same categories
34. Marais JS, The Cape Coloured People, p191

Fortuintjesdorp. Other urban locations existed near the Victoria bridge, near Du Toit station and on a farm called Roux Dorp, owned by the Roux family outside town.[35]

Although some scope existed for domestic work, opportunities for employment were limited while the economy of the district and the colony remained largely agrarian. Those members of the underclass who moved to the hamlets of the Western Cape largely remained in agricultural employment. This they performed mainly as day workers on either a casual or a regular basis.

The transformation in the nature of productive relations in the Western Cape from slave to `free' wage labour was not accompanied by a qualitative shift in the structuring of rural labour relations. The entrenchment and conditioning through law of patterns of violence, subservience, compliance and complicity, caught even day workers, living off the farm, in a web of such subtlety it was difficult to break.

Legislation supplied the dominant class with enough ammunition to win most battles that servants might want to fight at the work place. As importantly, participation in a relationship which had in effect been initiated under the conditions of slavery reinforced the continual renactment of behaviour prototypes which bound both oppressor and oppressed.*

It was into this context that day labourers entered employment on the farm. Their potentially greater freedom gained

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35. Visagie JC, `Expansion of the District', chapter 5, in Smuts, Stellenbosch Three Centuries, p98

* See chapter 5

through living off the farm and through technically being able to offer their services to whoever they chose, was not sufficient to change the relationship between master and servant. While the economy of the colony remained predominantly agrarian, conditions continued to allow both members of the underclass and the dominant class to act upon traditional assumptions which governed behaviour and status.

This pertained even more to those labourers living permanently on the farms. The geography of the farm changed little between 1838 and 1870 with boundaries remaining static until the subdivisions of later years. Thus little visual change was evident which could give signification to the transformation from slavery to `freedom'. The traditional occupation of space on the farm itself also continued to sculpture the interaction of farmers and labourers living on the farms.

The rural world of Stellenbosch district in the pre-industrial economy was one framed by few new points of reference. The residue of slavery in the geographical and social landscape, invested the rural world with particular ideological meaning. The message was clear. The farmer had been Master {prior to 1834}. He was now master, but his power {bolstered by legislation} was not to be challenged, particularly within the boundaries of his farm.

Labourers did not necessarily accept those conditions. They accepted them less after c1870 with the development of a wider and more diversified economy predicated upon the discovery of minerals in the interior of South Africa.

The Mineral Revolution-Stellenbosch and a Wider World

> "Our usual sources of industry are interfered with and a quiet, but on that account no less insidious revolution in our ordinary mode of life is being prepared and for that change we must make provision in due time".[36]

This revolution based on the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and of gold in 1886, and eponymously named the mineral revolution by twentieth century historians helped create the conditions for the major restructuring and growth of the political economy of Southern Africa in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.[37] However for the international economy, these were decades of depression as from 1873 the newly industrialising nations competed for markets and suffered declining prices for their products, particularly agricultural commodities. Only in the 1890s did this depression end as new technology and experience fired the furnaces of a second revolution increasingly based on European rather than British soil.[38]

The dependence of British colonies on the export of primary products in order to pay for the import of manufactured goods made them very susceptible to downturns in the British economy. The Griqualand West diamond discoveries were therefore important in providing the Cape economy with armour against recession, and the Cape experienced a boom period from 1868 and particularly between 1875 and 1882, based primarily on diamonds and wool.[39]

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36. Editorial, ZA 18 July 1870
37. See Marks S and Rathbone R [eds], Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa; Mabin, `The Making of Colonial Capitalism'; also De Kiewiet C, A History of South Africa, Social and Economic [Oxford, 1960]
38. Forbes Munro, Africa and the International Economy, p66
39. Mabin, `The Making of Colonial Capitalism', pp28; 113

This armour was chinked however. With the decline in British imports in the 1880s, the Cape fell victim to recession, particularly between 1882 and 1885. For wine farmers facing problems peculiar to their industry, the recession would last well into the 1890s although the discovery of new mineral deposits in 1886 once again resuscitated the colonial economy.[40]

The importance of these mineral finds for the Cape economy is demonstrated by the expansionist policies of the Rhodes/Bond alliance of the 1890s, which was united by the desire to exploit the minerals and markets generated by the Transvaal gold fields.* However the transformation in the epicentre of the Southern African economy from an agrarian to an industrial base, in the wake of the Witwatersrand gold discoveries, should not lessen an appreciation of the growth and changes in the Cape economy during the era of the diamond fields in the late 1870s and early 1880s.

The discoveries occurred against the background of the steady penetration of merchant capital from the 1840s into Griqualand West, based on a lucrative hunting and arms trade with the Thlaping. The relationship between the agents of capitalism and the Southern Tswana did not long remain favourable. By the end of the 1880s the position of the local inhabitants had declined to that of a largely dispossessed, impoverished

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40. Although Mabin has shown how investment into transportation in order to take advantage of the northern markets ultimately undermined the Cape economy. Mabin, `The Underdevelopment of the Western Cape'

* Although this unity ended after the Jameson Raid in late 1895.

proletariat.[41]

For farmers, merchants, businessmen and speculators, the incorporation of the diamond fields into the colonial economic framework, first under the aegis of the crown and then the colonial government had happier connotations. "We have rejoiced with our fellow colonists" wrote Hofmeyr in 1872, " at the substantial good which the discovery of diamonds has done for the colony... money is being freely circulated ...and both labour and produce are finding markets which were dull before, but which are now craving supplies".[42]

Debates raged over the routing of railways as merchants and farmers perceived the growing markets for agricultural produce both within and outside of the colony and also the potential for investment opportunities.[43] With the growing importance of rail traffic the state came to take increasing responsibility for the routing of railways. The first line which ran from Cape Town to Wellington via Stellenbosch had been constructed by a private company in 1863 with district residents paying for the section of line that ran through their land.

Railway development accelerated rapidly after 1872 when the

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41. Shillington K, The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana, [Johannesburg, 1985]
42. ZA 31 January 1872
43. As early as 1872, some Stellenbosch farmers recognised the potential of the mineral discoveries at Kimberley as a source of capital accumulation. Paul Ryk Roux of Fleurbaai hired 8 men to go to the diamond fields. In 1895 his son, also PR Roux, said that he had three diamonds which his father had found on the diamond fields. 1/STB 18/183, Letters tp Resident Magistrate, 10 January 1872; 1/STB 20/103, 23 April 1895; see also ZA 11 October 1871, Mr A Lindenberg going to the diamond fields

new responsible government appropriated the existing railways and undertook the construction of new ones. The state controlled railway scheme caused tension in the western districts as residents who had earlier had to pay a guarantee for their privately funded lines now had to subsidise new railway building through the payment of taxes.[44] Despite this a major investment of both labour and capital was made between 1873 and 1902 in the building of 480 miles of line, indeed at the expense of the development of a manufacturing sector in the colony.[45]

The years 1870 to 1890 constituted a critical period of readjustment for the farmers of Stellenbosch district with survival increasingly linked to the willingness and ability to adapt to transformations occurring in production processes, marketing, and labour relations. Above all this period was crucial in that it witnessed the spread and intensification of capitalist relations in the district.

In the process the base of the dominant class came to rest increasingly in progressive farming and commercial ventures as much as in the soil of the traditional landholding class. In tracing these developments, discrete trends within the district can be mapped out as, in the context of world and colonial recession, wine farmers responded to changing political and economic circumstances and more specifically to the series of

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44. ZA 2 August 1874, letter from Stellenbosch resident. Stellenbosch had paid L15 000 a year under the guarantee principle
45. Tatlow A, `Railways of the Cape Province' in Playne S [ed], The Cape Colony. Its History, Commerce, Industries and Resources [Cape Town, 1911], p138 ; Mabin, `The Making of Colonial Capitalism', p38

crises which came perilously close to destroying the Cape wine industry.

The population at the diamond fields initially absorbed the wine that had been geared for the foreign market, and high wine and brandy prices were secured there for a time, aided by the fact that railways provided easy transportation.[46] The output of colonial brandy more than doubled from 431 000 gallons to 1 million gallons between 1865 and 1875 in response to the increased demand, while by 1891, 1 423 143 gallons of brandy were being distilled in the colony.[47]

The first phase of the mineral revolution proved a double edged sword however, as the economic upswing it generated also created alternative sources of employment on the mines, railways and in the towns, for labourers who had traditionally worked in the rural areas. This meant that by the 1870s, the major concern of farmers was the need for stronger measures of control over their traditional labour force as well as the desire to gain access to new sources of labour.

The following decade witnessed the descent into insolvency of marginal under-capitalised farmers, as well as some of those who had capitalised their farming operations without taking

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46. In 1876 wine was fetching £18 per leaguer, but a year later it had fallen to £12 14s, and in 1878 to £10 17s; CCP Blue Books CCP A6-'80 Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Excise Tax. Minutes of Evidence, p7; Noble J, Handbook of the Cape Colony [Cape Town, 1875], p283; ZA 20 January 1877; Giliomee, 'Farmers and Ethnic Politics', p10; See Table 4, p69
47. CCP Blue Book 1875, part iv, section Q; CCP G5-1892, Census 1891

sufficient cognisance of the long term stuructural problems of the wine industry. It was these farmers who were unable to cope with the strains created by the excise tax on brandy introduced in 1878, the recession of the 1880s, the increasing competition over labour and markets and the devastation of phylloxera.

However there were others who faced the challenges successfully, who adapted to changing circumstances and hitched their wagons to the economic momentum generated by the mineral revolution and the expansion of the colonial economy. They did this in a number of ways. Through political mobilisation on an unprecedented scale, through investment in mining companies, and through a renewed commitment to improving the marketing and production of wine.

In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, changes were thus taking place which slowly transformed both the social, economic and the geographical realities of the Cape political economy. In Stellenbosch district the stamp of a new era was being lightly etched on the landscape. By the end of the century it would be fully engraved.

CHAPTER 2

LANDHOLDING AND AGRICULTURE IN STELLENBOSCH DISTRICT 1870-1900

> "Without wine people cannot live here, it is our only means of subsistence".[1]

When foreign markets were closed to Cape wine, causing prices to slump owing to subsequent over supply, when an excise tax was placed on brandy, the true requirements of successful wine farming were revealed to Stellenbosch farmers. In order to make competitively good wine, much capital and expertise had to be invested and it was in this area that the ability of a farmer to adapt to the conditions of the late nineteenth century was increasingly determined.

The intensification of capitalist relations in the colony subsequent to the discovery of the mineral wealth of Southern Africa, was a crucial factor in the rise of a capitalising agrarian group within the dominant class of Stellenbosch district. In the 1820s and 1830s attempts had been made to improve production and marketing but these had failed to transform the Cape wine industry in the face of an increasingly unfavourable British tariff policy and the undermining of slavery which was the productive base of the industry.[2] The mineral revolution ushered in both the twilight of the traditional wine farmer as well as the dawn of the agrarian entrepreneur.

Even before the coming of the mineral and transport

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1. Letter from Stellenbosch resident, ZA29 June 1878
2. See Rayner, `Wine and Slaves' for detailed discussion

revolutions, settler society in Stellenbosch had exhibited the stratification that tends to characterise capitalist agriculture.[3] Ross, Rayner and Worden have indicated the existence of an elite, of a gentry in the Western Districts, from at least the late eighteenth century onwards.[4] Of the 53 families in the Western Cape who had owned more than 10 000 vines in 1731, nineteen families were still engaged in wine farming on a large scale in 1825, and they owned 41% of the vines in the colony at that time.[5] Of the Stellenbosch families within that group, all were still prominent within the district in the late nineteenth century.*

Stratification was most obvious in landholding where a few families owned or leased land in excess of 1000 morgen while there were other farmers who leased holdings of 40 morgen or less. The 1875 Census identified 411 farm units in the district, with 238 held under quitrent tenure, 169 under freehold and 34 under lease according to Act 19 of 1864.[6] A rough sample of 100 quitrent properties indicates a very wide margin in the size of holdings, with the majority {83} falling between 10 and 3000 morgen. Only 9 of the properties were over 1000 morgen while the remainder were spread mainly in the 500 to 800 morgen range. This is not necessarily an indication of stratification, which tended

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3. Ross R, `The First Two Centuries of Colonial Agriculture in the Cape Colony: A Historiographical Review', Social Dynamics 9 1 1983, pp30-49
4. Ross R, `The Rise of the Cape Gentry', Journal of Southern African Studies 9 2 1983, pp193-217; Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; Rayner, `Wine and Slaves'
5. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves', p97
*. See the Du Toits, Morkels, Marais, Myburghs, Rouxs, Van Der Byls etc
6. CCP G42-1876 Census 1875, Table 2, piv

to take the form of the accumulation of smaller holdings by one man, in contrast to the general pattern of landholding in the district, which was of owner occupied farms.

Phillipus Albertus Myburgh is a good example of the traditional elite of Stellenbosch district. Member of the House of Assembly, Field Commandant of the Burger Commando, Director of the Stellenbosch District Bank, Myburgh on his death in 1891 owned three farms in the district, Mariendahl, Elsenburg and Meerlust, a total of 1648 morgen.[7] Myburgh's peer in the Somerset West field cornetcy, Dirk Cloete Morkel, owned 921 morgen.[8]

The dominant class was itself dominated socially and economically by an elite consisting of families with their roots in landholding such as the Faures, Kriges, the Myburghs, the Neethlings, the De Waals, the Marais, and the Du Toit's. The association between office holding in the divisional and municipal councils, in the church, in judicial posts and landholding was repeated throughout the nineteenth century.[9] Of course some of the wealthiest men in the district

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7. 1/STB 11/5 f50, f53, f54, f78; ZA 29 January 1876; ZA 1 February 1879
8. 1/STB 11/5 f244, f247, f466
9. i.e G Joubert deacon of the DRC in 1835 also landholder of 163 morgen, Cape of Good Hope Annual Register, Directory and Almanack, 1835, QRR 192, f252; JC Faure Field Cornet Environs Stellenbosch, owned 250 morgen, Annual Register, 1855, QRR 192 f236; See ML Neethling, owner of Oude Molen, Director of the Stellenbosch District Bank, MLC, Mayor of Stellenbosch 1871-1874, 1901-1903; also J Mader, Municipal Councillor, auctioneer; JJP du Toit, member of the licensing board, Divisional Councillor, ZABBV committee member; WA Krige, owner of Uiterwyk, plus part ownership of a property in Paarl, Director of the District Bank, Municipaland Divisional Councillor, ZABBV committee member; ZA 17 July 1875; 4/STB 2/1/1/4 List of municipal councillors, 1876.

did not participate in the office holding of Stellenbosch, their dominance being felt predominantly in the the economic sphere.[10] Often men owned land as well as businesses in the village, with capital from the former often helping to finance the latter.[11]

Unlike other Western Cape districts such as Worcester, Swellendam, Caledon and Malmesbury during this period, Stellenbosch {and Paarl} experienced less severe degrees of stratification within the ruling class in that they had no significant poor white or bywoner class.[12] The different experiences of these districts can be partly ascribed to the nature of the crops produced. The former districts were largely wheat producing while Paarl and Stellenbosch were dependent on wine production. The capital intensive nature of wine farming, unlike wheat farming which facilitated share cropping arrangements did not favour the continued existence of an **extremely** marginal farming community and farmers without means

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10. For example, CP Marais of Mosterstdrift and JGF Holm, owner of two farms, of houses in Stellenbosch district. In 1889 his properties were worth L 5120. Insp 3 August 1889
11. See G Krige, owner of Sweet Home and Oude Libertas, also owner of local distillery. Insp 26 April 1881; 1/STB 2/59 case 81, 7 March 1890; also AB de Villiers, farmer, Idas Vallei, also hotel keeper and wine merchant. Insp 2 June 1893; Insp 12 October 1893
12. See testimony of JP Louw of Stellenbosch to CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893 vol.1 [hereafter CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission, p..]., p303; Host, `Die Hondjie Byt', Van Ryneveld, `Merchants and Missions'; Vienings, `Stratification and Proletarianisation'; Worden, `Slavery and Post Emancipation Reconstruction'; Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour'

were therefore unable to survive.[13]

Agriculture

Stellenbosch had entered the 1870s maintaining her position as second most important wine district in the colony. Farmers responded to the temporary good market prices for wine and brandy in the late 1860s and early 1870s, as they had in similar circumstances in the early decades of the century, by putting an increasing amount of land under vines. In 1865 there were 14 241 220 vines planted on 1528 morgen of land in the district and by 1875 this had increased to 15 703 150 vines planted on 1789 morgen. In 1904, 21 000 morgen was under vine cultivation.[14]

Fruit farming which was to assume more importance in the closing years of the century when the wine industry almost collapsed, already showed a growth of interest at this stage with roughly 368 morgen in the district being under orchards in comparison to the 230 morgen of 1865 while by 1904 it had risen to approximately 915 morgen.[15]

Under good market conditions wine farming yielded good results for a small area of cultivation. This suited the

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13. Compare with the experience of a marginal `poor white' class in the midlands districts in the same period. Bundy C, `Vagabond Hollanders and Runaway Englishmen: White Poverty before Poor Whiteism' in Beinart et al, Putting a Plough to the Ground, ppl01-128; See Table 1, p40 for investment required by a wine farmer in 1885.
14. CCP Censuses, G20-'66 1865; G42-1876 1875; G19-1904 1904
15. CCP Censuses. G20-'66 1865; G42-1876 1875 and G19-1905 1904. Vegetable cultivation showed a concomitant decline. See CCP G42-1876 Census 1875 Table 2; Table 3

TABLE 1: INVESTMENT OF A WINE FARMER IN 1885

farm:	£3000
Quitrent:	£ 120
20 vats at L 17 each	£ 340
3 brandy kettles	£ 150
Wagon and oxen	£ 180
Cart and Horses	£ 80
TOTAL	£3970
Interest:	£ 138 2s

: Yearly Expenses

66 loads compost	£ 66
20 loads wood	£ 30
2000 lb sulphur	£ 25
8 labourers at 2s 6d p day, with food & housing	£ 313
Barley machine buckets etc	£ 40
Horsefeed	£ 30
TOTAL	£ 742 2s 1d

[ZA 16 April 1885, expenses calculated by DE du Toit]

conditions of Stellenbosch district where land had early been parcelled into smallish lots, especially near the village itself. With two and a half morgen sustaining roughly 20 000 vines planted 2 feet apart, producing 50 leaguers of wine or two leaguers of brandy, farmers were able to produce viably for the wine market in times of good prices and protected markets.[16]

Wealthier farmers tended to engage in mixed farming and owned various portions of land. Within the dominant class in Stellenbosch district a handful of farmers owned several holdings each, often representing a spread of investment, in wine, grain and cattle farms.[17] Mixed farming benefited the wealthier farmers with a large body of permanent labourers who they could employ throughout the year and in addition it enabled farmers to reap an income all year round by relying on more than one crop. Farmers with few labourers and less inclination to maximise profits also engaged in mixed farming but on a smaller scale mainly in order to fulfill subsistence needs.

The size of the holding was to an extent the factor which determined the degree and importance of diversification. With the average yield of grain being 5 to 8 muids per properly manured acre, a relatively large acreage was required in order to make it

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16. 4/STB 2/1/1/4 Letters Received, PH Faure to Divisional Council, 10 November 1875; 1/STB 10/149, Replies to the Vineyard Diseases Commission 1880, nd; ZA 11 September 1871
17. The 1875 Census recorded 1,467 morgen under wheat cultivation. CCP G42-1876, Table 3; PA Myburgh owned three farms, PD Myburgh owned 2 farms, Insp 8 July 1884; while HJ Louw owned 5 farms in the district before his departure for the Transvaal ZA 16 July 1889; Also JA Faure, Insp 11 August 1883, p40

profitable. Thus it was the owners of large farms such as Elsenburgh or Weltevreden, or Muldersvlei, who concentrated on mixed farming.[18]

Wine farming gives long term rather than short term profits with yields suitable for making wine only occurring in the fourth year after planting. The maximum yields only occur between the seventh and the ninth year. This long term investment would not suit the type of sharecropping arrangement found in the wheat districts where a marketable crop was produced within a year of planting.[19] Wine farmers as a group in Stellenbosch district were thus relatively homogenous, consisting of a majority of small scale wine farmers producing for the market and very susceptible to labour shortages and market fluctuations.

Most wine farmers had very little liquid capital and survived on credit loaned by the local bank {particularly the locally financed district bank in this period which gave easy credit} against the probable returns to be derived from the wine harvest. It appears that most farming operations in the wine districts of Paarl and Stellenbosch were very undercapitalised in the nineteenth century and continued to be so into the twentieth, although increasing investment was made in agricultural machinery.[20]

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18. 1/STB 10/160 Field Cornet, Environs Stellenbosch to Resident Magistrate, ZA 13 May 1882; Muldersvlei c800 morgen, ZA 15 December 1883
19. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves', p56
20. Giliomee, `Farmers and Ethnic Politics', p21; see Standard Bank Reports for Stellenbosch district, 1881-1910

The 1875 Census illustrates the lack of mechanisation and the lack of capital investment in agriculture in Stellenbosch district during the late nineteenth century, but a comparison with 1891 figures indicates that capitalisation of agricultural production was taking place in the years under review.* However in the Western Cape "manual labour {was} the rule and the use of machinery the exception".[21]

Another index of capitalist enterprise is the amount of land put under cultivation. Efficient use of ground suggests a desire for maximising profits. It is clear that most farmers did not utilise all the land at their disposal. Advertisements for land sales refer constantly to the fact that there was room for an increase in the number of vines planted or the amount of land under cereal cultivation.[22]

This inefficient use of land was partly owing to poor farming techniques. Writing early in the twentieth century Owen Thomas commented that the method of cultivation in Stellenbosch and Paarl was primitive. "Successive crops are grown until the land is exhausted. It is then left to lie fallow and within three years it is uncultivated wilderness". As a result the agricultural value of land in the Western Cape declined.[23]

Certainly a capitalising group did exist within the dominant

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* See Tables 2 and 3, p44

21. Quoted by Mabin in 'The Underdevelopment of the Western Cape' p15, source not identified.
22. Sale of Weltevreden, ZA 13 May 1882; Sale of Uitkyk, ZA 19 May 1883; Sale of Muldersvlei, ZA 15 December 1883
23. Thomas O, Agricultural Prospects of Cape Colony [London, 1904], p186

TABLE 2:AGRICULTURAL INSTRUMENTS IN STELLENBOSCH DISTRICT 1875

631 Ploughs
233 Harrows
4 Reaping machines
9 Threshing machines
3 Maize cleaners
11 Corn Mills
160 Stills

[From CCP G42-1876, Census 1875]

TABLE 3:AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND INSTRUMENTS IN STELLENBOSCH DISTRICT 1891

548 two wheeled carts
9 cream separators
3 dam scrapers
1 dipping tank
2 sowing drills
22 grape mills
237 harrows
60 hay and straw cutters
1 hay press
18 incubators
27 maize cleaners
1 horse corn mill
10 water corn mills
2075 stuk vats
736 leagures
2160 other
12 winowers
3 steam engines

609 furrow ploughs
124 two furrow ploughs
24 three furrow ploughs
2 four furrow ploughs
10 water and turbine pumps
1 wind pump
15 reapers
1 self binder reaper
289 stills
20 sheep shearing machines
6 threshers
7 turnip and root cutters
233 wagons, 4 wheeled, horse
58 wagons, 4 wheeled, ox
47 wine presses
1607 fermenting tubs
127 wine pumps
854 other implements and machines

[From CCP G5-1892, Census 1891]

class, one who's roots can be traced often via the leading families, back to the early decades of the nineteenth century. However if one was to characterise Stellenbosch farmers it would be difficult to ascribe a capitalist mentality to them as a group in the sense that they tried to accumulate capital in order to invest in production or to exploit their land most profitably. A letter to the Zuid Afrikaan in 1877 encapsulates the predominant attitude among farmers.[24]

> "The Stellenbosch representative in parliament put forward his case with great vigour, but I can't associate with all of it. Especially when he said that wine farmers should bury their wines until they are a certain age. What age? No, a wine farmer cannot allow his wines to age because he is not prepared for it with his cellar and vats. People will not enlarge their cellars and buy morevats".

Inadequate attention to the processes of production is obvious. This was a key factor behind the downward spiral of Cape wine sales in the late nineteenth century. From the beginning of the century, the poor state of Cape wine had been lamented. The Zuid Afrikaan continued the refrain from 1870. The same causes were also ascribed. It was too sweet; the production methods were inadequate, it would never compete with French wine on the open market, efforts should be made to improve its quality.[25]

A contemporary account of wine production in the 1870s gives an indication of the unsophisticated production techniques. "The

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24. ZA 11 August 1877
25. Rayner, 'Wine and Slaves', p13; ZA 31 January 1870; ZA 4 August 1877; ZA 29 November 1876

method of making wine is primitive. It is cut at random, trodden by labourers and fermentation goes on in cellars crowded with wagons, skins etc". Noble paid lip service to the farmers' perception that all could be blamed on the perceived labour shortage by adding that " a want of sufficient labour to secure the vintage often prevents proper pains being taken".[26]

This is one side of the problem. Farmers depended on cheap labour precisely because maximum exploitation of labour power was the only method they could use to maintain their farming operations: most wine farmers in Stellenbosch district just did not have the capital to invest in knowledge and technology in order to improve wine production.

A correspondent to the Zuid Afrikaan pointed to the poverty of knowledge. " It is a sad fact that farmers here are far behind the requirements of the age in which they live. They have not had the chance of studying the branches of education which would enable them to distinguish between the different kinds of soil... All honour to farmers who strive by intuition to combat the difficulties in their way".[27]

Where progress occurred, it happened at the level of the individual farm, starting at a slow pace from the middle of the

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26. Noble, Handbook of the Cape Colony, p283
27. Letter from A McMillan, ZA 2 July 1881; The California wine industry suffered a similar problem in the same period due to the lack of capital investment in storage facilities. Farmers were forced to sell their wines very early, thus undermining the quality of the product. Carosso V, The California Wine Industry. A Study of the Formative Years, 1830-1895 [Berkely, 1951], p25

1880s, accelerating in the 1890s. Baron von Babo, appointed as Colonial Viticulturist in 1886, was primarily responsible for generating those improvements that did occur in wine production, through stressing the need for a systematic production process and encouraging the use of machines.[28] The use of pressing machines both quickened the production process as well as improving the quality of wine. Both first and second class wine could be made whereas with foot pressing only one pressing could be done.[29]

The Afrikaner Bond spearheaded the drive for a better product through its mouthpiece the Zuid Afrikaan, but the paper reported that Von Babo's attempts to instil a correct and hygienic wine making method were not meeting with much success.[30] This was partly a result of the fact that the nature of the improvements being made in wine production favoured the farmer with capital.

The use of labour saving devices such as vineyard ploughs and pressing machines were in the main too expensive for common use. It is only on the capitalising farms of the district that one finds mention of mechanisation, and of attempts to follow Von Babo's techniques. [31] The desire to capitalise one's farming operation was, however, no guarantee of insulation against

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28. See Leipoldt, 300 years of Cape Wine; for a more critical view of von Babo's contribution see Wallace R, Farming Industries of Cape Colony [Cape Town, 1896]
29. ZA 6 March 1886
30. ZA 3 February 1887
31. 'Progressive' farmers included JP Louw, PA de Waal, Adrian de Waal, CM Neethling, Insp 10 December 1887, p28; Insp 3 August 1889, p26; ZA 27 October 1888; wine press in use at Welmoed, ZA 6 March 1886; AJ de Waal using machinery in vineyard, CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p306

insolvency; investment often made a farmer's financial position particularly precarious. Those farmers who fell victim to recession in the 1880s and early 1890s came from within and without the small capitalising group.

The Effects of Recession

Fourteen years after the discovery of diamonds, the sparkle lost its lustre: over speculation caused a share collapse in the second half of 1881, doubly hurting those wine farmers who had speculated in diamond scrip and who now also lost a valuable brandy market.[32] In 1881 the Standard Bank report for Stellenbosch stated that "the farmers in the district are probably in good circumstances generally", but by the following year the western districts were regarded as being the weakest in the Cape.[33]

The recession hit the colony in 1881, with the severest depression occurring in 1885, with the collapse of wool and ostrich prices.[34] The excise tax, and closing wine markets in the 1870s had partly precipitated the fall of marginalised members of the dominant class into dire economic straits, the

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32. Henry JA, The First Hundred Years of the Standard Bank [Cape Town, 1963]; Mabin A, `Recession and its aftermath: The Cape Colony in the 1880s' [paper presented to the African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, August 1984], p3; there is scant evidence of Stellenbosch investment in the diamond fields, although CP Marais of Mostersdrift was reported to have a large interest in the mines, as well as being a shareholder in Marais Brothers at Kimberley, Insp 3 August 1889, p41
33. Insp 25 April 1881, p98; Mabin, `Recession and its aftermath', p4; 7 insolvencies in Stellenbosch, 1882, 20 in 1883, 10 in 1884, CCP Blue Book, 1884
34. Mabin, `Recession and its Aftermath', p6

recession, and the Phylloxera of the last two decades of the century were to set the seal on this decline.

Farmers learnt to their cost that long time dominance would not secure them against the results of imprudent spending and poor farming methods, while those farmers who had invested in machinery and in the planting of extra vines also learnt the risks of expansion and investment. The pages of the Zuid Afrikaan begin to record a litany of insolvencies among Stellenbosch farmers from 1882 and the records of the Standard Bank show insolvencies occurring well into 1886.

Recession manifested itself in a variety of ways in Stellenbosch: in increasing mortgages among wine farmers from c1882 into the next century, in insolvencies, and in land sales to commercial interests from outside of the district.[35] The instability and insecurity of agriculture in the wine districts in the late nineteenth century culminated in the 1890s in the purchase of land and the capitalisation of agriculture by `farmers' with their base in the mining sector.

It is this broadening of the dominant class in Stellenbosch to include entrepreneurs, with capital derived from capitalist enterprises spawned by the mineral revolution, which is one of the factors which distinguishes the developments of the late nineteenth century from the earlier decades of that century.

The Standard Bank records give an indication of the increase in bonds. The report of 1890 stated that "owing to the recent bad

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35. Mary Rayner has charted a very similar process for the 1820s. `Wine and Slaves'

years, many of the farmers are under the necessity of bonding their farms"[36] For example, Arend de Waal's farm Happy Vale, was free of bond in 1885, but was bonded for £1000 two years later.[37] PJ Bosman's farm was described as free of bond in 1882, but by 1886 he was bonded for £600 and by 1889 for £800.[38] The rate of insolvencies increased dramatically from 1882, reaching a peak in 1885. CF Beiers, a director of the early Stellenbosch district bank, owner of the farm Uitkyk, was declared insolvent in 1883, as was his son M Beiers. H Morkel of Hottentots Holland, followed suit in late 1884.[39]

Appeal to family ties was sometimes able to wrest a farmer away from the horrors of insolvency. PR Roux was apparently rescued by his brother, since two years after his insolvency the Standard Bank records him as owning Fleurbaai jointly with his brother and farming under the partnership of JA Roux and Co.[40] This incorporation of marginalised farmers into the family fold camouflaged the increasing stratification of Stellenbosch society in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

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36. Insp 11 August 1890, p81
37. Insp 5 September 1885, p24, Insp 10 December 1887, p19
38. Insp 6 October 1882, p24; Insp 19 October 1886, p19; Insp 3 August 1889, p18; also JJP du Toit, Bergzicht, farm fully bonded for most of the decade, Insp 26 April 1881, p38, Insp 10 December 1887, p19; Insp 3 August 1889, p27
39. Insp 28 July 1884, p32; Insp 5 September 1885, p37. See also PR Roux, Fleurbaai, insolvent 1883, ZA 5 May 1883; DD Joubert, ZA 17 January 1884; AC Neethling, Welmoed ZA 22 March 1884; HF Joubert, JJG van der Bijl, ZA 11 March 1884; CJ and DP Ackerman, Zewe Rivieren, described as doing well in 1882, were insolvent by 1884, Insp 6 October 1882 p18, ZA 14 October 1884 etc
40. Insp 5 September 1885, p42; Insp 17 August 1888, p60

Land sales also escalated in the 1880s as insolvent estates were put on the market, or as some famers sought out the prospectively more lucrative options presented by the land of the Free State or the gold fields of the Transvaal.[41] An analysis of the quitrent registers for the district does not elicit much evidence to substantiate the transfer of land which the advertisements for the sale of farms in the Zuid Afrikaan suggest.[42] This is partly due to inefficency of the records, as few entries are made after the 1840s.[43] It might also be ascribed to the fact that there was little concern about who owned the land as long as the quitrent was paid regularly.[44]

The registers do indicate that subdivision of farm properties began to occur in the 1880s. Subdivison gives a farmer access to cash or credit to maintain that portion of land which he has kept. For a farmer experiencing financial difficulties over a long period of time it would be one way of remaining solvent. However subdivision would have been a last resort in a community where wealth and family status were still predominantly invested in land. There are only four instances of subdivision for the 1880s and one for the previous decade.[45]

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41. AJ Brink, Weltevreden, insolvency ZA 13.5.1882; M Beiers, Uitkyk, insolvency ZA 19 May 1883; H Morkel, 8 farms, insolvency ZA 12 May 1884; JJ Joubert, selling 3 farms, leaving for the Free State, ZA 9 October 1884; CJ and DP Ackerman, Zewe Rivieren, insolvency, ZA 14 October 1884; PC Haupt, Banhoek, insolvency, ZA 29 August 1885; JG Brand, Zandvliet, insolvency, ZA 18 August 1885; PJR Retief, Onrust, insolvency, ZA 29 January 1887; HJ Louw, five farms, leaving for Transvaal, ZA 16 July 1889
42. 1/STB 11/5 f5, f31, f61; QRR 192 f237, f360; QRR 194 f802
43. See QRR 192; QRR 193; QRR 194
44. See 1/STB 11/5 Quitrent Register, 1880-1901,
45. QRR f213, 1878 annex to Welgevonden; QRR 192, f382, 1884 Idas Valley; QRR 191 f36, 1880 Gustrouw, f110, 1883, Waterproof, f210, 1886 f65 Voorburg subdivided in 1891

The small number of subdivisions in a decade in which economic difficulties were rife suggests that farmers were still able to rely on credit, thus the increase in mortgages. It seems to have been fairly common for sons to farm either as tenants or as partners on the family farm, or in some cases to farm on one of the family farms.[46] Tenancy arrangements outside the bonds of kinship seem to have been relatively rare, although the number of people hiring land increased in the 1880s.[47]

The increase in the numbers of tenant farmers does not necessarily signify the marginalisation of people within the existing agrarian sector. Rather these tenants seem to have been either men new to the district or the sons of established farmers. In fact the records suggest that these tenants were generally young men of means who were in the process of accumulating capital through the relatively easy route of stock farming or market gardening, viticulture proving too expensive and too risky.

For example, a tenant of FW de Villiers, W Stegman, was described as "a highly respectable young man with livestock worth L 800. He has a large dairy which pays well".[48] More than

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46. The only source giving sufficient detail about landholding is the Standard Bank Archives. The inspection reports only start from 1881, thus it is difficult to judge if more farms were being farmed jointly in the last two decades of the century than had been done previously. See Insp 6 October 1882 JH Brink farming portion of brother AJ Brink's farm; Insp 5 September 1885, p15, JD and H Beyers; Insp 19 October 1886 p6, PJ, JJ and JG Carinus
47. See 1/STB 2/45 case 191, 4 September 1876; Insp 11 August 1883, p44; 1/STB 2/54 case 27, 19 January 1885; Insp 28 July 1884, p66; Insp 5 September 1885, p44; Insp 10 December 1887, p21; p28 etc
48. Insp 5 September 1885, p44

anything else the trend towards renting land should probably be regarded as the underside of an increasing accumulation of holdings under one owner, as well as the growth of an absentee landlord group.

However the paucity and inaccuracy of the evidence contained in the quitrent records makes it difficult to assess the extent or rate of accumulation of land in the district between 1870 and 1900. The one clear example is PE Scholtz who accumulated land in Stellenbosch district in the latter half of the 1880s; in 1887 he owned 3 farms and by the end of the decade he had added another two.[49] The tendency towards accumulation of holdings under one ownership increased in the last decade of the century as the continuing devastation wreaked by phylloxera ruined the credit worthiness of many farmers.

Phylloxera happened at a crucial time for all farmers since it occured in the years of depression. But it hit those farmers who had planted more vines in the late 1870s and early 80s doubly hard. It was just when those vines were beginning to yield a return on the investment that the phylloxera swept through the vineyards. The insect arrived at the Cape in 1886, threatening to wreak as much havoc as it had in France where in the three decades since 1879 it cost the country 10 million francs.[50]

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49. Scholtz derived income of £200 per annum from rental collected from tenant farmers. Insp 10 December 1887, p37; Insp 3 August 1889, p57; Insp 11 August 1890, p65
50. Van Zyl DJ, 'Phylloxera Vastrix in the Cape Colony, 1886-1900, Voorkoms, Verspreiding en Invloed', paper presented to the 9th Biennial National Conference of the South African Historical Society, RAU, January 1983

The outbreak of the disease in Europe had been greeted with tentative enthusiasm in the Cape as it presented the possibility of entry into a British market starved of wine. The Cape was able to take advantage of this for a while with exports to Britain increasing from £ 1570 in 1882 to £ 5 020 in 1883 and £ 14 746 in 1884.[51]

Efforts were made to protect the colony's wine industry with legislation being passed to prohibit the importation of vines and root vegetables from Europe and allowing for the destruction of infected vines.[52] As a result the Vineyards Diseases Commission of 1880 was able to declare the Cape vineyards free of the disease. However the regulations were subsequently so relaxed that the Zuid Afrikaan declared in 1884 that "no other country in the world is better prepared than the Cape Colony to bring Phylloxera to fruition".[53]

Two years later the prophecy proved correct as Stellenbosch succumbed to the disease.[54] The traditional remedy of applying bi-sulphide to the roots proved ineffectual and infected vines had to be destroyed.[55] By 1896 8 million vines had been

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51. Wine Trade Review, quoted in ZA 13 September 1884
52. Vineyards Protection Act 9 of 1876; Leipoldt, 300 Years of Cape Wine, p144
53. ZA 7 October 1882
54. ZA 26 January 1886; ZA 1 January 1887; ZA 27 October 1888; ZA 22 May 1890; AGR 1/6; Insp 3 August 1889
55. Convict labour was used to eliminate the infected vines. 1/STB 10/30 Letters from Prisons and Convict Stations 1883-1900 from Blaauwklippen Convict Station, convicts at Mr Le Roux's farm, 11 October 1889; from Bottelary Convict station; CO 3599 Resident Magistrate, Stellenbosch to Under Colonial Secretary regarding use of convict labourers at Idas Vallei, 24 September 1888

destroyed at an estimated annual loss of £32 000.[56] Compensation was paid but seldom was it equal to the loss of income phylloxera had brought about.

Strict quarantining of infected farms was instituted and no produce except wine or brandy was permitted to be moved from the farm while vines were still infected.[57] However these procedures proved largely ineffectual and by 1890 the district was almost totally infected.[58] Only the importation of American vines in the last decade of the century was ultimately able to halt the disease and the government supplied these to farmers at cut rates.[59] However the decline of many farmers had already occurred to the extent that their position could not be redressed so the more commercially successful farmers dominated the applications for these vines.[60]

Agrarian Capitalists

The primary result of phylloxera on Stellenbosch district was the devaluation of land in response to devastation.[61] This

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56. Wallace, Farming Industries of Cape Colony, p152
57. AGR 1/6 letter from L Peringuey, Inspector of Vineyards to the Colonial Secretary; further restrictions were passed in terms of Proclamation 290 of 28 November 1890
58. ZA 22 February 1890; 24 infected farms in Stellenbosch, 11 in Moddergat, 8 in Eerste Rivier, 5 in Bottelary, 2 at Klapmuts and 1 in Hottentots Holland. Van Zyl, 'Phylloxera Vastrix in the Cape Colony', p65
59. At 1s per 100 vines and 500 vines being allotted per farmer. Wallace, Farming Industries of Cape Colony, p152
60. AGR 1/22 Letters Received, 8 July 1890, Applications for cuttings, W Krige, DC Morkel, ML Neethling, HJ Louw, C Marais, CM Neethling
61. 1/STB 10/171 letter from Hill and Co, Fruit Manufacturers and owners of farm Bethlehem to Resident Magistrate, 23 December 1892. Municipal valuation £ 1800 but farm bought for £ 1275 owing to phylloxera; 1/STB 16/159 letter from Field Cornet Helderfontein to Resident Magistrate, 10

accelerated tendencies which had started during the depression. Land sales escalated with ravaged farms being put up for sale.[62] Farmers who had recently put more land under vine cultivation and who had attempted to capitalise production were particularly vulnerable.[63]

The 1890s witnessed a new development in the agrarian history of Stellenbosch district. In the light of the almost complete collapse of a viable wine industry, entrepreneurs such as James Sivewright and JX Merriman, with capital gleaned from investment in mining companies and transport contracts bought up farms in Stellenbosch district.[64] It was largely this group of land owners with merchant and business backgrounds plus the handful of `indigenous' progressive farmers, who were to constitute part of the minority of progressive capitalist farmers in South Africa well in to the 1920s.[65]

February 1893

62. i.e. Rustenberg decimated, sold May 1892, ZA 7 May 1892
63. HJ Louw's farm Banhoek was infected and Louw put all his properties up for sale in order to move to the Transvaal; ZA 16 July 1889; Insp 3 August 1889, p38
64. QRR 191, f 233; QRR 192, f236, f244, f249, f331; QRR 194, f829 etc; STD 11.8.1890, p23; see Bundy, `Vagabond Hollanders and Runaway Englishmen' for a discussion of the significance of the 1890s for capital accumulation and stratification in the Western Cape.
65. See Bradford, `The ICU of Africa', p45; i.e. WH Mills bought Voorburgh, 1892 spent £2 000 on improvements. Insp 2 June 1893, p42; JH Michell, owner of property in Claremont, bought farm in Stellenbosch district, Insp 12 October 1895; The Standard Bank reported that new entrants to Stellenbosch district, the Havers Brothers had "planted a large number of fruit trees.. which they work according to the most approved methods"; Insp 27 August 1898, p4; see also Pioneer Fruit Growing Company which planted thousands of fruit trees, Insp 12 June 1894, p23; also Shepherd Brothers' Jam Factory, Insp 12 October 1895; Playne S,`Wine and Fruit Districts'

The destruction wreaked by Phylloxera had been presaged by an earlier move towards more fruit and cereal cultivation in the wake of wine surpluses, poor markets, the chaos surrounding brandy production and the closure of the African Liquor market.[66] In the 1890s the first really capitalised agricultural enterprises in the Colony were initiated with the export of fruit held in cold storage, to England.[67]

Fruit farming on a small scale, often run under a `market-gardening' label, was an attractive option for farmers who found the rigours of viticulture too daunting in the late nineteenth century. This is one of the reasons why the 1880s and 1890s saw the growth of a significant market-gardener class made up largely of members of the underclass in Stellenbosch district.* In 1904 a capital outlay of 200 to 300 pounds was sufficient to start farming, which even in the 1890s would have been within the reach of many farmers with access to credit facilities.[68]

Farming fruit on a large scale required similar knowledge and application as did viticulture, but lack of knowledge blighted the fruit industry in this period as much as it did wine farming. In 1892 the Goverment Botanist wrote in despair that "The antiquated conservative ways of the Cape fruit farmers are due to several causes... One of the chief is their comparatively

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66. JP Roux, of Mount Hector, Jonkershoek, farming fruit, Insp 11 August 1883, p56; also AJ Roux, Insp 3 August 1889, p53; Insp 19 October 1886, General Remarks, p57; Insp 17 August 1888, p85; See chapter 3
67. In comparison to 1875 when only 367 morgen was under orchards in the district, by 1904, approximately 915 morgen was devoted to fruit farming. CCP Blue Book 1880; CCP G19-1905, Census 1904
* See chapter 4
68. Thomas, Agricultural Prospects of South Africa, p187

isolated life and the absence of any effective interchange of ideas and information upon the subject of their industry".[69]

Farmers sold their fruit at the local town markets for table consumption but it was the minority who were able to compete on the colonial or even the London market. This group was made up of farmers with much land and access to sufficient labour as well as men who came from outside the district and who were bent on running pioneer agribusinesses.

Farmers with large tracts of land suitable for mixed farming were at an advantage. "The most important point for growing fruit on a large scale rests on the fact that the industry cannot be carried out successfully without general farming" wrote Von Babo in 1892. "the size of the farm.. must be a considerably large one.. the general farming is required to produce the necessary manure, without which no fruit trees could be cultivated successfully".[70]

Merriman and James Sivewright well represent the new capitalist farmer of the Western Cape. Merriman had been involved {unsuccessfully} in a variety of investment ventures connected with the diamond mines in addition to his holding of portfolios in both the Molteno and the Rhodes ministries.[71] In 1892 he bought Schoongezicht farm with the intention of fostering an

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69. AGR 30 folio 80, May 1890
70. AGR 30 folios 79 and 80, 4 May 1892
71. Lewsen P, JX Merriman; paradoxical South African statesman [Johannesburg, 1982]; Lewsen P [ed], Selections from the Correspondence pf JX Merriman 1870-1890 [Cape Town, 1960]; Dictionary of South African Biography vol 2 [Pretoria, 1972] pp463-639

export fruit industry as well as producing high quality wines. Between 1893 and 1896 James Sivewright consolidated pieces of property from the farms Vergelegen, Vetbriedensmolen, Brincksburgh and Zeemanshoop in the Hottentots field cornetcy to form Lourensford, a major fruit farm, which was 4009 morgen in extent.[72]

The establishment of the Rhodes Fruit Farms confirmed the `invasion' by capitalist agrarian entrepreneurs. Cecil John Rhodes bought 29 farms in the Stellenbosch and Paarl districts in 1897 worth £250 000 and planted 200 000 fruit trees within two years.[73] In 1902 when Rhodes brought in De Beers Consolidated Mines as a shareholder in the farms he estimated that they could support 778 000 vines. This would have yielded 800 leaguers of wine a year, a considerable amount in comparison to the average yield of most farms which ranged between 100 and 200 leaguers a year.[74]

The movement of capital did not just penetrate into the district. From the late 1880s wealthy farmers began to invest in gold speculation as well as in property in the Transvaal.[75] In

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72. 1/STB 11/5 transfer of Schoongezicht from HA Beyers to Merriman 6 September 1892; Merriman upgraded the farm and was one of the farmers who saw the advantages of planting American vines. AGR 161 folio 784; 1/STB 11/5 f83, f62, f79, f99; see chp3 for comments on his political activity
73. Hofmeyer W, `Agricultural Crisis and Rural Organisation in the Cape 1929-1933' [MA thesis, UCT, 1985], p39; 1/STB 11/5, f105
74. QRR 195, f850; Noble, Handbook of the Cape Colony, p55
75. i.e JH Marais who owned 4080 De Beers shares worth £100 000, Insp 25 July 1896; Adrian de Waal of Vlaggeberg, also owned farms in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, Insp 27 August 1898

1887, Directors of the Stellenbosch Bank also invested unwisely in the Paarl Ophir Mining Company.[76] The Zuid Afrikaan noted in 1889 that wine farmers were more interested in investing in gold speculation than in wine improvement.[77] Gideon Krige, one of two wine merchants in Stellenbosch district, floated the Huguenot Company in 1890, and received an enthusiastic response.[78] Farmers also sold their farms in the district and moved to the Transvaal, such as A Brink and HJ Louw.[79]

The growing stratification within Stellenbosch as well as the changing composition of the dominant class in the district are most clearly illustrated in relation to the issues of central concern to wine farmers in the last three decades of the nineteenth century; the marketing of wine and the perceived labour shortage.

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76. Mabin, `The Underdevelopment of the Cape Colony', p10
77. ZA 21 September 1886
78. ZA 4 September 1890
79. ZA 3 April 1883; ZA 16 July 1889; also JJ Joubert, ZA 9 October 1884; PG Beyers, Insp 17 August 1888; H Walbergh, ZA 1 February 1890

CHAPTER 3

AGRARIAN POLITICS, AGRARIAN CONCERNS c1878-1900

The battle against the excise tax in 1878,which enlisted the support of all wine farmers regardless of their place in the economic hierarchy, was one of the last where the dominant class of the rural Western Cape was to show a united front. As the economic axis of Southern Africa began to move from the agrarian base of the Cape Colony to the mines of the Transvaal, the division between struggling farmers and their capitalising peers in Stellenbosch and other western districts was increasingly entrenched.

The primary interest of the colonial state at this time was the raising of revenue to finance the extension of railways and the border wars, as well as the creation of bureaucratic apparatuses of control over labour relations. Although there were areas of difference, capitalising farmers and merchants co-operated in securing the favourable routing of railway lines, in attempts to develop markets and in the establishment of companies which would help market wine and brandy effectively. Thus as competition for access to state power and capital intensified, fluid alliances between merchants and `progressive' farmers became a feature of politics at both district and parliamentary level.

Farmers and Politics

The vehicle for this rural capitalising class was the Zuid

Afrikaansche Boere Berskermings Vereeniging and later the amalgamated Afrikaner Bond. JH Hofmeyer launched his Zuid Afrikaansche Boere Berskermings Vereeniging {ZABBV} in October 1878 with the aim of protecting all colonial farmers, and of securing sympathetic parliamentary candidates who would urge the repeal of the excise tax as well as look after farming interests particularly with regard to labour relations.[1] The previous year, SJ du Toit had started the Afrikaner Bond in Paarl, primarily envisaging it as an ethnically based organisation to protect and encourage the development of the Afrikaans language.

The different concerns of the two bodies were reflected in their discrete membership. The Bond tended to draw on the more marginalised farmers, who felt threatened as the Western Cape moved more coherently into a capitalist orbit, by emphasising the need for the Dutch speaking community to unite and thus gain collective strength. The ZABBV on the other hand with its more commercially based political agenda, appealed to the class of capitalising farmers in the western districts who did not have major qualms about the correctness of parliamentary participation.[2]

Thus the ZABBV was established in the four more capitalised western districts, Paarl, Stellenbosch, Malmesbury and the Cape. Difficulty was experienced in soliciting active participation in the branches, although the organisation was more successful in securing political representation, winning 8 out of 12

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1. In this he emulated the concerns of the earlier farmers associations. Davenport TRH, The Afrikaner Bond: The History of a South African Party {1880-1911} [Cape Town, 1966]
2. Marincowitz, 'Rural Production and Labour', p245

Legislative Council seats in the three midland and western circles, and 9 out of 21 in the legislative assembly.[3]

The Stellenbosch membership is indicative of the class which saw their interests represented by the ZABBV's political agenda. The local branch committee consisted of many of those people who lent their names to schemes promoting the upgrading of wine marketing and production. The 1879 committee for example consisted of G Krige, PJ Bosman, PD Myburgh, JJP du Toit and Adriaan de Waal. The committee expanded in subsequent years to include PA Myburgh, ML Neethling, P de Waal, WA Krige, J Marais and CP Marais. Leading Stellenbosch farmers such as PA Myburgh, ML Neethling and PJ Bosman were also representatives on the executive committees.[4]

The Afrikaner Bond and the ZABBV competed for hegemony of the Dutch speaking rural world during a rare period of prosperity for the Cape economy between 1875 and 1882 when wool, copper and diamonds fetched good prices.[5] The merger of the two organisations and essentially of their programmes at the start of the recession in 1883, represents the acknowledgement that some appeal to past patterns of conduct and heritage, which had best been signified in language, was necessary. This was done to mobilise farmers in order to make possible a seizure of state

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3. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, p72
4. ZABBV published by Smuts and Hofmeyr, in the Hofmeyr Papers, MSC 8 Box 1B SA Bond Policy, Letters 1881-1909
5. Henry, The first 100 years of the Standard Bank, p78; Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond

power by the commercial farming class in collaboration with the mining interests best represented by the Rhodes ministry. In essence, the support base of the ZABBV was transferred to the Afrikaner Bond which became the parlimentary representative of the progressive rural elite.[6]

Merchants and capitalising farmers tended to unite under the banner of the ZABBV and later of the Bond, on issues relating to the marketing and protection of colonial wine and brandy both on the local and on the British and Transvaal markets. Thus they supported the various doomed confederation schemes, as well as the many proposals to establish a customs union with Natal, the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, which dominated the discussions on inter-territorial trade in the second half of the nineteenth century.[7]

Transport and the Politics of Control

Powerful combinations of local merchant, business and capitalising farming interests also became involved in railway lobbying. These groups felt sufficiently strongly about the importance of railway routing to bring about the fall of the

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6. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; also Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', chapter 4
7. The ZABBV subsequently withdrew its support for the confederation schemes because of the blatantly imperialist policies which motivated it, illustrated by the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877; Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond, p73; Bor J, `Liquor and Labour at the Cape in the late Nineteenth Century', [Honours dissertation, History Department, UCT, 1978], p9

Sprigg ministry in 1890.[8] The discovery of minerals and the growing markets for agricultural produce thus acted as a catalyst for a politically assertive class consciousness.

In 1876, after intimations were made that the railway line between Stellenbosch and Muldersvlei was to be pulled up, a deputation was sent to the government, successfully bringing these plans to a halt, although the line was still showing a loss two years later.[9] The deputation consisted of J Mader, PA Myburgh and WA Krige all of whom were powerful in local politics, the latter pair being ZABBV members while all three held important civic and economic positions within Stellenbosch district.*

The composition of the deputation indicates the extent to which important local political, merchant and farming interests coalesced, often in individuals, as well as the extent to which these different sectors were interested in the advantages of railway transport for better marketing their produce.[10] This alliance between merchants and capitalising farmers was to play an increasingly important role in giving impetus to progressive farming and marketing of wine in Stellenbosch district in the last two decades of the century, although it

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8. Purkis A, `The Capital, Politics and Labour of Railway-Building in the Cape Colony, 1870-1885' [Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1978]; Denoon D, Settler Capitalism: The Dynamics of Dependent Development in the Southern Hemisphere [Oxford, 1983], p91
9. CCP G26-'79 Report on Workings and Progress of the Railways of the Colony, 1878
* See Footnote 9 in chapter 2 for details
10. Purkis, `Politics, Capital and Labour', pp23-28

remained an ambivalent relationship of accommodation and conflict.[11]

Unity disintegrated once within the ambit of colonial wine and brandy production particularly around the issue of protection of the farmer's product as against that of the distiller. Merchant and commercial farming interests diverged over issues such as the excise tax on brandy, the making of brandy based on molasses rather than wine, and on the manner of the sale of wine locally. These same issues tended to glue marginal and capitalising farmers together at times when growing differences in wealth and perception might otherwise have prevented such solidarity.

The average wine farmer of small means suffered on many fronts. State efforts to secure labour for the farmers of the Western Cape helped the wealthier farmer while the efforts to improve wine making also had an ingrained bias towards the farmer with capital.* Supporting the viticultural sector in matters of labour relations while depriving it of incentives to produce a better product by imposing the brandy excise tax, merely hastened the economic demise of many wine farmers.[12] The distillers fared little better as larger firms consolidated their hold over the industry in the wake of the uncertainty caused by the vacillations of state legislation regarding liquor manufacturing.

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11. See Trapido, ``The Friends of the Natives''
* See chapter 4 for an analysis of labour importation schemes
12. Rayner makes a similar observation regarding the attitude of the metropolitan state towards the wine industry in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. `Wine and Slaves', p4

Mobilisation of Farmers around the Excise Tax

The severest blow to wine farmers in the 1870s was delivered by the Sprigg government, largely representing merchants and farmers with their economic and political base in the Eastern Cape wool farming region.[13] The excise tax on brandy of 1878 was conceived by the Sprigg ministry as a means of raising revenue, in the absence of an income tax. A tax on brandy made economic sense to the state while the price was high, fetching up to L 40 per leaguer owing to increased demand caused by the growing population at the diamond fields.*

However farmers were less enamoured of the tax. The ZABBV articulated their dissatisfaction which centred on two major complaints; that wine farmers were being taxed unfairly in relation to other branches of industry and that excise officers were an imposition on farmers.

The excise tax played an ironic role in the fortunes of the wine farmers in the late nineteenth century. It partly effected the decline of poorer farmers into marginal economic status, thus helping to increase the economic divide within the dominant class, while at the same time it united the wine farmers in attempting to have the tax repealed. The harsh effects of the tax on the wine industry is demonstrated by the fall off of 289 tons in wine railway traffic in 1878 at the same time that wool

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13. Crais, `Gentry and Labour'
* The armies on the frontier and Natal also added to the demand See Table 4 for wine and brandy prices, p68

TABLE 4 - AVERAGE PRICE WINE AND BRANDY

Cape Colony *

YEAR	WINE						BRANDY					
	quality			inferior			quality			inferior		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1870	17	9	3	12	15	0	29	4	0	22	17	0
1871	20	17	10	14	18	11	27	11	11	21	4	8
1872	22	19	3	10	4	6	29	14	10	20	7	1
1873	24	3	11	17	0	10	32	3	5	26	3	11
1874	32	16	0	24	6	8	49	10	0	36	8	4
1875	25	12	0	17	9	0	37	7	0	30	4	0
1876	18	0	0	11	9	0	22	17	0	18	13	0
1877	12	14	7	7	13	0	7	10	0	13	18	0
1878	10	17	0	7	15	0	30	0	0	24	10	6
1879	13	0	0	8	3	0	31	2	0	26	2	0
1880	20	0	0	11	10	0	42	0	0	34	10	0
1881	21	3	0	13	6	0	43	4	0	34	8	0
1882	17	4	0	11	5	0	31	6	0	25	8	0
1883	13	0	0	9	0	0	23	10	0	17	12	0
1884	9	9	0	5	16	0	18	15	0	15	8	0
1885	8	3	0	5	12	0	17	10	0	15	2	0
1886	7	13	0	4	5	0	13	5	0	10	7	0
1887	6	9	0	3	18	0	10	2	0	7	10	0
1888	6	12	0	3	18	0	11	8	0	8	18	0
1889		10	9		7	9	1	8	1	1	3	2
1890	11	12	0	8	6	0	32	6	0	27	7	0
1891	9	9	0	6	9	0	24	2	0	18	1	0
1892	9	1	0	5	4	0	18	5	0	14	15	0
1893	8	3	0	6	1	0	21	14	0	16	3	0
1894	8	9	0	6	0	0	18	9	0	15	17	0
1895	11	13	0	9	1	0	27	2	0	27	2	0
1896	14	2	0	10	1	0	37	19	0	33	8	0
1897	12	0	0	8	10	0	26	14	0	21	2	0
1898	13	0	0	8	18	0	24	10	0	19	17	0
1899	10	8	0	7	19	0	22	9	0	18	8	0
1900	16	1	7	11	6	0	38	18	0	32	7	0
1901	14	15	0	10	14	0	43	11	0	34	17	0
1902	14	12	0	10	13	0	34	6	0	25	0	0
1903	23	3	0	15	16	0	35	6	0	26	0	0
1904	16	8	0	10	7	0	28	8	0	18	5	0
1905	27	15	0	15	17	0	42	7	0	28	4	0
1906	9	8	0	6	3	0	19	18	0	15	0	0
1907	8	6		4	19	0	17	11	0	13	3	0

* Prices per leaguer

[From CCP Blue Books and Statistical Registers]

traffic increased by 744 tons.[14]

The provisions of Act 2 of 1878 entitled excise officers to visit the farms at random in order to assess the amount of brandy being produced. Farmers particularly resented this invasion of their private domain and, in Worcester, they threatened to pull up their vines rather than have to submit to excise inspection.[15]

However the inept and inefficient procedures followed by most farmers rendered the inspection ineffectual and the protection unnecessary. A Cape Town distiller claimed that he had a friend in Stellenbosch who stored wine without putting spirits into it but told the government that he used 50 gallons of spirits to fortify it in order to evade the excise tax on brandy.[16] Without this dodge, the farmer would be levied on spirits he distilled since they would normally form the basis for brandy manufacture.

The tax fell particularly hard on the poorer farmers in the district of whom there were "far more than rich, men who can just make a living, and it is very hard for them".[17] They were not able to store their brandy until the price was good but had to sell whenever they needed cash, thus surrendering much of their

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14. CCP G26-'79 Report on Workings and Progress of the Railways of the Colony, 1878
15. ZA 3 August 1878; see chapter 5 for a discussion of the perception of the farm as a haven from the `hostile' world of the late nineteenth century
16. CCP A6-'80 SCR on Excise Tax, p2
17. CCP A6-'80 SCR on Excise Tax, p25

profit to pay the tax. Those farmers with mixed wine, grain and fruit farms, who were not solely dependent on brandy sales, were better able to cope with the tax as were farmers with credit and who therefore relied less on the money gained from **ad-hoc** brandy sales.

However both wealthy and poor farmers suffered in comparison to professional distillers. Farmers distilled dop brandy for home and labour consumption and used the surplus to pay off debts or to raise cash. The commercial distillers were seen as having different motivations to farmers. "They are a different class of people", said ML Neethling, "they want to make money".[18] Distillers could afford to store their product until the price was good, while the bias in their favour was exacerbated by the position taken by the distilling companies whereby the farmers were made to pay the excise tax.[19]

The general feeling among farmers was that dop brandy and brandy for home consumption, should be exempt from taxation, owing to the discrimination against the small producer as well as the inefficiency of the excise inspection. In Stellenbosch district, the majority of farmers were small brandy producers, distilling at the most 10 leaguers of brandy a year. Paarl and Stellenbosch

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18. CCP A6-'80 SCR on Excise Tax, p42; This is a warning note to any historian charting the rise of a capitalist agrarian elite, farmers might always see their investment lying in land rather than in profits obtained from produce, but then it is the extent of that investment in machines and in more efficient use of the land which identifies the capitalist farmer.
19. Position taken by the Van Rijn Wine and Spirit Company of Vlottenburg, ZA 15 March 1879; see editorial in ZA 21 July 1881, criticising unfairness

were unique in this respect as in other Western Cape districts such as Malmesbury and Wellington, the majority of farmers distilled brandy rather than producing wine. The Select Committee on the excise tax concluded that the only efficient means of collecting revenue would be if distillation took place under lock and key, but this was unsuited to the lax production methods of the small distillers.[20]

The excise tax further united farmers against distillers with the introduction of brandy manufactured by distillers from imported molasses and other substances in the early 1880s which created a cheap and viable competitor to wine-based brandy. PA Myburgh as ZABBV representative for the district managed to get the import duty on molasses raised, in order to reduce the competitiveness of molasses-based brandy. However this Act failed in its aim, having sufficient gaps to "allow a wagon and four horses to pass through".[21] Instead it merely raised the price of molasses, a household article. An article in the Zuid Afrikaan, articulated the concerns of commercial farmers.[22]

> "We stand on the eve of a revolution in our wine culture. Our farmers are...putting in new vineyards... we desire to put our import and export on a better footing, of raising the traffic on our railways. Then at the first hopeful turn of our affairs, we see a few capitalists rushing in and supplying the market upon which our home produce is relying for sale, with an article the raw material of which is imported".

The strength of farming interests in the legislature is

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20. CCP A6-'80 SCR on the Excise Tax, pviii
21. ZA 5 May 1881
22. ZA 14 May 1881

demonstrated by the passing of the Excise Bill of 1882, proposed by PA Myburgh, which exempted small distillers making brandy from grapes for their own purposes. It taxed the large commercial distillers by 1 shilling on grape based brandy and 2 shillings on brandy of other manufacture. This did not redress the discrimination against the farmer, but in a sense gave the distiller more bargaining power. Farmers in Stellenbosch complained that they were forced to sell their wine at very low prices in order to solicit the custom of the distillers who now bore the brunt of the excise tax.[23]

The lack of regulations also helped undermine the farmers position. Since the early years of the century farmers had complained that merchants failed to distinguish between different grades of wine.[24] This induced farmers to opt for quantity rather than quality, a factor which contributed to the poor standard of Cape wines, and the low prices obtained, as there was no incentive to produce a better article.[25]

In 1884 the government faced with a deficit in the treasury, proposed a return to the uniform tax of 2s per gallon of brandy, in order to raise about £171 000. At a meeting in Stellenbosch held to protest the proposed amendment, a Mr Oosthuisen made the wine farmers' favourite analogy." Earlier there were slaves, but they were never as bound as the wine farmer would be if the proposed excise tax was implemented... People could not pay

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23. ZA 3 July 1884; see testimony of wine merchant DF Bosman to CCP G1-'90 Report of the Liquor Laws Commission, p258
24. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves', pp19-25
25. CCP G30-1905 Report of a Committee nominated by the Western Province Board of Horticulture to enquire into the Wine and Brandy Industry of the Cape Colony

2s".[26]

The ambivalent relationship that existed between wine merchants and commercial farmers therefore undermined the emergence of a very secure solidarity within the capitalising groups within the district, and the wine industry as a whole. The events surrounding the collapse of the District Bank in 1876 illustrate the extent of solidarity which still bound the dominant class in its period of transition. The tension surrounding the collapse seeped into family legend. An elderly Stellenbosch resident recalls the events.[27]

> "My great grandfather, Arend de Waal of Happy Vale was on the district bank. He was a Director there on the bank. They had a meeting there that afternoon and he says `Stellenbosch District Bank is bankrot. Stellenbosch district bank is bankrupt'. And they said`how can you say such a thing?'But it was the honest truth, and the one man went home and committed suicide.It was a Wege. My grandmother never liked the Weges because we lost money there".

The aftermath of the drama is instructive as to the strength of solidarity in the district. Three leading farmers, Daniel de Waal, Gideon Joubert and C Neethling made a tour of the district to collect funds to meet the liabilities of the bank, and within a week had collected £38 000.[28] Despite these efforts, the bank was forced to close the following year, although it was resurrected in 1881.

In the early years of the next decade, when insolvencies riddled the district, similar co-operation prevailed. Many

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26. ZA 5 June 1884
27. Interview with Koos de Waal of Happy Vale, 25 February 1986
28. ZA 20 December 1876

farmers were spared collapse thanks to the long term credit loaned by leading farmers in the district. However this did not spare farmers who were patently unable to remain solvent in the increasingly competitive environment.

The repeal of the excise tax in 1886 did not alleviate the problems of wine farmers who remained in dire straits until at least the second decade of the next century. The manufacturing of brandy and the marketing of both wine and brandy came under the control of an ever smaller number of firms.[29] By the first decade of the twentieth century, some wine merchants were refusing to sell colonial wine or brandy while 70% of licensed houses were controlled if not yet fully owned, by wholesale wine and spirit merchants.[30]

Although they did not enjoy it, the capitalising commercial farmers were able to survive the greater leverage being exercised by the distillers. This enabled them to work with distillers on matters which affected their joint interests, while the poorer farmers sank more and more into marginal economic status.

Wine Merchants and Capitalising Farmers Unite

Capitalising farmers and wine merchants recognised a community of interests. Stellenbosch registered a very high degree of support for the proposal of confederation with Natal in

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29. Namely the Van Rijn Wine and Spirit company, the Van Es distillery which went insolvent in 1889 and that of Gideon Krige in Stellenbosch and Collisons in Cape Town. Even in the first two decades of the century a small number of merchants received 95% of the trade. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves' p19
30. CCP G47-1909, Report on the Wine Districts"

1875 which would have facilitated the importation of wine and brandy without duties and would thus have opened up the Natal market.[31]

Merchants and farmers also united when their mutual interests were threatened as in the case of competition from the Nelmapius Distillery in the Transvaal. In late 1881 came news of the formation of a brandy manufacturing company, which would effectively cut off the Transvaal market from Cape producers, as that brandy would be free while Cape brandy was taxed at £6 7s per leaguer.[32] In 1884 when the Republic's import duty on spirits was 6s a gallon, the Van Rijn distilleries reported a loss of custom to the Republic and competition with the Nellmapius distillery in the Orange Free State, which by 1899 was producing 1000 gallons of spirits a day.[33] The dissatisfaction caused by the Transvaal's tariff policy continued into the decade before union.*

Initial support from farmers in Stellenbosch for marketing initiatives in the 1870s declined after a debacle which rocked the first venture. In 1877 the Wine Growers Association was launched, soon to collapse after unwise speculation by the

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31. 190 out of a meeting of 205 people voted in favour of confederation, ZA 3 November 1875
32. See Van Onselen C, for the rise of De Eerste Fabrieken in de Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek Ltd, 'Randlords and Rotgut 1886-1903' in Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914 1 New Babylon, [Johannesburg, 1982]., p48
33. CCP A9-'84 Report of the Select Committee on Customs Rebate and Excise, p31

* See conclusion

directors on the brandy market.[34] Stellenbosch shareholders consisted of 70 farmers, including those with a commitment to capitalising their wine production as well as more traditional farmers.

The directorate is more cohesive in representing the progressive elite of the district, the marriage between merchants and capitalising farmers and the concerns of the ZABBV. Directors included Pieter de Waal of Saxenburg who was later elected to the House of Assembly and who was regarded as a progressive farmer, JA Faure, one of the wealthiest men in the district owning a wine farm, race horses and ostriches, and who was later MLA for the district as well as Gideon and WA Krige.[35]

The company's failure and that of a subsequent company, the South African Wine Growers Association, established and closed in 1882, suggests that the need to produce a commercially viable product and to market it aggressively was not widely shared in the western districts as a whole. A writer to the Zuid Afrikaan complained that farmers were not prepared to try and "procure a renumerative market for Cape wine by improving its quality"[36]

In general, the translation of broader schemes into practical achievement failed due to the reluctance or inability

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34. The aims of the association were 1] the introduction into the colony of people skilled in viticulture,2] the purchase of grape juice, wine and brandy from the farmer and 3] the manufacture, preparation, storage and sale of such wine and brandy. LC 144, Deed of Settlement, 25 October 1877
35. Insp 3 August 1889, p26; Insp 26 April 1881, p44
36. ZA 15 November 1876

of the majority of wine farmers to respond to incentives be they provided by the state or by their capitalising peers. Plans to establish a wine company were met with apathy by both Paarl and Stellenbosch farmers in 1884 while a wine and fruit export company established in 1887 failed the same year due to lack of support.[37]

In the 1880s a new initiative was launched this time by the state, to improve the production and marketing of Cape wine. To this end Baron von Babo was appointed as colonial viticultural expert to attend to the improvement of Cape wines, while efforts were made to introduce Cape wine to the foreign market with wine being sent to the London Exhibition in 1886 and 1887.[38] In 1883 the establishment of an agricultural school was mooted and a decade later one was established on the farm of Elsenburg which was sold to the government shortly after the death of PA Myburgh.[39]

The majority of farmers remained apathetic. In 1888 a meeting held at Stellenbosch to moot the establishment of yet another company doomed to collapse, attracted only 25 farmers mainly those who were involved in the propagation of better marketing techniques such as JD Krige, ML Neethling, D Morkel, Arend de Waal, JWL Hofmeyr, PH Myburgh.[40]

The political alliance between Rhodes and the Bond in the early 1890s, facilitated the collaboration in parliament

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37. ZA 15 November 1884; ZA 8 January 1887; ZA 15 January 1887
38. ZA 4 October 1886; ZA 15 February 1887
39. 1/STB 11/5 f54
40. ZA 12 January 1888; CCP G42-1876 Census 1875 cited 82 wine farmers; ZA 12 January 1888

between capitalising farmers and merchants in pressing for state aid to secure foreign markets for local produce. The Bond was thus able to achieve a measure of success as representative of commercial farming interests.

The alliance between the Bond as representative of 'progressive' farmers, and mining interests is demonstrated by the share holders of the Cape Town Wine Export Syndicate which was formed at the instigation of JH Hofmeyr in 1889. Both Rhodes and Barney Barnato indicated that they would be willing to buy shares, while other shareholders included some of the most prominent merchants and wine farmers in the Western Cape.

The syndicate started with capital of £5 800 from £100 shares, and bought wine direct from wine farmers in order to blend into wines suitable for the European market, such as Hanepoort and White Hermitage. However the company was liquidated the following year as the inferior quality of Cape wines meant that no foreign market could be secured.[41] Collective attempts to improve marketing techniques in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, therefore, failed owing to a lack of grass roots support for enterprising marketing ventures as well as to the bad quality of Cape wine.

James Sivewright is the epitome of the alliance which began to develop in the last decades of the nineteenth century between progressive Dutch-speaking farmers and English speakers with capital earned in an urban or industrial context. Telegraphic expert of the Cape Colony from 1871 to 1881, Sivewright joined

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41. Leipoldt, 300 Years of Cape Wine, pp156-159

the Cape Town branch of the Afrikaner Bond in 1887 and served as the link between the mining interests represented by Rhodes, and the progressive agrarian sector best served by Hofmeyr.[42]

Tensions within the Sprigg ministry moved Sivewright into a position sympathetic to the progressives and he won the Stellenbosch seat in 1898 on that ticket. However charges of corruption unseated him and he did not stand for re-election. Sivewright continued his alliance with progressive Dutch agrarian capital by acting as the British representative for the Bond dominated South African Supply and Food Storage Company.[43]

Markets for Cheap Wine

The reluctance of the majority of farmers to improve their wine making can be partly ascribed to their perception of market opportunities. After the effective closure of overseas markets, and the competition from the large distilleries in the Transvaal, the main market for Cape wine lay in the local sale of dop wine, wine of poor quality that was sold mainly to the underclasses through canteens. Farmers, particularly those without the capital to invest in vats and cellars, were content to exploit this market.

Legislation passed during the worst years of the depression aided farmers during a period of over production. Section 2 of

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42. See his support of the Stellenbosch Bond candidate, WA Krige in the 1890 election. 1/STB 2/59 case 160, 5 June 1890
43. Dictionary of South African Biography vol.4

Act 28 of 1883, allowed farmers to sell liquor in quantities of not less than 7 gallons on their farms without a licence, while Act 44 of 1885 removed the restriction of sale on the premises. After 1846 the law regarding the number of canteens allowed in any area had been revised and provisions were made for more licensed houses to operate. The 1865 Census listed 8 canteens for the district of Stellenbosch. By the 1890s there were 10 canteens in Stellenbosch village alone and 5 in Somerset West.[44]

The income from dop wine was very important, particularly as wine and brandy production had not declined in response to narrowing markets, which led to surpluses. Brandy production actually increased and by 1880 there was a greater demand for brandy among the African population in the Transkei than there was for wine.[45] In 1887 a government offical warned farmers of the consequences of ignoring market demands, or lack thereof. As Ross has indicated, the problem was not so much that farmers did not want the market but rather that the market did not want them, or rather their wine.[46]

The increasing hegemony of mining interests in the last two decades of the nineteenth century resulted in the passing of legislation which hampered rather than favoured the interests of

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44. CCP G20-'66 Census 1865; LC 1893, p307; CO 3706, Resident Magistrate to Secretary of the Land Department, 28 February 1892
45. See CCP A12-'07, Report of the Select Committee on the Sale of Liquor, pxxix; CCP A9-'80 Report of the Select Committee on the Adulteration of Spirits, p29
46. CCP G48-'87 Report on Cape Wine and Brandies, p5; Ross, `The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape Colony', p61

Cape wine and brandy producers. The mining sector was favoured by the prohibition of liquor sales to Africans in 1883 in response to their complaints that the low productivity of the workforce on the mines was partly owing to alcoholism.[47] In 1883 the canteens in the Orange Free State were closed while the Cape Liquor Licencing Act prohibited the sale of liquor to Africans in proclaimed `native' areas.

However the needs of the small wine and brandy producers who depended on the sale and distribution of liquor to the African and `coloured' population, both for income and for the securing of labour, were also met. The Cape Liquor Licencing Act allowed for the continued distribution of liquor through the tot system and Africans were permitted to obtain liquor provided that they were employed. This was yet another attempt to induce Africans to engage in wage labour.

This provision became crucially important for wine farmers as a means of securing labour and of disposing of cheap wine, for the 1897 Liquor Act in the Transvaal, imposed a total prohibition of the sale of liquor to Africans. This Act was also passed with the support of the Chamber of Mines.[48]

In the debates surrounding Innes's Liquor Law Amendment Act of 1898, the Afrikaner Bond, as representative of commercial agrarian interests, supported the bill which proposed

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47. CGH A100-'82, Petition of Merchants regarding the Housing of Natives at Kimberley
48. Fridhjon M and Murray D, with chapters by Rees D, and Gordin J, Conspiracy of Giants: The South African Liqour Industry [Johannesburg, 1986], p29

a prohibition on liquor sales to the African population on the grounds that it would improve the quality of labour.* Not all wine farmers supported this view since it eradicated in one fell swoop an important market for brandy and wine.

Illegal liquor sales became a very important distribution outlet. The income from illicit liquor sales is hard to determine but it was an enterprise which seems to have continued unabated.[49] The importance of the Bond in the legislature at this time is evident though in the fact that Innes did not include the `coloured' population the main buyers of dop wine, in the prohibition measures.[50]

In the competitive labour market of the late nineteenth century, the reliance on coercive and extra-economic measures to secure sufficient labour, became ever more important both for capitalising and marginalised farmers. For the latter, unable to pay competitive wages, the tot system represented one way of keeping labour.

The contest over access to and control of labour played a key role in the capitalisation of agriculture in Stellenbosch district. The maximum exploitation of labour power was one of the means by which marginalised farmers were able to subsist in

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* This marries with the evidence that it was the capitalising, Bond supporting farmers, who applied for African labour in Stellenbosch district. See Chapter 4

49. CCP C1-'85 Report of the Select Committee on the Liquor Licencing Act; see Scharf W, `The Impact of Liquor on the Working Class {with particular focus on the Western Cape}', [M Soc Sci thesis, UCT, 1984]

50. Liquor Laws Amendment Act, Bor, `Liquor and Labour at the Cape'

the late nineteenth century, while it formed part of the base from which capitalising farmers were able to intensify their agricultural production.

CHAPTER 4

LABOUR RELATIONS 1870-1900

"They went in search of a fortune to be able to provide better in the needs of their families"[1]

One result of concentrating on the effects of the mineral revolution on the colonial and district economies, is the emphasis on change; the development of an infrastructure, the new market for labour, the diversion of capital to the mining ventures on the northern border and in the Transvaal. And yet this sense of change belies the extent to which the new structures and processes that had been set in action, were either still based on or at least derivative of, established factors that had long constituted part of social and economic relations in the western districts. This is particularly true of the mechanisms and attitudes that farmers in Stellenbosch held with regard to labour relations between 1870 and 1900.

A perception of a lack of sufficient labour had been part of the discourse of the rural ruling class since emancipation. Hofmeyr observed in 1875 that the complaint stretched from " the beginning of the years until now".[2] It became a wail of victimisation in the last three decades of the nineteenth

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1. Evidence of Jakobus Gabrielse, Labourer, Stellenbosch, CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p320
2. ZA 11 December 1875; See Chapter 1; LCA vol 6,item 31, petition from Stellenbosch farmers in support of a vagrancy ordinance; Marincowitz, `Proletarians, Privatisers and Public Property Rights'

century.[3] The factors blamed for the shortage changed over time as did the vociferousness of the complaints but the potential of labour shortage hung like a sword of damocles above the head of the dominant class of the western districts.

In order to survive in the shadow of this threat, farmers relied partly on the coercive mechanisms of the state to entrap the labour force through the Masters and Servants Act, while also fashioning an armoury of hidden weapons which ensnared the rural underclasses in debt, and alcoholism. Thus the advance system and tied rent helped bind labourers to their wealthier masters, while poorer farmers in particular depended on the tot system to rope their labourers to them at times when they might have taken their labour elsewhere.

Wine farming shaped the labour requirements of the district. The major draw on labour came in the picking and pressing season. It is in this regard that currents of stratification become important. It was the commercialising farmers who could lure labourers to their farms with the offer of a house and plot that were best suited to obtaining labour in the season of high demand.[4]

The wine year was divided into six components, of picking, January to March; pressing, April; ploughing, May to June; digging and pruning, July to August; with a lull between September and

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3. ZA 14 April 1870; ZA 31 January 1872
4. Scully P, `Whining Farmers: Stellenbosch District 1870 to 1900'[ unpublished paper presented to the Conference on the Western Cape, Roots and Realities, Centre for African Studies, UCT, July 1986]; Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour' p120

January. A permanent body of labourers was required to work in the vineyards all year round. On a farm with a high proportion of vines i.e. 300 000, a permanent work force of 12 to 15 labourers was required. At peak periods, such as picking and pressing, up to double the amount of labour would be employed.

The working year was governed by the demands of agriculture. In July, the soil would be trenched and manured with compost and new cuttings would be planted about four feet apart. These cuttings would not be pruned for about two years, but for older vineyards, the first pruning took place in May and the second in August. Pruning requires a degree of skill and farmers tended to rely on the services of pruning teams, working under contractors who toured the wine districts. Permanent workers would be employed throughout the winter, digging the soil between the vines in order to aerate it, and in order to clear the undergrowth.

Up until the 1880s when a horse pulled hoe was introduced, labourers loosened the soil with spades. This was a very laborious process, and an unending one. `Skoffling' was done every ten days between October and April. The soil was put in the middle of the rows so that it formed a small mound running between the vines and after a while this soil would be spread back under the vines. Sulphur was sprayed on the vines as a preventative measure in order to stave off disease.

After the relatively quiet intermediate season from September to December, the viticultural calendar revitalised. If the summer was very hot, picking might start as early as January. This was the one time of year when a permanent

labourer's entire family would be expected to work in the fields. The peak seasonal labour force was thus made up of more women and children than the labour force of the rest of the year.*

The grapes were collected in bushel baskets which contained about 50 pounds of grapes. The baskets were carried to the wagon which waited in the road between the vineyards. This then trundled back to the cellar. " They put the grapes in a wooden barrel. One or two people used to do it at a time. We then put the grapes in wooden vats".[5] Although a recollection from early this century, the method described is essentially similar to that of the nineteenth century. Once pressing was completed the demand for extra or seasonal labour would decline and the labour force would again shrink to the body of labourers employed by the month throughout the year. After pressing, the must would be put in the barrels to aid fermentation and the wine would lie for a few months, before being sent to firms such as Collisons in Cape Town or the Van Rijn Wine and Spirit company in Stellenbosch for blending and marketing.

The growth of fruit farming in the 1890s did nothing to alleviate the labour shortage; the orchards needed constant attention. Deep ploughing was done annually, while during summer the soil between the rows had to be hoed every ten days and the trees sprayed with insecticide. Farmers engaged in fruit farming, therefore, also required a permanent work force as well as access to a doubly large labour force during the picking season.[6]

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* See chapter 5

5. Interview with Koos de Waal of Happy Vale, 25 February 1986
6. Playne S, `Wine and Fruit Districts' in Playne, Cape Colony [Cape Province], p190

A system of tied rent was used by wealthier farmers to secure seasonal labour. The house was let at a nominal sum in return for the assurance that the lessee would work during the peak harvesting and pressing seasons.[7] Although the majority of farmers appear to have given the plot as part of the wage, the relationship between wage and land was not completely clear cut.

Semi-feudal relations were not uncommon. A leading farmer JP du Toit, made a labourer work one day a week in return for the house.[8] This effectively tied the labourer to his employer in a condition of ongoing labour tenancy. The fact that the labourer's access to the plot was dependent on his working for the farmer meant that he had no independent relation to that land. "Even if farmers give a labourer a free house and a piece of ground as big as the Braak {the Stellenbosch village square} it does not help him a bit. It should be a condition that he be allowed to work his own plot on Saturdays".[9]

Another facet of rural labour relations in the western districts was the advance system which ensnared a labourer in debt in order to ensure his presence on the farm when his labour was most required. This exacerbated the competition

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7. 1/STB 1/44 case 160, 13 July 1874
8. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p312; also see Morris M, The development of capitalism in South Africa: class struggle in the countryside', Economy and Society 5 1976, pp293-344 for a discussion on the transition from `feudal' to capitalist relations of production via the transformation of the labour tenancy arrangement.
9. Evidence of Augus Viane, Labourer, Stellenbosch, CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p327

between corn and wine farmers with the former enjoying the advantage, owing to the timing of the agricultural calendar. Conflict was minimised to an extent owing to the fact that the peak seasons for the two crops differed, with harvesting occurring between October and December and picking starting in the new year. However this was only in ideal weather conditions and conflict between the two sectors often occurred in hot years when picking was forced to start early.

Advances were thus offered to labourers at the end of the harvesting season in order to guarantee a labour supply the following October. This deprived wine farmers of labour at a crucial time since labourers tended to live off their advances for as long as possible, often seeing them through the picking season. Wine farmers also complained that corn farmers recruited labour later in the year, sending foremen with money to the wine districts to lure labourers.[10]

The institutionalisation of alcoholism among members of the rural underclass in Stellenbosch {and other Western Cape districts} was one extra-legal avenue to the goal of rendering the rural proletariat immobile and docile, especially for farmers unable to pay cash wages commensurate to those offered by the public works. Two bottles of rough doctored dop {tot} wine every day of the year from the age of about 12 to the day of death, did much to aid farmers in their quest for a compliant

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10. 1/STB 2/44 case 3, 3 August 1874; CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, pp285; 312

proletariat.[11]

The practice of giving liquor rations had started during slavery as a means of getting rid of excess sub-standard wine as well as ensuring a docile labour force.[12] The tot system began to play an increasingly important role after emancipation as a lever for attracting labourers to employment on the farms.[13] The practice of paying out part of the labourers wage in reject wine particularly benefited the more marginalised farmers in that it reduced the need for capital outlay in the form of wages.[14]

Of course the system of enforced alcoholism had other ramifications. The tot tradition reached into the social experience and practice of the farm workers world. Violence, often a product of drunkenness, thus became the dominant language of the many used in social relationships between workers on the farms.* The hold of liquor traversed the boundaries of the farm. Labourers addicted to alchohol frequented canteens that dotted the countryside.

Canteens were the focus of discussion in debates over the control and regulation of underclass behaviour. The anti-tot lobby in Stellenbosch led by Reverend JH Neethling, saw the

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11. CCP G1-'90 Report of the Liquor Laws Commission, p243 The tot system was also a feature of labour relations in French vineyards in the same period. Frader L, `Grapes of Wrath: Vineyard Workers, Labour Unions and Strike Activity in the Aude, 1860-1913' in Tilly C and Tilly L [eds], Class Conflict and Collective Action [London, 1981], pp185-206
12. Rayner, `Wine and Slaves'; Scharf, `The Impact of Liqour on the Working Class' p26
13. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, p196
14. Worden, `Slavery and Post-Emancipation Reconstruction'

* See chapter 5

presence of canteens as part of the problem in that they encouraged anti-social `unchristian' behaviour.[15] They formed an important venue for social interaction between members of the rural underclass, and thus could be regarded as an environment potentially subversive of the farmers authority.

Farmers saw advantages in the presence of canteens.* In important ways they helped to bolster the farmers' power over their labour force. They were not neutral localities. Labourers fell into debt to the canteen owner, which in turn tied the labourer ever closer to his employer in order to work off money to pay the debt.

Corn and wine farmers in Stellenbosch district had traditionally drawn on the same seasonal labour pool, the men from the mission stations Pniel and Genadendaal, although also increasingly from the villages after the middle of the century. It was this supply of seasonal labour that was particularly affected by the new sources of employment.[16] This had serious repercussions for poorer farmers who tended to rely heavily on seasonal labour as opposed to their wealthier counterparts who could afford to employ a larger permanent labour force. For Stellenbosch wine farmers the contest over seasonal labour was

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15. ZA 28 January 1880
* The divisional council records for Stellenbosch, which contain the records of the liquor licensing court, are not yet available to researchers. Thus an interesting avenue of analysis, ie to see which farmers owned canteens and therefore had a direct interest in fostering their entrenchment, cannot really be investigated.
16. Up to 1000 mission inhabitants worked on Public Works annually. Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', p277

therefore not new, it was the parameters and strength of that competition which was to change during the last three decades of the nineteenth century.

By the late 1860s the battle to secure a sufficient pool of labour had appeared to have been won, when rural wages sank to their lowest rate since emancipation owing to poor wine markets as well as the tightening of farming operations during a period of drought and depression.[17] This made casual and seasonal labourers particularly dependent on the farmers, a balance of power welcomed by the latter although the economic conditions that caused it were not. These conditions were alleviated in 1867, but the discovery of diamonds, and the early railway development which gave such a welcome injection of life to the faltering wine industry, provided less support for the structure of labour relations in the western districts.

Farmers and Labourers and Competition for Labour

Between 1870 and 1890 the demand for labour and thus the cries of labour scarcity varied in Stellenbosch, coinciding very much with fluctuations in the fortunes of the colony and of the district. The shortage peaked in the boom period between 1875 and 1882, between c1896 and the early 1900 when the colonial economy recovered from the `great depression' and when capital flowed into Stellenbosch district. As the first decade of the twentieth century came to a close the demand for labour tailed off in the

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17. Marincowitz,`Rural Production and Labour', p169

wake of the seriously ailing wine industry.[18]

The changing content and tenor of the cry about labour shortage indicates the qualitative and quantitative changes which took place in the colonial economy between 1870 and the end of the century; the growth of industry and the burgeoning state infrastructure, the continuing proletarianisation of the rural population and the movement into part-time wage labour of people living on the borders of the colony.

The mission stations had traditionally been cited by farmers as the main cause of labour shortage, but in the early 1870s the diamond fields were blamed while from c1875 the various branches of the colonial state came under increasing attack from farmers in the Western Cape. The construction of the Malmesbury and Beaufort West extensions was the main source of Stellenbosch farmers' complaints with regard to the railways.[19] An irate farmer from Groot Drakenstein, near Paarl, wrote that "in my experience we can blame the lack of labour on our government and the other Public Works who take our best labourers for high payment and lazy work. I have seen more than one who I earlier knew as farm boys".[20]

It was the farmers living on the survival margin, who were

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18. ZA 31 July 1872; CCP A26-'79, Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the supply of the labour market, p26; 1/STB 2/59 case 47, 30 January 1890; CCP G47-1909, Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the economic condition of the "Wine Districts" of the Cape Colony, and on other matters having relation thereto
19. See ZA 9 May 1877, ZA 16 February 1882; see Purkis, `Politics, Capital and Labour', p334; also Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', p 194
20. ZA 25 June 1889

barely managing to maintain their position who felt the competition from new employment sectors most keenly. A 'farmer's son' remarked in 1876 on "the damage being made to our land on account of most of the labourers being drawn to the railways...it speaks for itself that the less well to do farmers cannot pay the extremely high day wages being offered by the railways".[21] It was therefore mainly the farmers who were not prepared to, or unable to pay good wages who suffered the labour shortage.

Reverend JH Neethling of Stellenbosch said that the best and most influential members of his congregation had no trouble getting labour.[22] Mr Douglas, Member of the Legislative Assembly put forward the view of the government in relation to farmers complaints. "The farmer must be prepared to give a high rate. No law can be passed that will interfere with the laws of supply and demand".[23]

How justified were these complaints? Analysis of the Censuses of 1891 and 1904 indicates a rather gradual movement of members of the underclass out of agricultural employment. In 1891 70% of the black population in Stellenbosch district lived in the rural areas while 18% were classified as workers on farms. By 1904 this had dropped to 15% while 68% of the underclass lived on the farms.[24] Out of a male population of 3958 {defined

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21. ZA 26 June 1876
22. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p314
23. CCP C2-'92, Report on the Labour Question, 1892, p52
24. Calculated from population figures found in CCP G5-1892, Census 1891; CCP G19-1905, Census 1904. There is a great difference in the categories of the 1875 and later censuses - thus for this analysis the data from the former was not included; See tables 5 & 6, p95

TABLE 5: POPULATION IN STELLENBOSCH DISTRICT

YEAR	1865	%	1875	%	1891	%	1904	%
WHITE	2712	30%	3442	33%	4420	35%	8672	34%
BLACK	6205	70%	7107	65%	8360	65%	13 619	66%
TOTAL	8917		10549		12 780		22 291	

[From CCP Censuses: G20-'66, 1865; G42-1876, 1875; G5-'1892, 1891]

TABLE 6:POPULATION IN RURAL STELLENBOSCH

YEARS	1891	%	1904	%
White	2010	30%	2972	27%
Black	4764	70%	7708	68%
TOTAL	6774		11200	

[figures in the Census do not tally]

[From CCP Censuses; G5-1892, 1891; G19-1905, 1904]

as `mixed' and `coloured' races in the 1891 Census, about 300 men left Stellenbosch between 1890 and 1893.* These figures are an indication that possibly farmers were exaggerating the loss of labour to the towns and public works.

What was important in determining the context in which labour relations were played out in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, was not necessarily the actual numbers of people leaving agricultural employment. But rather that labour relations were now to operate on a terrain perceived by farmers to be less secure than previously. It was the **potential** for labourers to leave the farms that so threatened farmers in Stellenbosch district.

Certainly the diamond discoveries and the transport works had provided a market for labour. By the early 1870s rural unemployment in the western districts was a thing of the past.[25] However there is little evidence to suggest that labourers in the district were attracted by the far off fields.[26] The labourers who left Stellenbosch district mainly went in the company of their masters.[27] The major competition over labour between the state and farmers in Stellenbosch and other western districts came from the railways and the Public

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* This figure is based on a broad consensus of opinion of people {both farmers and a few labourers} giving evidence to the 1893 Labour Commmission. More specific data is not available

25. Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', p193
26. The only direct link of a labourer to the fields is presented in a case of assault in 1890. Dina Samuelse, residing on the farm Rustenburg said that her husband Andries Vlaggendorp had gone to work at the diamond fields. 1/STB 2/59 Supreme Court case 2, 4 August 1890
27. 1/STB 18/183 contracts signed on 10 January 1872, 5 February 1872, 5 March 1872, 9 February 1872

Works in Cape Town. Of the 3000 people employed on the railways in 1875, two thirds were black, a category which includes people falling under the appellation, `mixed'.[28]

It was clearly the farmer's source of seasonal labour that was most attracted by the wages of the Public Works. However it is difficult to substantiate the farmers' claims that they were losing out to the railways. In 1890 the Chief Railway Engineer of the Colony said that most men employed on the line were residents of the mission stations who left in such numbers to work on the farms during the peak seasons as to cause inconvenience.[29]

As the century drew to a close, the potential employment opportunities promised by Cape Town seemed to have been the main attraction for labourers deserting rural employment.[30] Work in the towns and villages of the Western Cape was also an alternative to farm labour.[31] "Young men prefer[ed] to work in the towns and villages rather than for the farmers".[32]

The appeal of Cape Town and the villages seems to have been both the wages and the nature of the work. "As the cities grew the

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28. Purkis, `The Politics, Capital and Labour of Railway-Building', p388; Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', p193
29. CCP A12-90, Report on the Labour Question, p38; see also testimony of Shipping Agent at the Docks to same committee, p40
30. 1/STB 2/59 case 47, 30 January 1890; 1/STB 2/54 case 162, 6 June 1890; 1/STB 2/54 case 190, 17 July 1890; 1/STB 2/62 case 68, 22 February 1893; 1/STB 2/63 case 32, 15 February 1895; 1/STB 2/63 case 56, 5 March 1895
31. 1/STB 2/50 case 89 31 May 1882, labourer deserting service to work in Stellenbosch Brick Factory; 1/STB 2/50 no case number, 3 July 1882
32. Testimony of DC Joubert, field Cornet, Franschoek, CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p288

children and grandchildren left the farms. It was the pay".[33] A former farm labourer who was apprehended in Cape Town on charges of desertion said that he had left the farm because "too little food was supplied and the work was too hard".[34] The report of the Select Committee on the labour question, substantiated this allegation. It stated that "in the Western Districts, the employment of `Cape Boys' on the Railways, Harbours and other Public Works, the conditions of pay and other privileges offered to labourers by those in charge of such works, does materially and seriously affect the labour market to the detriment of corn and wine farmers, especially during pruning, ploughing, reaping and wine making seasons".[35]

The main incentive for the movement of people from agrarian employment was the higher wages offered by the state sector. In the early 1870s day wages on the farms ranged between 1s and 3s with food, while the public works paid from 3s to 4s also with rations.[36] In the 1880s workers on the docks received 4s per day, while in the peak seasons, the farmers were offering between 2s 6d and 3s per day with rations.

In 1890 JP Eksteen of Paarl quoted wages of 1s 6d per day for peak seasonal vineyard work,in comparison to the wages on the public works which ranged from 3s to 6s per day.[37] Skilled artisans could earn up to 8s per day in the towns as against the

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33. Interview with Olga Starke of Muldersvlei Central, 25 November 1985
34. 1/STB 2/63 case 32, 15.2.1895
35. CCP A12-'90, Report on Labour Question, pii
36. See Table 7, p99; CCP Blue Book 1870; 1/STB 2/44 case 101, 27 May 1874, day wage of 2s 3d
37. CCP A12-'90,Report on Labour Question, pp9; p26

TABLE 7 - FARM WAGES

Stellenbosch 1870 - 1884
Paarl 1885-1909

YEAR	Overseers/ Head Shepherds per month						Servants/ Herdsmen per month						Day Labourers per day						RENT		
	White			Coloured			White			Coloured			White			Coloured					
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
1870	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	12	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	0
1871	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	12	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	0
1872	2	10	0	1	10	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	3	0	10	0
1873	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	0
1874	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	1	6	0	1	6	0	20	0
1875	0	1	10	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	-	-	-
1876	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	1	6	0	1	6	0	15	0
1877	0	2	10	0	1	10	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	15	0
1878	4	0	0	2	0	0	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	20	0
1879	4	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	1	5	0	0	3	0	0	2	6	0	25	0
1880	5	0	0	2	0	0	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	9	1	0	0
1881	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	0	0	15	0	0	1	6	0	1	0	1	10	0
1882	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	1	6	1	5	0
1883	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	0	15	0	-	-	-	0	1	6	0	15	0
1884	3	0	0	2	0	6	1	10	0	0	15	0	0	2	0	0	0	9	0	15	0
1885	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	17	6	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	15	0
1886	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	15	0	0	2	6	0	1	0	0	15	0
1887	2	10	0	1	5	0	2	0	0	0	18	0	0	1	6	0	1	0	0	15	0
1888	1	15	0	0	15	0	-	-	-	1	0	0	-	-	-	0	1	6	0	10	0
1889	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	1	6	0	10	0
1890	2	5	0	-	-	-	1	10	0	0	15	0	0	1	0	0	9	0	0	15	0
1891	2	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	15	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	0
1892	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1893	3	0	0	1	10	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	15	0
1894	3	0	0	2	0	0	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	20	0
1895	2	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	15	0	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	15	0
1896	2	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	1	0	0	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	15	0
1897	2	0	0	1	10	0	1	10	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	0	0	20	0
1898	4	0	0	2	0	0	1	10	0	0	15	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	15	0
1899	3	0	0	2	0	0	1	15	0	0	15	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	0	15	0
1900	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	15	0	0	3	0	0	1	6	0	25	0
1901	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	15	0	0	3	0	0	1	6	-	-	-
1902	4	0	0	1	10	0	-	-	-	1	10	0	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	10	0
1903	4	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	6	0	20	0
1904	4	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	0	0	2	6	0	1	3	0	50	0
1905	2	10	0	1	10	0	-	-	-	1	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	0	0	30	0
1906	3	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	-	-	-	0	1	6	0	30	0
1907	3	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	20	0
1908	2	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	10	0	-	-	-	0	0	9	0	12	0
1909	1	10	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	14	0	-	-	-	0	1	0	0	12	6

[From CCP Blue Books and Statistical Registers]

1s 6d with wine, earned by farm labourers on the Stellenbosch farms.[38]

It must be emphasised that the labour force of the Western Cape was particularly responsive to the lure of relatively high wages. The determined efforts of Cape farmers and their representatives to create a rural proletariat after emancipation, had best been realised in the Boland where most of the best land had been appropriated by colonists by the end of the eighteenth century.*

The farmers who committed themselves to progressive commercial farming in the 1880s did so with the assurance of being able to draw on long established contacts of obligation and deference with members of mission stations for their seasonal labour, as well as being able to exert influence at the legislative level in order to press for native labour.[39] Access to sufficient labour was thus one of the crucial ingredients in determining which farmers were going to emerge with successful commmercial operations in the period c1870 to 1900.

The problem facing farmers in Stellenbosch and other districts was not so much a shortage of labour as a lack of

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38. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p321
* See Chapter 1
39. 1/STB 2/54 case 155, 13 May 1885 labourer from Genadendaal; 1/STB 2/54 case 193, 13 July 1885, labourers from Pniel, etc; See Bernstein H, `Notes on capital and peasantry' in Harriss J [ed], Rural Development: Theories of Peasant Economy and Agrarian Change [London, 1982]; 1/STB 2/48 case 228, 4 November 1880; CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p142

labour for farmers wanting and expecting cheap labour on traditional terms of employment. With the opening up of other areas of employment the labourers could move from permanent labour on the farms even if they circulated through different employment sectors: from the railways to the docks, to the farms and to Cape Town. What labourers now had was an option which some of them used.

The earlier rupture of the local underclass from the land now proved a dubious blessing; as the labour market expanded so did the opportunities for wage labourers, while the farmers' monopoly over rural labour in the Western Cape declined, together with their perceived immunity to market forces with regard to wage rates.[40]

Farmers reluctantly witnessed the slow crumbling of the bridge which linked them as a class in the present, to the authority and control they had enjoyed in the past. They resented the fact that their labourers were leaving to go and work on the mines and the public works. They resented the increasing feeling of dependence on their labour force and the suspicion that the balance of power was no longer uncompromisingly in their hands. Two generations after emancipation they still complained of the meanness of compensation.[41] Strenuous attempts were therefore made in the 1870s to reinforce the existing mechanisms of labour

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40. See Hobsbawn E, Captain Swing [London, 1975], chapter 2, for comments on perceptions of the agrarian ruling class to a `free' labour market; also discussion later in this chapter
41. ZA 29 March 1876

control as well as to fashion new avenues in which to exercise power.

The slight gain in the economic independence of rural workers led to demands for a stringent amendment to the Masters and Servants Act.[42] The first amendment occurred only one year after the granting of responsible government and once again demonstrates the extent of agrarian influence in the legislature. For the first time a distinction was drawn between farm and other servants. This facilitated the introduction of harsher penalties for farm servants vis a vis their urban counterparts.[43]

For a first offence a farm labourer was fined £2 while an ordinary worker was fined only £1.[44] The coercive mechanisms of the Act which provided for the imprisonment of farm workers specifically, also demonstrates the degree to which farmers who could not draw labour in a competitive labour market were accommodated. This was in line with the precedents set by legislation in Britain and the Caribbean which aided marginal farmers.[45] Subsequent amendments to the Cape Masters and Servants Act, continued the discrimination against farm servants. The 1875 Act allowed the arrest of deserting labourers and negated the need for a warrant of arrest in the case of the rural labourer.[46]

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42. ZA 16 October 1872
43. CCP A5-'72, Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the Masters and Servants Acts
44. Act 18 of 1873
45. Bundy C, 'The Abolition of the Masters and Servants Act' South African Labour Bulletin 2 1 [May-June 1975], pp37-46
46. Act 7 of 1875

Since their inception the Master and Servant Acts had been regarded in an ambivalent light by farmers. While willing state intervention on their behalf to bolster their dominance over the labour force, at the same time many farmers resented the penetration of state power in to relationships on the farm. Struggling farmers were particularly ambivalent about the efficacy of the Acts.

With the judicial authority residing in the Resident Magistrate, he was best able to attend to those cases which arose within the village, or to those where the farmer was able to afford the time, effort and money to come to town in order to lay a charge. Geography and wealth shaped the workings of justice, often to the detriment of those who were most in need of it. This emerges particularly if one examines the cases brought under the Acts between farmers and labourers, where the elite seem to have dominated in the prosecution of their servants.*

Farmers and Labourers in a Capitalising Rural World

With the development of the state employment sector and the growth of the towns, access to seasonal labour became a site of struggle between farmers in the western districts and the state as well as between different economic strata within the master class itself. The competition centred on the farmers' traditional source of seasonal labour, the members of the underclass living on missions stations and in the villages of the Western Cape.

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* See chapter 5 for a discussion of the role of the law and of crime in Stellenbosch society

Marincowitz's observation of the attitudes of an earlier period continues to hold true for this later one. The traditional solution of the Western Cape farmers to farm labour problems was to attempt to conserve ex-slaves and apprentices {and their descendants} as the agrarian labour force, thus relying on established patterns of access and control.[47] The proprietary attitude of farmers to that labour force was accompanied by requests to the government not to exploit it. Gird, a Stellenbosch parliamentary representative, said that owing to a lack of labourers farmers had not been able to do what they wanted to do for a long time. The government had plundered {the rural areas} to draw farm labourers to the railways.[48]

Farmers in Stellenbosch district felt keenly the demand on the labour of people living on the mission stations being made by the Public Works Department, and later in the 1890s, the desertion of labourers to Cape Town.[49] The competition over seasonal labour is demonstrated by demands that all men from the mission stations working on the railways be dismissed by 1 October each year in order to help farmers in their peak seasons.[50]

Once again the contradiction within the consciousness of the dominant class comes to the fore. The capitalising farmers

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47. Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour',p 292
48. ZA 25 July 1874
49. 1/STB 2/45 case 69, 22 April 1875; 1/STB 2/56 case 28, 4 April 1880; 1/STB 2/59 case 162, 6 February 1890, etc
50. ZA 25 July 1874

welcomed the proletarianisation of the underclass which made labourers more susceptible to dismissal but only as long as the conditions suited the farmer rather than the labourer. Their desire was at base, contradictory. They wanted an economy that was at once "capitalist and stable, traditionalist and hierarchical".[51]

Capitalising farmers within the dominant class of Stellenbosch district were not unique in this respect. They shared an outlook with their peers in other agrarian societies undergoing a shift to capitalist relations.[52]

For many farmers the process of capitalising their farming operations did not necessarily involve an acceptance of the status of their labourers as members of a `free' wage labouring class. In fact it is noticeable that in the very period that Stellenbosch and other such societies were shifting into a high capitalist gear, labour relations were dominated by the use of mechanisms which prevented labourers from easily seeking work elsewhere.

It was the very uncertainty and risk associated with real capital investment in agriculture which made farmers rely so

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51. Hobsbawm, Captain Swing, p 47
52. See Hobsbawm, Captain Swing; Foner, Nothing But Freedom; Berlin I, Hahn S, Miller S, Reidy J, Rowland L, `The Terrain of Freedom: The Struggle over the Meaning of Free Labor in the U.S. South', History Workshop Journal 22 1986, pp108-130, and Brass, T `Free and Unfree Labour in Puerto Rico during the Nineteenth Century', Journal of Latin American Studies 18 1986, pp181-194

heavily on practices to impede labour mobility.[53] As Brass says, "in the absence of trade unions, the bargaining power of a rural worker consists of an ability to move from farm to farm {or to other employment sectors} in search of better paid work. And it is precisely because labourers began to use this power", that farmers began to rely even more heavily on mechanisms such as the advance system, and tied rent.[54]

The advance system seems to have become endemic in the period under review. In Stellenbosch district, the majority of cases tried under the Masters and Servants Acts related to desertion of a servant either after an advance had been given, or in response to an advance promised by a competing farmer. Barend Philimon, a labourer in the employ of Adrian de Waal of Vlaggeberg utilised the benefits of this system to the extreme. Apparently he was "in the habit of going about getting advances from masters and promising to work but does not do so".[55]

In an appendix to the 1890 Select Committee on the Labour Question, JP Louw of Stellenbosch, as well as other leading

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53. See chapter three for the examples of farmers who were not able to survive the transition to a competitive environment. Also see Wolf E, `San Jose: Subcultures of a "Traditional" Coffee Municipality' and Mintz S, `Canamelar: The Subculture of a Rural Sugar Plantation Proletariat' in Steward J [ed], The People of Puerto Rico [Urbana, Illinois, 1956], for comparative material on labour shortages and mechanisms of control in the late nineteenth century.
54. Brass, `Free and Unfree Rural Labour in Puerto Rico', p188
55. Testimony of A de Waal, 1/STB 2/59 case 136, 6 May 1890; see also 1/STB 2/44 case 101, 27 April 1874; 1/STB 2/48 case 54, 4 March 1880; 1/STB 2/59 case 135, 16 May 1895; 1/STB 2/64 case 272, 12 November 1895

farmers of the western districts, stated that the advance system was flourishing. "The farmers have been induced to advance sums of money in order to get labour services".[56] This ready exploitation by rural labourers of the farmers' needs during a period of a shortage of cheap labour, was not appreciated. "The master has to put himself out to retain his servants instead of them putting themselves out to retain service with their master".[57]

The problems of overproduction that had plagued wine farmers since the second decade of the century, resulted in thegradual increase of the size of the tot. For those farmers who could not afford to pay competitive wages, the tot remained virtually the only way of attracting labour. It was also an effective way of disposing of surplus wine and indirectly it helped to create a market for low quality wine.

In the last two decades of the century a quantitative increase seems to have occurred.[58] and farmers complained that drunkenness and alcoholism among labourers were also increasing.[59] This was sufficient to cause dissension within the ranks of the dominant class, with certain ministers within the Dutch Reformed Church {DRC}, calling for total abstention from the drinking of wine.[60] The position of the DRC seems to

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56. CCP A12-'90, Report on Labour Question, Appendix B, piii
57. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p298
58. Testimony of Rev. Botha, CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p330
59. ZA 30 September 1880; ZA 9 October 1888; ZA 9 September 1890; 1/STB 19/156 letter to Resident Magistrate from residents of Stellenbosch, 12 February 1909
60. i.e NJ Hofmeyr, ZA 16 September 1882. Letters of angry criticism of this position from anonymous `wine farmers', ZA 21 September 1882; ZA 10 October 1882; ZA 31 October 1886

have been ambiguous as regard the legitimacy of liquor being the base of the districts economy.[61]

However wine farmers themselves failed to agree on the merits of the tot system. Although most acknowledged the drawbacks of daily consumption, they also felt this was a necessary component of labour relations in the district.[62] In defending the system farmers and their supporters pointed out that the wine given by farmers was of "low alcoholic strength" and that "if workers are in a hot climate and sweat for the whole day in the open air... and drink 2 bottles of white wine a day, we dont think this is too much".[63]

Some farmers indicated a willingness to pay an extra 1 shilling per day instead of providing wine as part of the wage.[64] They did this in recognition that it was the "better class of labourers" who were leaving the farms and that in order to attract them it would be necessary to offer higher wages.[65]

However the same farmers testified that they could not get labour without the attraction of wine. A labour force with much of its social discourse based on drinking after years of forced alcoholism would not easily respond to new incentives. Social coercion proved able to hurt both those it was meant to affect as

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61. The Zuid Afrikaan complained in 1886 that the Synod's statement that farmers could distil brandy from their grapes was done with such bad grace that the synod was clearly acting against the interests of wine farmers.ZA 4 November 1886
62. CCP G1-'90 Report of the LiquorLaws Commission, p23
63. CCP G1-'90 Liquor Laws Commission, p23; ZA 17 December 1889; also evidence of WA Krige, CCP G1-'90 Liquor Laws Commission, p216
64. CCP G1-'90 Liquor Laws Commission, p26
65. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p329

well as those who wielded it.

The provision of a house and plot as an incentive to obtain labour at seasonal times also seems to have become increasingly important as the century wore on. In this regard it was monthly labourers who benefited the most although they were also then more firmly tied to their employer. For farmers with much land, the leasing of houses to labourers who would then work for daily wages in the peak seasons, both drew revenue throughout the year as well as securing seasonal labour. Farmers also leased houses in Stellenbosch to labourers on similar terms.[66] The size of the plots in general does not seem to have been sufficiently large to feed the labourer and his family.

The norm appears to have been that the labourer was still paid rations while the plot was supposed to feed his family. Monthly labourers on J du Toit's farm Groote Zalze, received a "fine garden" in addition to earning 13s 6d per month with rations. These monthly labourers did not have to pay rent for their house or plot. However, daily labourers who received a cottage and plot had to pay rent. Thus Abel a daily servant was paid 9d per day in 1868 and paid a rent of 7d 6s per month to Mr du Toit.[67]

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66. See farm in Welmoed with 22 cottages, Advertisement for sale of farm, ZA 23 October 1883; On the farm Annandale it appears that labourers were granted a fair access to land. A labourer, Vlaggendorp, had "a pretty large garden on the farm planted with sweet potatoes and pumpkins. It is not fenced in. It is in the masters ground near his house". 1/STB 2/59 case 310, 4 December 1890; See chapter 5 for details of labourers working conditions
67. 1/STB 2/41 case 2654, 24 November 1868

This also resulted in a blurring of the definitions of permanent and temporary labour.[68] The complexity of labour relations in an era of transition makes any easy categorisation very difficult, and the terms permanent and seasonal labour are really misnomers. The former category would include labourers working under long term contracts of up to five years. These contracts mainly applied to African labourers from Mozambique and Delagoa Bay who were brought to the Cape mainly from the 1870's onwards, as well as to monthly and daily servants who had worked for a farmer for a continuous period of over a year.

Increasingly it appears that farmers were forced to give in to labourers' demands for flexible working weeks and contracts. "When a farmer gives a house and garden and allows the labourer to go out and work at off season, he will get a steady supply of labour" declared Reverend Pauw of the Dutch Reformed mission at Wellington.[69] Resident labourers tended to work only in the peak season and hired out their labour to corn farmers or went to work in town during the off season. For example, a labourer on Klein Idas Vallei was given a house in return for working when asked, but was allowed to hire himself out at other times.[70]

This was a mutually beneficial arrangement to an extent as it gave the labourer a base, although not an independent one, while it guaranteed the farmer labour at the times he most required it.[71] This clearly disadvantaged those farmers who

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68. Marincowitz, `Rural Production and Labour', p205
69. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p277
70. 1/STB 2/59 case 95, 26 March 1890
71. ZA 31 May 1884, letter from wine farmer talking of expense of having to provide houses for labourers; 1/STB 2/63 case 28, 11 February 1895

could not afford to provide such incentives. They increasingly drew on the populations of Stellenbosch and Somerset West villages for their labour and often on a daily basis.

The move towards capitalist relations of production was thus accompanied by the increasing employment of labourers by the week or by the day rather than on a monthly basis. Although in this regard too the practical division between daily and weekly labour tended to disintegrate, as daily wages were often realised as weekly wages in practice. This worked primarily to the advantage of the farmer who could dismiss a labourer at short notice.

It is by no means clear that labourers resented the transition to day wages. A servant of ML Neethling, in fact wanted to change from work by the month to work by the day.[72] There is evidence to suggest that this arrangement was beneficial to the labourers while the labour market was under supplied. Farmers complained that labourers worked for four days and then would be idle for three.[73]

In the early years of a shift to developed capitalist relations in a peripheral economy, proletarians as well as people with a subsistence base often responded with alacrity to the relatively high wages that were offered, before their bargaining power was undermined once full scale proletarianisation of the

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72. 1/STB 2/59 case 148, 20 May 1890
73. ZA 20 June 1974; 1/STB 2/63 case 135, 16 May 1895; see Wilson F, `Farming 1866-1966' in Wilson M and Thompson L [eds], The Oxford History of South Africa volume 1 [Oxford, 1971], pp104-171 for an illustration of the commonality of this `problem' throughout South Africa while some access to the means of production was still available to the black population

population had occurred.[74]

Another sign of the expansion of capitalist relations of production within Stellenbosch was the development of stratification within the underclass.[75] From the early 1880s a small capitalising group consisting mainly of traders, contractors and market gardeners and some artisans, compounded the farmers labour problems by employing local labour often at better rates.[76] "There is competition with the contractors", lamented a Western Cape farmer, "they now have all the best men".[77]

This is also a sign of a positive perception of a wage and the `freedom' it conferred as opposed to the servile relations on the farms. Although labour relations on the farms were supposedly governed by a wage contract, under the Masters and Servants Acts, they were enmeshed within a host of received values and powers on the part of both the farmer, and the labourer, which resulted in

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74. See Harries P, `Migrant Labour and Changing Standards of Living in the Nineteenth Century' [paper presented to the Africa Seminar of Centre for African Studies, UCT, August 1986]
75. See M Dobb on the crucial transition to capitalism lying in signs of stratification within the producing classes. Dobb, M Studies in the Development of Capitalism [London, 1963]
76. 1/STB 2/54 case 193, 13 July 1885; 1/STB 2/54 case 71, 24 February 1885; etc. See also CO 3706, Resident Magistrate Stellenbosch to Secretary of the Land Department, 28 June 1892, stating that there is "an increase in the number of coloured people engaged in the fishing and brick making industries" in The Strand.
77. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p 308. Market gardeners paid up to 4s per day; Insp 26 April 1881 p6, David Pool, shopkeeper; 1/STB 2/45 case 210 14 September 1876, contractor living at Railway Station; 1/STB 2/48 case 171 5 August 1880, contractor employing 30 men; Labour Commission 1893, p307 talking of market gardeners; 1/STB 2/68 case 37, 24 January 1898, mason at Roux Dorp near Stellenbosch etc.

tensions specific to the farm.*

The escape that was offered by contract labour or by independent petty commodity production from the dependency represented by the master/servant relations on the farms was a real one, one taken by rural underclasses the world over.[78] The fact that a section of the underclass could exist without relying on wage labour was also a cause of concern to farmers.

For the dominant class in Stellenbosch district as in other agrarian societies, the proper occupation of members of the underclass was work in the service of the dominant class, not self employment and certainly not as competitors on the labour market. "A growing number of {farmers} came to see wage-workers not merely as individuals in an early and temporary stage of the climb to economic independence, but as a relatively permanent social class".[79]

In 1891 the magistrate of Stellenbosch cited the main causes of labour shortage as being the growing number of market gardeners, the contractors who employed men for phylloxera work and the movement of men into employment in Cape Town although their families remained in the district.[80] There was a

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* See chapter 5

78. See Hobsbawm, Captain Swing, p46; Berlin et al, `The Terrain of Freedom' p118; also Mintz S, `Was the Plantation Slave a Proletarian ?', Review 1 1978, pp81-98; also Foner, Nothing But Freedom; also Adams D, `Prices and Wages in Maryland, 1750-1850', The Journal of Economic History XLVI 3 September 1986, pp625-646, for a discussion of the flexibility of rural employment in the pre-industrial age and the alacrity with which wage labourers responded to urban employment when the opportunity arose.
79. Berlin et al, `The Terrain of Freedom', p117
80. CCP C2-'92 Report on the Labour Question, pxviii

flourishing agrarian community. "The best men have cows and horses. Others have orchards and fruit and vegetables ...There are people who plant strawberries and hire men to work...".[81]

The market gardeners drew wine farmers' particular anger. "They will not work", said JP Louw of Neethlings Hof, "but live from the small gardens that they have under cultivation".[82] For an underclass which had emerged out of a history of slavery, ownership of land was very important in signifying independence. In the American South, a black major in the US Coloured Infantry urged the freed people to ensure their independence by engaging in market gardening rather than being employed as wage labourers.[83]

To an extent the farmers were correct in citing the emerging petty bourgeois class in Stellenbosch as being a cause of labour shortage. The movement of men into trades did decrease the numbers of labourers available for farm labour. In addition it was from the ranks of skilled artisans that most of the permanent losses to the towns occurred. The men who left for the towns were the mechanics and the masons. "They went in search of a fortune to be able to provide better for their families".[84]

In the period 1870 to 1900, it appears that the group who suffered most, relative to their earlier position, were the farmers living in conditions of debt if not insolvency, who had

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81. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p308
82. CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p392
83. Berlin et al, The Terrain of Freedom' p118
84. Evidence of Jakobus Gabrielse, Labourer, Stellenbosch, to CCP G3-'94, Labour Commission 1893, p320

neither the capital nor the physical means {ie houses} to attract labourers. They suffered on other fronts too. Their very dependence on labour made the Masters and Servants Acts work against them, since labourers found guilty and not able to pay the fine were often jailed, thus depriving the farmer of labour.

For the marginalised farmers of Stellenbosch, not able to afford labour saving machines, mechanisation was also no consolation. The benefits of mechanisation were clearly stated by the Honourable PL van der Byl, who said that if it "had not been for the introduction of machinery, I do not know how farms would have been worked at all".[85] Schemes initiated by the state at the request of wealthier farmers, to import African labourers under a contract system into the Western Cape, also mitigated against the participation of struggling farmers.

Farmers, Labour and the State

The various select committees on labour and the voluminous Labour Commission of the late nineteenth century are a testimony to the strength of farming interests in the political economy of the Cape. But they do also indicate the growing power and intervention of the colonial state in the attempt to gain access to, or to create a cheap labour supply for work on the mines and the Public Works.[86]

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85. CCP A26-1879, Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider and report on the supply of the labour market, p37; See chapter 2, also Tables 2 & 3, p44
86. CCP A26-1879, Report on supply of the labour market; CCP A12-'90, Report on the Labour Question; CCP C2-'92 Report on the Labour Question

In the short term, Cape farmers, especially those who would not or could not afford to pay competitive wages, regarded the state as a competitor rather than an ally. In the long term, the more commercially viable farmers were able to hold their own through the application of proven methods of labour control, as well as through their representation in the Afrikaner Bond, through which they pressed for the importation of black labour into the colony.[87]

The critical labour shortage of the 1870s induced wine farmers in Stellenbosch to lobby for state aid in securing additional farm labour. The composition of a Stellenbosch deputation to the Governor in 1874, illuminates the section within the master class who were willing and able to experiment with new sources of labour. The deputation consisted of Daniel de Waal, JP Louw, CF Beiers and ML Neethling, all wealthy landholders, as well as Gideon Krige.[88]

The Zuid Afrikaan was inundated with pleas for the importation of a new core of agricultural labourers, be they from Europe, India, China or the interior of Southern Africa.[89]

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87. See Cooper, `The State and Agricultural Labour', for an anaylsis of the tension which can arise over labour between the state and the ruling rural elite, even when the state is is operating in the interests of commercial farming. Berman B and Lonsdale J, `Crises of Accumulation, Coercion and the Colonial State: The Development of the Labour Control System in Kenya, 1919-1929', Canadian Journal of African Studies, 14 1 1980, pp37-54; also see Londsdale J and Berman B, `Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895-1914', Journal of African History 20 1979, pp485-505, for an analysis of the role of the colonial state in securing the dominance of the capitalist mode of production.
88. ZA 31 January 1874
89. ZA 20 June 1874

The hidden premises of the labour shortage were soon revealed, however, subsequent to the government sponsored immigration schemes involving Germans, English and later Italians as well as `Mozbiquers' and Mfengus from outside of the Colony.[90] Farmers were generally very reluctant to employ any group except their local labour force; they wanted cheap and compliant labour, a requirement that for a time the underclass of the Western Cape had been able to fulfill to an extent.[91]

Farmers complained about European labourers not being suitable to agricultural work while in addition they soon accumulated sufficent capital to invest in land and thus competed on the labour market; exacerbating rather than solving the problem of shortage.[92] Indian, Chinese and African labourers would not have posed a similar threat. The Zuid Afrikaan supported their importation, but for work on the railways not on the farms saying that "these races work better and desert less if they are employed in great numbers, such as on our railways than when they are put to strange and lonely agricultural work".[93]

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90. 1/STB 10/33, 17 September 1878 lists of German immigrants expected to arrive in Cape Town; 1/STB 10/229, 1September 1903 advertisement regarding employment for Italian farm labourers
91. However one must not deny the silent struggles that constituted part of rural relations even prior to emancipation and after, even though they were to assume new force and added meaning in the late nineteenth century, Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa; Marincowitz, `Proletarians, Privatisers and Public Property Rights'
92. ZA 8 October 1881
93. ZA 20 June 1874; ZA 11 December 1875; ZA 13 August 1879; ZA 16 February 1882

This was of course bound up with the desire of Western Cape farmers to retain their local labour force within their own domains. However the state concentrated on importing labour for agricultural as well as state employment, although it was difficult to draw African labour to the Western Cape at a time when the traditional economies had not yet been sufficiently undermined to force people into wage labour.[94]

Western Cape farmers' rejection of European, Asiatic and Chinese and African labour rested on both class and racist assumptions; the latter was to dominate their attitudes to African farm labour well into the next century. In 1879 in response to a notice that men were arriving from Delagoa Bay, the Zuid Afrikaan expressed reservations and said that farmers would first have to see that they were not like the `local' African labourers who had been referred to as "unmannered untameable barbarians".[95] Despite reservations, farmers increasingly turned to African labour as one solution to their labour problems.

Even ten years previously it had been clear to some farmers that a new source of agricultural labour would have to be secured in the wake of the diamond discoveries.[96] In 1865 there

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94. PWD 2/48 letter from C Levey, Clerk to Fingoe Agent, Transkei, to Commissioner of Crown lands and Public Works, 16 January 1875, saying that 118 Fingoes prepared to work on Worcester Railway; PWD 2/48 Letter to Colonial Secretary from Special Magistrate, Kenhart, 18 December 1872; PWD 2/48 letter to Government Agent, Basutoland from Resident Magistrate Leribe District, 14 February 1873; etc. See Bundy C, The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry [Oxford, 1979]
95. ZA 18 February 1874; ZA 26 November 1879
96. In 1868 there is a record of 3 African labourers being hired in Stellenbosch district. 1/STB 18/184, 12 November 1868

were 179 Africans in Stellenbosch district, by 1891, 207, and by 1904, 1619. In 1904, Africans only constituted 4.5% of the population of Stellenbosch.[97] The continuing low numbers of Africans employed in Stellenbosch can partly be accounted for by the terms of the contracts which favoured farmers of secure financial position as the employer had to pay the costs of transportation as well as sign a long term contract which stipulated that wages had to be paid all year round.

The difficulty in obtaining single men again favoured wealthier farmers. A notice stated that " as all {members of the family} will be dependent on the employer for means of livelihood, the whole family shall contract or be apprenticed as the case may be".[98] All children of African labourers had to be apprenticed to the employer from the age of 6 to 18. They had to be housed, clothed and fed only, until the age of 12 when they started earning a wage of 15s a month with an increase of a shilling a year. This provision helped provide a reserve army of labour for seasonal labour at an exploitatively cheap rate. Thus poorer farmers were able to benefit to some extent by the employment endeavours of their wealthier counterparts.

Between 1879 and 1882, a period of prosperity for Cape farmers, another influx of labour therefore occurred, consisting mainly of single men from Mozambique. Although the wages were initially tied to age , with a starting wage of 15s per month, from 1880 onwards, all wages were fixed at that sum and the two

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97. CCP G20-'66, Census 1865; CPP G5-1892, Census 1891, CCP G19-1905, Census 1904
98. Government Notice 222 of 1878

year contract extended to 3 years. This provided some farmers with a relatively cheap and accessible labour force: in 1880 the average monthly wage on the farms in the Western Cape was one pound with board and lodging.[99]

For those farmers that could afford to employ labourers on a long term basis, the use of African contract labour was a viable option. Of the very few existing applications from Stellenbosch farmers, all were from farmers of some standing i.e. they could be situated within the traditional elite with the Stellenbosch dominant class in terms of landholding, probable income and social status. In 1868 PD Myburgh of CLoetesdal hired one "Swart boy" on a three year contract.[100] Ten years later when the supply of African labour was abundant as a result of the devestation caused by the frontier wars, he applied for four labourers.[101]

In the next decade when the labour shortage was less severe owing to falling prices and general recession, Hofmeyr magnanimously reflected that "farmers would rather shape, remould the natives into useful labourers than do away with them".[102]

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99. CCP Blue Book 1880, p02; Harries P, `Mozbiekers: The Immigration of an African Community to the Western Cape 1876-1882', in Studies in the History of Cape Town, Volume 1 [UCT, 1979], p128
100. Myburgh owned at least 166 morgen of quitrent property in addition to Cloetesdal and was a regular prize winner of wine and brandy at the Stellenbosch agricultural show. QRR 193 f660; ZA 27 March 1876; ZA 1 February 1879
101. NA 179, Letters Received from Resident Magistrates in the Colony. 27 March 1878; also see application by JA Ackerman, 1/STB 18/183 , 21 March 1878; also JP du Toit of Groote Zalze, 1/STB 18/183, 21 May 1878. ML Neethling also took advantage of the supply as did PA Myburgh; 1/STB 2/50 case 73, 24 April 1882
102. ZA 15 January 1884

But prejudice has a long shelf life and in 1892 when Stellenbosch farmers were again in need of labour they still baulked at relying on African labour.

Once more the proprietary attitudes of farmers in the district to the labour of the local underclass surfaced. At a public meeting held to consider the governments proposal to supply African labourers, JA Krige apparently spoke for all when he said that the government was partly to blame for the scarcity of local labour since the best farm labourers were employed by the government.[103]

Stellenbosch farmers and their peers in neighbouring districts clearly viewed labour mobility by farm workers as illegitimate. They were still clinging to a vision of the labourer as `property', which had been sustained after the ending of slavery because of the narrow employment opportunities. From the 1870s with the expansion of the colonial economy, it became ever clearer to farmers that that vision was no longer entirely tenable.[104]

The preparedness of some farmers to employ African labour is symptomatic of the fact that by the 1890s, Stellenbosch farmers had lost their monopoly of the labour of the underclass of the

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103. CO 4557 Letter from Under Secretary for Native Affairs, to the Secretary of the Labour Commission, containing minutes of meeting held in Stellenbosch, 13 December 1893
104. In 1892 forty leading farmers made applications for African labourers for general farm work. They included JP Louw, DC Morkel, JJP du Toit, PD Myburgh and WA Krige. CO 4557 Applications for Native Labour in the District of Stellenbosch, November 1892

Western Cape. The applications also indicate that it was a fairly small and defined group within the dominant class who were able to make the adaption to more competitive conditions. Farmers wrestled with economic crises in various ways. Some pursued progress, some clung to traditional techniques. Nearly all attempted to establish vigorous control at home, a site of struggle with which they were familiar, over the most obvious symbol of a changing world, the `disloyal' and `insolent' labourers on the farm.

CHAPTER 5

THE VIEW FROM THE FARM 1870-1900

Isolation formed the common denominator of the geographical architecture of Stellenbosch district. For a labourer living on a farm in Moddergat or Eerste Rivier, Stellenbosch village was as far off as Cape Town.[1] Roads of rough gravel connected farms with villages but these became virtually impassable during the rainy season. Geography and architecture reinforced the hold of history over the rural population.

Although farms in the district differed very much in terms of size, they shared a common organisation of space. The manor house of H-plan Dutch design dominated the landscape. The most important source of economic survival, the vines, ran up and down on ground close to the house. On a `progressive' farm the bushes were placed in regular rows, with the ground cleared neatly in between. On most farms the bushes ambled across the veld in irregular lines, with overgrowth and even trees visible between the vines. Further away from the house might lie wheat or oat fields. Occupying almost as important a position as the vineyards was the wine cellar which was neighbour to the main house.

Labourers' cottages were often situated within hearing distance of the farm house, behind a clump of trees or in a ditch. The person of the farmer thus never retreated

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1. A mid-century report on the district stated that it took a four hour ride to reach Cape Town. Cape of Good Hope Annual Register, Directory and Almanack, 1855

completely from the workers' consciousness. Labourers' quarters were expected to serve as a place for sleeping and eating. Labourers were to be seen {preferably} but not heard {definitely}. The servant's house was not to be a haven for extended and enriching social intercourse be it verbal or physical. Spatial organisation therefore gave the presence of a farmer and his family as representatives of his power, a significant role in defining the boundaries within which the labourers and their families on a farm constructed their social world.

Until transformations occurred in the nature of the colonial economy, the farm was the alpha and the omega of experience and imagination, for farmer and labourer. The idea of the farm as the haven of `normality' in contrast to the society `outside' which was threatening and hostile was particularly attractive to those farmers who were reluctant or unable to enter the demanding and encroaching world of intensified capitalist relations of production.[2]

Isolation and agricultural time which had set the tempo of rural life in Stellenbosch in the first half of the 1870s, continued to conduct the same slow tune well into the 20th century. But an echo of the distant but quickening beat of urban and industrial time was to sound louder and louder across the

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2. There are suggestions of this consciousness of the safe `domain' in CP Hoogenhoudt's novel Catherina, die dogter van die Advokaat [Paarl, 1879]; See forthcoming thesis by Jean du Plessis, University of Stellenbosch, on the origins of the Paarl Language Movement; also Coetzee JM, `Lineal conciousness in the farm novels of CM van den Heever' [in Association of University English Teachers of Southern Africa, 1985 Conference Papers]

plains between Muldersvlei and Hottentots Holland as the nineteenth century drew to a close, driven by the sounds of the trains crossing the Eerste River plains on their way to Wellington or Cape Town.[3]

Daily Life and Social Practice

Even forty years after emancipation labourers were woken by the ringing of the old slave bell. This is once again indicative of how practices constantly reinforced the patterns of old behaviour even if the the legal and economic parameters had shifted.[4] Breakfast rations were eaten outside with the tot of dop wine. If the weather was bad then the meal could either be eaten in one of the nearby farm buildings or in the kitchen of the main house.[5] The working day was governed by the seasonal demands of agriculture and the working hours were always from sunup to sundown. In summer when the sun in the Western Cape sets as late as 9 o'clock, this could mean a 15 hour working day.[6] These long working hours contributed to the movement of labourers into employment on the railways where there was an eight hour working day.[7]

Of course the crucial punctuations of working hours were

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3. Thompson EP, 'Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism' Past and Present 38 196, pp56-97
4. 1/STB 2/45 summary trial 26 April 1875; see also Cape Times 2 April 1987, interview by Philip van Ryneveld of the Black Sash with Oom Flip, an ex-farm labourer who spoke of a similar practice, and this in the late twentieth century
5. 1/STB 2/44 preliminary investigation, 6 June 1874; 1/STB 2/59 case 207, 4 August 1890
6. 1/STB 2/54 case 141 n.d. 1885
7. Evidence of JP Louw of Neethlings Hof, CPP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p297; see Chapter 3

caused by the rations of dop wine which were given four times a day as well by the breaks for meals. Officially half an hour was taken off for breakfast and an hour for lunch.[8] Olga Starke recalls, "Now the men didn't come home for lunch. So Arend, we had the wine here they used to get their dop. More or less then say a pint a day. Now this old Arend had a long pole. This side he had a basket that he carried the food in and another basket at the back with the wine. If the women arrived late with their husbands' food, he didn't wait. He walked down the road and they screaming back but he didn't stop. They had to catch up to him".[9]

It seems that the general custom was for the rations to be cooked in the main house, but the increasing trend was towards giving raw rations. This would have benefited the labourers in the sense that they could divide the ration more easily between the family members. On the other hand it might have created gender conflict within the labourers' families as it would have increased the women's work.

In the late nineteenth century on Groote Zalze, the daily ration consisted of one and a half loaves of bread, one pound of meat and porridge plus a quart of soup. Labourers on Muldersvlei Central received bread with salt and fish for breakfast, for lunch, a stew of meat and vegetables and in the evening they received more bread.[10]

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8. 1/STB 2/68 case 153, 20 April 1898
9. Interview with Olga Starke, Muldersvlei Central 23 November 1985; Mr S du Toit of Paarl gave his labourers wine six times a day. CPP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p251
10. 1/STB 2/41 case 2654, 24 November 1868; Interview with Olga Starke, Muldersvlei Central, 25 November 1985; see also

Different categories of labourers worked under discriminate working conditions. For the labourer working in the vineyards, the degree of supervision was more severe than for the shepherd who took the sheep to graze at quite a distance from the main house.[11] Either the master, or in the case of owners who owned a business in town, for example PD Myburgh, or who owned many farms i.e. HJ Louw or JH Faure, an overseer was omnipresent. In 1898, JJ Hendricks, an overseer for JE Scholtz of Scholtzenhof demonstrated the extent of the control allotted to him. "I went to the vineyard and {David Samuels} was whistling, and I told him to stop".[12] Labourers working as part of a contract team in digging vineyards or harvesting wheat were also subject to stringent control as the farmer attempted to ensure that he received the maximum work for the money paid.[13]

The elite among farm labourers seems to have been the shepherds who were paid more, being regarded as relatively skilled in order to handle the stock, and who enjoyed greater freedom during the working day. Klaus, a shepherd described his day. "I went with my sheep towards Eerste River Railway Station. I left my sheep in the veldt and went for a bottle of beer at the canteen. After partaking of the beer I went back to the sheep".[14] For this category of labourers, the point of conflict with their employer tended to occur in the vicinity of the farm and revolved around the farmer's complaints of inefficiency.

1/STB 2/68 case 3, 4 January 1895
11. 1/STB 2/42 case {no number}, 27 March 1870; 1/STB 2/45 summary trial 26 April 1875
12. 1/STB 2/68 case 84, 3 March 1898
13. 1/STB 2/45 case 69, 22 April 1875
14. 1/STB 2/45 summary trial 26 April 1875

The servants most under the eye of the master were the domestic servants.[15] Unfortunately they are the employment sector most hidden in the historical records.[16] The house servants were sometimes the wives of farm labourers and were employed as washer women and cooks.[17] Access to and control over the labour power of labourers' wives was regarded by farmers as a right which could be exercised at any time. The use of female and child labour during peak seasons is an example of this. The complaints by farmers that labourers wives were being idle while farmers wives worked in the main house, underlines this assumption.[18]

Due to the shortage of domestic servants particularly from the 1880s onwards, which corresponds with the trend for more labourers and their families to live off the farm premises, young women were imported to work on a contract basis.[19] The relationship between the domestic servant and the employer was one of special intimacy, which also erupted into violence under duress. On the 2 January 1899, a cook was told to do some work in the kitchen which she had neglected. "she point blank refused to do it, lost her temper, punched one of Mr Steyn's daughters

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15. See Fox-Genovese E, `Placing women in history' New Left Review 133 May-June 1982; also Genovese E, who makes a similar distinction between the different degrees of control experienced by domestic servants and the field hands of plantation slavery in the American South, Roll Jordan Roll [New York, 1972], p331
16. Boddington E, `Domestic Service: Changing Relations of Class Domination 1841-1848. A Focus on Cape Town', [M Soc.Sci, UCT, 1983], p71
17. Wage Book 1895-1896, Muldersvlei Central
18. CCP A12-'90 Report of the Select Committee on the Labour Question
19. CO 4546 folio 108 Draft report of Labour Comission for Somerset West, 1894; Boddington E, `Domestic Service', p151

against the wall with some force and then went to her room and left the farm..."[20]

The working week was officially from Tuesday to Saturday with Sunday observed as a religious day and Monday as a workers' holiday. This demarcation of the week seems to have occurred as much through the wishes of the labourers as of the farmers. Monday was a day of canteens and socialising for the underclass in general. However for the labourers living a distance away from the village, it was rare to leave the farm.

"Our coloureds never went off the farm", recalls Olga Starke. "Our boys used to get off once in three months. They went for the day and they would come back drunk. They were good, capable, practical people".[21] Special trains brought urban members of the underclass to Stellenbosch on excursions. The Reverends Weeber and Neethling concurred that these `Malays' exercised a bad influence on the farm labourers.[22]

The antagonism towards urban people who might help transform the conciousness of rural labourers to a more urban/more independent outlook was felt by many rural ruling classes in eras of transition. The threat of values which stressed mobility and change threatened the very premise of these dominant groups which assumed that stasis certainly in labour relations was the norm.* A Stellenbosch farmer complained that he was unable

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20. NA 257 Assistant Resident Magistrate, Somerset West to Resident Magistrate Stellenbosch, 23 April 1899
21. Interview with Olga Starke, Muldersvlei Central, 25 November 1985
22. ZA 14 February 1891; CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p292 CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, pp308; 314

* See chapter 4

to induce his labourers to work on a Saturday afternoon. "Last Saturday I could not get them to finish what they were at in my vineyard. They simply threw their baskets away".[23]

This assertion of independence was made in a context of labour shortage when the labourers had a measure of leverage. Even if the formal tools of construction and production resided in the hands of the dominant class, both figuratively and practically, in informal and often in as powerful ways, the actions of the underclass were also instrumental in framing that world. People acted within a frame of reference but their interaction with one another across the boundaries of both class and geography constantly remoulded the conditions of interaction. Rural life might be dominated by continuity, but the reproduction of behaviour patterns is an active process and not a static and passive reception of norms and values.[24]

To an extent then labourers on the farms were able to mould their working hours to suit them, but they always had to use the material which had been provided. The restrictions on the labourers' fashioning of their lives on the farms is most evident with respect to living conditions. Housing ranged from barrack-like buildings, to small cottages with a plot. In 1893 the Reverend Neethling of the Dutch Reformed Church ascribed what he saw as a degeneration of a section of the `coloured' population to the "narrow and overcrowded rooms", and said that

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23. CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p297
24. See Giddens A, A contemporary critique of historical materialism [London, 1981] for a discussion of recursive action; also later this chapter under **Crime and Conciousness**

the barrack system in Stellenbosch was very bad.[25]

The living conditions of labourers on the farms, across the spectrum of employment status, temporary or permanent were very poor, as were the conditions in Fortuintjes Dorp and the village near the Station. JX Merriman in his capacity as Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mines and Agriculture however declared himself satisfied with the accommodation of the labouring class in the district. "There is not a peasantry in any part of the world better treated than that about the wine districts".[26] This does not reflect well on the living conditions of other `peasantries'. It also illustrates ruling class perceptions of the rural under class as being stable and timeless. Peasantries are largely passive and immobile, the rural proletariat which Merriman was really describing was not.[27]

Overcrowding was endemic. In 1871, Salvea Damonse said that she shared a house on J van der Byl's farm with a farm labourer Abraham Wyngaardt, and shared a bed with he and his wife. Adam, a labourer in the service of JSJ de Villiers, shared a room and a bed with three other men, while on the farm Onverwacht, owned by DS Marais, at least five men and women slept in the same room.[28]

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25. CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p315
26. CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p143
27. See Hobsbawm E, `Peasants and Politics' Journal of Peasant Studies 1 1 October 1973, pp3-22; also see chapter 4 and later comments in this chapter
28. see 4/STB 1/1/1/5 folio 12, 18 July 1882, notes stating that 120 people living in Mr R Louw's hired houses, also 108 people living in 16 rooms on farm Sweet Home; 1/STB 2/42 case 143, n.d. 1871; 1/STB 2/44 case 229, 15 January 1874; 1/STB 2/45 case 207, 5 April 1875; see also 1/STB 2/45 case 216 26 April 1875

This overcrowding resulted in widespread syphilis among labourers while it also encouraged alcoholism which was a major factor in causing the fractious nature of social relations among the underclass in the district.[29] The quality of living conditions would be helped by having access to land since it would enable a labourer to supplement his family's diet. In this regard it was monthly labourers who benefited the most although they were also then more firmly tied to their employer.

However competition over land and its produce, as well as complaints about the inadequacy of rations, were common and there is evidence that whole families were forced to subsist on the worker's ration, which was intended for him alone.[30] The inclusion of rations as part of the wage benefited the farmer who did not have access to ready cash, a trait of the dominant class in Stellenbosch at the end of the nineteenth century when most farms were heavily mortgaged.*

Testifying in a case involving sheep stealing from his master JJ du Toit of Groote Zalze, Nicolaas Adonis made clear that hunger had induced him to supplement his income. The rations "are not sufficient for me, I have a good appetite. I have a wife

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29. CO 3472 Resident Magistrate to the Colonial Secretary, 18 June 1884; In 1890 the Resident Magistrate for Stellenbosch stated that 75% of crimes in Stellenbosch were alcohol related. CCP G1-'90 Report of the Liquor Laws Commission, p56
30. See for complaints: 1/STB 2/54 case 34, 22 January 1890; 1/STB 2/54 case 248, 24 September 1885; NA 257, Assistant Magistrate, Somerset West to Resident Magistrate Stellenbosch, 23 April 1899

* see chapter 3; also Standard Bank Reports 1881; 1882 etc

and six children". Regina September the mistress of Prins Pomering who worked on the farm Vredenberg, owned by W Herold, {the cashier at the bank who embezzled money in the Stellenbosch District Bank fiasco}, said that "I cooked Prins' ration of meat that he got that evening and we {Prins, Regina and her son Klaas} all ate it".[31]

Access to and rights over plots and the produce grown was a key area of conflict both between labourers themselves and between labourers and their employers. It has been shown that the rations given by employers were often insufficient for the number of mouths that they had to feed. Thus petty theft of sheep, fowls and wine as well as the sale of produce on the informal market formed one of the pillars which maintained the structure and process of the law in Stellenbosch district, although the major bulwark was provided by the prosecution of labourers under the Masters and Servants Acts.

Theft: "I asked with my heart not my mouth"

It has been suggested in a recent article on the historiography of crime in eighteenth century England, that an avenue worth pursuing would be to look at how "different forms of illegal appropriation were undertaken, and organised".[32] This would illuminate our understanding of those crimes which enjoyed popular support as well as providing an avenue into both popular

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31. 1/STB 2/41 case 2654, 25 November 1886; 1/STB 2/41 case 2629, 30 September 1868
32. Innes J and Styles J, `The Crime Wave', p400: see Cohen S, `Bandits, Rebels or Criminals: African History and Western Criminology' {Review Article} Africa 56 (4) 1986, pp468-483

and ruling class consciousness in a given area.

Theft in Stellenbosch seems to have followed patterns already identified in the relatively well documented case of eighteenth century England, where most of those charged with committing crimes against property were drawn from the rural underclass.[33] Like this underclass the labourers of Stellenbosch lived on the marginal subsistence line and were thus very vulnerable to fluctuations in employment opportunities and in the prices of commodities.

In the period 1868 to 1900, the majority of petty thefts in Stellenbosch district were committed by farm labourers against their employers. These thefts can be divided into two categories. The theft of food and goods for personal use and the stealing of produce or fowls or animals for sale mainly within the context of an informal sector, or more rarely to merchants in the villages of Stellenbosch and Somerset West.

Petty theft seems to have been a fairly lucrative venture for members of the underclass living on the farms. The kraal and the chicken run, the vineyards and the vegetable garden all presented a ready source for the making of a quick penny.[34] The cases of stealing in order to sell on the market seem to have peaked in the mid 1880s and then occurred again in 1900.[35]

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33. Innes and Styles, `The Crime Wave', p390; Rude G, Criminal and Victim [Oxford, 1985], p42. His tabulation for rural crimes shows that `labourers' were responsible for 85.2% of crimes
34. 1/STB 2/42 summons, 14 February 1870
35. Marincowitz suggests that property crimes declined from the 1870s onwards, `Rural Production and Labour', p213. He relies on published material for the Colony in the Statistical Registers , but archival material for Stellenbosch does not

Maybe a correlation could be made between theft and times of recession.[36]

Theft of household goods for use did occur, for example the case of Sophia Racelse who during the year that she was employed as a washerwoman, systematically stole petty household goods from her employer, Mrs Henrietta Morkel of Rome farm.[37] The more common crime in the criminal records though is the theft of food and wine for consumption. Theft of wine was common, often occurring when the farmer was away.

This suggests that farmers had a significant degree of authority while they were present, but that this authority was one vested in their person, not their position vis a vis the labourers. Once the person of the farmer was removed, so too were some of the strictures which shaped and dominated the lives of the underclass.[38]

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substantiate this; 1/STB 2/54 summary trial 106, 18 March 1885; 1/STB 2/54 case 254, 26 October 1885; 1/STB 2/56 warrant 29, 23 October 1886; 1/STB 2/72 case 285, case 286, 31 May 1900

36. See Beattie J, `The Pattern of Crime in England, 1660-1800' Past and Present 62 1974, pp47-95, where he concludes that factors such as employment problems and wage decreases have an effect on crimes against property; Rude, Criminal and Victim, p118; A systematic statistical survey of all the criminal records for the district would have to be done in order to verify this with any precision for Stellenbosch

37. 1/STB 2/43 case {no number}, 22 April 1872

38. On returning from church one Sunday, Pieter de Waal, owner of Neethlings Hof found that "all the men on the farm, plus visitors from neighbouring farms, were drunk". Willem de Vos a labourer in A De Waal's employ, was charged with cellar breaking and sentenced to one years imprisonment with hard labour. 1/STB 2/59 case 227, 9 September 1890

Theft of food and sheep and fowls can be directly linked to the insufficiency of the rations given as part of the wage. Jan `Kafir' stole a sheep from his employer because he was hungry and hid the meat in his room, while Johannes May stole a bucket of potatoes from his employer Hugh Porter of Murasie.[39]

In the records of theft cases the abusive attitude of farmers towards members of the underclass screams across the page. One is struck by the power that farmers and their families wielded against their employees. For example in the case where Jan `Kafir' was charged with sheep stealing, his employer John Myburg of Cloetesdal, had walked into the room and started searching with impunity for some ostrich feathers that he was missing. It was thus that he came across the meat hidden under the bed.[40]

The stream of theft cases as well as those involving the sale of stolen goods, represents the one side of underclass mechanisms of coping with an inadequate diet based largely on wine.[41] It also forms the locus of a contest over rights to land and produce. The farmer and the state emphasised the rights given by land ownership, by property. The worker, the rights inherent in work and traditional occupation of land. Hans Bantam

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39. 1/STB 2/45 summary trial, 26 April 1875; 1/STB 2/68 case 192 21 May 1898; see also 1/STB 4/7 case 2546, case 2547 n.d.; 1/STB 2/41 case 2654, 24 November 1868;1/STB 2/59 case 96 25 March 1890
40. See 1/STB 2/45 summary trial 26 April 1875. The invasion of a labourer's privacy was repeated in other instances across the district; i.e. 1/STB 2/54 case 110, 21 March 1885; 1/STB 2/59 case 332, 29 December 1890; 2/54 case 34, 22 January 1890
41. 1/STB 2/42 Case 3028, 9 June 1870; 2/45 summary trial 26 April 1875

of Hottentots Holland said he had stolen grapes from the vineyard on the farm where he worked after asking his employer "with my heart but not with my mouth".[42] This was of course a neat sidestep to admitting his guilt in theft but it also reveals that he felt that he had some right to the produce of his employer.[43]

Petty theft can be regarded most straightforwardly as a means of supplementing the labourer's income, but at the same time it can serve as an attempt to redress the inequalities and exploitation experienced by members of the underclass in a particular society. Thus theft can be defined as a `social crime'. It does have a place in the repertoire of an ill defined and individualised class consciousness.*

Crime and Consciousness

The criminal records provide the best documented window on to the world of the master and the servant. In fact for this period, the rural labourer of the Western Cape only enters the written records once he or she has been rendered a criminal, mainly in terms of sections of the Masters and Servants Act. Of course the corollary is also partly true.

The masters emerge from the criminal records mainly as

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42. 1/STB 2/44 n.d. 1874; See Cooper, `The State and Agricultural Labour', p7
43. also see 1/STB 2/48 case 41, 19 February 1880

* Although it could also be the form in which a more aggressive consciousness could be expressed. See later in chapter under **The Election, the Bribe and the Stolen Pigs**

people eager to control the lives of their workers either through threat or punishment and thus they are rendered as autocratic hybrids of their slave holding forebears. The slant of the evidence, in itself, speaks volumes of the junctures at which farmers met their servants.

In Albions Fatal Tree, Douglas Hay wrote a seminal article on the role of law and justice in securing the continued legitimacy of the ruling class in England during the eighteenth century as English society entered an era of transition to the hegemony of industrial capitalism.[44] Hay argues that "all men of property knew that judges, justices and juries had to be chosen from their ranks".[45]

By this he meant that dispensation of justice had an inherent property qualification attached to it. The labourer being tried for theft both in eighteenth century England, as well as in nineteenth century Stellenbosch was aware that it was his employer and not he who would meet the judge or magistrate on an equal footing outside the court.

Pardon, or in our case reprimand, played a very important role in creating the illusion of a just and benevolent justice. "It allowed the rulers {of England} to make the courts a selective instrument of class justice, yet simultaneously to

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44. Hay D, `Property, Authority and the Criminal Law' in Hay D Linebaugh P and Thompson EP [eds], Albions Fatal Tree, [London, 1975], pp 17-64; See Innes and Styles `The Crime Wave'pp380-435 for a summary of the debate on the role of law and of criminalisation in social control.
45. Hay, `Property', p38

proclaim the law's incorruptible impartiality...".[46] In Stellenbosch this notion of manipulating the law through the use of `pardon' was given an added dimension by the fact that it was the master who demanded leniency on the part of the magistrate towards the erring servant. This at once reinforced the threat of potential prosecution but also secured the gratitude of the servant to the master who had at once emphasised his authority but within a `benevolent 'context.

In assessing the cases where this leniency was practised it is clear that only the wealthier farmers made use of this technique. This had much to do with the practical drawbacks of the Masters and Servants Acts which resulted in a loss of labour time on the part of the servant as well as taking the farmer away from the farm. It was only those farmers who had overseers, or those who could afford to use up twelve hours of a labourers labour time in order to teach the said labourer a lesson, who used the tactic.[47]

Of course these members of the dominant class were also those who were most closely associated with the workings of the law and therefore realised the benefits which accrue from exploiting the threat of force which always lies behind justice. This was to become even more true in the depression of the 1880s and the early 1890s when only the really wealthy were prepared to prosecute under the Masters and Servants Act.*

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46. Hay, `Property' p48; also see his comments on the generality of the law, pp55; 56
47. See PA Myburgh, 1/STB 2/45 case 187, 29 August 1876; 1/STB 2/54 case 260, 24 January 1885

* See chapter 4 for discussion on how the workings of the Act favoured wealthier farmers.

Another striking aspect of the role of law in maintaining an equilibrium in Stellenbosch, is the degree to which the legitimacy of the law was accepted by the underclass. However this statement needs clarification. Certainly the state was successful in establishing the court as the `proper' context for arbitration of class conflict. Contractors, the elite of the rural underclass, used the power granted to them under the Masters and Servants Acts to prosecute labourers who had not fulfilled their contracts.[48]

Labourers also recognised the validity of the law in the sense that they took their masters to court if there had been a great infringement of customary behaviour. Thus one finds cases of labourers prosecuting their masters for assault. After an assault by her master J Michell of Mariendahl, Joanna de Vos went to lay a charge with the magistrate. On returning to the farm she was assaulted a second time for having laid the charge. Undeterred she again went to Stellenbosch and laid a second complaint.[49]

There is a degree of ambiguity with regard to how labourers and particularly resident farm labourers perceived the legitimacy of the law as a deterrent in halting crimes against the property of the farmer. From all accounts this kind of crime was endemic ranging from theft of alcohol, clothes and sheep to arson.

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48. 1/STB 2/54 case 193, 13 July 1885; 1/STB 2/68 case 37, 24 January 1898
49. 1/STB 2/64 case 305, 16 December 1895; also 1/STB 2/42 Statement by Hendrik Jooses to Resident Magistrate, 27 March 1870, charging employer JJP du Toit of Groot Zalze with assault; 1/STB 2/54 case 95, 12 March 1885; see 1/STB 2/54 case 41, n.d. Marie a labourer said he knew the law as well as P Neethling his employer at Jonkershoek...

It seems that the law was respected where it could be used to the advantage of either the servant or the master but similarly was ignored in the cases where it was supposed to act as a deterrent. To arrive at some understanding of consciousness and the transformations that might have occurred in the period 1870-1900, one has to go beyond a discussion of the workings and manipulation of justice and attempt to deconstruct the meanings of the `crimes' themselves.

The mercantile and judicial functions performed within Stellenbosch helped create the context for the structuring of economic and social relations within the district. But the rural dimension was equally important. The primacy of agriculture in the economy of Stellenbosch district makes essential a study of relations between farmers and labourers. For it was in the rural arena that the intrinsic struggle for assertion of power and of rights by masters and servants was played out.

The View from the Cottage

It has been argued above that in the fifty years following emancipation, the rural world in Stellenbosch district was invested with the legacy of slavery by both geographical, spatial and architectural layout in the district and on the farms themselves. It has also been argued that this use of space and architecture served as symbols which empowered the dominant class to retain the norms which had governed earlier relationships with servants in a different context.

It is tempting to continue relying on the traditions of slave heritage to explain the despotic nature of labour relations

in Stellenbosch district in the late nineteenth century, but this merely restates a description, it does not really offer an explanation. As Beinart, Delius and Trapido succinctly put it, "The way in which new forms of exploitation were embedded in the old has sometimes disguised the extent and reality of the refashioning of rural society".[50]

Helen Bradford has explored labour relations on the South African farms in the 1920s in a time and in areas where reliance on a slave-legacy explanation would be inappropriate, and concludes that the straitened economic position of the majority of farmers partly led them to resort to a system of labour relations which for many labour tenants was not dissimilar to serfdom.[51]

Certainly the majority of farmers in Stellenbosch were uncomfortably aware of their dependence on labour and particularly on the need to exploit labour power to the maximum in order to remain relatively solvent. Progressive and more successful farmers shared these perceptions and concerns with their more economically insecure peers. The area of difference lay in their preparedness to utilise new sources of labour such as imported African labour which again is related more to their ability to pay for that labour than to a less conservative

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50. Beinart, Delius and Trapido, `Introduction' to Putting a Plough to the Ground, p2
51. Bradford, `The ICU of Africa', Chapter 1, p4; also see Morris, `The development of capitalism in South Africa'

approach to employing `foreigners'.*

Thus one can argue that the crucial determinant in the relations between the farmers and labourers on the farms in the period 1870 to 1900 was the capitalising context which put severe strains on farmers and which encouraged super-exploitation of their labour force. But in looking at the consciousness of the dominant class vis a vis their labourers in Stellenbosch it is also clear that appeals to norms established under slavery were still being made in the 1870s.

In the 1890s the Zuid Afrikaan began to foster the notion of paternalism. The editor queried whether the system of service contract, which had replaced slavery and which put master and servant on an equal footing, was desirable. "The Cape farmer who has control of his farm and gives his labourers a model to emulate can adjust to a patriarchal system better than perhaps any one else in this country".[52]

From the farmer's standpoint, labour relations were conducted within the framework of a warped paternalism which relegated the `coloured' workers to the status of minors, who should not be `cheeky', who might `deserve' a thrashing, but who were also regarded with a kind of affection.[53]. An analysis of labour relations on the farms of Stellenbosch district has to

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* See chapter 3

52. ZA 28 July 1890

53. See Bradford, `The ICU of Africa', chapter 1, p65-69; See author's interview with Koos de Waal of Happy Vale, 25 February 1986; "They were fond of their ou-baas and ouma. They loved us. We had six labourers they were in my grandfather's time too. They always called him ou-seer. Now they come with all this bloody nonsense"

consider the slave heritage as well as situating the relations of production within a process of capitalist development.

It is clear that the last three decades of the century did place a new strain on the interaction of farmers and labourers. It was a time of particular depression for wine farmers both in the realm of production and marketing of the product, and also in their own domain. The overriding tones that emanate from the Labour Commission of 1893 are perturbation - even sorrow - and wrath. There was an awareness that the control and power which had been exercised over farm labourers and which had been taken for granted after the traumas of reconstruction was now once again a matter for dispute.

Farmers perceived that they were part of a world whose foundations were being shaken, although certainly they exaggerated the degree of instability. "You ask the parents to engage their daughter as a nurse-girl with you and they have the impertinence to ask you whether you will not engage your daughter with them", complained DJ Joubert of Franschoek. Another farmer complained that "it is obvious that the servant is striving not to be under his master, but over him, in fact to be in the place of the master".[54]

Members of the dominant class were aware that this independence and mobility was part of a wider social and economic upheaval, attendant on industrialisation. Reverend Weeber of the Rhenish Missionary Society compared the insolence and "moral

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54. ZA 21 February 1884, letter to the Editor; CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p288

decline" of the underclass in Stellenbosch to conditions in Germany. "It is happening all over the world. A spirit of liberty is taking possession of the classes".[55]

It was in response to this apparent revolution of labourers' attitudes, that farmers reverted to the security of traditional methods of control.* There was an almost uniform response of farmers testifying to the 1893 Labour Commission for the passing of a strop act. The basis of this request for the legally sanctioned use of corporal punishment was accompanied by pleas for more stringent Masters and Servants Laws which would not punish offending labourers by imprisonment. This was seen as punishing the farmer too, in that he then lost the use of valuable labour power.[56]

In Stellenbosch district some labourers did enjoy a brief Indian Summer; alternative areas of employment were being created; farmers dependence on their labour power was evident; the rural labour market had not yet become oversupplied; and the advent of machinery had not yet undercut their bargaining position to any great extent.

Class struggle which had always been a component of relations in the countryside continued to reconstitute and remould the rural world. It emerged in the endemic petty theft, in the violence which recurred in the social discourse between labourers and farmers, in the terminology used by the master

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55. CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission 1893, p310
* See chapter 4
56. CCP G3-'94 Labour Commission, pp252; 258; 266; 293; 313]

towards the labourer and vice versa.

The use of language as an abusive tool is obvious in the criminal records. In times of stress racist epithets were quick to escape. Labourers called their masters variously, "damned doesman", "verdoender Dutchman" as well as more substantive names such as "Moershoud".[57] This form of racism on the part of masters is less dramatically revealed in the records, mostly because masters could not be taken to court for being abusive towards their labourers. However the names of labourers on the farms well illustrates the perception that farmers had towards the dignity of their workers. The use of the diminutive is one way of undermining a person's authority, this was most common nomenclature for `local' labourers. African labourers bore more indignity. They were often given names such as "Swart Boy" although in the records they often appear only as a contract number.

Struggle and discord also emerged in the late nineteenth century in forms which are indicative of a society undergoing painful transition from poorly conceived and badly executed agricultural ventures to an unevenly capitalising agrarian economy. In a society which so curtailed the expression of members of the underclasses, the use of covert channels in which they could articulate an often antagonistic consciousness was an established feature, but the mode of expression changed as conditions and consciousness itself was transformed.

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57. "Damned Dutchman"; "Bloody Dutchman"; "mother..." 1/STB 2/45 case 69, 22 April 1875; 1/STB 2/54 case 83, 2 March 1885; 1/STB 2/62 case 105, 27 March 1893; etc

The penetration of the capitalist world onto the domain of the farm, and the growth of the colonial state which began to displace the power of the farmer over his servant through bureaucratic controls and discipline, helped to realign the margins within which farmers and labourers interacted on the farm.[58]

Arson was the most visible weapon used by members of the Stellenbosch underclass during the 1870s and particularly during 1875. This is in contrast to the class antagonism of the 1880s, where arson was less prevalent but where discontent was expressed through strikes and confrontation with the employer, until the beginning of the 1900s when rural incomes fell to record lows and rural protest bowed before the more immediate struggle of trying to stay alive.

The 1870s was a decade of strange tensions. Master and servant eyed each other across the yard while the representatives of capitalising farmers and industrialists vied with one another across the parliamentary floor. In the second half of the 1870s political mobilisation and rural class antagonism coalesced in the different responses of the dominant and underclasses to the transformations taking place in the colony. Resentments were played out both in the political as well as in the personal arena where power and politics lurked behind the deferential smile and the beneficent wave.

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58. See Tilly C, `Introduction' in Tilly and Tilly, Class, Conflict and Collective Action, ppl3-26 for a discussion of how the emergence of capitalist hegemony and the growth of the national state, help to transform the articulation of class conflict

Control over work was one area of conflict. Labourers appear to have regarded attempts by the farmer to regulate or manage activities as illegitimate interference. This designated the farmer to a position exterior to the labour process and therefore claimed for the labourers on the farms, a terrain over which they had some control.

When Hendrick Jooses was reprimanded by his master J du Toit of Groot Zalze for ploughing inefficiently, he ignored him. This resulted in Du Toit striking Jooses several times. The fact that the case appears in the records as a charge of assault against Du Toit, also of course demonstrates the fact that labourers did attempt to seek redress through legal avenues.[59] Similarly in August 1871 Adam Caster was busy making a cart for Herman Morkel. When Philip Morkel, Herman's son interfered Caster replied "That I knew what I was doing and that he had nothing to do with me or my work". Morkel then beat him.[60]

The work place was also where the farmers and labourers confronted each other most frequently, so it was here that often unarticulated grievances were articulated in tense moments which might initially have been linked to the work situation. In 1893, C Ackerman of Blaauwklip gave interesting testimony in a case in which he was charging his labourers with assault.[61]

> "When I came to my cellar and was loading the wagon,. Afsor was on the wagon to empty

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59. Although it doesn't appear that the matter ever went further than the form of a statement made by Jooste, 1/STB 2/42 to Resident Magistrate, 27 March 1870
60. The case was settled out of court with Morkel paying compensation for work lost. 1/STB 2/42 deposition, 16 August 1871; see also 1/STB 2/50 case 46, 27 March 1882

> the wine into the casks. September went to do so but threw more wine outside the funnel than in it... I told September to come off as he was drunk. He said `I will not listen to a damned doesman'... I jumped off the wagon and pushed him aside with my hand. September then hit my face with his fist... I threw him to the ground. He got up and butted at my face with his head... His father Afsor then seized me by the shoulders and said `come here I have long waited for you'".

At the time of the first crisis of labour shortage faced by farmers after the start of the period of transition in 1875, a great fire occurred in Stellenbosch village; 47 buildings were burnt, causing about £ 15 000 worth of damage and one person was killed.[62] This was a most disconcerting example of underclass dissatisfaction which gained much column space for Hofmeyr who recommended the death sentence for arson.

The dominant class had cause to be worried. " In our rural **reports, more and more mention is made of arson. This crime appears in the rural districts to becoming an endemic sickness among the coloured population.** In Stellenbosch this is spreading further and further and a situation of fear and trembling exists".[63]

Arson is an acute and individual articulation of dissatisfaction, but arson does not dismantle or reject the status quo. It seeks violent redress within the parameters of the given. The labourer who set fire to his/her master's farm house

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61. 1/STB 2/62 case 195, 27 March 1893; see also 1/STB 2/48 case 200 24 September 1880
62. CO 3245 Resident Magistrate to Colonial Secretary, 15 January 1875
63. ZA 3 February 1875

was not rejecting the structure of labour relations itself, so much as demanding that an infringement of custom be redressed.

Arson was predominantly a crime of revenge against an employer for premature dismissal or a wage dispute, performed by men from the rural underclass.[64] Where it is used as an act of revenge or of social redress, is therefore found most often in societies experiencing a transition to capitalist relations rather than in developed capitalist societies.[65] Stellenbosch society was confronting the implications of industrialisation; mechanisation, the closer link with other areas, the threat to traditional forms of behaviour. All this heightened tensions.

As a retributive action demanding justice in terms of custom, arson would thus be perpetrated against the symbol of tradition, against the most visible sign of the dominance of the master. In the rural world it was above all property, the physical presence of the farm house on the land owned by the farmer. The house was the clue to power and to status. The size of the house signified the wealth of the owner, and thus served to reinforce the personal power of the farmer over his labourers whose inferior position was underlined by the meanness of their dwellings.

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64. Schulte R, `Arsonists. Conflicts of Domination and Subjectivity in a Rural Society', [unpublished paper presented to the third round table conference of Anthropology and History: "Hersschaft [Domination] as Social Practice, Hamburg, 1983], pg2; 1/STB 2/41 preparatory examination 12 August 1869; 1/STB 2/45 preliminary examination, 21 January 1875; ZA 5 May 1875 etc.
65. In the latter arson takes on the capitalist form, of trying to benefit from insurance. See Schulte, `Arsonists' and Rude, Criminal and Victim, chapter 3, for comparative material on arson in rural Germany and England during the nineteenth century.

"Anyone who set fire to a farm struck at the heart of rural existence, damaging not only the property but also the `person' of the farmer".[66] This rationale is particulary valid in the context of the intimacy of social relations in Stellenbosch district, where property and name had been tied for generations and where the farm was the nucleus of interaction.

As the district was increasingly drawn into a broader capitalist arena, conflict and consciousness began to transform into forms consistent with a proletarianised labour force, although the transformation is impressionistic rather than structural. The form rather than the content of action seems to have been the primary sign of change in the late nineteenth century.

Disputes still tended to revolve around infringements of custom, but this was done through collective worker action rather than on an individualised basis.[67] However collective action had a wider application: it was used both as a weapon in labour disputes as well as in more subtle struggles against members of the dominant class.

In analysing instances of collective action it seems that contract workers were most often involved. This might be due to the fact that they lived off the farm and thus were protected from the extra-legal coercion that could be used by farmers against resident labourers. The fact that contract workers often

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66. Schulte, `Arsonists', p3
67. see 1/STB 2/48 case 200, 24 September 1880; 1/STB 2/54 case 141, n.d. for trial, but `crime'took place, 15 April 1885; 1/STB 2/56 case 185, 28 July 1887; 1/STB 2/68 case 3, 4 January 1898 etc.

resided on a mission station, must also have enhanced a collective consciousness.[68]

The Election, the Bribe, and the Stolen Pigs

During June, July and August of 1883 and February of 1884, HJ Louw, the owner of a farm in Banhoek, experienced a series of thefts. By August 1883 he had lost 40 pigs while in February grapes were stolen from his vineyard.[69] A scandal broke in February of 1884 when ML Neethling's election to the Legislative Assembly was declared invalid owing to corruption on the part of his son-in-law. What is the connection between these events?

The area of Banhoek lies at the top of the Helshoogte Pass which winds its way up from Stellenbosch towards Franschoek. In the nineteenth century the source of seasonal and contract labour was the Pniel mission station which was situated in Banhoek on the road linking Stellenbosch and Franschoek. The majority of Pniel inhabitants engaged in seasonal work to supplement the food they produced from their plots on the station.*

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68. See Brenner R, 'Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe' Past and Present 70 February 1976, pp30-75, for comments on how patterns of landownership and living conditions effect the fashioning of class consciousness
69. see 1/STB 2/53 case 89, 4 March 1884; 1/STB 2/53 case 98, 11 March 1884

* See chapter 1 for comments on increasing proletarianisation of mission peasant farmers through the nineteenth century, For employment of Pniel labourers on the farms see 1/STB 2/45 case 69, 22 April 1875; 1/STB 2/54 case 113, 23 March 1885; 1/STB 2/54 case 193, 13 July 1885; 1/STB 2/56 case 268, 14 November 1887

The fact that the people in Pniel lived in close proximity to one another as well as the fact that they shared common work experiences on the farms, helped to create the conditions for a collective exploitation of the resources of the neighbourhood as well as a collective resistance to infringements of what they perceived as their rights within their society. This was in contrast to the more individualised consciousness of labourers working and living on the farms.[70]

One of the capitalising farmers in Banhoek in the 1880s, and one of the wealthiest, was Hendrik Johannes Louw. He owned four farms in Stellenbosch district, as well as an erf and buildings in Malmesbury.[71] Other than his wealth, and his membership of the ZABBV, Louw's other claim to fame was his connection through marriage to one of the district's most respected citizens, his father-in-law, ML Neethling. Louw depended financially to quite an extent on Neethling to stand surety for his bonds. He was both financially and morally in Neethlings debt.[72]

On 23 February 1884, the invalidation of Neethlings election to the Legislative Council made the headlines of the Zuid Afrikaan. HJ Louw had apparently dismissed a labourer

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70. The lack of labour organisation in Stellenbosch is striking in comparison to labourers experiences in France in the same period where most workers were unionised. The much larger scale of farming operations in France and the fact that French labourers lived in tightly knit village communities on the farms, are key reasons as to the greater sense of class consciousness. Frader, `Grapes of Wrath'
71. ZA 16 July 1889, The four wine farms brought him between 300 and 400 leagures of prize winning wine per year, Insp 6 October 1882; ZA 16 July 1889
72. see Hofmeyr Papers MSC 8 Box 1B, ZABBV Executive Report of 1881, p21; See Insp 26 April 1881, p64; Insp 6 October 1882, p44, Insp 19 October 1886, p31

who had not voted for Neethling in the recent election. The newspaper was outraged saying "the court verdict is wrong. The court listened to the coloured over HJ Louw. Mr Louw says he dismissed the coloured because he asked for a day's leave to go and vote for ML Neethling, but did not vote".[73]

The attempt to influence the voting patterns of those members of the underclass that could vote was not an unusual activity. In a time of open voting, drink, money and coercion were used to guide voters in the appropriate direction. "Men of influence expected their tenants, clients, debtors and other dependents to vote for them and had means of ensuring they did so".[74]

HJ Louw owned many houses rented by registered voters which gave him additional leverage to use on his father-in-law's behalf.[75] The securing of the `coloured' vote was crucial as the vote of people defined as `mixed' could be a determining factor. In 1891 the return by race of registered voters in the division of Stellenbosch was "751 Whites, 900 Coloureds and 9

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73. ZA 23 February 1884
74. Purkis, `Politics, Capital and Labour', p32
75. Purkis, `Politics, Capital and Labour', p33; The 1894 by-election in Stellenbosch for the House of Assembly was stained with allegations of bribery and corruption. Various people were paid to vote for candidates. For example, Jas Stadler offered J Baard, a day's wages if he would vote for Hofmeyr and De Waal. Hofmeyr Papers MSC 8 Box 4, 21 such allegations; Hofmeyr papers MSC 8 Box 4 Book entitled 1894 Election; Similar allegations pertaining to Somerset West were made in the by-election of 1899. Hofmeyr Papers MSC 8 Box 5, Stellenbosch file on by-election 1899

Aboriginal Natives".[76]

A week after the election scandal, on the 4 March 1884 several members of the Pniel mission station appeared in the Stellenbosch Magistrate's court on charges of theft of pigs and grapes. Arend Arendse, a contractor, and a man working in his employ on Louw's farm, Thomas Davidse, were charged with stealing 2 pigs from Louw in July 1883.[77]

The nature of the accuseds' answers is illuminating, and gives one a hint of the questions asked, which are not supplied in the records. Arendse said that "Mr Louw told me to come out with the truth because he knew everything... Mr Louw held out hopes of lighter punishment if I revealed the truth. I am not a registered voter". Clearly, the Magistrate was trying to ascertain if any corruption had been practised in soliciting the confession of Arendse. This does not seem to have been the case in this instance because of Arendse's ineligibility for bribery, but the Pniel inhabitants obviously did not favour Neethling, nor his son-in-law.

On the 20 March about a month after HJ Louw's appearance to give evidence in the election case, the Zuid Afrikaan published an indignant article on the behaviour of certain members of Pniel mission station. The magistrate's comments were reported in full. "... It was clear that a general raid on a notable scale

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76. CO 3679, 28 December 1891. The vote was given to men who occupied £25 of -immovable property or who earned £50 in wages per year. A few chief herdsmen, and members of mission stations with access to land could thus qualify for the vote. The Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 raised the property qualifications to £ 75
77. 1/STB 2/53 case 89, 4 March 1884

had been made on Mr Louw by certain bad members of the Pniel mission station".[78]

The saga came to a close when the by-election for the same Stellenbosch seat was held in April 1884. Neethling was re-elected and at a meeting of "influential coloured" voters in Stellenbosch he received their unanimous support, but in the Pniel constituency, he received not a vote. All 75 votes went to Ross, the other candidate.[79]

The economic recession of the 1880s also found expression in relations between farmers and those labourers living permanently on the farms. In 1887, Anthonie Lewis was convicted for using abusive language to his master, W Roux. The latter stated his case,"I saw the prisoner come from his work. I asked him where he was going. He said `I am not going to work without money...I won't work under a bankrupt farmer who cant pay me or my children'".[80] The bonds that had bound farmer and labourer together in the Western Cape were beginning to fray, although slightly, in the late nineteenth century as other employment opportunities became available.

More than anything, the last two decades of the nineteenth century broadened the frame of reference of the inhabitants of Stellenbosch district. For labourers, a measure of choice was

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78. ZA 20 March 1884
79. ZA 19 April 1884; ZA 22 April 1884; This voting pattern reflects the stratification which was beginning to divide the underclass in Stellenbosch. Four years later at a similar meeting, a voter said to applause that "We coloureds will vote only for Hofmeyr and Myburgh".ZA 1 November 1888
80. 1/STB 2/56 case 185, 28 July 1887; also see 1/STB 2/62 case 220 25 August 1893, case of a shepherd keeping an account book recording wages received and debts incurred

granted through the expanding labour market, which in turn introduced new factors into their position as labourers on the farms. For farmers, it was a period of chronic insecurity with regard to access to and control over their labour force. By the 1900s though, it was apparent that they had little cause for concern. The balance of power came to rest, as it had after the earlier period of insecurity in the 1830s, on the side of the dominant class.

CONCLUSION

In the decade before Union, Stellenbosch district retained many of the features that had characterised social and economic relations in the preceding thirty years. Between 1896 and 1904, wine farmers enjoyed a short respite from the despondency of the previous decade. Prices remained high and the South African War provided a temporary relief to farmers in much the same manner as had the diamond discoveries of some thirty years previously.* There was an increased demand for cheap wine and brandy, and this helped farmers recoup some of the losses caused by the recession and by phylloxera devastation.

The war also brought new employment opportunities for labourers. The establishment of a remount depot in Stellenbosch generated a flourishing trade, and a man with a horse and cart could do good business as a transport rider. Washerwomen were also in demand and could earn up to 6d per day.[1] The remount camp therefore became a destination for deserting servants who mainly found employment as mule drivers, at wages of up to £ 4 10s per month.[2]

After the war, in 1904, the colony experienced another recession. Farmers precariously staved off insolvency. "Many of

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* See Table 8, p161

1. Leipoldt, 300 Years of Cape Wine, p162; Nasson W, 'Moving Lord Kitchener: Black Military Transport and Supply Work in the South African War 1899-1902, with particular reference to the Cape Colony', Journal of Southern African Studies 11 1 1984, pp25-51
2. 1/STB 2/72 case 21, 9 January 1900; 1/STB 2/72 case 24, 9 January 1900; 1/STB 2/72 case 29, 11 January 1900; 1/STB 2/73 case 339, 4 July 1900 etc

the farmers are in a bad way" stated the Standard Bank report on the district for 1907, "in many cases they have been unable to repay the interest on their bond for a considerable period".[3] The Inspector reported that creditors were not calling for repayment of mortgages which protected some struggling farmers from financial ruin. The outlook was bleak for the majority of farmers who still had "little chance of accumulating capital for building cellars and buying casks".[4]

Between 1899 and 1907 subdivisions seem to have occurred at a much higher rate than during the depression of the 1880s.[5] This suggests that the heritage of at least twenty years of adverse conditions was seriously undermining the security of wine farmers even though their creditors were being lenient in calling up loans. In the 1880s this had been sufficient to stop struggling farmers resorting to subdivision. In the 1900s it was not.

The attraction of fruit and wine farming, and of the district itself, continued to lure businessmen and professional people with capital to Stellenbosch. The quitrent registers show a renewed influx of people from outside the district who benefited from the poor economic circumstances which forced

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3. Insp 9 October 1907, p13
4. Evidence of JP Louw to CCP G30-1905, Report of a Committee nominated by the Western Province Board of Horticulture to enquire into the Wine and Brandy Industry of the Cape Colony, p49
5. See 1/STB 11/ 5 f249, 1900; QRR 191 f189, 1909; QRR 191 f209, 4 February 1909; QRR 191 f219, 22 April 1902; QRR 191 f220, 10 August 1905; QRR 192 f236, 5 April 1902; QRR 192 f249, 14 December 1900; QRR 192 f331, 27 July 1907; QRR 194 f829, 20 November 1901; etc etc

farmers to subdivide their properties.[6] The Standard Bank report for 1907 remarked that "The factor which may help keep up prices for farm properties in this district, lies.., in the desirability of many of them as residences for wealthy men who can make a hobby farming". i.e who could afford to ride out the years when no return could be expected from farming operations.[7] By 1909, farmers in this position were a rarity. Interest on some farms was in arrears for up to 3 years.[8]

The commission appointed to look in to the economic position of the wine districts reported that the decline in wine production was a "blessing in disguise" as the market for Cape wine remained poor.[9] In this decade the state continued its contradictory policies regarding wine farmers' interests. Various select committees pointed out the unstable position of wine farmers and stressed the need to help them by setting up co-operative ventures, while at the same time measures were passed which threatened the economic viability of wine farming. For revenue purposes, an excise tax of 10d, which was 67% higher than that imposed on imported brandy, was imposed in 1904 causing the same indignation and distress among wine farmers as had the

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6. Insp 9 October 1909, p13; 1/STB 11/5 f91, 20 July 1899, Transfer of 315 morgen in Somerset West, to De Beers Consolidated Mines; 1/STB 11/5 f181, 8 June 1899, transfer of 814 morgen to a Mr Samuel Kerr; also see QRR 191 f189, 1909; QRR 191 f219, f232, 22 April 1902; etc
7. Insp 13 October 1907, p13
8. CCP G47-1909, Report of a Commission appointed to enquire in to the economic condition of the "Wine Districts" of the Cape Colony, and on certain other matters having relation thereto, p9
9. See Table 4, p68; CCP G47-1909 Report on Wine Districts, p3

TABLE 8: SUMMARY OF WINE AND BRANDY PRODUCTION FOR THE COLONY *

YEAR	WINE	BRANDY
1891	46 973	1117
1892	no returns	
1893	48 010	12 112
1894	35 624	10 816
1895	42 439	10 835
1896	44 431	9 878
1897	34 435	11 020
1898	37 977	10 839
1899	37 691	8 651
1900-1903	no returns	
1904	44 655	12 067
1905-1906	no returns	
1907	46 566	10 673
1908	42 433	9 084
1909	27 302	8 651

[Compiled from the Statistical Register of the Cape Colony]
* in leaguers

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earlier one of 1878.[10]

The monopoly of the liquor market which had been a feature since the early nineteenth century also continued in to the twentieth at the expense of the local product.[11] Merchants sold foreign brandy and wine in preference to Cape brandy and wine because of its better quality. This can be seen in the rising percentage of foreign liquor sales.[12] The lack of incentive to make a better quality wine remained. Arend de Waal of Happy Vale, who gained second place for his wine in the Stellenbosch Agricultural Show was only offered £4 per leaguer for this wine. "It is no good making wine at that price. There should be three

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10. Giliomee, `Farmers and Ethnic Politics' p35
11. Fridjon and Murray, Conspiracy of Giants
12. Foreign liquor. % sold of that of Cape product: 1892, 44%; 1895, 69%; 1904, 71.6%; Giliomee, `Farmers and Ethnic Politics', p35

prices allowed, for first, second and third classes of wine".[13]

A committee of enquiry into the wine and brandy industry in 1905, stated in its report that the "serious financial embarrassment of wine farmers was due to five factors. The prohibition of the sale of liquor to the black population, the shrinkage of the Transvaal market owing to the high import duty, the excise, the constant changes in liquor licensing procedure, and the limited consumption of Cape wines by the white population.[14]

The wine industry had experienced most of these problems since the 1870s. They were not to be properly addressed until the Co-operative Wine Growers Association of South Africa was successfully established in 191. The aim of the Association was to attempt to regulate wine production and marketing as had its predecessor, the Cape Town Wine Export Syndicate of 1888.*

The Association undertook to rectify the two major problems of the wine industry, the disposal of wine surpluses and the unsatisfactory prices received for wine and brandy.[15] The demand for wine after the First World War aided in the resuscitation of the industry, although the battle against ignorance and undercapitalisation was far from won.[16]

It took the direct intervention of the state to stabilise

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13. CCP G30-1905 Report into Wine and Brandy Industry, p50
14. CCP G30-1905 Report into Wine and Brandy Industry
* See chapter 3
15. Leipoldt, 300 Years of Cape Wine, p170
16. Monopolies have remained the dominant feature of the South African wine and liquor industry, see Fridjon and Murray, A Conspiracy of Giants

the wine industry. In 1918 the Association was floated as a limited company under the name of Kooperatiewe Wynbouwers Vereeniging van Zuid Afrika Beperk [KWV].* Six years later an Act was passed which enabled the KWV to exert more control over wine production by establishing a quota system and it also transformed the Association from a voluntary one into a state sponsored body.[17]

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, one aspect of economic conditions in the wine districts **had** changed. Wine farmers no longer complained of labour shortages, On the contrary, by 1909, they talked of an oversupply of labour, especially of unskilled labour. Nowhere in the commissions appointed to investigate the problems of the wine industry, do farmers rail against the state for competing on the labour market. Nowhere do they complain of insubordination, of a world being turned up side down.

By the 1900s, the massive Public Works schemes were coming to a halt through lack of finance, closing one area of alternative employment for members of the rural underclass. The continuing proletarianisation of Africans increased the size of the wage labour force and thus reduced the bargaining power that the labourers of the Western Cape had enjoyed while the labour market was under supplied.

The skilled artisans who established themselves in the towns

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* Co-operative Wine Growers Association of South Africa Limited

17. Act No. 5 of 1924. The KWV is a controversial body. Farmers interviewed voiced dissatisfaction with the quota system

of the Western Cape were able to entrench their position. It was the unskilled labourers who had deserted the farms to work on the railways and the public works, who had bargained with farmers for better wages and working conditions, who suffered most in the emerging industrial economy of the twentieth century.

The 1909 report on the wine districts claimed that "unskilled coloured labour is in excess of demand... A number of witnesses stated that on several occasions parties of labourers had volunteered to work without wages if only they could be supplied with food".[18] The labourers of the Western Cape were not alone in this experience of the under side of recession and industrialisation. Africans who had laboured on the mines in the 1870s and 1880s on terms favourable to themselves, at relatively good wages, found their position undercut by the early twentieth century.[19] They were now forced to participate in a bureaucratised system of migrant labour, the parameters of which were no longer controlled by them to any great extent, but rather by the Mining Houses and the South African State.

For farmers in the Western Cape, the world had righted itself. "It used to be very difficult to get coloured labour, but now if you hold up your finger you get hundreds".[20] In the rest of South Africa farmers were less sure of victory as they wrestled with an African tenantry, determined, although

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18. CCP G47-1909, Report on Wine Districts, p7
19. Delius P, `Migrant Labour and the Pedi, 1840-1880 in Marks and Atmore, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, pp293-312
20. CCP G47-1909 Report on the Wine Districts, p7

*. Farm workers are still not protected by labour legislation

increasingly unable, to work their land `independently'. Legal mechanisms continued to facilitate the domination of the farmer over the worker. After Union, the Masters and Servants Acts were retained, only being abolished in 1974.* Ironically though, the dominant class of rural South Africa was to formulate and grammarise a patois, Afrikaans, much influenced by the speech patterns of their subordinates, at a time when the dominance of the white Afrikaner over the black Afrikaner was coming to be enshrined in overtly racist legislation.

In the years between 1870 and 1900 farm labourers in the Western Cape might have sensed the bouquet of independence; they have yet to savour it.

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	3204	R-W	1872
	3216	Q-S	1873
	3230	Q-S	1874
	3245	Q-S	1875
	3260	Q-S	1876
	3275	R-S	1877
	3138	S-T	1879
	3342	Q-S	1880
	3376	Stellenbosch	1881
	3408	Stellenbosch	1882
	3438	Stellenbosch	1883
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M#/25	Rough Plan showing old freehold grants	

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7 ORAL INTERVIEWS

Mr Julian Starke, Muldersvlei Central, 23 November 1985
Miss Olga Starke, Muldersvlei Central, 23 November 1985
Mr Jack Starke, Muldersvlei Central, 23 November 1985
Mr Koos de Waal, Happy Vale, 25 February 1986