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**The Children's Friend Society in the Cape of Good Hope  
and the question of labour c. 1830-1842**

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation follows the lives of the children under the care Captain Brenton's Children's Friend Society to the Cape Colony in the period 1833-1842. Using the works of prominent Cape Colony historians such as Banks, Worden and Ross, I give an overview of the Cape Colony around the time of emancipation. My work includes an in depth study of the results of the 1839 Commission of Inquiry, which contained summaries of over 400 interviews with CFS apprentices stationed in the Cape Colony. Furthermore, I place great emphasis on the reporting by *The Times* in London on the activities of the CFS. My research highlights their humanitarian and anti-slavery rhetoric with regards to the children. This work attempts to highlight the role of the Times in the falling of the Society, the treatment of the children in the Cape and the failure of the parties involved to enact any change in the situations experienced by the CFS apprentices.

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## Introduction

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Between the 1833 and 1841, 843 children were sent from London to the Cape of Good Hope, a British Colony, by the Children's Friend Society (CFS). These children were bound to Dutch and English settlers as apprentices. This paper is a study of London at the time the Society was formed, the Cape Colony that the apprentices were sent to, with a look at the inhabitants, labour and the society as a whole, the role of that *The London Times* played in the fall of the Society in 1841 and the findings of the a Commission of Inquiry into the lives of apprentices in the Cape, that resulted in a Report in 1840. The 1840 Report was the first official feedback that the London public received regarding the well being and condition of the children in the Colony, and it was published seven years after the first ship of boys had left England's shores.

Although Britain is the only European colonial power to have "made an industry of the export of its children," the practice of juvenile emigration was not borne in Victorian England. The earliest documented schemes of juvenile emigration were from England to Virginia in 1607. For the next 350 years, philanthropists, with the support of the English government ran many similar schemes. Captain Edward Pelham Brenton, (1774-1839) a retired Royal Navy Officer with a philanthropic drive started the *Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy*<sup>1</sup> in 1830 with the object "reclaim and provide for vagrant children found in the streets without any means of subsistence except by begging and thieving."<sup>2</sup> Although the original plan was to train pauper children in the ways of industry, good moral habits and find them apprenticeships in and around London, the Society reported that there was no employment to be found for the young children, and so looked towards the colonies. The CFS sent London's 'street children' to the Cape of Good Hope, Canada, Mauritius and Australia. The majority of these children (seventy-two per cent) were sent to the Cape Colony.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This name was changed in 1833 to the Children's Friend Society, as it was thought to be a more appropriate name. It will henceforth be referred to as the CFS.

<sup>2</sup> Blackburn, G, *The Children's Friend Society* (Western Australia,; Access Press 1993) p.ix

<sup>3</sup> Blackburn, G, 1993, p. 283

There is some literature on the Society and their efforts in the British colonies during the mid-eighteen hundreds. Geoff Blackburn, a geologist from Australia who is a fourth generation descendant of Edmund Wright, a juvenile emigrant sent to the Swan River Colony in Australia, wrote *The Children's Friend Society*, first published in 1993. His work is useful for his reprinting of many of the primary sources, such as the CFS Annual Meeting reports, which was useful in my research when I was unable to access various documents in London. Furthermore, Edna Bradlow wrote a comprehensive paper on the presence of the CFS in the Cape Colony, including a full analysis of the role of John Fairbairn, editor of the *South African Commercial Advertiser* (SACA) and head of the CFS committee at the Cape. Although the SACA printed many articles relating to the CFS, I found that for the most part, they merely reprinted articles published in *The Times* and other publications back in the metropolis. For this reason, I have focused on *The Times* in London as the main marketer of propaganda surrounding the CFS activities.

The Society was created with the same zeal that brought the anti-Slavery Society in 1823 and the abolition of slavery in the British colonies in 1833. Andrew Bank's work *This paper follows the juvenile emigrant's journey from the workhouse or London streets to the Cape Colony. It offers insight into the 843 children whom were sent to the Cape of Good Hope from the first ship, the Charles Kerr which landed on the eleventh of May in 1833 to the last ship which arrived at the Cape on the fifteenth of the same month in 1841.*

At the end of the eighteenth century, Britain's control of her empire was, in the words of Ronald Hyam "a dominion of opinion." The period after the Napoleonic Wars, from 1815 to 1914 was a period of massive industrialisation and a rapid growth in the Protestant missionary movement. Along with this came a humanitarian drive that targeted the slave trade. This period is known as "

Britain's Golden Age.<sup>4</sup> Britain had however, entered the nineteenth century still reeling at the loss of the United States of America one of her oldest and most lucrative colonies, and had to turn her eyes to her other smaller and younger colonies. For the first half of the nineteenth century there was no dominant philosophy or consistent policy unifying the various British colonies. For example, in the Cape during the 1820s, it was said that "they knew no law but the will of the autocratic governor, Lord Charles Somerset."<sup>5</sup> By the 1840s many of the colonies were still very disconnected. The idea of an overreaching, powerful, all-knowing British government and Empire is not one that applies to the first half of the nineteenth century. The CFS and their involvement in the Cape make for a good example of this. With the final British takeover in 1806, and the following immigration of the four thousand settlers in the 1820s meant that the first half of the nineteenth century was a period of great change and transition for the Cape. Despite the fact that the British Empire did not have much direct control of the daily-goings on in the colony (post took three months to travel between London and Cape Town), the British take-over of the Cape, affected the original Dutch settlers greatly. They began to feel imposed upon by the British government, by what they considered to be an invasion of privacy- British interference in their labour systems, in particular, slavery. This paper will look at reflect the level of Britain's interference into their well-established (or so they believed) system of patriarchy. The Commission of Inquiry in 1839 and the subsequent 1840 Report gave rise to the refusal of the settlers, the Dutch settlers in particular to accept more apprentices. Furthermore this paper will address the findings of the report and the trial by London press that the Society underwent.

Chapter one gives the context in which this strange migration of Oliver Twists to the Cape of Good Hope occurred. It includes an overview of London in the first half of nineteenth century, the humanitarian beliefs at the time which affected the treatment of children and the Poor Laws that were introduced in the 1830s I

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<sup>4</sup> Hyam, Ronald, *Britain's Imperial Century 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (London: Batsford, 1976) pp15-20

<sup>5</sup> Hyam, Ronald, 1976, p.16

use the works of Robinson to shed some light on the evolution of the concept of childhood in Victorian London and what this meant for working class and pauper children that littered the streets of London.<sup>6</sup> Jordon's work on juvenile emigration in the nineteenth century gives us insight into the mind-set of the Society and its benefactors. The CFS argued right until their demise that they were giving their wards a second chance to make themselves respectable members of society. Just not London society. The 4000 settlers who arrived in the Cape in 1820 are discussed and compared to the juvenile emigrants. Chapter One also includes the history of the Children's Friend Society in London, with a look at Bradlow's work on the CFS in London. It outlines the asylums, Hackney Wick (for boys) and Chiswick (for girls) where the children spent up to three months preparing for their trip to the colonies. I used Blackburn's work to substantiate Bradlow's for this section. Chapter one introduces the workings of the Children's Friend Society in London, both through a study of the reports on the Annual General Meetings as seen in *The Times* and reference to Bradlow's work. The Society cannot be understood without some insight into the man behind it, Edward Brenton. I used a combination of his letters to the London Press, in particular *The Times*, and Brenton's memoirs, written by his brother Jaheel, shortly after Brenton's premature death. From this I believe I was able to conjure a fair representation of the man Brenton was, or rather, the man Brenton wanted the London public to think he was (whether or not this is the same cannot be known).

Chapter Two addresses the Cape Colony that the young emigrants found themselves in after sailing for three months from London. Robert Ross's work on colonial South Africa sets the scene along with Andrew Banks work on the erosion of slavery in the Cape.<sup>7</sup> It gives a lengthy description of the Dutch

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<sup>6</sup> Robinson, R, "Victorians, Children and Play," *English Studies*, 4, 1983

<sup>7</sup> Bank, Andrew, "The Erosion of Urban Slavery at the Cape, 1806-1834," p.82 in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) Chap 3

settlers to whom the majority of the apprentices were sent to, and some insight into what it would have been like to live on such a farm. Stanley Trapido's work on the first half of the nineteenth century is cited often, as I address the system of paternalism that was in place in the former Dutch colony.<sup>8</sup> As always in South African history, the question of labour is integral to this story. In The apprentices were supposedly sent to the Cape to help meet the ever growing labour demand, especially in light of the pending emancipation of the slaves. The first apprentices landed seven months before the emancipation of the slaves in the Cape on December 1, 1834. During the following four years, in what is termed the 'apprenticeship years' upward of six hundred young emigrants arrived regularly at the Cape. Along with the slaves, the apprentices had to work alongside the native Khoikhoi, who formed a large part of the Colony's labour force by the 1830s. Elphick and Malherbe's work gives us a deeper insight into the lives of the Khoisan and the systems of labour that were in place as I explore their role in the economy and the laws enacted to protect them.<sup>9</sup> The question of motive is approached in this chapter, whether the CFS were truly answering a demand for labour by sending the apprentices to the Colony or whether they were merely ridding their own streets of what was considered to be a social nuisance.

The apprentices' position in the class hierarchy was ambiguous. The term 'apprentice' was used to describe them, or rather, in many cases define them and yet it was the same word used for a former slave during the years 1834 to 1838. Chapter two will address this issue, with examples of contact between former slaves and juvenile emigrants in Chapter three. It gives an overview of the Cape's system of labour proceeding the first arrivals of juvenile emigrants in 1833. Did the failure of the CFS to clearly define the differences between the former slaves, referred to as apprentices and the juvenile emigrants who were

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<sup>8</sup> Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb 1990),

<sup>9</sup> Elphick, R and Malherbe, V.C, "The Khoisan to 1828," in Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840*, (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1989)

indentured as apprentices, create confusion and have a part to play in the fall of the Society? Accusations of white slavery were thrown at the Society from conception. In British settler colonies, white became a signifier of power. White skin carried with it certain privilege from which the darker-skinned indigenous people were excluded. However the juvenile apprentices were in a unique position in the Cape. The Cape colony was not, as Australia was, a penal colony. The CFS children that arrived at the Cape were generally written off as rough characters from the working class of England, in need of moral and religious training. Did the juveniles carry their class across from England? According to Catherine Hall, the whiteness of ones skin in the colony was conditional. It was affected by other factors such as class, age, gender and religion.<sup>10</sup> This placed the juvenile emigrants at a disadvantage from the minute they set foot in the Cape. Although they were white, British subjects, they were also young boys and girls from the London working-class, and some of them had been in trouble with the law before their move to the respective asylums in England. In the eyes of the settlers, the juvenile emigrants were higher up on the social ladder than the former slaves, but this was not formalised. In order for the scheme to have continued past 1841, a distinction in terms was needed. The lack of formal differentiation between the juvenile apprentices and the former slave apprentices made it very easy for the enemies of the CFS to paint them as traders in white slaves who were British subjects.

As explained above, I have put a special emphasis on the report by a Commission of Inquiry in 1839, which is analysed in Chapter three. There was a push by the English public in the second half of the 1830s for an inquiry into the condition and treatment of the apprentices in the Cape. The Governor at the Cape, George Napier was instructed by Lord Normandy to put together four commissioners to investigate. Chapter three deals with the findings of the report, the analysis by the Commissioners and my insight into the report along with relevant stories from *The Times*, which in some cases substantiate the claims made in the 1840 report and in other cases highlight the inefficiencies of the report. Included in

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<sup>10</sup> Hall, Catherine, "Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century," Chapter 3 in Levine, Philippa, *Gender and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) p.104

this chapter, along with a brief summary of the style used by each commissioner of inquiry are micro histories of certain apprentices. To the best of my ability I have tried to re-create the lives of the children, both in London and in the Cape, so that their experience might be better understood.

Chapter four focuses on the role that *The Times* played the dissolution of the CFS in 1841, with a close look at Jaheel Brenton's memoirs of Edward Brenton. Brenton and other members of the CFS courted the London press for the duration of the Society's existence.<sup>11</sup> *The Times*, who saw themselves as champions of the poor accused the CFS of white slavery and transportation of juveniles who were, in some cases, untainted by crime. This paper will argue that although *The Times* did raise awareness within London of what they considered the plight of these emigrants, they did so in a sensationalist fashion, with little follow up on many of the cases that they reported on. Coinciding with the demise of the Society, by 1841, humanitarian disillusionment in the aftermath of emancipation in the West Indies was rife. The British authorities were disappointed at what they deemed to be failure on the part of the freed slaves to discipline themselves in the manner in the wake of their emancipation.<sup>12</sup> According to Hyam, the humanitarian influence lost most of its drive in 1842, coinciding with the dissolution of the Society. I will look at the role that *The Times*, many of whose articles were republished by John Fairbairn in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, played in the dissolution of Society. *The Times* presented themselves to the London and Cape Colony readership as the voices of the children and yet, my research shows that they failed to do more to rescue the children (as they firmly believed the children needed rescuing). They instead published their articles and left the London public incensed and the settlers in the Cape feeling vilified. Nothing was done for the children in any great scale. The second voice heard by the London public was that of Brenton's, both through his numerous letters to the Times and the letters and prayers that were published in his memoirs in 1842. My analysis of the Report of 1840 will prove

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<sup>11</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, London, 1842

<sup>12</sup> Lester, A "British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire," in *History Workshop Journal*, 54 (2002): pp.39-41

that the Committee in London was relatively clueless as to the goings on once the children left England's shores. This ignorance, I argue is linked to the British government's failure to introduce formal policies and procedures for the running of the colony. The 1840 Report was the first official feedback that the CFS received regarding the treatment and condition of the juvenile emigrants and it was only instigated six years after the first twenty boys arrived at the Cape in May of 1833.<sup>13</sup>

Although both *The Times* and the CFS in London claimed to be speaking for the children and acting in their best interests, the only testimonies of the apprenticed children that exists is copies of letters that they sent to their parents, as seen in Chapter Four. *The Times* reprinted some of the letters that worried parents brought into the Magistrates offices when looking for information regarding their children. This paper will compare the emotive language and verging-on-sensationalist writing that *The Times* did on the children and the impassionate, rather stern tone that Brenton and the CFS as a whole spoke of the children. *The Times* appeared to have more insight into the conditions of the children, not necessarily because they had, but because they created 'sob stories' of white slave children surrounded by heathens in a far away place quite unlike home. Brenton on the other hand, never referred to a child by name, not in his innumerable letters to *The Times*, not in his prayers, many of which were reprinted in his memoirs and not in his personal correspondence.<sup>14</sup> *The Times* found it easy to paint him a heartless, corrupt, child-trafficker.

The second voice that was lost in *The Times'* attack on the CFS was that of the colonists themselves. They were the subject of much discussion and hatred. They were portrayed as monsters. Although some of the juvenile emigrants were

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<sup>13</sup> CHILDREN'S FRIEND SOCIETY. Copy of Report on the treatment and conditions of the juvenile emigrants at the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies, relative to the condition and treatment of the children sent out by the Children's Friend Society. BPP 1840 Vol XXXIII pp.341-376

<sup>14</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, London, 1842

placed in English homes (especially in the first years of emigration), *The Times* placed their focus on the Dutch farmers in the rural areas of the Cape Colony, whom they believed to be mistreating the young British subjects. Although the CASA reprinted articles regarding the CFS that *The Times* had published, in all of my research I could find no case in which a colonist from the Cape had something published in *The Times*. There were two different sets of representation. How the settlers saw themselves and how they were presented by the British Press by self-professed humanitarians.

The Dutch farmers were given a chance to fight back with the 1840 Report. Although it was the apprentices that were interviewed for the report (except in some cases where the Commissioner thought it necessary to interview the masters) I will argue this Report proved to be the voice of the Dutch farmers of the interior. It was a peculiar occurrence where Dutch settlers, in a British colony, were unknowingly given the chance to fight back against the accusations that had been hurled at them for over five years by the British press. The (somewhat debatable) positive results of the Report vindicated the Dutch and gave them a chance to say their piece to the English public. I contend that their refusal to accept any more juvenile emigrants in the wake of the 1840 report was instrumental, in the demise of the Society. *The Times* would have you believe differently. So too would the Children's Friend Society. Blackburn concluded that the conflict between "philanthropic idealism and social realism" brought the Society to its demise in 1841. I will argue that there were three factors that played differing roles in the demise of the Society. *The Times* played its role, the 1840 Report played its role and finally Brenton and the CFS played a part in their own demise, the lack of administrative control implementing the systems that the CFS set up in London in the Cape Colony. If the CFS had monitored the children more carefully from the very first shipment of boys, they would have been better able to combat the continuous tirade of attacks by the British press. This paper will show that the CFS had very little knowledge regarding the well-being, the whereabouts and the progress of the majority of the apprentices they sent to the Cape by 1839 when the report was compiled. Their courtship of the press, which, although was lengthy and verbose was impassionate when

referring to the children. *The Times* was able to present the public with the name of the child, the description of the parent's grief and then the vague responses, or worse, silence from the Committee in London.

The final chapter of this dissertation is on the demise of the CFS and the subsequent reporting on its demise by *The Times*. Not long after the fall of the Society, Reverend Saunders, who spent four years in the Cape, published a pamphlet which validated *The Times* campaign against the CFS. Saunder's pamphlet entirely justifies the worries expressed by the parents of apprentices that *The Times* went to such lengths to publish. Excerpts from this pamphlet are published at length in *The Times*, during 1842.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Chapter Five addresses the variety of reasons given for the fall of the Society, as seen in *The Times* whom were present and reporting on the final meetings of the CFS. The final chapter also highlights the dearth of articles on the CFS apprentices in the aftermath of the fall of the Society. *The Times's* role in the lives of the apprentices is best described as brief and momentary. From the dissolution of the Society, aside from the publication of Saunders' pamphlet, *The Times* did not lead any campaign to return the apprentices to England or instigate further investigation into their lives now that the Society was no longer in existence.

The purpose of this dissertation is to give insight into the lives of the apprenticed children from their lives in the street of London to their lives on the farms in the Cape Colony, primarily seen through *The Times*, the 1840 Report and Saunders pamphlet. Robinson, Jordon, Hadley and Jaheel Brenton's work set the scene in London in the early to mid nineteenth century. The works of Worden, Crais, Bank, Trapido and Ross supply context on the Cape Colony, so the environment that the children entered from 1833 can be better understood. The 1840 was not sufficiently (in my opinion) explored by Blackburn, as he failed to do more than present the facts of the 1840 Report, without much analysis. I believe my study and subsequent analysis of the Report give greater insight into the lives and conditions of the CFS apprentices in the Cape, highlighting specific cases and providing an analysis on areas such as wages, clothing, treatment,

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communication with home and religious education. Furthermore, my work on *The Times* acknowledges their role in the demise of the CFS but also highlights failings on the part of *The Times*, their failure to continue to investigate many of the cases presented before the magistrates in London, and their subsequent relative silence upon the dissolution of the Society.

## Chapter 1

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### *Victorian London and the Children's Friend Society*

Woe be to that Land where the children of the poor  
cry in vain for bread and for shelter: such is their state  
at this moment in England, and more particularly in  
London.<sup>16</sup>

By the mid-nineteenth century Victorian London was facing problems of mass unemployment, slums, industrialization and filled to capacity workhouses.<sup>17</sup> It was the age of industrialization and the population growth in London was between eighteen to twenty-one per cent a year from 1801-1879. London's expansion spilt over into the out-parishes of Surrey and Middlesex.<sup>18</sup> In the words of Captain Brenton, founder of the Children's Friend Society, the ills of Victorian London were "cholera, drunkenness, starvation, beggary, theft, misery."<sup>19</sup> Brenton worried that the poor of England were fast losing sight of their "love of country...which is the best safeguard of the state."<sup>20</sup> Brenton was convinced that by sending the children to the Cape and Britain's other colonies they were helping them reach a potential that would not have been attainable had they stayed in London. He believed that the success of their scheme would engender in the juvenile emigrants a love and appreciation for their mother country whom had so graciously given them a chance to 'start over.' Brenton's belief in the inherent British national identity was however, put to the test at the Cape, a former Dutch colony.

In early nineteenth century Revd. Joshua Kind commented that the streets of London were filled with uninhibited children who were "...filthy and very

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<sup>16</sup> Brenton, E, "Letter to the Editor of *The Morning Post*," October 5, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton* (London, 1842) p.86

<sup>17</sup> Donajgrodzki, A.P, "Social Police and the bureaucratic elite: a vision of order in the age of reform," in Donajgrodzki, A.P (ed) *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Totowa,N.J) : Rowman and Littlefield, 1977) p.51

<sup>18</sup> Smith, P, *Policing Victorian London: political policing, public order and the London Metropolitan Police* (Westport, Conn : Greenwood Press, 1986) p.16

<sup>19</sup> Brenton, E, "Letter to the Editor of *The Morning Post*", Aug 23, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, 1842, p. 85

<sup>20</sup> Letter to the Editor of *the Morning Post*, Aug 23, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, 1842, p. 85

ragged...rude and unmannerly in the extreme, but under no sort of control.”<sup>21</sup> One of the reasons for the increasing number of children in the streets of London was due to the new factory legislation, which limited the number of hours a week that a child could work. Included in this factory legislation reform was the new classification of ‘suitable ages’ for children in factory jobs, which forced many children into unemployment and idleness.<sup>22</sup> These legal reforms started in 1802 but were only properly enforced from the newer reforms made in 1819, 1825, and 1833, when inspections were carried out in factories to ensure that children were of the right age and were not being overworked.

Much of the upper classes felt that there was a need to “morally sanitize” the English working-man. <sup>23</sup>Patrick Colquhoun, the London Police Magistrate in the early nineteenth century, who Donajgrodzki refers to as “the father of British Police” wrote in 1806 that, “... the only means of securing peace in society is by enforcing the observance of religious and moral principles.”<sup>24</sup> Philanthropists, leaders and the elite believed in forming a system that would both “sustain and control the poor.”<sup>25</sup>

...An intense interest shown by the middle classes in what the working classes did after their release from the salubrious discipline of mill or workshop, [which] reflected anxiety about the social implications of unsupervised working-class leisure.<sup>26</sup>

Philanthropy in Victorian London was the process whereby the elites superimposed their beliefs of what was best upon those they believed to be inferior to them. A popular method of the study of philanthropy among historians of Victorian England is viewing the elites as the parents, with society

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<sup>21</sup> Thompson, F.M.L., “Social Control in Victorian Britain,” *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 34, 2 (May 1981): p.191

<sup>22</sup> Parr, Joy, *Labouring Children: British Immigrants to Canada 1869-1924* (London : Croom Helm, 1980) p. 28

<sup>23</sup> Storch, Robert D, “The problem of working-class leisure. Some roots of middle class moral reform in the industrial north: 1825-1850” in Donajgrodzki, A.P (ed) *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Totowa,N.J) : Rowman and Littlefield, 1977) p.139

<sup>24</sup> Donajgrodzki, A.P, “Social Police and the bureaucratic elite: a vision of order in the age of reform.” In Donajgrodzki A.P. (ed) 1977, p.54

<sup>25</sup> Donajgrodzki, A.P, “Social Police and the bureaucratic elite: a vision of order in the age of reform.” In Donajgrodzki, A.P, 1977, p. 54

<sup>26</sup> Storch, Robert D, “The problem of working-class leisure. Some roots of middle class moral reform in the industrial north: 1825-1850” in Donajgrodzki, A.P, 1977, p.139

working as 'one big family' that could be controlled by the parent bodies.<sup>27</sup> London in the nineteenth century was for all intents and purposes, overflowing. The street children that pilfered, stole, pick-pocketed and begged were a visual embodiment what the elite believed was the failure by the poorer classes to be masters of their own lives. The street children were proof, in the eyes of the middle class that the majority of pauper parents were unfit to care for their children, and therefore the philanthropists saw it as their duty to take on the role of parent to the children of paupers, criminals, beggars and workhouse residents. Furthermore, during the 1810s and 1820s, there was a noted increase in juvenile offenders, to the extent that special local inquiries had to be held. These inquiries found that there was a rise in crime from an earlier age, and Victorian philanthropists placed the blame on the parents.<sup>28</sup>

### **1.1 Emigration in the nineteenth century**

Mass emigration from the metropolis was not a new occurrence in the nineteenth century, nor, as I stated earlier, was child relocation. The tendency of migrants at the time was to "remain rooted in the world they had left behind."<sup>29</sup> A new social identity was created in the Cape in the early nineteenth century with the arrival of the 1820 settlers. The scheme was the brain-child of Lord Charles Somerset, proposed to the colonial office as an alternative to the mass emigration to the now independent United States. The emigration scheme did not target what were considered to be indigents, but rather it was geared towards "those who could form a self-sufficient community along an unstable frontier."<sup>30</sup> There was a great response from the British public with over 90 000

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<sup>27</sup> Thompson, FML, "Social Control in Victorian Britain," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 34, 2 (May 1981): p.191

<sup>28</sup> May, M, "Innocence and Experience: The Evolution of the Concept of Juvenile Delinquency in the mid-Nineteenth Century" *Victorian Studies*, 17, 1, The Victorian Child (September 1973) p.15

<sup>29</sup> Harper, Marjory & Constantine, Stephan, "Migration and Empire" *Victorian Studies*, 51, 1, (Autumn, 2011), p.

<sup>30</sup> Nash, M, *Baillie's Party of 1820 Settlers* (Cape Town : Balkema 1982) as seen in Lester, Alan, "Reformulating Identities: British Settlers in early nineteenth-century South Africa," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 23, 4 (1998), p.517

applicants. These settlers whom were divided along the boundaries of class, gender, religion and ethnicity had little alternative but to come together and create their own, reworked British identity. There were three distinct groups that settled in the Cape, the first were the proprietary parties, which was made up of a wealthy leader, who had with him, a minimum of ten indentured labourers. The leaders arrived at the Cape with introductions to the Governor. Their vision for the Cape was to recreate there the gentry lifestyle that they could no longer afford in England. The majority of the 1820 settlers were 'joint stock parties' which consisted of artisans or professionals and their families. The emigration scheme offered them a chance to escape from the quickly industrializing London society in which they no longer had a place. They arrived in the Cape as, as Lester claims, "apostles of free enterprise and free trade," and aided capitalist expansion in the interior of the Cape Colony. Along with them was the final group, those that were dependent upon relief. The emigration costs were raised through parish donations and once in the Cape they were not given land, as both other groups were, but instead, were assigned to work as hired labourers for the "most respectable settlers."<sup>31</sup>

Although the third group of settlers, who in England were dependent on relief, arrived in the Cape thirteen years earlier, their situation was similar to that of the child apprentices who arrived over a decade later. For example, both groups arrived in the Cape with no money, or career opportunities besides that of manual labour for the gentry of the colony. They were surplus labour. They were placed on farms according to a need decided by the colonial authorities. The difference between these immigrants dependent on relief and the CFS children, is the issue of consent and in turn, age. These differences account for the differences in reaction to the schemes by the British public. Although children did accompany the 1820 settlers they did so with their families. The emigrants were separated from the places of their birth, but they did so with a community. There was a unity amongst the factions of the 1820 settler parties. There appears to have been no such unity or sense of community amongst the juvenile

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<sup>31</sup> Lester, Alan, "Reformulating Identities: British Settlers in early nineteenth-century South Africa," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 23, 4 (1998), p.517

emigrants of the 1830s. The children did not travel solo however - if Brenton and the Society's claims are to be believed, most of the children sent to the Cape spent three months in one of the two asylums, where there would have no doubt grown a sense of community or at the very least friendship. Three more months were spent on a ship between London and the Cape. By the time the children reached the Cape they had been in each other's company for six months, which, considering that the majority of juvenile emigrants arrived at the Cape before they turned fourteen, is quite a considerable time. There is a scarcity of personal and private accounts of any specific child's time spent under the care of the CFS. This sense of community, if indeed there was one, would have in most cases been broken within a week of landing at the Cape. Apprenticeship contracts were signed and the young folk had to endure yet another separation, and venture into an alien land.

There is a definite sense that the 1820 emigration scheme offered more protection for their settlers than the CFS did for their children. The concept of separation was very prominent in the proceedings of the CFS. Not only did they physically separate the children from their parents (in some cases) and their homes,<sup>32</sup> but they also separated them from each other, to be placed in a stranger's family in a foreign country. Why then, did the CFS specifically target poor children, instead of attempting to take adults to the Cape as part of a similar emigration scheme? The 1820 emigration scheme was slow to produce results. The years following their arrival in the Cape were marked by droughts and crop failures. In fact, Lester sums up the entire scheme with a quote from John Montgomery, one of the last surviving of the original 1820 settlers in 1870, at the settlement's fiftieth anniversary celebrations. Montgomery spoke of his fellow settlers as a community who had "experienced wars, troubles, disappointments, losses and difficulties too numerous to call to mind."<sup>33</sup> The entire scheme was not considered to have been a success.

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<sup>32</sup> It is important to note that the CFS did not consider removing the children from their homes, whether it was the workhouse, the street, or even a house in the slums of London, to be a cruelty to their charges. The CFS, run by Victorian-age philanthropists, were adamant that they were acting in the best interests of the child and the public.

<sup>33</sup> Gliffard, A, (ed.) *The Reminiscences of John Montgomery* (Cape Town: Balkama, 1981) in Lester, Alan, 1988, p.520

## 1.2. Classification of the Poor.

With the intention of imposing order upon the city of London in the nineteenth century, Britain decided that poor of London had to be categorised. The New Poor Law of 1834 was an attempt to put poor people into three different categories, the unemployed poor, the employed poor and the unemployed poor of able body destined for the workhouse. As seen in Mayhews, *London Labour and London Poor* (1851), there was a great emphasis laid upon the difference between those who *could* not work and those who *would* not work. The New Poor Law of 1834 attempted to “isolate and punish those who ‘seemed able-bodied by unemployed from those who were disabled.”<sup>34</sup> Children were frequently removed from their homes as they were deemed workhouse candidates. The children who were taken to the Cape by the Society were not necessarily all orphans, many of them simply found themselves at the mercy of those in the workhouse as a direct result of the New Poor Laws.

Those who would not work were placed in workhouses where they were removed from all familiar settings and men and women were separated, which prevented them from reproducing. This was considered to have been the ultimate solution to the population problem. Hadley points out that child emigration was the “most extreme type of ‘complete separation.”<sup>35</sup> Emigration meant that children were separated from their parents and their less-than-desirable ways, and, in the eyes of Victorian philanthropists, to shake off the bad habits ‘typical’ to people of their class, in a concentrated effort to improve their lives. The fact that many of the children did not have a family in the traditional sense of the word meant that they were not seen as ‘normal,’ and therefore were in need of reform. The Mothering state of England took over the role of parent, doing what she believed to be best for her children (and herself). Lord Ashley of the Ragged School students connected a child’s family status to the state of his or

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<sup>34</sup> Hadley, Elaine, “Natives in a Strange Land,” *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.418

<sup>35</sup> Hadley, Elaine, 1990, p.418

her wardrobe, both clothing and family were considered signs of privacy and domesticity, neither of which street children had.<sup>36</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were few legal distinctions between the treatment of children and adults. Between seven and fourteen, children were presumed innocent unless the prosecution could prove that they had the ability to tell right from wrong.<sup>37</sup> This changed with the introduction of the term "juvenile delinquent." It helped to express the difference in culpability between young criminals and adult criminals and the consequent need for graduated punishments. In addition to this new term, another set of categories was created, based on various assumptions about youth and age. According to Blackstone, all children under ten and a half years were incapable of "conscious criminal behaviour," and therefore could not be punished. However the term youths was used to describe children between the ages of 11-14 who were considered to be very capable of what was considered to be 'mischief,' as opposed to criminal acts.<sup>38</sup>

### **1.3. Victorian Era and Children:**

The very decade that the Children's Friend Society was formed was the same decade in which humanitarian opposition to child labour began on a mass scale. This was linked with the increase in awareness of the social problem – or rather the acknowledgement of juvenile delinquency as a social problem. Up until the 1830s, working class children were, according to humanitarians writing in the 1850s, merely the tools of their working class parents, instead of being potential contributing members of society. Frederick Timbrell, administrator at a prestigious private school in Westminster, wrote in 1855 that working class

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<sup>36</sup> Hadley, Elaine, 1990, p.418

<sup>37</sup> May, M, 1973, p.8

<sup>38</sup> Hadley, Elaine, "Natives in a Strange Land," *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.421

parents were selfish and immoral and it was the duty of the state to protect their children.<sup>39</sup>

Victorian theories related to children were rooted in educational theories.<sup>40</sup> But as everything else in Victorian London, these ideas were centered around class. More importantly the age-old saying “children should be seen and not heard,” originated in the Victorian era.<sup>41</sup> Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* is a good example of the experience of lower-class children in the Victorian Era. It was published in 1837, only three years after the passing of the New Poor Law. *The Times* was considered one of the biggest champions of the poor, and was quick to reprint Dickens albeit fictional story. As Roberts put it:

The Times condemned this oppressive policy [The New Poor Law] in its editorials and throughout its columns described the floggings, the filth and the squalor of these workhouses and the callous neglect of the aged and infirm poor by guardian and relieving officers.<sup>42</sup>

There was a failure by reformers and thinkers to separate, both physically and in their discourse, the criminal from the poor. Greenwood (1869) believed that pauperism contributed to what he termed “The Seven Curses of London,” with emigration being the easy way to rid the country of their poor.<sup>43</sup> Emigration was pushed as a sure fire way to certain work and possible advancement. According to Jordon, juvenile emigration was justified through the Poor Laws. It was a mere shift from “involuntary internal migration” which by the 1830s had become somewhat of a standard practice.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Timbrell, Frederick, *Compulsory Education*, London, 1855, p.3 as seen in Auerbach, S, “Some punishment should be devised: Parents, children and the state in Victorian London,” *The Historian*, 2009, pp.762-764

<sup>40</sup> Robinson, R, “Victorians, Children and Play,” *English Studies*, 4, 1983, p.318

<sup>41</sup> Robinson, R, “Victorians, Children and Play,” *English Studies*, 4, 1983 p.320

<sup>42</sup> Roberts, David, “How Cruel was the Victorian Poor Law?” *The Historical Journal*, 6, 1 (1963) p. 98

<sup>43</sup> Jordon, T, “Stay and Starve or Go and Prosper: Juvenile Emigration from Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century.” *Social Science History*, 9, 2 (Spring 1985) p.146

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, p.160

The upper classes of London believed that the poor of London were “liable to be led astray by agitators or to form ‘perverted’ social systems,” if left alone.<sup>45</sup> According to Earl Grosvenor, at a CFS meeting, it was;

...Individual depravity which produced national decay, and it was therefore with a feeling of philanthropy and of religion which called them to come forward and rescue the children from their deplorable condition. <sup>46</sup>

Brenton believed that it was due to what he termed “family neglect” that child delinquency was so rife in London. William Beaver Neale, writing in 1840 held similar views to Brenton with regards to the parents. He did a study on juvenile delinquency in Manchester. He stated that the transition from children who began as street sellers who became pickpockets and worse, began involved in organised crime, was due to a “lack of positive parental influence and supervision.” <sup>47</sup>

His belief in discipline with kindness was founded on his belief that “brutal treatment produced brutalized captives who were unwilling to learn.”<sup>48</sup> Brenton blamed English Society for the state of the poor in the first half of the nineteenth century. In a “Letter to the Editor” of the *Morning Post*, he stated, “we murder our children body and soul in this country, by neglect, starvation and cruelty.”<sup>49</sup> Brenton did not believe that adults could be saved as he believed that in most instances, their misery was a result of crime.

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<sup>45</sup> Donajgrodzki, A.P, “Social Police and the bureaucratic elite: a vision of order in the age of reform.” In Donajgrodzki, A.P. (ed.) *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977)p.52

<sup>46</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society” (Furnished by a correspondent) *The Times*, June 4, 1840

<sup>47</sup> W.B Neale, *Juvenile Delinquency in Manchester, it’s Causes and History and Some Suggestions concerning its Cure* (Manchester: Hamilton, 1840), pp.13,15. In May, M, “Innocence and Experience” p.18

<sup>48</sup> Bean, Phillip and Melville, Joy, *Lost Children of the Empire* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989) p.30

<sup>49</sup> Brenton, E, “Letter to the Editor of *the Morning Post*,” August 23, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, (London, 1842), p. 88

#### 1.4. The Children's Friend Society In London

Brenton wrote that the Society was the means "under the blessings of Providence, of changing the manners and so totally altering and improving the condition of the laboring classes, as to render them the happiest and the best people on the face of the earth."<sup>50</sup> With him founding the society were some 'active and benevolent friends,' J.F. MAubert, D. Haes, R. Ricardo, Henry Wood, A. Borradaile and J.M White.<sup>51</sup> The first mention that I could find of the Brenton and his Society was in the London newspaper, *The Morning Herald* in March 1830. This article praised Brenton's initiative and berated the government for not taking some similar action. In their words, the CFS was "endeavoring to rescue children from destruction and society from their depredations."<sup>52</sup>

The name was officially changed in 1834 to the Children's Friend Society.<sup>53</sup> Brenton and fellow philanthropists persuaded the powers-that-were of the advantages of moving pauper children to the colonies where "the air was clean and their labour was in demand" and that by sending them to the Cape they would succeed in "...extricating them from the criminal and enervating influences of over-crowded London."<sup>54</sup> He wrote that "with the Bible and Spade for the Boy, the Bible, broom and needle for the girl," children could be "rapidly brought into habits of order, regularity and obedience."<sup>55</sup> Brenton argued that his emigration program prevented the necessity of transportation. However, as Hadley points out, the Society sanctioned "seemingly punitive versions of apprenticeship," suggesting that the Society could not entirely make the distinction between transportation and emigration. This is highlighted by the

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<sup>50</sup>Brenton, E, "Letter to the Editor of *the Morning Post*," August 23, 1832 in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.84

<sup>51</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.50

<sup>52</sup> Article published in *the Morning Herald*, March 14, 1830 in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.54

<sup>53</sup> Author Unknown, "Society for the Suppression of Vagrancy," *The London Times*, 5 May, 1834 p.3

<sup>54</sup> Hadley, Elaine, "Natives in a Strange Land," *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.412

<sup>55</sup> Iannini, Craig, *Contracted Chattell: Indentured and Apprenticed Labour in Cape Town, C.1808-1840*, Masters, (University of Cape Town : August 1995) p.53

fact that apprenticeship contracts had been abolished from the English Statutes in 1813 and yet, in 1830 were still enforced at the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>56</sup> Critics at the time questioned whether Brenton's scheme was "merely the same old wolves in sheep's clothing- transportation and slavery disguised as emigration."<sup>57</sup>

Brenton responded publically to these accusations in an ongoing battle between the CFS and the London Press (*The London Times* in particular) until his death in 1839. In one of his earlier responses, on the issue of the difference between transportation and emigrations, he wrote to the Editor of the *Morning Herald*, dated September 20, 1833, and stated that he was "unfriendly to adult emigration as a remedy for what is the term 'superabundant population.'" He clarified that he saw the "transplanting of young people" to a less populated land where there was more opportunity as a "necessary in human society, as if is in the vegetable kingdom."<sup>58</sup> The Society also responded to their critics by arguing that the overriding principle of the Society was to "dispense with these descriptions of punishment which tend to corrupt and hard young offenders."<sup>59</sup> At his schools, Hackney Wick and Chiswick, Brenton introduced a 'time-out system' to replace the necessity for corporal punishment, he believed in "discipline tempered with kindness."<sup>60</sup>

#### **1.4.1. The Asylums at Hackney Wick and Chiswick**

Brenton's original plan was to find the children alternative employment in England, preferably outside the city of London. This plan was halted by the unemployment plaguing England at the time. According to Blackburn, Brenton's intentions were pure but they were hijacked by others who saw the Society as a means of ridding the streets of London of social nuisance, and a way to provide

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<sup>56</sup> Hadley, Elaine, "Natives in a Strange Land," *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.413

<sup>57</sup> Hadley, Elaine, "Natives in a Strange Land," *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.414

<sup>58</sup> Brenton, E, "Letter to the Editor of the *Morning Herald*" September 20, 1833, in Brenton, J, 1842, p.

<sup>59</sup> "Letter to the Editor from a member of the London Committee of the CFS," *The Times*, April 16, 1836

<sup>60</sup> Bradlow, E, "The Children's Friend Society at the Cape of Good Hope" *Victorian Studies* (Winter 1984) p.155

cheap labour for British landowners in the colonies.<sup>61</sup> The Children's Friend Society aimed for complete separation of "poor children from the English inner-cities," essentially redeeming themselves through hard work in the colonies.<sup>62</sup> The purpose of the asylums set up by the CFS was:

To dispense with those descriptions of punishment which tend to corrupt and harden young offenders and by steady and gentle, moral discipline and constant, healthy occupation to expand and improve their hearts and inspire them with a virtuous self-confidence.<sup>63</sup>

The first home established was in West Ham Abby in Essex in 1830, it was only moved to Hackney Wick in 1833 and was a boy's only home.<sup>64</sup> Hackney Wick provided accommodation for up to two hundred boys along with ten acres of land, all cultivated and kept by the pupils.<sup>65</sup> The Royal Victoria Asylum at Chiswick was established in 1834 and was only for young girls.<sup>66</sup> Mrs Rebecca Bourhill, a widow, was the matron of the Royal Victoria Asylum and eventually followed her charges and immigrated to the Cape. According to Blackburn, she brought her two sons and her daughter to the Cape on her first visit. Following Mrs. Bourhill's her emigration in 1837, her eldest daughter, Anna Champion, was appointed Matron of the Asylum.<sup>67</sup>

According to Brenton in a "Letter to the Editor" of the *Morning Post*, the residents at Hackney Wick were alarmed when the home was first established, fearfully anticipating a "set of little ruffians, who would pillage their gardens." According to Brenton's letter however, the residents admitted that the boys at the home were "inoffensive."<sup>68</sup> As mentioned, there was comparatively little corporal punishment in these homes, unlike others of their nature at the time. In Brenton's own words, "we have no whips or rods although we have had many

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<sup>61</sup> Bradlow, E, "The Children's Friend Society at the Cape of Good Hope" *Victorian Studies*(Winter, 1984),p.155

<sup>62</sup> Hadley, E, 1990, p.418

<sup>63</sup> Author Unknown, "Letter to the Editor" *The Times*, April 16 1836

<sup>64</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p. 51

<sup>65</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, pp 52-3

<sup>66</sup> Author Unknown, "Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy," *The Times*, May, 5 1834, p.3

<sup>67</sup> Blackburn, Geoff, *The Children's Friend Society* (Western Australia: Access Press) p.21

<sup>68</sup> "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Herald*, August 19, 1833, in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.97

unruly spirits to deal with.”<sup>69</sup> Flogging was not allowed, and was replaced by solitary confinement that lasted for a maximum of six or seven hours at a time for offences like stealing.<sup>70</sup> The homes did however demand strict discipline and “prompt obedience,” with the children along with their classes and the husbandry, expected to learn how to look after themselves with tasks like grinding their own corn and cooking their own meals.<sup>71</sup> During the summer, the boys were expected to rise at six in the morning and in the winter months they were allowed to sleep in for an additional hour.

The CFS and other reformers such as the St. Pancras Board of Guardians, “...emphasized reformation rather than repudiation.” Hackney Wick, or the Brenton Asylum as it was sometimes known, was based on a “system of mildness,” in Brenton’s words. At the school children were instructed in the Bible, they did reading, writing, maths and spade husbandry, which Brenton referred to as their ‘principle subject.’<sup>72</sup> Their boys’ days were spilt up into literary instruction for one part of the day and the other part was devoted to field and garden. According to Brenton (although we only have his word to go on) only nine per cent of their total number of students had, by August of 1834, absconded.<sup>73</sup> According to Brenton, the poor boys at his asylum, whom he deemed were “of the very worst class of society, as destitute of clothing for the body as food and morals,” were after a mere six weeks at his school, “clothed and in their right minds.”<sup>74</sup>

Brenton’s Hackney Wick and Chiswick answered the demands of reformers like Mary Carpenter and Matthew Davenport Hill who believed that reformatories were needed for children. These schools would be “sensitive to their innocence and potential for growth.” According to Brenton, the poor boys at his asylum

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<sup>69</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842. p.52

<sup>70</sup> Bean, Phillip and Melville, Joy, 1989, p.30

<sup>71</sup> Brenton, Edward P, quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.203

<sup>72</sup> Brenton, E, *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.202

<sup>73</sup> Brenton, E, *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.201

<sup>74</sup> Brenton, E, “Letter to the Editor” *The Morning Post*, December 6, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, p. 91

were “reclaimed and happy without police, or iron bar or flogging.”<sup>75</sup> He claimed that his schools prevented the necessity of juvenile imprisonment, in fact, in a letter to the editor of the *Morning Post* he promised “never to let a boy go to prison under sixteen years of age.” He claimed that his schools protected and educated children before they became thieves and prostitutes. Parents were not allowed to visit unless, as Brenton stated, “we know they are good.” This rule indicates the similarities between him and Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth who belonged to the school of thought that believed that pauperism was a form of ‘moral contamination’ that was transmitted from parent to child.<sup>76</sup> Even when parents were considered “good,” they were only allowed to visit one Sunday a month. Separating the child from all things that would remind them of their former life (and indeed, former habits) was an integral part of Brenton’s teaching methods. He stated to the Select Committee on the State of Education in 1834 that he believed his methods of education and rehabilitation should be applied nationwide.<sup>77</sup>

So confident was Brenton in the running of Hackney Wick that in a letter to the editor of *the Morning Herald* he urged the public to pay a visit to the asylum, where he promised they would find “...forty boys who have exchanged idleness, crime and poverty for cheerfulness, labour, moral and religious instruction and a comfortable home.”<sup>78</sup> He declared that if he was given the means, he would make sure that every child in the British Empire would be protected as such.

The patron of the CFS was Queen Victoria herself. *The Times* reported on her as a princess with the Duchess of Kent, visiting the girls asylum at Chiswick which was renamed “The Victoria Asylum,” and strongly expressing their “approbation

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<sup>75</sup> Brenton, E, “Letter to the Editor” *The Morning Post*, October 5, 1832, as seen in Brenton, J, 1842 p.88

<sup>76</sup> Johnson, R “Education Policy and Social Control in Early Victorian England,” *Past and Present Society*, 49 (November 1970) p.110

<sup>77</sup> Brenton, Edward P, quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.204

<sup>78</sup>Brenton, E “Letter to the Editor of the Morning Herald,” August 19, 1833, in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p. 96

of the arrangement and discipline carried out in this institution..."<sup>79</sup> The girls branch was run on the same principles as Hackney Wick. Brenton believed that Chiswick was "more deserving of public notice and support," due to the fact that the female sex was more defenseless and therefore, according to Brenton, more dependent on support.<sup>80</sup> Chiswick was managed by a committee of what Brenton referred to as "the most distinguished females in the country, both for rank and virtue."<sup>81</sup> The younger girls were cared for by the older girls, and this was considered part of their education, as they learnt how to nurse and administer to the wants of children.

In 1834 the Society reported that of the 276 boys that had been admitted into the asylum at Hackney Wick, 213 of them had been shipped to the Cape of Good Hope and that twenty-eight had been discharged and provided for by their friends and families.<sup>82</sup> Of all of these boys, one per cent had run away and one per cent had been expelled, this was considered to be very low, and the year was deemed a success. The girls' asylum was slower establish itself, with 1834 only reporting thirty-nine girls. The society raised funds through membership fees, an annual banquet and generous donors. The CFS reported an income of £4165 in 1834 which was four times the amount brought in the previous years. Donations came from all over including the City of London, who gave £200. Expenses for the year came up to £474. Upon the list of patronesses were notables such as the Duchess of Buccleuch, Rexburgh, Northumberland and Sutherland.<sup>83</sup>

Accusations and suspicions plagued the Society for its entire existence, and would eventually cause its final downfall after the death of Brenton in 1839. Chapter four discusses this in more detail with a special light shone on the role of *The Times* in the downfall of the Society. The confusion over terms such as

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<sup>79</sup> Court Circular, *The London Times*, August 6, 1836, p.3

<sup>80</sup> Brenton, E, "Observations on the training and education of children in Great Britain," 1834, seen in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.129

<sup>81</sup> Brenton, E "Observations on the training and education of children in Great Britain," 1834, seen in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p. 129

<sup>82</sup> Author Unknown, "Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy" *The London Times*, May 5, 1834 p.3

<sup>83</sup> Author Unknown, "Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy" *The London Times*, May 5, 1834 p.3

'transportation' and 'emigration' were heatedly discussed in the London Press. Hadley states that this kind of confusion in categories and distinctions was typical of much nineteenth century philanthropic discourse. The central question critics had regarding the CFS was that of accurately defining the objects of Brenton's philanthropy, "where they criminals deserving of punitive transportation or paupers in need of the benefits of emigration?"<sup>84</sup>

#### 1.4.2. The workings of the CFS in London

With boys at the West Ham asylum costing the government 7s. per week, the English Government promised to pay for half the cost of sending the first 20 boys to the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>85</sup> The *Charles Kerr* was the first ship that brought CFS apprentices to the Cape, arriving on May 11, 1833. All the boys sent over initially were under the age of 14 years.<sup>86</sup> Brenton was instrumental in the recruiting of parishes such as St. Marylebone and St. Giles to help the society to send their pauper children as what they called 'agricultural servants' to the Cape.<sup>87</sup> By April of 1833, 20 more boys had left London on the *Maria*. According to Brenton in a letter to *Morning Herald*, the boys were "most welcomely [sic] received," and that the majority of them were immediately put with "good masters".<sup>88</sup>

Brenton stated that the need for apprentices was only increasing in the Cape and that this system would empty the prisons and leave the workhouses for "poor women and helpless girls" in need of a home. According to him, in a letter to the press, the Cape of Good Hope had by 1833, demanded 200 young girls between the ages of 10-12.<sup>89</sup> The CFS Committee at the Cape sent, according to Brenton, very flattering letters of approval regarding the first shipment of boys and

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<sup>84</sup> Hadley, Elaine, "Natives in a Strange Land," *Victorian Studies*, 3, 33, 1990, p.415

<sup>85</sup> Letter from R.W Hay, undersecretary, 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 1832 to the Chairman of the Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.

<sup>86</sup> Bradlow, E, 1984, p.159

<sup>87</sup> Blackburn G, 1993, p.4

<sup>88</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor of *the Morning Herald*," August 19, 1833, in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.94

<sup>89</sup> Breton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Herald*," August 19, 1833, in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.96

Brenton stated that “there is every reason to believe that these poor defenseless creatures will become creditable members of society.”<sup>90</sup> This was a critical concern to the Committee, that the children, at the end of their indenture would be able to earn a good living. A close study of the 1840 Report shows that although they stated they were worried about the future prospects of the boys and girls, not much was done once the children arrived in the Cape.

Initially the CFS was relatively well received by the public (or at least by the upper-middle classes who concerned themselves with philanthropy). For example, it was found, after the initial few years of the Society’s work, that the prisons were less crowded with youngsters who would have had to have been cooped up with harder, older criminals who were liable to corrupt them further.<sup>91</sup> It was believed by many of the ruling of London (especially in the early years of the Society’s existence) that the Society had succeeded in providing London’s poor youth’s with a viable opportunity to become “useful, exemplary and industrious members of society.”<sup>92</sup> Hadley disputes this, she writes, “In spite of ever more refined definition, all the children frequently ended up receiving similar treatment, they were objects of much discussion but of little aid.”<sup>93</sup>

According to the members of the Society in London, however, the children at the asylums:

...were on their way to gain an honest livelihood in the colonies, Having been apprenticed there by the society upon such terms as to secure their future success in life, if their own conduct deserves it.<sup>94</sup>

The amount of ‘good’ that Society actually achieved with regards to their charges, will be discussed further in Chapter three, where a full analysis of the working, living and learning situations of the children is discussed.

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<sup>90</sup> Brenton, Edward P, “Letter to the Editor” of *The Morning Herald*,” September 20 1833, in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.106

<sup>91</sup> “Parliamentary Intelligence from the House of Lords” *The London Times*, 12 August 1836, p.3

<sup>92</sup> “Parliamentary Intelligence from the House of Lords” *The London Times*, 12 August 1836, p.3

<sup>93</sup> Hadley, Elaine, 1990, p.415

<sup>94</sup> “Letter to the Editor from a member of the London Committee of the CFS,” *The Times*, April 16, 1836

### **1.4.3 Juvenile Emigration, Kidnapping or Transportation? The issue of consent**

From the very beginning, Brenton was aware that the difference between his emigration scheme and transportation had to be made clear. He claimed that he was a supporter of adult emigration as a remedy for the “superabundant population.”<sup>95</sup> He did however think that the “transplanting” (as he termed it) of young people to a “more open and less occupied field,” was necessary. He furthermore declared himself to be “no friend to emigration,” but stated that he “would gladly see ten thousand boys properly prepared and sent out there [the Cape of Good Hope] then see them starving and naked in our streets or pining in Coldbath Fields and Newgate.”<sup>96</sup>

As I touched upon earlier, the issue of consent was widely debated in the *London Times* during the 1830s. The age of consent in England at this time was fourteen years old. According to the Society, if the parents of the child could not be located then the children themselves were asked whether they would like to go to the Cape. A nurse at the parish of St. Luke’s workhouse told the *London Times* that the children were given a choice regarding their relocation to the Cape, but she followed this stating that the children:

Little know what they say or hold their hands up for;  
Several of them yesterday inquired of me if they should  
Go to the Cape whether it was intended that they should  
Come home every night to the workhouse to sleep!<sup>97</sup>

Sarah Ballot was fifteen years old in 1839, when she was interviewed by Major Piers, a commissioner in the inquiry into the living conditions of the apprentices (See Chapter 3). She was apprenticed to Doctor Muntingle of Paarl as a house servant. According to her she was in the parish school of St. Martins when she was sent to the Cape without her sister (her only living relative) knowledge or

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<sup>95</sup>Brenton, Edward P, “Letter to the Editor of the Morning Herald,” September 20, 1833 as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842 p. 106

<sup>96</sup> “Letter to the Editor of the Morning Post,” January 1, 1833, as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, p.112

her own consent.<sup>98</sup> Sarah Ballot was only one of many children who claimed to have been sent to the Cape without the knowledge or consent of their living relatives.

The *Times* followed one woman in particular with regards to the issue of consent. Mary Crooker claimed that her daughter, Louise Crooker, had been sent to the Cape without her knowledge or consent. Mr. Sayers, a church warden and overseer of St. Martin's Parish defended the Society stating that he knew that the practice of the Society was to not only gain the consent of the children themselves but also of their parents or guardians. The Society's representative claimed that every effort had been made to locate Louise Crooker's mother but to no avail. The Society's representative (who remained unnamed for the duration of the article) stated that he knew that the child's consent had been given because, previously a boy named Hurst had, at the last hour, objected to being sent aboard, and, according to the CFS representative he was kept in the workhouse, as per his request.<sup>99</sup> Mary Crooke was adamant that her daughter would never have consented to moving to the Cape of Good Hope, and that she had said as much at their last meeting. This case continued over a few days and at their next meeting, on January 21, 1839, Mr. John Sparkes, secretary to the CFS in London was in attendance and he claimed to remember Louise Crooker. Sparkes stated that he remembered her being a "nice girl but not a very intelligent child." He testified that in the month preceding the children's departure, he had visited Chiswick numerous times and he claimed to remember Louise volunteering to go to the Cape. According to him, she was in good spirits when he saw her on board the *Triumph* before their departure.<sup>100</sup>

Mary Crooker applied to the Lord Mayor in the hopes of recovering her child, accompanied by Mr. Wilshire, who was apparently a gentleman of good

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<sup>97</sup> Author unknown, "The Parish of St. Luke, Middlesex" in *The London Times*, 11 December 1838

<sup>98</sup> Enclosure No. 4, in 1840(323) Children's Friend Society. "Copy of a report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies, relative to the Condition and treatment sent out by the Children's Friend Society." (Herewith referred to as the 1840 Report) House of Common Parliamentary Papers Online (HCPPPO)

<sup>99</sup> "Police Report," *The London Times*, 18 January 1839, p.7

<sup>100</sup> "Police report, Bow Street," *The London Times*, 21 January, 1839, p.7

reputation. Mr. Wiltshire stated that it was nothing less than kidnapping. The Society men were present at this meeting, although their names were not given and they stated that the vestry clerk of the Louise Crooker's parish from where she had been sent to Chiswick had spent a long time searching for Mary Crooker, so as to attain her consent regarding her daughter's emigration. This was not the last of the case however, a month later there was a meeting held at the Parish of St. Marin-in-the-Fields, to "take into consideration the extraordinary proceedings at Bow-Street, particularly with reference to emigration or transportation of pauper children to Africa."<sup>101</sup> At this parish meeting, a Mr. Simpson, a member of the Society, defending the conduct of the board and stated that the Society had acted in the best interest of the child, as at the Cape of Good Hope she would be "far more happy and better provided for than if she remained in this country."<sup>102</sup> He concluded by asking whether it was likely that a Society that was patronized by Queen Victoria and a "long list of nobles and distinguished persons," would sanction a system of kidnapping.<sup>103</sup> The notables on CFS board of commissioners in London and in the Cape, along with Queen Victoria's Patronage, helped the Society duck many of the accusations thrown at them over the years. The case was eventually dismissed by the Magistrate who declared that he did not find the Society to be at fault but that every effort would be made to help Mary Crooker. This offer of help for Mary Crooker included sending her to the Cape to her daughter, to which she said a very definite no.<sup>104</sup>

The children whom made up the population of Hackney Wick were generally orphans, or, as Brenton stated:

...worse than orphans, having corrupt and drunken parents, whose pernicious example and neglect of duty destroys the morals, while their bodily frame is emaciated and their constitutions ruined by want of proper food and clothing.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Author unknown, "Parish of St. Martin-in-the-fields," *The London Times*, 22 February 1839, p.6

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>105</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842, pp.52-53

Although Brenton stated to the Select Committee for inquiry into the state of Education England that many of the boys were very impatient to make their journey to the Cape and start their new lives, Hackney Wick was reluctant to part with the boys until they had “perfected their habit of labour and improved their morals.”<sup>106</sup> And by 1834, of the 250 boys who had been sent to the Cape, only two had returned, but this, Brenton stated, was because they were ‘worthless.’<sup>107</sup>

Brenton believed himself to be rescuing the children; especially those who came from workhouses, which he believed made criminals of boys and prostitutes of girls.<sup>108</sup> He tried to take children from the workhouse (whom he termed “poor contaminated wretches”)<sup>109</sup> at a young age, as they tended to be less difficult the younger they were. The master of the school also made similar comments to the Select Committee, stating that the boys from the workhouses tended to be “the worst boys they had to train.”<sup>110</sup> Children from the workhouses, he stated, were boys who had “lost all their sense of shame, all sense of independence and every good feeling.”<sup>111</sup> By his own account, Mr William Wright, the house master at Hackney Wick, was a kind and patient man who made time for every individual boy who passed through his school on their way to the Cape. He was a firm supporter of the concept of reform, stating, “their reformation is the object kept in view.”<sup>112</sup> Brenton and Mr. Wright appeared to have shared the belief that a combination of industry and book-learning was the best way to educate children, they both spoke of the benefits of open air and exercise for the children, claiming it gave them, “both vigour of body and mind.”<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Brenton, Edward quoted in *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.202

<sup>107</sup> Brenton, Edward, quoted in *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.202

<sup>108</sup> Brenton, Edward, quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.204

<sup>109</sup> Brenton, Edward, quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.203

<sup>110</sup> Wright William, Master of Hackney Wick quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.203

<sup>111</sup> Wright William, Master of Hackney Wick quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.204

<sup>112</sup> Wright William, Master of Hackney Wick quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.203

<sup>113</sup> Brenton, Edward P. quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.209

As is already quite clear, Brenton was very audibly against the workhouse system, he wrote endless letters to the editors of the *Morning Herald*, the *London Times* and the *Morning Post* on the subject. He stated that the children who were part of the workhouse system generally had little prospects in life. He referred to the system as “defective and inhuman,” one that “never yet produced any good fruits.”<sup>114</sup> He pointed out that in regards to education and moral training, workhouse children were little better than a street beggar.

Although the Children’s Friend Society did send children abroad, it was, according to Brenton, not by choice. He claimed to be training them for home service as well as foreign service. He was primarily occupied with their rescue from the workhouses, prisons and begging in the streets.<sup>115</sup> Before Brenton’s Society was established there had been a system of apprenticeship within England, but Brenton believed that the majority of people who apprenticed children from the workhouses were “greedy only for the premium of four or five pounds.” This was the sum given to those who removed the children from the parishes’ books and responsibility.<sup>116</sup> The probationary period which usually last about six weeks was referred to by Brenton as the ‘honeymoon’ when the children would give glowing reports to the guardians. However, according to Brenton, once the money changed hands, the children were often subject to starvation, beatings or being driven from the property by “cruel treatment.”<sup>117</sup>

## 1.5 Conclusion

This Chapter gives an understanding of London at the time the Society was formed. Brenton and the rest of the Society were primarily concerned with ridding the streets of London of what they considered to be a social problem, the vagrant children. Although they cited the benefits of sending the children to the Cape often, the benefits to the Colony were not mentioned as often. In the case of

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<sup>114</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842. P.49

<sup>115</sup> Brenton,Edward, quoted in the *Report of Select Committee on the State of Education*, 1834, p.204

<sup>116</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842. p.49

<sup>117</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, 1842. p.49

the CFS apprentices, the Colony's needs were not properly analysed. As will be discussed in Chapter two there was a fear of labour shortages due to the upcoming emancipation of the slaves and following Ordinance 50 regarding the Khoikhoi labour, but these fears, it turned out, were not actually realised. Brenton's focus was the children themselves as a whole, but the Society was not well managed. The communication between the Cape Committee and the London Committee was infrequent. Chapter three will show that the CFS in London was not well-informed as to the well-being of the apprentices once they were off the streets of London and in the Colony.

## Chapter 2:

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### *The Cape Colony and the Question of Labour in the nineteenth century.*

The end of the eighteenth century brought with it the end to Dutch rule in the Cape of Good Hope. The final British takeover of the Cape in 1806 brought with it many changes to the Cape Colony with the new British colonial administration. Victorian Liberalism, as explained in Chapter One challenged the existing system of Paternalism within the Cape slave society. The change in rule did bring many economical benefits with it however, so despite the abolition of the slave trade in 1806, the original Dutch settlers at the Cape were still reasonably content due to the opening up of the economy, and of course, the preferential wine tariffs imposed on Cape wines until the mid-1820s. It was only when the British colonial government began to implement further ameliorative measures for slaves in the late 1820s, and the discussions began for emancipation of the slaves that the Dutch settlers began to resent the new authority. The CFS juvenile emigrants were sent to the Cape between 1833-1841, when, although it appears the labour crisis was not as bad as anticipated, there was a demand for the juveniles, as the British colonial state began a number of schemes for the "importation of 'free' labour into the colony."<sup>118</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Cape of Good Hope was a slave colony with a large population of indigenous people, the Khoisan<sup>119</sup> who worked as indentured labour for settlers. The first slaves arrived in the Cape in 1658, brought in by the Dutch East India Company (the VOC) to work for the Company and it was not long before the settlers were buying their own slaves to work on their farms. From 1652 when the first Dutch sailors set up at the Cape, until the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, 60 000 slaves were imported to the Cape, with a third of them working the town of Cape Town itself. In 1782, 74.5% of

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<sup>118</sup> Bank, Andrew, "The Erosion of Urban Slavery at the Cape, 1806-1834," in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg: Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) p. 82

<sup>119</sup> The term 'Khoisan' is an amalgam used to describe both the indigenous pastoral people of the Cape, the KhoiKhoi and the indigenous hunter-gatherers of the Cape, the San.

farmers in the Stellenbosch district owned at least one slave.<sup>120</sup> The slaves provided the colony with the bulk of their labour and made up a third of the Colony's population. <sup>121</sup>

Although, at the end of the eighteenth century the population of Cape Town itself was steadily growing, it was only the South West corner of the Colony that was densely populated. The rest of the colony comprised of small towns in the interior with small rural farms. When the British took over the colony from the Dutch it was still relatively underdeveloped and underexploited. John Fairbairn, editor of the Colony's *Commercial Advertiser* and an active member of the Society's Committee in the Cape, wrote upon his arrival in the Cape in 1823 that in comparison to the colonies in North America the Cape was "an economic and social backwater."<sup>122</sup> Historians of the nineteenth century Cape however, do not agree. During the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the economic bonds between the port and the rural interior of the colony strengthened due to the increase in wine exports. There was a further steady growth in the Cape's economy due to agricultural growth in the South Western areas. Despite not producing "commodities complimentary to the European economy," like the North American colonies Fairbairn referred to, the Cape did have a significant strategic value.<sup>123</sup> Cape Town was an extremely busy port with ships stopping on their way to and from Asia and Europe. <sup>124</sup> Britain had plans for the colony, she believed that the Cape Colony was "sufficiently well-resourced and enjoyed a suitably favourable climate to be transformed through 'successful policies.'" <sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg : Witwatersrand University Press, 1994)p. 32

<sup>121</sup> Mason, John E, "The Slaves and their Protectors: Reforming Resistance in a Slave Society, the Cape Colony, 1826-1834" in *Journal of South African Studies*, 17, 1 (March 1991), p.105

<sup>122</sup> Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, 12, 1 (Feb 1990), p.77

<sup>123</sup> Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, 12, 1 (Feb 1990), p.77

<sup>124</sup> Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb 1990), p.78

<sup>125</sup> Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, 12, 1 (Feb 1990), p.78

## **2.1 The Cape that the juvenile emigrants experienced.**

### **2.1.1 The Cape Economy**

Under the VOC, the free burghers had to work in what Trapido has termed an 'unfree economy' as the Company had the monopoly on all external trade. A landed gentry emerged amongst them through wheat and wine growers in the South Western Cape, and these rich settlers formed a rural elite who had control over the administration of the districts.<sup>126</sup> However, once the British came back into power 1806, things began to change. From 1807 to 1817, Cape exports increased greatly, coinciding with an increase of European imported goods.<sup>127</sup> It is hard to accurately analyse the annual tax returns, known as the opgraaf of the Cape in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. During the VOC period, farmers at the Cape were notorious for under-recording, although this did improve slightly under the British.<sup>128</sup> Due to the Cape's poor roads, which, according to Worden, "restricted economic cultivation of grain," from 1780, the Cape ran the risk of running out of grain.<sup>129</sup> It was then that attempts were made to "extend the area of arable land by developing coastal shipping."<sup>130</sup> And although this did help, grain production still declined in the nineteenth century, although it was not as noticeable as it was offset by the growth of other grains such as barley.<sup>131</sup>

Wine exports were low in eighteenth century Cape due to the inferiority of Cape wines in general and because it was too expensive to find a large overseas

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<sup>126</sup>Trapido, Stanley, "From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834" in *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb 1990), pp.78-79

<sup>127</sup> Bank, Andrew, "The Erosion of Urban Slavery at the Cape, 1806-1834" in Worden and Crais (eds.) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) p.79

<sup>128</sup> Ross, Robert, *Beyond the Pale: essays on the history of Colonial South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) p.15

<sup>129</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994),p.43

<sup>130</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994 p.16

<sup>131</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994 p.17

market. But after the second British conquest of the Cape, the preferential tariffs imposed by the British helped to open up the export market.<sup>132</sup> However from 1828 to 1834 the annual wine output declined by 25% in the Cape district and nearly 50% in Stellenbosch.<sup>133</sup> Bankruptcies were rife, with wine farmers being unable to make their debt payments. And despite this, in the years proceeding the final emancipation of the slaves, “more wine was pressed between 1838-1841 than in any other four year period...” contradicting all previous worries.<sup>134</sup> The high levels of production were not limited to wine production but brandy too.<sup>135</sup> According to Ross, the spike in grape pressing during the years following emancipation could be a natural recovery from the depression that began at the end of the “wine boom in the 1820s.”<sup>136</sup> Ross points out that the increase in brandy production can be explained by labour shortages. According to him, the decrease in farming in the vineyards due to the upheaval caused by emancipation, increased the total supply of wine, but due to its inferior quality the farmers had no choice but to turn it into brandy which became known as “cape smoke.”<sup>137</sup>

### 2.1.2. Early Nineteenth-century Politics in the Cape Colony

Due to ongoing debates regarding labour control and economic stagnation, the politics at the Cape were in a constant state of disarray during the 1820s and 1830s. Liberals like Fairbairn and Pringle pushed their political agendas in their newspaper, the *South African Commercial Advertiser*. Fairbairn believed that colonial legislation was the first thing that had to be done away with, and that the colony should be granted a level of autonomy in government. According to Fairbairn, the Cape’s government, “neither hereditary nor elective...responsible

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<sup>132</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994, p.21

<sup>133</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994, p.21

<sup>134</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994, p.22

<sup>135</sup> Ross, Robert, “Rather Mental than physical: Emancipations and the Cape Economy,” in Ross, Robert, *Breaking the Chains: essays on the history of Colonial South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press: 1994) p.153

<sup>136</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994, p.153

<sup>137</sup> Ross, Robert, 1994, p.154

only to the British government, feared inquiry and exposure.”<sup>138</sup> He pushed the idea that the settlers in the colony must have some way of imposing a check on the Executive that ruled them. His mistake was assuming that the settlers wanted autonomy, the Cape Dutch elites were the most influential and significant political group in the colony and in their eyes, they had profited much from the British takeover and were unwilling, for the most part, to rock the boat. It was only once the legislation to ameliorate the conditions of slaves that the Dutch began to grow unhappy with the colonial administration. This was of course, entirely at odds with Fairbairn’s political agenda. Fairbairn wanted autonomy for the Cape before the emancipation of the slaves in the Cape, and the Boers wanted to retain their free labour source. The question of labour, as always in South African history, plays a large role in the political economy in the Cape during the nineteenth century.

The 1830s brought with it the Sixth Frontier War, or Hinsta’s war as it is sometimes known as. It began twenty days after the abolition of slavery on December 21, 1834 with a least 12 000 Xhosa’s warriors attacking the frontier from the Kat River Settlement to the sea, affecting most of the Albany District, home of the 1820 settlers. Graham’s Town became a refuge for settlers and British troops in the area, as there were no direct attacks on the town. By May of 1835, most of the Xhosa arms had been driven out of the colony but the fighting did not stop along the frontier until September. According to Watson’s research, 456 farms were destroyed and 260 000 heads of cattle. Furthermore 100 settlers and colonial soldiers were killed and it is estimated that approximately 2000 died in the war. <sup>139</sup>

### **2.1.3. The inhabitants:**

By the nineteenth century, the Cape Colony was made up of four distinct groups, the English Settlers, the Dutch Settlers (known as the free burghers), the Khoisan

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<sup>138</sup> Trapido, Stanley, “From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834” in *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb 1990) p.94

<sup>139</sup> Watson, R.L. *Slave Emancipation and Racial Attitudes in nineteenth century Cape* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012) pp.108-110

<sup>140</sup> and the slave population. The community of Cape Town was described as “a network of social relations marked by mutuality and emotional bonds.”<sup>141</sup> Robert Shell described the settler society as a “tangled cousinry.”<sup>142</sup> J.D Moodie, after his travels through the Cape in the early nineteenth century, described the Colony as a community “intimately connected by intermarriage and keep constant intercourse, employing much of their leisure time in riding and visiting each other.”<sup>143</sup> The concepts of reputation and honour were very important amongst the settler community, as in most slave-holding societies. The reputation of settlers often came into question with regards to the treatment of their slaves.<sup>144</sup> Although to be labelled an “ill-treater of slaves” was to be tarred with a bad reputation, violence in the Cape towards the slaves and labour in general was rife. The violence of the master-slave was a point of concern for those who fought to put an end to the CFS and their juvenile emigration scheme.

### **2.3.1. The Dutch Settlers in the nineteenth century Cape Colony**

The trekboers were the original Dutch residents whom had left the thriving port of Cape Town for the vast hinterland to lay claim on land through the loan-farm system. These farms were extremely isolated but they generally lived quite well. According to Jaheel Brenton, who spent a considerable amount of time in the Cape in the 1820, “the want of food [is] unknown...their other wants [such as clothes] are easily provided for [by] sheep skin [...] and the slender produce of their industry.”<sup>145</sup> Jaheel Brenton believed that the original settlers had become lazy and he believed that emigrants would stir up production in the Cape. As discussed briefly in Chapter One, the 1820 settlers program was to a large extent a failure. The Cape Colony needed farmers and the majority of the settlers who arrived were skilled handymen. Jaheel Brenton believed that having slaves or indentured labour ruined the industry and productive of Europeans and this was

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<sup>140</sup> The term ‘Khoisan’ is an amalgam used to describe both the indigenous pastoral people of the Cape, the KhoiKhoi and the indigenous hunter-gatherers of the Cape, the San.

<sup>141</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) 1994, p. 32

<sup>142</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) 1994,p. 32

<sup>143</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) 1994,p. 32

<sup>144</sup> Worden and Crais (eds.) 1994, pp. 37-39

<sup>145</sup> Brenton, J, “Observations made in a journey to the Kynsa,” ADM 7/4 (ca. 573)

one of the main reasons that he pushed for the abolition of slavery. Jaheel Brenton was “adamant that Europeans in the settlement- be they British or Dutch origin- should perform as much of their own work as possible and employ only Europeans when additional hands were required.”<sup>146</sup>

Paternalism was the system of control used by the Dutch over their slaves. Typical in slave societies at the time, this system encouraged kindness and affections but also encouraged cruelty and hatred. Paternalism was further encouraged by the British as a method of rule over the colony’s Khoisan. It bound the employers to feed and provide for their Khoisan servants and forbade ill-treatment and unjust wage deductions.<sup>147</sup> In turn, it bound the Khoisan (and slaves) by “reciprocal attachment and indulgence.”<sup>148</sup>

Cape farmhouses were marked by the high level of intimacy that existed between master and slave. Dutch slaveholders saw the farm as a common ground that bound slaves and slaveowners under one authority, that of the slave owner. According to Pamela Scully, the household and the family were synonymous, not only in terms of authority but also physically as for most farmers inland, there was not enough money to build separate slave quarters. <sup>149</sup> This intimacy tended to undermine the authority of the master. However, “by the end of the c.18<sup>th</sup>, their ideological commitment to paternalism was clear.”<sup>150</sup>

In a Cape farmer’s house there is no privacy. The family sit at one end of their long halls, which the other is a kind of thoroughfare for the slaves and house-servants pursuing their culinary options, who overhear the conversation and know all the most private affairs of their master and mistress nearly as well as they do themselves.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Grogan, P.M, “Improving the cape Colony, 1815-1821, the perspectives of Sir. Jaheel Brenton,” MA Thesis, University of Basel, 2012, p.76

<sup>148</sup> Trapido, Stanley, “From Paternalism to Liberalism: The Cape Colony 1800-1834” in *The International History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb 1990) pp. 84,85

<sup>149</sup> Scully, Pamela, “Private and Public Words of Emancipation in the rural Western Cape 1830-1842,” in Scully, Pamela (ed.) *Liberating the Family: Gender and British Slave emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, South Africa 1823-1853* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1997) p.204

<sup>150</sup> Mason, John E, “Paternalism under siege- Slavery in theory and practice during the era of reform c.1825 through emancipation,” *Journal of South African Studies*, 17, 1 (March 1991),p.57

<sup>151</sup> Moodie, *Ten Years*, p.110 seen in Worden and Crais (eds.) 1994, p. 32

The Dutch residents at the Cape were unsettled by the new ameliorative measures introduced by the British Administration regarding slaves and their rights. The Burgher Senate condemned the new laws relating to labour in the mid-1820s because they did not think that anyone had the right to “come between a father and his children.”<sup>152</sup> The Cape Boer was extremely resentful of what they considered to be interference in their personal life by the British Colonial Government. They had no problem however, asserting their power and dominance in the lives of their slaves. Those who were especially unhappy with the Anglicization of the Cape, the ameliorative measures taken towards their labour, and the decreasing availability of good land were part of the Great Trek across South Africa in the 1830s. Their main issue however that that of the impending changing status of the slaves in the colony on the eve of emancipation. Many Dutch residents were unable to accept that their former slaves would be “on equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinctions of race and religion.”<sup>153</sup>

The Dutch of the Cape Colony in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century were known for their piety and their “rigidity of their dogmas.”<sup>154</sup> However, when the British took over rule of the Cape at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the notion of piety was not yet applied to the Cape Settlers. In fact, it is generally thought that due to the isolation and lack of churches, the farmers in the hinterland of the Cape Colony were less religious than the citizens of Cape Town. Elphick claims that by the end of the eighteenth century, the farmers of the Cape were “teetering on the edge of heathendom.”<sup>155</sup> However in the 1780s-1790s, a religious revival occurred. Christianity was the sign of culture and civilization and anyone (for example, slaves and the Khoisan) who was not Christian were treated as sub-human. Christianity in the nineteenth

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<sup>152</sup> Mason, John E, “Paternalism under siege- Slavery in theory and practice during the era of reform c.1825 through emancipation,”p.60

<sup>153</sup> Watson, R.L, *Slave Emancipation and racial attitudes in c.19<sup>th</sup> South Africa* pp.129-30

<sup>154</sup> Ross, Robert, *Beyond the Pale: essays on the history of Colonial South Africa* (Johannesburg:Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) p.69

<sup>155</sup> Ross, Robert, *Beyond the Pale: essays on the history of Colonial South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) p.69

century became the defining criterion for admission to the Cape's white community. Despite the fear that the children would lose their English ways should they be apprenticed with Dutch farmers, the rural countryside was considered preferable to the ever-growing, bustling street of the Cape Town. Despite the language barrier, these farms seemed a good choice because the children were physically separated from the vices and temptation of the ever growing port of Cape Town.

### **2.3.2 The Labour force in the Cape Colony**

Perhaps one of the most striking characteristics of the European settlers at the Cape Colony is that from the moment the Dutch landed at the Cape in 1652, the settlers believed themselves to be above manual labour. They began to use a combination of slave labour and indentured labour to work their large farms.

Although slaves made up approximately one-third of the population in the Cape Colony by 1806 when slavery was abolished, they were not, as mentioned above, the only source of labour. Although the indigenous Khoisan of the Cape region were never enslaved in the legal sense, they were often coerced into working, often as indentured servants. Brenton's children were referred to as apprentices when they were in the Cape, as opposed to indentured labourers. The term apprentice was also used to describe the slaves during their apprenticeship period 1834-1838, although the children the CFS were not considered under the terms and conditions of the apprenticeship in 1834.

## Apprenticeship is the:

contractual relationship in which the employer provides apprentices with training to become artisans...under the apprenticeship system was education and labour was combined to bring about the promise of self-employment.<sup>156</sup>

The term apprenticeship was used often in the Cape colonial context, in many different circumstances. It was used to describe the system whereby Hottentot children (children of Slave and Khoikhoi parentage) were bound to farms until they were twenty-five (1775) or eighteen (after the passing of the Caledon Code in 1812). It was also used to describe the period between the abolition of slavery in the Cape (1834) and the final emancipation of the slaves in 1838. This 'apprenticeship period' (as it is was termed) was a period of transition for both the slave and the master. It was a system of institutionalised indenture for four years, as opposed to a period where slaves were taught skilled labour with the promise of "eventual self-employment."<sup>157</sup> The term apprenticeship was further applied to manumitted slaves who were often 'apprenticed' to their former owners for a number of years, or in some cases, until the owner died. And finally, the term apprenticeship was applied to the system of indenturing Prize Negros, those slaves off captured slave ships whom had been brought to the Cape. These Prize Negros could be 'apprenticed' for up to fourteen years. But, as Worden points out, none of these systems of so-called apprenticeship included any kind of special training.

The system of indenture was a contractual relationship between employer and employee where the employer had no obligation to provide instruction to his staff. According to Nigel Worden, in the Cape Colony the terms were interchangeable, and "apprenticeship" usually meant "indenture."<sup>158</sup> Even after emancipation, farmers in the hinterland had ways of ensuring that their former-slaves did not leave their service. They refused to allow newly freed labourers to take with them the stock that they had been given in lieu of wages. Furthermore

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<sup>156</sup> Iannini, Craig, 1995,p.17

<sup>157</sup> Worden, N, "Between Slavery and Freedom: The apprenticeship period 1834-1838," in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) pp.121-122

the 'dop' system was developed, whereby farm workers would receive a daily measure of wine in form of payment. <sup>159</sup>

The system of apprenticeship with regards to former slaves was a policy that designed to prepare these newly emancipated slaves for their future as wage labourers. Although, as Worden points out from December 1 1834, the Cape slaves were no longer slaves, they were not free. Across the British empire, the Abolition act "tied them to their owners as 'apprentices' for a further four years."<sup>160</sup> This apprenticeship period was to prepare the former slaves for a life as wage labourers and gave the colonists time to adjust to their new system of labour. <sup>161</sup>

According to Dooling, the newly emancipated slaves were quite mobile despite the newly passed Masters and Servants' laws. Mission stations took in many former slaves and others found work in Cape Town. Emancipation meant that former slave-owners were forced to "adjust and lessen their dependence on slave labour." <sup>162</sup> According to Dooling however, most newly free slaves continued to work in the agriculture sector for their former owners.<sup>163</sup> Slavery was replaced by casual wage labour, meaning that the masters were able to continue production at the post-emancipation levels. <sup>164</sup> There was no decrease in production in the wake of emancipation, in fact, according to Dooling, from 1838 to 1888, "wheat production in the Western Cape increased threefold. Farmers were also able to produce more (lower quality) wine..."<sup>165</sup> So why, with these facts in mind, did the Cape authorities see fit to take on the responsibility

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<sup>158</sup> Iannini, Craig, 1995, p.18

<sup>159</sup> Chapter 3 discusses the terms under which the apprentices from London were indentured, the terms and the systems of payment.

<sup>160</sup> Worden, Nigel, "Between Slavery and Freedom: The apprenticeship period. 1834 to 1838," in Worden and Crais (eds.), *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witwatersrand University Press, 1994) p.117,

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*, p.117

<sup>162</sup> Iannini, Craig, *Contracted Chattel: Indentured and Apprenticed Labour in Cape Town, c.1808-1840*, MA, (University of Cape Town, August 1995) p.14

<sup>163</sup> Dooling, Wayne, "In Search of Profitability: Wheat and Wine Production in the Post-Emancipation Western Cape," 2006, *South African Historical Journal*, 55, 1, p.88

<sup>164</sup> Dooling, Wayne, 2006, p.91

<sup>165</sup> Dooling, Wayne, 2006, p.91

and hassle of importing juvenile apprentices from England through the Children's Friend Society?

Discussed below are to the two main sources of labour in the Cape Colony, the indigenous Khoikhoi and the imported slaves, amongst whom the CFS apprentices were expected to work, despite their European origin (unheard of at time).

## **The Khoisan**

In the pre-colonial period, the indigenous pastoral inhabitants, the KhoiKhoi of the Cape area were willing trade both cattle and sheep in large numbers with the Europeans traders and travellers.<sup>166</sup> The KhoiKhoi were willing to trade their stock for products unavailable to them from interior trade, tobacco, copper and iron. When the Netherlands East India Company (VOC) founded their trading post at the Cape in 1652 they continued to trade with the indigenous pastoralists. The Dutch settlement meant an increased demand for meat with the growing population of sailors and VOC officials. In order to continue this trade and to avoid any wars in the Colony, the directors of the VOC (the Heren XVII) declared the KhoiKhoi to be a free people, neither conquered nor enslaved.<sup>167</sup> Despite what Elphick and Malherbe refer to as "mild policies" there were problems that emerged between the Dutch and the original Cape residents. Problems included petty theft by the KhoiKhoi for metal items and the Company's livestock. Furthermore the KhoiKhoi's were unwilling to trade at the volumes that the Dutch needed and Dutch believe that the KhoiKhoi were offering refuge to the imported slaves who had deserted. On the other hand, the Khoikhoi were disturbed by the manner in which the frontier was expanding, from a mere trade post to an agricultural community, with the Company releasing some employees from their contracts and allowing them to set up as independent farmers. These freeburgers lessened the Company's dependence

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<sup>166</sup> Elphick, R and Malherbe, V.C, "The Khoisan to 1828," in Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840*, (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1989) p.3

<sup>167</sup> Elphick and Malherbe, "The Khoisan to 1828" in Elphick and Giliomee (eds.) *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1840* (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1989) pp.10-11

on East India imports and, more importantly, on trade with the Khoikhoi. This new agricultural society that was created threatened the KhoiKhoi's land claims for pasture and their access to water areas on the Cape Peninsula.<sup>168</sup> Seven years after the Dutch first settled in the Cape the Khoikhoi, under the leadership of a Khoikhoi interpreter for the Dutch, Doman, attacked the European settlements, destroying farms and stealing the bulk of their cattle and sheep.<sup>169</sup> This first KhoiKhoi Dutch War ended with the KhoiKhoi being allowed to keep all the stock that they had stolen without having to pay reparations for the damage they had caused. The conditions were that they were to recognise the Company's claims over the freeburgher's land. This was the beginning of the end of the KhoiKhoi's independence in the Cape Colony.

Forty-eight years after the VOC had established their trading post at Table Bay, the majority of KhoiKhoi were either partially or entirely dependent on the colony for their living. As seen in Elphick and Malherbe's work, the Company had not only claimed the majority of Khoikhoi cattle but also "subordinated and humiliated the KhoiKhoi chiefs, assimilated Khoikhoi into its legal system and instigated the expansion of the colony into Khoikhoi pastures."<sup>170</sup> It was only after the Company had stripped them of their land and livestock and had broken up their communities, that the Freeburgers began to play a decisive role in the lives of the KhoiKhoi- by offering them employment on their farms. Despite the importation of slaves to the colony, many of the freeburgers were facing labour shortages as they could not afford enough slaves to work their large farms, and the dispossessed Khoikhoi were a welcome alternative. The KhoiKhoi's experience with domesticated animals made them amenable to the "management of flocks and herds," and "prepared them for ploughing and driving wagons on arable farms."<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Elphick and Malherbe, "The Khoisan to 1828" in Elphick and Giliomee (eds.) *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1840* (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1989) p. 12

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, p.28

Despite their importance to the Cape economy, the Khoikhoi were not well paid, although details regarding wages are scarce before November 1799 when the first register of labour contracts was introduced in Graaf-Reinet. What is clear however is that for the most part rations formed a large part of the wages received by the Khoikhoi labourers. These rations included tobacco, food, knives, clothing and sometimes a small number of breeding animals.<sup>172</sup> This was not uncommon at the time, during the 1700s it was rare to receive cash as a form of payment in the Cape Colony. Prices were constantly rising in the colony and as argued by Elphick and Malherbe, it may not have been advantageous for the Khoikhoi to receive cash. The downside of receiving cattle as payment however was that the Khoikhoi were dependent on the farmers for grazing rights, no matter what number of livestock they had accumulated.

This dependence on the farmers only increased as the Colony grew, in 1775 the governor at the time approved legislation in the district of Stellenbosch that allowed a child of Khoisan-slave descent to be apprenticed to the age of twenty-five. 1797 brought with it limitations on the Khoisan's freedom of movement, when pass systems were introduced in Swellendam, to prevent Khoisan from deserting and to prevent farmers poaching each other's servants.<sup>173</sup>

There were pockets of resistance during the eighteenth century but none as lasting as that attempted in March of 1799 when hundreds of servants trying to escape the bonds of servitude, left their farms on the Eastern Frontier and began what would be a four year war to reclaim their country, in a war of independence. Initially the central government blamed the farmers for their harsh treatment of the Khoikhoi which had led them to revolt. But as the war continued, and specifically the killing of a field cornet in his home occurred, the government began to take notice. Not only were the attacks on farms increasing but production on the frontier was falling and the British, who were in the middle of their First Occupation at the Cape, were forced to act. This included the use of burgher commandos (groups of farmers and loyal servants armed with

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid, p.30

<sup>173</sup> Elphick and Malherbe, "The Khoisan to 1828" in Elphick and Giliomee (eds.) *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1840* (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, Longman, 1989) p.30

guns) to quell the rebels. This war of independence (1799-1803) resulted in deaths of many leaders on both sides and the fighting eventually died down. The Batavian Regime, back in power at this stage had to arrange the peace settlements.

The nineteenth century brought with it another final change in government in the Cape Colony, with the British re-gaining control in 1806. Along with the new British administration came an influx of missionaries from Europe. The arrival of this missionaries and the establishment of their mission stations, available to the Khoikhoi meant that the grievances of the Khoikhoi became well known in the nineteenth century. The Khoikhoi were, with the help and encouragement from the missionaries more willing to seek justice through the courts for the grievances done to them. Dr. John Phillip of the London Missionary Society (LMS) was the biggest champion of their rights, but he only arrived in 1819. In the meantime, the British government were nervous of Khoikhoi alignment with the Xhosa on the Eastern Frontier, an alliance that would threaten the survival of the colony.<sup>174</sup> The war for KhoiKhoi independence brought to light the need for regulation of the working and living conditions of slaves and servants alike. The British government spent her first years after the Second Occupation of the Cape attempting to strip "colonial labour relations of their excessive violence."<sup>175</sup>

The Caledon Code was, according to Dooling, the outcome of the century long struggle between masters and servants in the Cape, that culminated in the 1799-1803 rebellion. The Caledon Code was implemented in 1809. It stated that contracts had to be drawn up in triplicate so that the master, the servant and the Colonial Government could have copies, and these contracts had to be registered before local judicial officials. Under the Caledon Code, the Khoikhoi were given the right to lodge complaints regarding ill-treatment. Furthermore, Masters were liable to pay fines if found responsible for gross ill-treatment of their labourers. And finally, under the Caledon Code, Masters had to provide, along with wages,

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<sup>174</sup> Dooling, W "Origins and Aftermath of the Cape Colony's 'Hottentot Code' of 1809" *Kronos*, 31 (November 2005) p.54

<sup>175</sup> Dooling, W, 2005, p.55

'the necessities of life' to their labourers, such as food, clothing and lodging (similar to slaves).<sup>176</sup>

The success of the Code was largely geographically based. The more rural districts found it quite easy to break the code. The Circuit Court system was established after the Caledon Code was passed, and one of their main jobs was to ensure the fair treatment of the Hottentots. The missionaries mentioned above, drew a lot of attention to the failings of the Caledon Code, including a series of court cases against masters in what became known as the Black Circuit, where seventeen settlers were charge with murder of their labourers but only received trifling sentences. This series of court cases, Dooling argues, put on trial the "entire social system that had emerged on the frontier."<sup>177</sup>The settlers at the Cape were forced to defend their way of life and their actions as a class.

Despite the ameliorative measures of the Caledon Code, conditions did not improve for the majority of the Hottentot labourers. Between 1812 and 1828, when the next big legislation was introduced regarding them (Ordinance 50), the apprenticeship system that had been in place for the children of Khoikhoi and Slaves, was applied to Hottentot children who lived on the farms, they were allowed to be indentured without the permission of the parent between the ages of eight to eighteen. This effectively tied the Khoikhoi labourers to the farms. Ordinance 50 of 1828 freed the indigenous Khoisan from the legal requirement to work for colonial farmers and obtain passes signed by said farmers before moving off the farm. Although this ordinance was celebrated by humanitarians both in the Cape and in London, the British settlers loathed it, seeing it "as a license for the criminally-disposed 'coloured' classes to roam and plunder through the colony."<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Dooling, W, 2005, p. 54

<sup>177</sup> Dooling, W, 2005,p. 60

<sup>178</sup> Lester, Alan, "British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire," in *History Workshop Journal*, pp.33-4

## The slaves

The first slaves arrived in the Cape in 1658, a few years after the VOC arrived at the Cape. They were from Madagascar, Mozambique, the Indian Ocean Coastline and the Malay areas. The lives of slaves in the Cape Colony were marked by hard work. Historians of slavery in the Cape highlight the difference between urban slaves and rural slaves. In general the lives of rural slaves were more taxing and controlled than the lives of the slaves living in Cape Town and other towns in the colony.

Rural slaves were generally classified as either domestic labourers or farm labourers. Domestic labourers were in charge of tending to vegetables, making butter and cheese and feeding the poultry. This tended to be less physically taxing than the work done by the farm labourers. They were put to work taking care of livestock, the cultivation of grain, making wine and the collection of wood. It was not uncommon for slaves to be rented out during peak labour demand periods. Worden points out in his *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* that there was a lack of specialisation on Cape farms, which meant that "fewer distinctions emerged of rank or position."<sup>179</sup>

According to Worden, slaves on the rural farms suffered through extreme isolation and a lack of privacy. This extreme isolation often resulted in the adoption by the slave of the Dutch language, or a bastardised form of it. This is similar to the case of the CFS children, with the adoption of their master's language, and by extension, their culture. Slavery in the Cape Colony is marked by the lack of organised rebellion or revolt against the slave-owning class. Partly to blame for this was their placement, to a large extent the slaves worked on rural farms, where they were separated from family and other slaves from their country. Language barriers played a huge role in the prevention of a single overriding slave unity in the Cape. Similarly, the CFS apprentices were placed in rural farms where they were often without a single person to speak English to. English was an integral part of the notion of Britishness, and some CFS

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<sup>179</sup> Worden, Nigel, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)

apprentices actually 'adapted' so well to their new surroundings that they forgot their mother tongue entirely and took on the language of their Masters, Dutch.<sup>180</sup>

Similar to the slave experience too was the separation of CFS siblings at the Cape. It was not stated mandatory but there were cases of siblings in the CFS being separated and in other cases, children reported to not knowing where in the colony their siblings were, if they were still even there. Brenton's idea of creating a group of industrious, pious, proud Britons on the South West shores of Africa was marred by the reality of the Cape Colony and the predicated adaptability of the children to their new homes only ended up disadvantaging the CFS. The first CFS children arrived in the Cape in 1833, a year before the four year period of apprenticeship. Although they too were classified as apprentices, they were indentured under different terms.<sup>181</sup>

#### **2.4. Slavery and Reform in the Cape Colony**

Beginning with the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and finally ending with the emancipation of all the slaves in 1838, the first half of the nineteenth century in the Cape Colony is a prime example of the changes occurring within the British Empire as a whole. The abolitionists and administrators of the colony believed that slavery was inhumane, but not only that, they further believed that it limited worker productivity and incentive.<sup>182</sup> They considered the amount of power that the slaveholders had over their unfortunate subjects to be dangerous. Finally, they were of the opinion that slavery in fact hindered "worker incentive and productivity."<sup>183</sup> Abolitionists, both in the Colony and in London hoped to create a free black labour force of

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<sup>180</sup> For a more detailed account of the number of children whom forgot to speak, read and write in English, see Chapter 3.

<sup>181</sup> For the terms of indenture, please see Chapter four.

<sup>182</sup> Worden, Nigel, "Between Slavery and Freedom: The Apprenticeship Period, 1834-138," in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) p.117

<sup>183</sup> Worden, Nigel, "Between Slavery and Freedom: The Apprenticeship Period, 1834-138," in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) p.117

“cheerful, obedient and grateful labourers, whose wants could be satisfied only by working voluntarily for wages.”<sup>184</sup> This new wage world that the British Empire hoped to embark upon would be one free of direct physical coercion all the while keeping the newly emancipated slaves tied to their former masters through a need for income and subsistence.

In 1823, Somerset issued a proclamation that he claimed he hoped would ameliorate the lot of slaves in the Colony, by awarding them the right to form legal marriages as long as they were Christians and their masters agreed. Under Somerset’s proclamation, baptized slaves were allowed to testify in court and maximum work hours were set. Furthermore punishments by slaveholders were restricted to no more than twenty-five lashes. And finally, under Somerset’s proclamation, slaves had the right to own property. In an attempt to appease the slaveholders who were unhappy with the level of governmental interference in their relationships with their labour, none of the above rights affected the claims that slaveowners had over their slaves.<sup>185</sup>

In 1826, Ordinance 19 was passed protecting slaves from excessive labour demands, which included limitations being placed on punishments and the protection of slave families.<sup>186</sup> In light of this, the worries plaguing slave owners in the decade leading up to emancipation seem quite rational for the time. The Patriarchal system was breaking down, with the slave-owners fearing that they would be placed at the mercy of their former slaves, newly equipped with the right to demand wages. *The Colonist* published an article in 1827, in which the “cry of the employers” was stated, “there is no greater obstacle to the

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<sup>184</sup> Davis, David Brion, “Reflections on Abolitionism and Ideological Hegemony,” seen in Mason, John E, “The Slaves and their Protectors: Reforming Resistance in a Slave Society, the Cape Colony, 1826-1834” in *Journal of South African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (March 1991), p.107

<sup>185</sup> Mason, John E, “The Slaves and their Protectors: Reforming Resistance in a Slave Society, the Cape Colony, 1826-1834” in *Journal of South African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (March 1991), p.106

<sup>186</sup> Dooling, Wayne, “In Search of Profitability: Wheat and Wine Production in the Post-Emancipation Western Cape,” *South African Historical Journal*, 55, 1, 2006, p.91

prosperity...than the want of free labour.”<sup>187</sup> There was increasingly a large demand for alternative sources of labour.<sup>188</sup>

Ordinance 19 of 1826 gave slaves the right to purchase their freedom, without regard for the master’s consent, and furthermore created the Office of the Guardian of the Slaves. It also extended the right to testify in court to all slaves, Christian or not. Furthermore, it stated that slave children under the age of ten were not to be sold away from their mothers. It also placed restrictions on the physical punishment of male slaves, with female slaves only to be whipped to a “moderate extent.”<sup>189</sup>

The Consolidated Ordinance of 1831 placed slave laws in the colony alongside the slave laws in Trinidad and other West Indian colonies. It reduced the number of lashes that could be given to male slaves and entirely forbade the beating of female slaves. Under the Consolidated Ordinance of 1831, slave owners were required to keep record books of all punishments. These records were to be submitted to the Guardian twice a year.<sup>190</sup> This idea of a learnt self-discipline and responsibility on the part of the slave was one of the reasons for the introduction of the apprenticeship system from 1834-1838. The thought was that the newly emancipated slaves would learn the joys of hard labour and responsibility without the fear of physical coercion as before. As Worden points out, “the language of ‘self-improvement’ often replaced a crude demand for a docile work force in abolitionist thinking.”<sup>191</sup> According to Dooling, the slave

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<sup>187</sup> Iannini, Craig, *Contracted Chattel: Indentured and Apprenticed Labour in Cape Town, c.1808-1840*. p.16

<sup>188</sup> Dooling, Wayne, “In Search of Profitability: Wheat and Wine Production in the Post-Emancipation Western Cape,” *South African Historical Journal*, 55, 1, 2006, p.98

<sup>189</sup> Mason, John E, “The Slaves and their Protectors: Reforming Resistance in a Slave Society, the Cape Colony, 1826-1834” in *Journal of South African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (March 1991), p.106

<sup>190</sup> Mason, John E, “The Slaves and their Protectors: Reforming Resistance in a Slave Society, the Cape Colony, 1826-1834” in *Journal of South African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (March 1991), pp.107-109

<sup>191</sup> Worden, Nigel, “Between Slavery and Freedom: The Apprenticeship Period, 1834-1838,” in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) p.118

economy was "...in terminal decline in the years leading to emancipation," as slaves were not being properly utilized.<sup>192</sup>

According to Worden, despite the manner ameliorative measures enacted to ensure the protection of the former slaves during their apprenticeship, it was not always successful. Many slave-owners blamed the slaves themselves for their approaching emancipation and took their anger at English Government interference out on the slaves. Other settlers used the new measures in place to their advantage, taking their unruly labourers to the Resident Magistrate to be punished on what seems to have been a tougher scale than during slavery.<sup>193</sup>

Nineteenth century Cape Liberalism was a "two-sided coin." On the upside, the middle class was concerned with the lower classes, but on the downside, it was also equally interested that the uplifting of the lower classes be profitable (to the upper-classes).<sup>194</sup> The changes in legislation toward the slaves, and their eventual emancipation threatened the master-slave relationship. The branch of liberalism that the Cape Colonial Administrations brought with them from Victorian England, threatened the Patriarchal society that the Dutch had spent nearly two hundred years cultivating.

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<sup>192</sup> Dooling, Wayne, "In Search of Profitability: Wheat and Wine Production in the Post-Emancipation Western Cape," *South African Historical Journal*, 55, 1, 2006, p.91

<sup>193</sup> Worden, Nigel, "Between Slavery and Freedom: The Apprenticeship Period, 1834-1838," in Worden and Crais (eds) *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth century Cape Colony*, (Witswatersrand University Press, 1994) pp.134-

<sup>194</sup> Iannini, Craig, *Contracted Chattel: Indentured and Apprenticed Labour in Cape Town, c.1808-1840*, Masters Thesis (University of Cape Town August 1995) p.54

## 2.5. The Children's Friend Society in the Cape of Good Hope

The Children's Friend Society set up two committees in the Cape Colony, one in Cape Town and one in the frontier town of Graham's Town in what is now known as the Eastern Cape. The Cape of Good Hope was considered the perfect place to send the apprentices, it was, in Brenton's words Britain's "half-way house and our key to India."<sup>195</sup> The Cape was considered cheaper than Australia and North America and the climate was thought to be ideal.<sup>196</sup> And of course, with the emancipation of the slaves, the labour demand in the Cape was high. It was hoped that the children would benefit from Cape Town, physically (their health) and morally, as London was considered to be a place of criminal temptations.

Graham's Town, was at the time a British military outpost founded in 1812. It had been the focus of the British "assisted migration scheme" of 1820. Due to the fact that the land in and around this area turned out to be unsuitable for small-scale subsistence farming, most of the 5000 immigrants abandoned their allotted land and moved to Graham's Town and Port Elizabeth.<sup>197</sup> Graham's Town was, in Blackburn's words, a "...British enclave compared to the high density of Dutch scattered around the Cape Town area."<sup>198</sup> Although the first boat of apprentices from England was sent to Cape Town, the next two were sent to Graham's Town via Port Elizabeth, presumably because of its more "English" character. However, the infrastructure in Graham's Town was not as extensive as in Cape Town.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the first twenty boys came to the Cape in May of 1833, upon the *Charles Kerr*. The committee in the Cape Town was only established in 1834, comprising of well-to-do English settlers in the city. The most cited names from the committee list were Ewan Christian, Esq, the

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<sup>195</sup> Letter to the Editor of *The Morning Post*, January 1, 1833, as seen in Brenton, J, p. 112

<sup>196</sup> Jordon, T, "Stay and Starve or Go and Prosper: Juvenile Emigration from Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century" in *Social Science History*, 9, 2 (Spring 1985), P.148

<sup>197</sup> Geoff, G, 1993, p.181

<sup>198</sup> Geoff, G, 1993, p.181

treasurer of the Society and John Fairbairn, editor of the *South African Commercial Advertiser* who was the Honourable Secretary of the Committee. In order to deal with the growing numbers of juvenile emigrants being sent to the Cape in the second half of the 1830s, sub-committees, consisting of three or four men, were set up in the districts of Stellenbosch, Paarl, Swellendam and Caledon, Wynberg, Worcester and George Town between 1837 to 1839.

The CFS was aware that, due to the fact that the Cape Colony was a slave colony, or nearly a former slave colony, much care had to be taken to ensure that:

...there should not be the remotest possibility that any of them should be consigned to a state of captivity, or to situations where, in the event of their being improperly treated they would be without means of redress.<sup>199</sup>

Members of the Committee in the Cape kept Brenton up to date regarding the reception of the Society's boys in the Colony. For example, in a letter to the editor of the *Morning Post*, Brenton said that he had received two newspapers from the Committee at the Cape, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* and the *Graham's Town Journal* in which he learnt that a public meeting was held on October 16, 1832 to discuss the much needed "free labour."<sup>200</sup> Furthermore Society in London had received "flattering letters of approval" from the Committee at the Cape and Brenton was convinced that his former charges would no doubt become creditable members of their new society.<sup>201</sup>

In 1839, R. Grisold, the assistant Secretary to the CFS in the Cape Colony, put together a table that was published in the Fairbairn's *South African Commercial Advertiser* in February of 1839 and later in the Ninth Annual Report for the CFS. According to Grisold, by 1839, there were 633 children under the guardianship of the Commissioners at the Cape of Good Hope, out of a total of 726. There were 530 boys and 103 girls. According to Grisold, by 1839 only six per cent of the

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<sup>199</sup> "Report on the Third Annual Meeting of the CFS, 1833," as seen in "The Children's Friend Society," *The London Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>200</sup> "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, January 1, 1833, seen in Brenton, J, *Memoirs*, p. 111

<sup>201</sup> "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Herald*, September 20, 1833, in Brenton, J, *Memoirs*, p. 106

apprentices in the colony had finished their period of service, two per cent was no longer in the colony, having either been transported for theft, having deserted, were travelling with the Master, or as in the case of six of the eight girls whom who were no longer in the colony, they were removed by their parents. Out of the 726 apprentices, according to Grisold, only one per cent had died, seventy-five per cent of those that died being boys.<sup>202</sup>

### **2.6.1. After the apprentices left London...**

According to Longmore, Resident Magistrate of Cape Town, when the ships carrying the apprentices arrived at the Cape, the Secretary of the CFS in the Cape Colony, R. Grisold Esq. would go on board the ship to meet the children. According to him, although the boys only sometimes had supervision with them, the girls always had a matron with them. He questioned them regarding their treatment, food, bedding and "usual comforts." The owner of the ship was not paid the remainder of the passage money, 2l. per apprentice until the board of commissioners was fully satisfied that the children had been properly treated during their journey.<sup>203</sup>

The Report of 1838 on the condition and treatment of the apprentices, stated only one instance in the later years where the owner of the ship was not paid his due, because of complaints from the young apprentices. However, it was later discovered that the children on board had been well treated and it was merely a "disgraceful attempt of three or four of the bad characters, by fabrication and falsehood to injure the master, who on being proved innocent, received the full amount of his contract."<sup>204</sup> In the early years of the program however, after interviewing the apprentices, it was found that the crews of the ships were

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<sup>202</sup> Tabulation by Grisold, R, Assistant Secretary to the CFS in the Cape seen in the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, February 2, 1839

<sup>203</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) "Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies relative to the condition and Treatment of the Children sent out by the Children's Friend Society" House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online, p.9

<sup>204</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) "Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies relative to the condition and Treatment of the Children sent out by the Children's Friend Society" House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online, p.9

sometimes guilty of persuading the boys to part with their clothing in exchange for something inconsequential like “the occasional piece of pudding.”<sup>205</sup> Refuting these claims that the children were well taken care of abroad the ships was Samuel Palmer, a former apprentice, who approached the CFS committee at the Ninth Annual General Meeting of the CFS in London. According to him, on board the ships, “the food was not fit for pigs.”<sup>206</sup>

The only recommendation that the Secretary to the CFS in the Cape could make to the CFS back in London was that it was preferable for the children to travel on ships with “larger class of free traders.” According to Grisold, the larger the number of cabin passengers, the better it was for the children as it gave the ship a greater level of respectability and, furthermore, the passengers often tended to instruct the children, and they ensured that the children were treated properly by the master of the ship.<sup>207</sup>

### **2.6.2. Upon Arrival at the Cape:**

Before the children were sent to their lodgings after their arrival at the Cape, and after they had been interviewed by the Secretary of the Society, Grisold, Esq, they were attended to by a doctor who examined each of them separately and gave a copy of his report of their health to the commissioners.

Although in the early years of the apprenticeships, the young ward, in the two years preceding the report, were lodged in a “clean, capacious and well ventilated building” in the centre of the Company Gardens. Before they were sent to their lodgings though they were under the temporary care of an unnamed “suitable and respectable person.” The boys were allowed to roam the Gardens, without the fear of “improper and dissolute characters” as the gates to the

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<sup>205</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) “Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies relative to the condition and Treatment of the Children sent out by the Children’s Friend Society” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online, p.10

<sup>206</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society,” *The London Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>207</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) Report p.9

Company gardens were guarded by a sentinel. However in the two years preceding the report, the boys were lodged in Somerset Hospital, as the lodgings in the Company Gardens was not available and the last batch of boys who arrived before the report, were lodged in the former girls lodging, Victoria Lodge, in Green Point.

As mentioned above, female apprentices were housed at Victoria Lodge in Green Point where Mrs. Bourhill resided until her death in 1838. According to the report, Victoria Lodge was a large, spacious residence, capable of catering for from forty to fifty children. Victoria Lodge was situated near the seaside with only gentlemen's villas surrounding it.<sup>208</sup> Upon the death of Mrs. Bourhill, Victoria Lodge was no longer used to accommodate female apprentices and the male apprentices took it over. There was no mention made of where the female apprentices were moved to upon Mrs. Bourhill's death.

### **2.5.3 The terms under which the juvenile emigrants were apprenticed- (Vide printed form of indenture)**

The 1840 report gives us insight into the procedures surrounding the apprentices after their arrival at the Cape. According to the additional report, the day after the apprentices arrived at the Cape they were individually interviewed by the board of commissioners, who were provided with lists from England which contained the birth date, baptism and a character analysis of each child along with the parish they were from and their parentage.

Each juvenile emigrant was asked if they had any specific trade in mind although the Report clearly states that this did not guarantee the emigrants their choice of job. Certain factors had to be considered such as the demand for said trade and whether the child (after consideration of their characters) would be better suited to a town or to the countryside.

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<sup>208</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) Report, p.9

In the early 1830s, the potential masters were allowed to accompany the commissioners and meet the emigrants themselves, and state their preferences. However, Longmore states that this more often than not resulted in the apprentice wishing to be separated from his masters and hence, the practice was stopped. Samuel Palmer, a former apprentice, gave evidence regarding this practice at the ninth annual meeting of the CFS in 1839, where he stated that upon arrival at the Cape, he and the other juveniles were "ranged in a row and several Dutchmen were called to look at them." There was no member of the Committee at the meeting who was able to refute this at the time the evidence was given.<sup>209</sup>

The decision regarding where the apprentice would go was from then on decided entirely by the commissioners after careful consideration and based on their:

Knowledge of the applicants and description and character  
And disposition in the boys or girls, as to the parties whom  
They considered most eligible to suit and likely to agree the  
One with the other, more especially in respect to situation of  
Town or country.<sup>210</sup>

The board of commissioners first took in the applications from the tradesmen applying for apprentices and to give them preference, followed by those applying for apprentices for domestic servants and finally those applications for farm servants.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, although the juvenile emigrants were referred to as 'apprentices' they were not apprenticed in the same manner or under the same laws as the indigenous inhabitants of the Cape or even in the same manner as the emancipated slaves from 1834 to 1838. Those interested in apprenticing juvenile emigrants were made pay nine pounds to the treasurer of the CFS in the Cape, Ewan Christian. The CFS was very careful to state that this

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<sup>209</sup> "The Children's Friend Society," *The London Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>210</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) Report, p.10

amount was not a payment for a slave, as the general public in England believed but rather it was an:

advance of wages on the part of the master to indemnify the society for a portion of the expenses of passage-money, clothing &c. attending the transmission of each juvenile emigrant from England to the colony.<sup>211</sup>

According to the report, the total expense for each child sent from London to the Cape Colony was £15, of which the Society paid two-fifths and the masters in the Cape were in charge of the remaining three-fifths.

#### **2.6.4. Protection of the Apprentices in the Cape**

Longmore, Resident Magistrate of Cape Town, stated in a separate report in September of 1839, that Ordinance No. 3 of 26 May, 1836 should be amended. He stated that the magistrates courts ought be included as 'competent tribunals' and that magistrates should be able to punish the masters for any:

breach of performance in regard to the indenture, his conviction of undue severity or continued neglect &c. towards his apprentice ought to infer and carry along with the sentence against him a power to the commissioners to remove their ward if they deem it right. <sup>212</sup>

Longmore recommended that if there were cases where the magistrate believed that the apprentice ought to be removed from the masters care, then a recommendation ought to be made to the commissioners who would then act. His final word on the matter however was that the only way to ensure the protection of the apprentices was "constant inquiry." He recommended that the Governor, Napier should "institute an inquiry at unstated times to report on this system and the condition of the apprentices."<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> 1840 (323) Report, p.10

<sup>212</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) Report, p.10

<sup>213</sup> Additional Report, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 (323) Report, p.11

### *Report on the condition and treatment of the children sent out by the CFS to the Cape Colony*

In September of 1839, there was a push by the English public for an inquiry into the conditions of apprentices who were serving in the Cape Colony under Ordinance No. 3 of 1836. George Napier, Governor at the Cape at the time was instructed by Lord Normandy to institute the inquiry and file a report. Four commissioners were appointed and told to look into the following areas; General Treatment; Trade Taught; Employment; Food, Clothing and Bedding; Weekly Allowance; Reading and Writing; Religious Instruction; attendance at church; Facility of communicating with relatives &c.; If any difference of treatment since the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1838; and finally health and appearance, as indicative of such. A general overview was then to be provided with regards to the probability of the apprentice obtaining a livelihood in "situations of comparative comfort and respectability," superintendence and a final additional report respecting the voyage from England to the Colony, how the apprentices were indentured, the terms of the apprenticeship and the laws regulating it.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore the masters were interviewed regarding the general conduct of the apprentices with regards to "regularity, industry, obedience and moral habits," and with regards to their own religious duties towards the apprentices. Four-hundred and thirty-two of the 726 apprentices who were recorded as under the Guardianship of the Commissioners at the Cape of Good Hope were interviewed by the Commissioners of the 1840 CFS Report.<sup>215</sup>

John Bell, the secretary to the Government at the Colonial Office in the Cape of Good Hope, wrote that he believed the report would sooth the British Government and public as to the condition of the English apprentices. According to George Napier, upon his reading of the 1840 Report, he believed the

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<sup>214</sup> 1840 (323)CFS Report, p. 3

<sup>215</sup> Tabulation prepared by R. Grisold, Assistant Secretary to the Children's Friend Society in Cape Town, *South African Commercial Advertiser*, February 2, 1839

“apprehensions of the society were in a great measure groundless.”<sup>216</sup> Furthermore John Bell stated that the parents of the Society and all those involved deserved thanks and praise instead of the “unmerited reproach” that they had been subjected to.<sup>217</sup> In his cover letter to Lord John Russel, Secretary of the Colonies at the time, Napier stated that he hoped that the report would ensure that the colony “...be spared the pain of encountering any further inquiry through the continued operation of the Children’s Friend Society.”<sup>218</sup>

### **3.1 The Commissioners of Inquiry**

There were four commissioners appointed to investigate the condition and treatment of the CFS children at the Cape in 1839, Major Longmore, Resident Magistrate of Cape Town, Major Piers, the Resident Magistrate for the district of Paarl, Major James Barnes, the Resident Magistrate in Caledon, who also interviewed children in the neighbouring district of Swellendam, and Captain J.M Hill, the Resident Magistrate in the Malmesbury District. The four Commissioners were given the task of inquiring in the condition of the CFS children in Cape Town, Wynberg and Stellenbosch districts, where there were a recorded 434 apprentices with 232 masters. According to the report 359 were male (eighty-nine per cent) with only seventy-five females.<sup>219</sup>

#### **3.1.1 Major Piers, Resident Magistrate, Paarl**

Major Piers, as mentioned above, was the resident magistrate at Paarl. He interviewed forty-one children. His interview questions, which we have to judge from the apprentices answers, appeared to have placed no importance on their lives before they arrived at the Cape, apart from one question regarding their parents. His questions related to their age, their reading and writing skills, their

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<sup>216</sup> Copy of Dispatch from Governor Sir George Napier K.C.B to Lord John Russell seen in 1840 (323)CFS Report p. 1

<sup>217</sup> Government Advertisement in the *Government Gazette*, 2 Jan, 1840.

<sup>218</sup> No 22. Copy of Dispatch from Governor Sir George Napier to the Lord John Russell, 24 February 1840 in the 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.1

<sup>219</sup> 1840(323) CFS Report p. 2

religious education, their duties, whether they were well fed and finally, he included a question regarding their feelings regarding their situation, i.e. whether they were happy in their current employment. He was the only commissioner who took any notice of their height, with him noting that twenty-four of the forty one apprentices interviewed were what he considered to be 'diminutive' in size. He failed to document how long the children had been in the Cape, leaving large gaps in our knowledge about what age the children were when they made their journey to the Cape.

He did however include in his report his own observations on each apprentice, although these observations tended to be rather superficial, with statements like "appears healthy and well-grown," (this statement was repeated numerous times). He did not make any reference to the apprentices being paid, either in his letter to the Napier or in interviews with the apprentices. As the interviews continued, it would appear that Major Piers either lost interest or did not spend as much time with each apprentice as he did in the beginning. The testimonies of each apprentice were much shorter for the second twenty apprentices he interviewed. Furthermore, his personal observations became repetitive and brief as the interviews continued.

### **3.1.2. Major James Barnes, Resident Magistrate, Caledon**

Major James Barnes was the Resident Magistrate of Caledon who was assigned the task of interviewing sixty-two apprentices in Caledon and Swellendam during October and November of 1839. Of the sixty two, thirteen were girls. These sixty-two children were divided between twenty-six farms. Barnes did not submit a detailed cover letter to the Colonial Secretary John Bell nor did he include any personal observations or insight into the methodology of his interviews.

Unlike Major Piers Barnes paid attention to detail with regards to the age of the apprentices and where they lived before they arrived in the Colony. Furthermore unlike Piers, Barnes made note of whether or not the apprentices had been paid

since their indenture. He also reported, for each individual apprentice, whether or not he believed they would be able to obtain a livelihood after their term was up. He did not however, state whether this livelihood would be what was considered 'respectable,' or even lucrative.<sup>220</sup>

What Barnes failed to mention in his accompanying letter to the Colonial Secretary was that he himself had a young apprentice, Mary Holland. She had been bound to him in July of 1837. And had been with him two years at the time of the inquiry. Two years before Mary Holland was assigned to Major Barnes, he took on a young boy, of approximately twelve years old, Charles Hocking from Mary-le-bone in London. According to the minutes, Hocking was, with the permission of the commissioners re-assigned to Mr Charles Taylor of Swellendam in October of 1835 where he was employed in "all manner of farming occupation."<sup>221</sup> Nothing was said of why the boy was re-assigned. This fact, which was not highlighted or mentioned in name by any of the commissioners or Major Barnes himself, is one I feel cannot be ignored in the reading of his minutes and interviews.

Mary Holland was originally from London and at the time of the inquiry she was fourteen years old. She arrived at the Cape in March of 1837 upon the *Perfect*, under the care of Mrs. Bourhill.<sup>222</sup> In order to get a clearer view on Mary Holland's experience of the Cape, Barnes should not have been the one to interview her, but nevertheless he did. In his minutes for their interview he wrote that she was "like all other young people, very giddy and inattentive."<sup>223</sup> He stated that her morals had improved since she arrived, and he would have no doubt attributed it to his claim of her attendance at family prayers every day and her attendance at the service in the English Church every Sunday. According to Barnes she was well clothed, well fed and lodged and that her wages were paid

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<sup>220</sup> For more on the notion of respectability in the Cape, see Chapter 2

<sup>221</sup> Minutes made on a Visit of Inquiry into the actual state of the Juvenile Emigrants in the Districts of Caledon and Swellendam, in the months of October and November, 1839, by Major James Barnes," Caledon, 19 November 1839, in 1840(323) CFS Report p.23

<sup>222</sup> Untitled Article, in *The Times*, May 10, 1839, p.5

<sup>223</sup> "Minutes made on a Visit of Inquiry into the actual state of the Juvenile Emigrants in the Districts of Caledon and Swellendam, in the months of October and November, 1839, by Major James Barnes," Caledon, 19 November 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.19

on time and into the savings bank under her name. According to Barnes, there were “no complaints on either side,” although young Mary Holland would have had to be very brave to speak up against Barnes and even if she did, it is unknowable whether he would have included it in the report.<sup>224</sup>

### **3.1.3. Captain J.M Hill, Resident Magistrate, Malmesbury**

Sixty-two-children were interviewed in the District of Malmesbury by J.M Hill, resident Magistrate there. According to the report the majority of these apprentices arrived in the Cape in 1836. These sixty-two children were divided between 21 farms in the Malmesbury district. None of the children claimed to have arrived in 1834 and six children did not answer the question of how long they had been in the Cape.

In his letter to the Secretary to Government at the Colonial Office in Cape Town, J.M Hill gives a brief description of his method of conducting the interviews. He states that he generally saw the children at their place of employment and that he conducted the interviews without their masters’ present. Included in his interviews (in some cases) are interviews with other labourers and servants on the farms where the apprentices lived and worked. He questioned them on their knowledge of the apprentices regarding food, clothing and treatment.<sup>225</sup>

### **3.2. The Findings of the Report**

The introduction to the report highlights the supposed depravity of the children apprenticed, the fraternising that occurred between the apprentices, the servants and slaves, whose “loose habits of moral observance and careless sense of religious obligation,” did not set a good example.<sup>226</sup> Finally, the introduction to the report highlighted the language barrier that existed between many of the masters and their new apprentices, the masters understanding little or no

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid, p.19

<sup>225</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 4 November 1839, in for the Colonial Secretary John Bull from Resident Magistrate of Malmesbury, J.M. Hill in 1840 (323) CFS Report, Cape Town, December 1839, p. 24

<sup>226</sup> Ibid, p. 24

English and the apprentices having no Dutch. This I believe to be an important point, as the loss of the apprentices' English language as a critical sacrifice that the CFS were forced to make. Although Brenton proclaimed that CFS and their actions with regards to the children would instil a love of country in the juvenile emigrants, it appeared that the opposite happened. Many of the children were under ten years old when they arrived at the Cape, the generally acknowledged advantage to that being that they would adapt quickly to the big changes. Adapting quickly meant losing their mother tongue, the written word, or in some cases, the English written word, having gained Dutch reading and writing along with speaking it. In many cases they lost their Protestant beliefs and love and duty to God, a defined characteristic of the Victorian English.

It was of little consequence that the Cape was a British colony when the apprentices arrived, it had been a Dutch colony for nearly two hundred years and many of the children were sent to serve under Dutch farmers. Many of these farmers were drastically (even if only in their own eyes as was often the case) affected by the emancipation of the slaves. The emancipation had negatively affected the Dutch farmers' feeling towards the British government. They began to deeply resent what they say as British government involvement in their private lives. This was only further exacerbated by the 1840 Report.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Dutch farmhouse was marked by an intimacy between servants, slaves, their masters and their master's family. They ate in close quarters, slept in their houses and witnessed each others lives. This patriarchal system had been invaded upon by Ordinance 19 and 26,(discussed in Chapter Two) and the emancipation of the slaves. The 1840 Report was the final straw. Those with apprentices reported to Longmore that they wanted no more apprentices after the invasion of privacy that occurred during the investigations for charges that had been unfounded (in their eyes) and, according to the report had been found untrue.

The CFS acknowledged that many of the children were sent to rural farms and that this was a hindrance to their religious education. However, Longmore states

that the CFS in London had emphasised that the children's moral well being was of the utmost importance. The London office urged the Cape Town Committee to put the children with "careful masters" in areas where they would be far from temptations or bad companions.<sup>227</sup> The Committee in Cape Town decided that loss of regular religious education by those apprentices placed on rural farms was compensated by them being geographically separate from the city of Cape Town and all its vices. The CFS in London was not only intent on removing their charges from the city of London, but preferred to have a little to do to with any city as possible. Cities as a whole were biggest threat to what Brenton and his committee called the moral well-being of the child. In the report, Longmore acknowledged the limitations of the countryside, regarding divine instruction and church attendance but he (and the CFS in London) believed these drawbacks would counterbalance "...the evils to which some of the apprentices (already perhaps initiated into bad habits) would be exposed, by remaining in a populous neighbourhood, and likely to meet with bad examples."<sup>228</sup>

### **3.2.1. General Treatment**

Under this heading the commissioners were told to question the apprentices regarding corporal punishment. According to the report, the commissioners were tasked with discovering how far corporal punishment had been inflicted, whether it was fair or whether the master was abusing his power, and finally whether confinement with "a spare diet had been resorted to by way of punishment."<sup>229</sup> According to the report, the apprentices generally responded that they were well treated, and that the correction they received was generally fair being as a result of their own negligence or fault. The instruments mentioned that were used to punish the apprentices were switches, sjambocks, cat-o-nine-tails and canes,

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<sup>228</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.4

<sup>229</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.3

According to Captain Hill (R.M Malmesbury), it was, "extraordinary that not one of them complained of having been punished without acknowledging at the same time that he deserved it."<sup>230</sup> In the interviews I found evidence of this, for example, Joesph Stockbridge, in the service of Mr. Danul of Kupers Pontein, Zwartland, states that "I am punished when I deserve it with a little quince stick."<sup>231</sup> In Hill's opinion the level of correction used on the apprentices was never too severe. However, upon my own inspection of the interviews carried out by him, it would appear that he glossed over some cases where the apprentices claimed to have been ill-treated. For example, Thomas Perry, had been in Mr. Thuenissen's of Klip Valley, Koeberg, service for three years, claimed that he was "badly treated" and it was recorded in the minutes of the interview that he wished to be removed.<sup>232</sup> Hill interviewed Mr. Theunissen regarding Thomas Perry, and Theunissen claimed that Perry was generally badly-behaved and that he had absconded a couple of times. Hill made no special mention of this in his cover letter, nor did he make any note to remove the boy from Theunissen's service or to investigate further. The other two apprentices in Theunissen's service had no complaints however and Mary Riley, who had been with the Theunissen's for six months clearly stated that she had never been punished.<sup>233</sup> Hill either used his discretion in this case, possibly believing the master and the other three apprentices over Perry, or he simply failed to follow up on the case. His failure to highlight this case in any way makes it impossible for us to know.

Robert Thomas Clother, apprenticed to Frederick Duckitt of Orange Fontein, Groene Kloof, stated that he had been punished with a "shamboch[sic]" several times and once with a cat-o'-nine-tails.<sup>234</sup> Hill made no other reference to this, nor did he interview Frederick Duckitt. Duckitt had three apprentices and the other two, George Brown and Michael Berry, although they admitted to having been beaten with a sjambock, they apparently claimed to have deserved it. This

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<sup>230</sup> Enclosure No. 7, Letter to the Secretary of the Government in Cape Town, from J.M Hill, Resident Magistrate Malmesbury, 4 November 1939, Cape Town, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 24

<sup>231</sup> Enclosure No. 7, Minutes of Interviews between J.M Hill and Apprentices in the Malmesbury District, October 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 27

<sup>232</sup> Ibid, p. 26

<sup>233</sup> Enclosure No. 7, Minutes of Interviews between J.M Hill and Apprentices in the Malmesbury District, October 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 25

<sup>234</sup> Ibid, p. 32

is probably why Hill did not pursue this case, as the majority of apprentices at the farm believed (or claimed to believe) that their punishment fitted the crime. We could make our own assumptions and assume that he made the presumption that Clother was one of the apprentices with loose morals or bad character.

In Twee Kuilen, Zwartland, Hill interviewed both Mr Lochner and his two apprentices, John Burke and George Bushner. George Bushner had no complaints to make with regards to punishment, he states that he was punished with a cane when he deserved it, but his fellow apprentice, John Burke told a different story. According to him, he was "frequently punished by my master who makes me lay down to flog me."<sup>235</sup> Hill then interviewed Mr. Lochner who denied this, and, that was the last mention of it.

Major Piers (R.M. of Paarl) clearly stated in his cover letter that he generally believed the apprentices to be well treated, even when the apprentice stated otherwise. For example, Henry Vine, apprenticed to P.F.R. de Villiers of Paarl, stated that he did not like his mistress as she was "constantly boxing my ears."<sup>236</sup> Piers obviously placed more trust in the testimony of the Master, de Villiers who stated that Vine was "very much addicted to telling lies, negligent and careless in his work... and on one occasion he was absent for two months." Piers remarked that the boy was well clothed and that he believed him to be well treated.

The second case in which Piers took the word of the master over that of the apprentice was in Gt. Drakenstein, with S.J. Marais who had six apprentices. According to apprentice eighteen year old Robert Whitehead, , he was frequently beaten unjustly by Marais with a walking-stick. According to Marais, Whitehead was "very obstinate and disobedient," and Piers concluded that Whitehead "showed no appearance of ill-treatment."<sup>237</sup> However, on the other hand, Francis

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid, p. 33

<sup>236</sup> Enclosure No. 5, Minutes of Interviews between H. Piers and Apprentices in the Paarl District, November 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.14

<sup>237</sup> Enclosure No. 5, Minutes of Interviews between H. Piers and Apprentices in the Paarl District, November 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.15

Griffin, aged seventeen, and John Mason both claimed to have no complaints to make and yet they were also described by Marais as obstinate and disobedient, so again, it may well have been that Whitehead was lying or at the very least, exaggerating.

As mentioned above, Major Barnes did not include a detailed cover letter to accompany the minutes to his interviews. However my own research indicates that the sixty-two children interviewed by Barnes had more or less the same treatment as the apprentices in Paarl and Malesmbury. For example, Matilda Augusta Garey, aged eleven years old, who was apprenticed to Hermanus Philip Steyn of Swellenda, claims to sometimes having been beaten by her mistress because "she does not work and tells lies, but says she is generally well-treated."<sup>238</sup> John Webb, aged thirteen and apprenticed to Mr. D.C. Odendaal claims that he had only been beaten twice in his two years of indenture with Odendaal and that he was "treated alike with his master's own children."<sup>239</sup> Other apprentices, like Samuel Thomas, aged fourteen, apprenticed to Mr. Arthuer Nitch of Zoelemdals Valley, states that although they were sometimes beaten it was "never unmercifully."<sup>240</sup>

If the reports of the interviews between the apprentices and the commissioners of Inquiry are to be believed, the majority of apprentices were not mistreated by their masters. However, the worry comes in when the children reported to have been mistreated and they were not believed. The master's word, was generally believed over that of the apprentices and the cases were not investigated further. Furthermore, it does not appear that the children were aware of their rights or where they were to go to lodge complaints if they were being mistreated. A couple of children interviewed stated that they had written home regarding their mistreatment, which was redundant. There were only two cases in Barnes' apprentices whom had been removed from their Masters care when their complaints were found to be true.

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<sup>238</sup> Enclosure No.6, Minutes of Interviews between James Barnes and Apprentices in the Caledon and Swellendam Districts, October- November 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 23

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, p. 21

<sup>240</sup> Ibid. p.23

### **3.2.2. Trade Taught and General Employment**

According to Longmore's analysis of the interviews from the three districts, sixty children (fourteen per cent) of the 432 were actually employed in learning a trade. Five per cent were employed as gardeners or in gardens, two per cent were employed as clerk, but the majority, at thirty per cent were employed as farm servants which included grooms, cowherds and shepherds.<sup>241</sup> Longmore acknowledged that there were requests made by apprentices to be indentured out to learn a trade, and he stated that the Commissioners reported that there was no demand at the time in the Colony for said trades. In other cases, it was found that applications for apprentices came from tradesmen whom the commissioners did not consider suitable.<sup>242</sup>

Longmore pointed out that the Children's Friend Society in London urged the commissioners in the Cape not to be "too urgent to select tradesmen in towns," as it was considered more "desirable to place them in the country under a careful master, then to indenture them where they would be exposed to temptations or to fall in with bad companions."<sup>243</sup> There were obvious drawbacks to the countryside, such as a lack of religious instruction, and church attendance was not what was desired, however it was believed that these drawbacks would:

more than counterbalance the evils to which some of the apprentices (already perhaps initiated into bad habits) would be exposed, by remaining in a populous neighbourhood and likely to meet with bad examples.<sup>244</sup>

As stated regarding the employment of the apprentices, the majority of boys were employed either as herding oxen, sheep or horses. Longmore highlighted

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<sup>241</sup> Enclosure No. 4, Report on the present Condition and Treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town, 24 December 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.4

<sup>242</sup> Ibid, p.4

<sup>243</sup> Enclosure No. 4, Report on the present Condition and Treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town, 24 December 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.4

<sup>244</sup> Ibid, p.4

this in his report and stated that this occupation did not lead to any useful attainment with regards to future employment or future prospects in the colony. In Longmore's words, the only attainment this occupation led to was "indolent and slovenly habits."<sup>245</sup> One of the biggest issues with using the juvenile emigrants as herdsmen was that this job was typically thought to be fit only for the indigenous population or slaves. In the Cape colony, as in much of the British empire at the time was not considered the job for a white person, in fact Longmore used the term 'demeaning' when referring to the use of apprentices to herd livestock. Many of the farmers stated in the report that since the emancipation of the slaves in 1838, it was difficult to employ herdsmen and that it was necessity alone that prompted them to employ the apprentices in such work. Henry Stevens, in Mr. Proctor of Droge Valley is an example of this, his testimony indicates that since the emancipation of the slaves in 1838, he was put herding mares.<sup>246</sup>

Refuting this is Thomas Perry (mentioned above) who, at the time of the report had been in the service of Mr Theunisseun for three years, as a horseherd. But according to Theunisseun, at the time of the interview, Perry had only been employed as a horse-herd for two months and that it was temporary. William Groves, apprenticed to Mr. Proctor of Droge Valley (the same Mr Proctor from whom two apprentices were removed due to ill-treatment) had also been apprenticed for three years and his chief task was herding mares. Although Mr. Proctor was interviewed, he made no attempt to defend the fact that fifty per cent of the twelve apprentices indentured to him were employed herding sheep, horses and cows.<sup>247</sup>

Longmore states in the report that only fourteen per cent of the apprentices interviewed were employed as herdsmen. In his summary of the findings of the Commissioners of inquiry, he fails to acknowledge or account for apprentices

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<sup>245</sup> *Ibid*, p.4

<sup>246</sup> Enclosure No. 7, Minutes of Interviews between J.M Hill and Apprentices in the Malmesbury District, October 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.28

<sup>247</sup> Enclosure No. 7, Minutes of Interviews between J.M Hill and Apprentices in the Malmesbury District, October 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS CFS Report, pp.27-28

who were classified as 'farm labourers' with no description of what this entailed. In the letter to the Governor that accompanied the Report, Piers did point out that those children who were working as farm labourers in remote areas, were fast losing "both their religion and language, and gradually, I fear, falling into the immoral habits and customs of the coloured population, with whom in common they labour daily throughout their apprenticeship."<sup>248</sup> These apprentices, he states, had no hope of a respectable living once their indenture was over, instead, they would, in all likelihood continue to work as farm labourers earning 12s. to 20s. per month, without much hope of improvement.

With regards to the children who were learning a trade, Piers made a point of stating that they had an advantage over the other apprentices, with regards to their present condition and their future prospects. These apprentices, he wrote, were constantly employed and supervised with no chance to mingle with the coloured classes. These apprentices generally lived in or near a town or village where they were able to continue their religious and moral education. However, he did not include, in his cover letter the fact that that only three apprentices out of the forty-one he interviewed were learning a trade.

Thomas Grimes and Edgar True, both 15 years of age were apprenticed by B.G Heydenreich of Wagonmakers Valley, where they were learning the trade of shoemaking. And despite Piers' claim that those learning a trade had the opportunity to go to church, both boys stated that they never went to church. However, it is true that both boys claimed to be happy in their situation and stated that they were kindly treated.<sup>249</sup> The third boy learning a trade was William Alchin who was apprenticed to Waldpot, a wagonmaker from Paarl. He claimed to attend church every Sunday, stated that he had "no intercourse with the coloured people," and was in good health and "quite happy."<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Enclosure No. 5 for the Governor Sir G.Napier from H. Piers, Resident Magistrate, Paarl, 30 November 1839 in the 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.11

<sup>249</sup> "Report on the present conditions of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices residing in this District [Paarl] by Major Pieres, Resident Magistrate in obedience with the Commands of his Excellency the Governor," Cape Town 13 September 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.13

<sup>250</sup> Ibid, p.14

Barnes interviewed forty-nine boys. With regards to their employment thirty-seven per cent of the boys were employed as shepherds, fourteen per cent of the apprentices were employed as general farm servants, ten per cent of the boys were employed with horses (grooms and stable boys) and fourteen per cent of these boys were employed as 'house servants.'<sup>251</sup> This is a good example of the ambiguity behind the notion of obtaining a livelihood after indenture, for Barnes clearly stated, even when the boys were merely employed as horse-herds that they would be "able to obtain a livelihood when out of his time."<sup>252</sup> This contradicts Piers' report which states that those not employed in a trade were unlikely to succeed in the Cape, and would be unlikely to improve their conditions.

One of the apprentices interviewed by Major Barnes was indentured in a trade. Charles William Bennett, age sixteen was first bound to Rev. Robertson of Swellendam, but with the consent of the commissioners in Cape Town, he was removed and apprenticed to William Kerr, a carpenter in Swellendam who took him on to teach him the trade of carpenter and joiner.<sup>253</sup> Kerr was one of the first of the settlers from the 1820 scheme to arrive in the Cape and he himself was indentured to Moodie. He was discharged in 1821 and set up his own practice as a carpenter and joiner.<sup>254</sup>

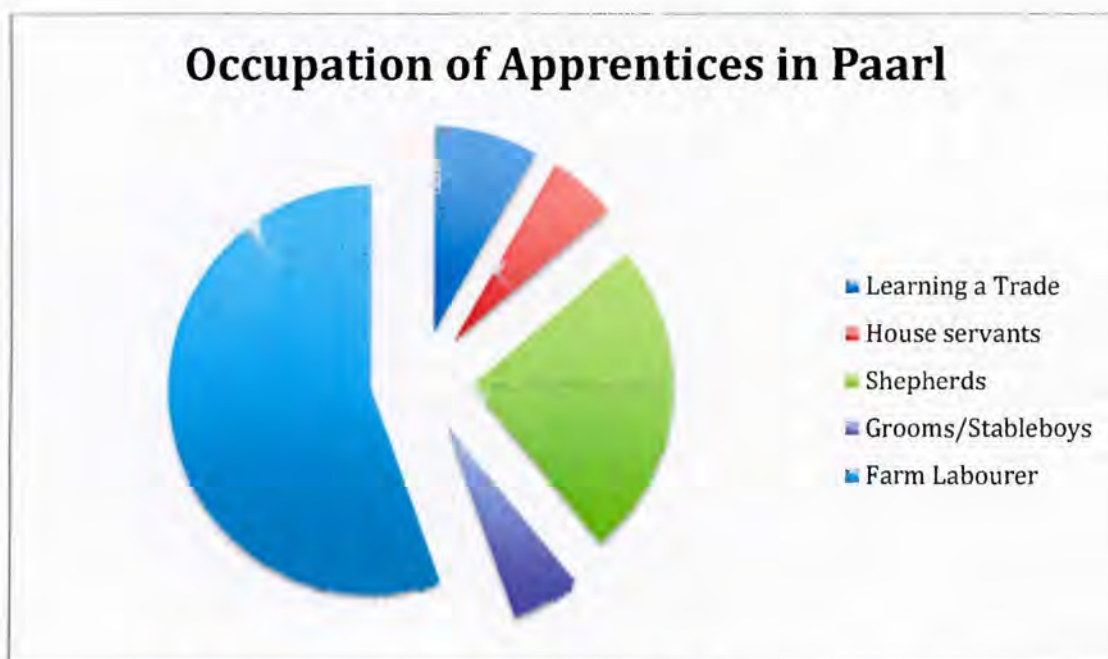
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<sup>251</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from James Barnes, Resident Magistrate, Caledon, Cape Town, December 1839 in the 1840 CFS (323) Report, pp.17-24

<sup>252</sup> Minutes made on a Visit of Inquiry into the actual state of the Juvenile Emigrants in the Districts of Caledon and Swellendam, in the months of October and November, 1839, by Major James Barnes," Caledon, 19 November 1839, in 1840 (323) CFS Report p.19

<sup>253</sup> Enclosure No. 6, Minutes from the interviews between Major Barnes and the Juvenile Emigrants, October-November 1839, in the 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.24

<sup>254</sup> Phillip, Peter, *British Residents at the Cape* (Cape Town: D. Phillip Totowa, N.J: Distribute by Rowman and Littlefield, 1981) p.221



**Figure 1 Pie Chart Showing the division of employment in Paarl**

The chart above clearly shows that the vast majority of the apprentices in the district of Paarl were employed as ‘farm labourers.’ As mentioned above, there is no accurate or thorough description of what this entailed, and it can be assumed that in some cases, a farm labourer would have been a herdsman, or at least that a portion of his time would be occupied with herding livestock.

As is clear from Figure 1, only a small percentage of apprentices in Paarl were employed in a trade. Thomas Grimes, age uncertain, but estimated to be between 15-16, was apprenticed to Master B.G Heydenreich of Wagonmakers Valley. At the time of the Inquiry he was being taught the trade of shoe-making. He was reported as being “quite happy,” and was apparently in regular contact with his friends back in England.<sup>255</sup> Edgar True was B.G Heydenreich’s second apprentice whom Barnes described in exactly the same words he described True’s peer, Thomas Grimes, except that it was noted that he “had not yet written to his friends.”<sup>256</sup> Obviously implying that he would but there is nothing to back this up.

<sup>255</sup> Enclosure No. 5 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from H.Piers, Resident Magistrate, Paarl, “Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope,” Cape Town, December 1839, p.13

<sup>256</sup> Enclosure No. 5 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from H.Piers, Resident Magistrate, Paarl, “Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope,” Cape Town, December 1839, p.13

William Alchin, aged fifteen was apprenticed to Waldpot who was a wagon-maker. The report states that he was in contact with both his parents back in England. The report stated that he was happy, and in good health, and that he had no "intercourse with coloured people."<sup>257</sup> He attended church regularly, and received a glowing praise from his Master, who said he was a fast learner. William Bartram, an orphan who age was not recorded was one of Mr Proctor's of Kupers Fontein, Zwartland, twelve apprentices. He was apprenticed to Mr Proctor in 1837 and was the mason's assistant.<sup>258</sup> Mr Proctor was a farmer who in 1818 sent a consignment of horses to India "as a specimen of what the colony of capable of producing for the supply of the Honourable Company's Cavalry."<sup>259</sup>

Michael Bodkin was apprenticed to Mr Laing of Green River from 1836 as a shoemaker. The records do not state Laing's first name, but I found two Laings, (brothers) in Phillips' *British Residents at the Cape*. One of the brothers, A Laing, who arrived at the Cape in 1811, was, five years later accused of mistreating his employee Philip Barends (It was not specified whether Philip Barends was a slave or a Khoikhoi labourer) and this case was settled out of court. His brother, P. Laing arrived in the Cape in 1817 and together the brothers set up a shoemakers business in Cape Town, so it is possible that Bodkin and his fellow apprentice were working for both brothers.<sup>260</sup> Said apprentice stated that he was in contact with his father. According to the interview, under Mr Laing he was given a bed, bedding and shared a room with his fellow apprentice. He said that he attended the divine service at the mission station. According to the report he was punished with a switch when he deserved it and he did not receive any pocket money as it was all put in the bank.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Enclosure No. 5 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from H.Piers, Resident Magistrate, Paarl, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p.16

<sup>258</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from James Barnes, Resident Magistrate, Caledon, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p.27

<sup>259</sup> Phillip, Peter, 1981, p.334

<sup>260</sup> Phillip, Peter, 1981, p.225

<sup>261</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from James Barnes, Resident Magistrate, Caledon, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p.33

Thomas Lee, an orphan of unknown age was Mr Laing's second apprentice from 1838. He was originally merely a cattle herd but had since been both herding cattle and learning the trade of shoe-making, according to the report. He did not have any contact with England as he claimed he had no one to write to. In a strange twist, it was Mr. Laing's sister (not mentioned in the Phillips' *British Residents at the Cape*) who was in charge of washing his clothes. This contrasts the majority of the apprentices whom either had to wash their own clothes or (pre-emancipation) had slaves to wash their clothes. He shared a bed with Michal Bodkin and unlike Michael Bodkin, claimed that he received pocket money regularly. There could be a number of reasons for this difference, either one of the boys was lying, or in light of the public outcry and uneasiness of the colony by 1838 with the apprentices, Mr. Laing adhered more to the rules regarding his second apprentice than he did his first.<sup>262</sup>

### **3.2.3 Food, Bedding and Clothing**

According to Longmore, the food given to the apprentices by their masters was, on the whole, sufficient in quality and quantity. According to his report, the few instances where there were complaints made regarding quality proved to be "trivial and accidental" and that there was only one case of insufficiency that proved to be true and the master "pleaded total ignorance of the circumstance, promised immediate redress."<sup>263</sup>

Ten of the twelve apprentices under Mr. Proctor of Droge Valley stated that they did not get enough to eat, however, according to William Eaton, who was in charge of the apprentices under Mr. Proctor, the boys all received one and a half pounds of meat daily along with two pounds of bread or vegetables. This,

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<sup>262</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bell from James Barnes, Resident Magistrate, Caledon, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p.33

<sup>263</sup> Enclosure No. 4, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the juvenile emigrant apprentices in the colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, 24 December 1839, p.4

according to Eaton was the same rations that the adult servants received.<sup>264</sup> This differs slightly from Mrs. Proctor's testimony. She claims in the interview that the boys all received one and half pounds of meat and one and half pounds of bread or vegetables. According to Annette, the cook, the boys received the same rations as her husband, whom, she took the trouble to state, was European. IT was not mentioned which of the male servants was her husband. The woman who was in charge of serving the rations to the employees on the farm backed up Mrs. Proctor's claim regarding the rations.

Longmore's report states that with regards to clothing, it was found that the apprentices were generally suitably clothed. There were however, according to him, between twenty and thirty complaints made, regarding a deficiency of shirts and shoes.<sup>265</sup> The report states that six of these complaints were of an aggravated nature and Longmore recommended to the commissioners that the apprentices be removed. With respect to shoes, Longmore made sure to state that in the Cape colony it was not uncommon for the farmers' own children to work without shoes, and that generally shoes were provided for Sundays, and thus it could not be considered a great hardship. Furthermore, the commissioners found, upon further investigation, that in many cases the apprentices were careless and neglectful of their clothing. This complaint was repeated by many masters. For example, W.J. Louw of Gt. Drakenstein, who had John Gunn, aged seventeen as an apprentice. According to Gunn, he had "no clothes but those on me."<sup>266</sup> This was rebuked by Louw who stated that Gunn was careless with the clothes he was given.

With regards to lodging, the biggest concern that Longmore and the commissioners had was whether or not the apprentices were lodged separately from the coloured farm labourers. Longmore stated in his report that he was not convinced that sufficient precaution was being taken in the rural farms to ensure that apprentices were not occupying the same sleeping apartments as people of

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<sup>264</sup> Enclosure No. 6, in 1840 (323) Report, pp.27-29

<sup>265</sup> Enclosure No. 4, "Report on the present condition and treatment of the juvenile emigrant apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, 24 December 1839, p.4

<sup>266</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.14

colour nor that the apprentices were being lodged in single sex apartments.<sup>267</sup> The commissioners generally made of point of noting when the apprentice was lodged apart from the black employees. On farms where there was more than one apprentice, the interviews revealed that generally the apprentices were lodged together. In other cases, apprentices were lodged with the overseers, and in a couple of cases, the apprentices were lodged with their masters' children.

The female apprentices, when employed in childcare generally shared a room with their charges. Eliza Isaacs, apprenticed to Mr. Mark Tracey, taking care of the children, slept with Tracey's children in one bed.<sup>268</sup> Elizabeth Horne, aged eighteen, had been in the service of Major William Shaw since 1833. She was employed as a nursery maid and as a general house servant. She too shared her sleeping quarters with Shaw's children.<sup>269</sup> Mary Riley, in the service of Daniel Theunissen of Klip Valley, Koeberg as a housemaid, slept in what she termed a "comfortable bed" in a room with her mistress.<sup>270</sup> However, Thomas Perry, also in Theunissen's service, claimed to have been lodged with "the coloured people," on a mattress with no blanket. Theunissen responded to this when interviewed by Hill by explaining that Perry had had the measles, and thus he had been removed from his normal lodgings in the kitchen for fear of infection.<sup>271</sup> This case of the measles was not mentioned in the interview between the commissioner and the apprentice, not even when the commissioner reported on the boy's health.

William Pitcher, one of Mr. Proctor's twelve apprentices claimed to sleep in "different places" with only a rug. Mr. Proctor made no reference to this when he was interviewed by Hill. Nor, according to the minutes of the interview, did Hill address it directly. William Groves, another one of Proctor's apprentices claimed that he slept in the chaff-house without a bed or bedding.<sup>272</sup> Some of Proctor's other apprentices slept in a room together, although why this was the case was

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<sup>267</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.5

<sup>268</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.26

<sup>269</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 22

<sup>270</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.25

<sup>271</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.26

<sup>272</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.27

not mentioned. Another, John Carroll, employed as a shepherd, slept in a hut near the sheep kraal with neither a bed nor bedding.

Thomas Carpenter a shepherd, employed by Mr. Scheundorff of Blaublommetjes Kloof, is a good example of what Longmore was worried about. Not only was he employed as a shepherd, but he shared his lodgings with Scheundorff's groom, a coloured man.<sup>273</sup> This was reported but there was no follow up report or inquiry to see if the situation was rectified after the findings of the report was released.

### **3.2.4 Weekly Allowance**

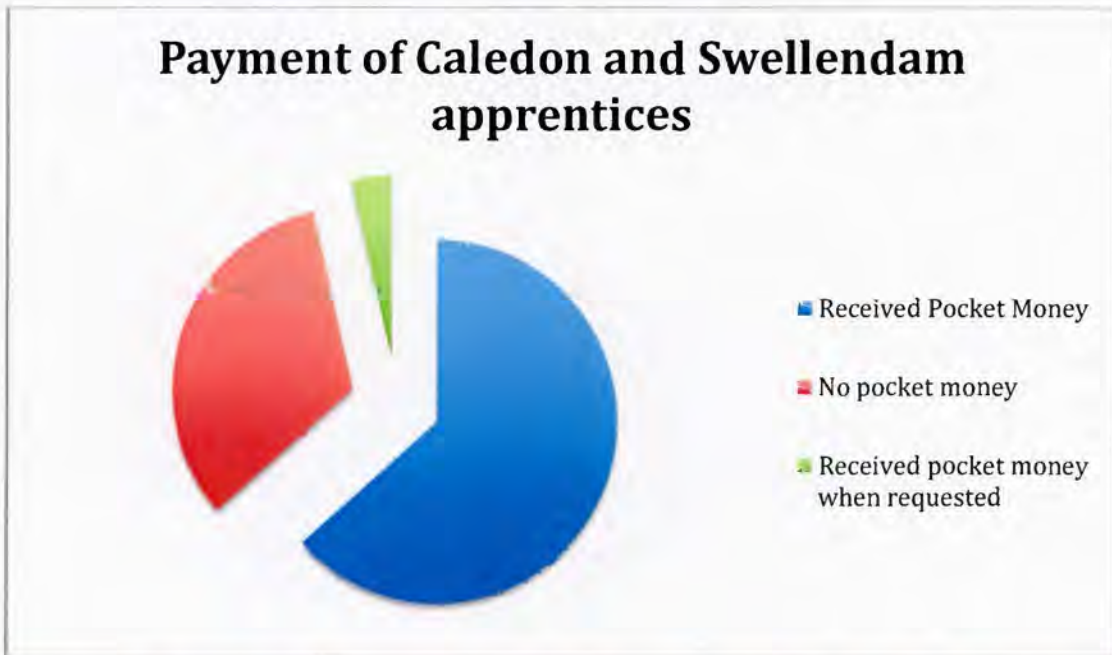
By the terms of indenture, each apprentice was to be paid a weekly sum of four pence until they reached the age of sixteen, two pence was to be paid to the apprentice and the other half to be paid into the savings bank. Between the ages of sixteen and nineteen, that sum was increased to six-pence per week, with one-third paid to the apprentice and the remaining two-thirds to be paid into the savings bank. Finally, from the age of nineteen to the end of apprenticeship, this sum was supposed to be increased to one shilling per week, again with one third being paid to the apprentice weekly.

The commissioners discovered that there were only a few cases in which the apprentice was paid their weekly allowance with any regularity. Some apprentices stated that they received their allowance, "when they asked for it," others that they only received it "occasionally." Longmore found that the majority of apprentices were given the occasional sixpence. He recommended that the masters be obliged to pay the full amount of the weekly allowances into the savings bank at the beginning of every year, and that the masters could then be reimbursed by the treasurer for any money that was paid to the apprentice during the year (as long as it did not exceed two-pence per week). The apprentice would have to sign a voucher stating that he/she received the money

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid, p. 30

during the year. Longmore stated that this was the only way to ensure that the apprentice was receiving his full allowance.<sup>274</sup>



**Figure 2 Pie chart indicating how many apprentices in the districts of Caledon and Swellendam received their weekly allowance.**

According to the chart above, the majority of apprentices received their pocket money on a regular basis. However, none of the commissioners appeared to have demanded proof that the apprentices were receiving their pocket money or that the money had been paid into the savings bank. When interviewing the apprentices in the district of Paarl, Major Piers did not record whether or not the apprentices received their pocket money.

Captain Hill, who interviewed the apprentices in Malmesbury did take note of whether or not the apprentices received pocket money. According to his interviews, eighteen per cent of the apprentices in Malmesbury had not, at the time of the interviews, received any pocket money, thirty-three per cent of them received it irregularly, thirty-eight per cent stated that they received pocket money on a regular basis but did not mention the amount, and five per cent of

<sup>274</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.5

the apprentices who answered the question regarding pocket money stated that their master had put it in the bank for them.<sup>275</sup>

Mr Peter van Breda, of Green River, Malmesbury, had two apprentices, Alfred Leland and John Taylor. According to Alfred, Mr Breda gave him approximately 1s. every five months, and John Taylor stated that he received the odd shilling from Mr Breda. In response, Breda stated that he had recently given the boys five goats each, and that the profits of said goats went entirely to the apprentices. Neither boy made mention of these goats. Furthermore, Breda stated that "each farthing that they are entitled to will be deposited for them" and that the money they had received to date was "extra."<sup>276</sup>

Proctor's apprentices had varied responses with regards to their pocket money, and Proctor himself was not made answer questions regarding the payment due to his apprentices. Only two of his apprentices stated the amount of pocket money they had received. Henry Pitcher, who had been in Proctor's service for two years, stated that he had received three shillings since his arrival. According to the terms of indenture, he should have, after two years of service, received, as his weekly allowance a total of seventeen shillings. William Bartram had also been in Proctor's service for two years at the time of the report and according to him he had only received two shillings in that time.<sup>277</sup>

In Swellendam, Robert Archer and William South, both thirteen, had been in the service of Hon. C.N Vermaas for a year and according to their testimonies, received pocket money regularly, although the amount was not specified. Furthermore they stated that one shilling each had been paid into the savings bank for them. This was not investigated by Barnes even though, according to the terms of indenture, the boys should have each had a minimum of eight shillings in their savings account at the time of the interview.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report pp. 24-35

<sup>276</sup> Enclosure No. 7 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 34

<sup>277</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report pp.27-28

<sup>278</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report pp. 23 & 24

### 3.2.5 Reading and Writing and Correspondence with England

According to the report, the terms of indenture specified that the literacy of the apprentices was the responsibility of the masters. Longmore stated that two thirds of the apprentices could both read and write. He acknowledged however, that in many cases, the ability to write was limited to a signature. In the country, it appeared that many apprentices did not have their reading and writing attended to at all, but according to Longmore this was because there was not means of instruction available. In many cases, the masters and mistresses were not able to speak English, making it impossible for the apprentice to receive instruction from them. It was found, in some cases, that the fault lay with the apprentices as they had no inclination to receive instruction and apparently, some masters testified that after “finding their attempts fruitless, rather than inflict punishment for constant neglect and dislike, they had ceased to urge it altogether.”<sup>279</sup>

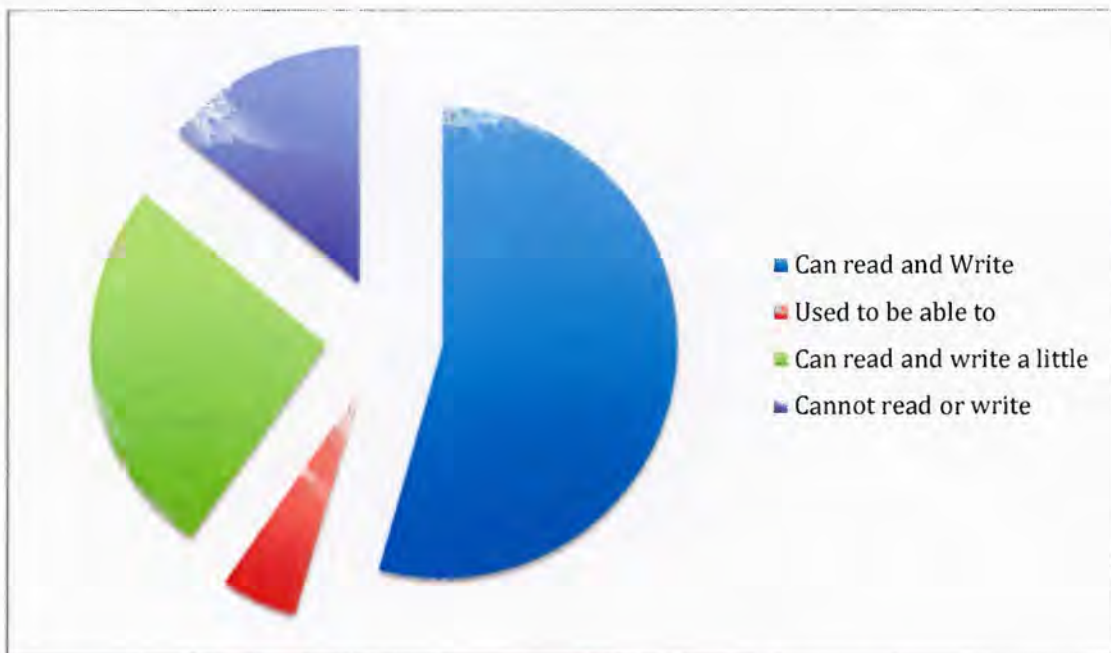


Figure 3 Pie Chart showing the literacy levels amongst apprentices in Malmesbury

As is clear from the chart, a small percentage of apprentices in the Malmesbury district actually forgot or lost their reading and writing skills upon

<sup>279</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.5

their arrival at the Cape. However, on the other hand, there were cases of children being instructed by their masters. Sarah Keith was one of the few females who received any instruction. She worked for Mr Marsh of Saldanha Bay. She stated that she could not read or write but that her master instructed her every Sunday.<sup>280</sup> However, at the time of the inquiry she had been working for Mr Marsh for four years, which brings into question these instruction sessions. Was it possible for her, after (we are led to assume) four years of instruction to still not be able to read and write? Or were these Sunday instruction sessions something that started happening as the inquiries began? My sources were unable to help me answer questions such as these.

Twenty-five of the forty-one apprentices interviewed by Major Piers in the district of Paarl were literate. Of these twenty-five, sixteen (sixty-four per cent) claimed to be in contact with their relatives back in England. Thirty two per cent of the literate children did not answer the question regarding communication, or perhaps, Piers overlooked this question with them. Henry Vine, indentured to P.F.R de Villiers of Paarl, testified to Major Piers that although he could read and write he had only written once to her mother. Major Piers commented that the boy was unhealthy and small for his age, and his master, de Villiers testified that the boy was "very addicted to telling lies, negligent and careless in his work, and constantly breaking glasses, plates."<sup>281</sup> Vine had apparently absconded twice, once when he was absent for two months. Henry Vine was clearly the example used by the CFS back in London when parents reported to the Magistrate that they had heard nothing from their children, an example of an ill-behaved boy who could, if he wanted to communicate with home, but didn't. According to Earl of Grosvenor, who was the chairman at the ninth annual meeting of the CFS in May of 1839, every encouragement was given to the children to write to their parents. He stated that each child was furnished with a pamphlet regarding their future conduct and one

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<sup>280</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 33

<sup>281</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 14

of the points made was that they should “without fail, communicate with their parents.”<sup>282</sup>

On the other hand, Walter Starkie, one of five juveniles indentured to D.J. Vander Merwe of Wagonmaker’s Valley, could not read or write and when asked about communication with home, he stated that he had not heard from his parents, both alive and in London, since he had moved to the Cape one year previously. There was a clear lack of communication between the committee at the Cape and the Committee in London, as parents were not informed as to the whereabouts or the address of their children sent to the Cape, and in the case of Starkie, he could not write home to inform them. Starkie claimed to be unhappy in the Cape, the work being too hard and that they were “kept at it from daylight til dark.”<sup>283</sup> Of the four boys apprenticed to Vander Merwe, three of them stated to Piers that they were unhappy, although, according to the minutes of the interview, it was not for a want of good clothing or sufficient food. George Stephanson, aged sixteen, employed in general farm work stated that he would “endeavor to get back to England when out of my time; what I am doing now will be of no use to me then.”<sup>284</sup> Similarly Benjamin Vickers, aged thirteen stated that also did not like his situation, and would rather have been learning a trade. The final boy under Vander Merwe’s care was not present at the time of the interviews, according to Vander Merwe he had run away for fear of punishment for bad conduct, and was consequently not interviewed by Major Piers.<sup>285</sup>

Of the apprentices whom were illiterate, one apprentice, Charles Boyce, indentured to S.P Gilkins of Klein Drakenstein admitted to only having been in contact with his mother once, with the help of his master. He stated to Piers that he was not content with his situation and that he wanted to go back to England to be with his mother.<sup>286</sup> Another of Gilkin’s boys was an example of the children losing the English language, William Muggilgan was fifteen years old at

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<sup>282</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society” *The Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>283</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 13

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid*, p.13

<sup>285</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 13

<sup>286</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS report, p.14

the time of the interview and was employed herding sheep, cattle and goats. According to him he was in good health, had enough food and clothing but according to Piers, had "nearly forgotten his own language."<sup>287</sup>

There were reported cases of children losing their ability to read and write since their arrival in the Cape. William Newman is a good example this. He was a shepherd for Mr. Van Der Byl of Nagtwagt, and claimed that he "could read and write better than he can now."<sup>288</sup> James Cain, aged nineteen, arrived in the colony in 1833 when he was thirteen years old. He was apprenticed to Mr. Moodie of Groot Vaders Bosch, Swellendam as a shepherd. He stated to Major Barnes that he could read well, and often read the Bible but that although he could write when he first arrived at the Cape, he had since forgotten.<sup>289</sup> Similarly, Joseph Mason, aged thirteen, was apprenticed to Mr. An. P. Keyter of Diepe Rivier, near Caledon, as a stable hand, assisting Keyter's groom. He testified that he was able to read when he arrive in the Colony two and a half years previously, but that he had, by 1839, forgotten.<sup>290</sup>

Communication with relatives back in England was of the utmost importance to the Committee in London, and Longmore stated that "every facility (where a disposition to avail themselves of it and a knowledge of the abode of relatives and friends exists) appears to be give to the apprentices to communicate with them."<sup>291</sup> Obviously the literacy of the apprentices and whether or not they were given pocket money affected their communication with their relatives. The report states that the apprentices were informed upon being indentured that the treasurer and the secretary to the commissioners were ready and willing to assist them with forwarding the letters and informing the CFS in London of the welfare of the apprentices to satisfy the inquiries of parents and friends.<sup>292</sup> In Stellenbosch, and surrounding areas, Reverend Saunders and Frederick Dickinson, Esq. clerk of the peace, were apparently were very conscientious in

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<sup>287</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.14

<sup>288</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 19

<sup>289</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 20

<sup>290</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 20

<sup>291</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 6

<sup>292</sup> For more on communication with home, please see Chapter 4

their efforts to keep the relatives in England informed and in some cases apparently they even wrote letter for the apprentices. There was one mention in Major Barnes's interviews of an apprentice making use of member of the CFS committee in the Cape to communicate with England. Julia Adamson, aged seventeen, had been in the Cape since 1837 under the employ of Rev. Mr Robertson of Swellendam. She could both read and write and frequently wrote home to Lady Johnson and Lady George Murray. According to her, she sent her letters through Mr Christian, but never received any responses.<sup>293</sup>

In my research however, I found several apprentices who were not aware of the services available to them through the Committee at the Cape, William Mapham for example, indentured as a general farm labourer to Mr Scheundorff, was not able to write and claimed that he was not able to get any one to write to his father, who was still living in England. <sup>294</sup> Mr Scheundorff was not interviewed by Hill with regards to this. Major William Shaw had one female apprentice, Elizabeth Horne, aged eighteen, who, in her own words, could not write more than her name, and as a consequence never wrote to any of her friends or family since she arrived in the Cape despite receiving several letters from her mother, Miss Keon who lived in Drayton. <sup>295</sup> Similarly, Hezekiah Roberts, a house-servant and herd boy in the service of Peter Nuthling of Malmesbury, stated that he could only write his name, and had hence, never written to his mother who was living in England, and although he wanted to communicate with her, there was no one at the farm who could write in English. <sup>296</sup>

James Cain, mentioned before, had been in the colony since 1833 and was bound to Mr Moodie of Groot Vaders Bosch in Swellendam. Moodie was one of the leaders of the original 1820 settlers, and had four apprentices.<sup>297</sup> Cain stated that he had never communicated with home as he was informed by Mr Moodie of the letters that some of the apprentices had written home complaining of ill-

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<sup>293</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 22

<sup>294</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 30

<sup>295</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 22

<sup>296</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 30

<sup>297</sup> Phillip, P,1985 p.285

treatment appearing in the newspapers in London, and thus, he was told that any letter he wrote would be read by Moodie. Because of this, he said, he had not written home. Despite this story however, Cain apparently had no complaints to make regarding his life with Moodie.<sup>298</sup>

There is no doubt that in many cases, there was no one at the premises who could read or write, or even speak English. Many of the farmers to whom the juveniles were apprenticed were Dutch. But in some cases, although the apprentices were not taught to read or write, they were given instruction in the Dutch language. For example, James Cairnes (age unknown) was taught how to speak Dutch by his master Mr Hugo Lordolff of Klip Valley, Koeberg. Similarly Beriah Frost was taught Dutch by his master Mr Danul. Isaac Skillern who had been with Mr Van Wielligh of Leeuwendaal Koeburg since 1836 and was taught on Sundays. Sarah Ann Hernes who worked for Mr William Du Toit of De Hoop, Zwartland, could not write but "sometimes received a little instruction in the Dutch language" from her Master.<sup>299</sup>

Finally, there were a few cases reported where the apprentice had lost all of their English. For example, Sarah Piper, aged fifteen, the only apprentice to D. Retief of Wagonmaker's Valley, stated that she could no longer speak English, but that she had no complaints to make. Along with her loss of English, she could not read or write, and therefore had had no communication with her parents who were both living in England.<sup>300</sup>

### **3.2.6 Religious Instruction & Attendance at Church**

Longmore stated in his report that in Cape Town and the immediate vicinity and in Wynberg, Stellenbosch and Hottentots Holland, where there were Sunday Schools, the attendance of apprentices was generally quite good. In the more rural areas, where there were no Sunday schools, where the English

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<sup>298</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 20

<sup>299</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 31

<sup>300</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 13

language was not widely spoken, Longmore stated that the masters encourage their apprentices to read the Bible. In Stellenbosch, since the appointment of Rev. Mr Saunders, those apprentices who were situated too far to regularly attend his services, Saunders made a point of visiting as regularly as his time would allow. His visits also provided insight into the condition and treatment of the apprentices.<sup>301</sup>

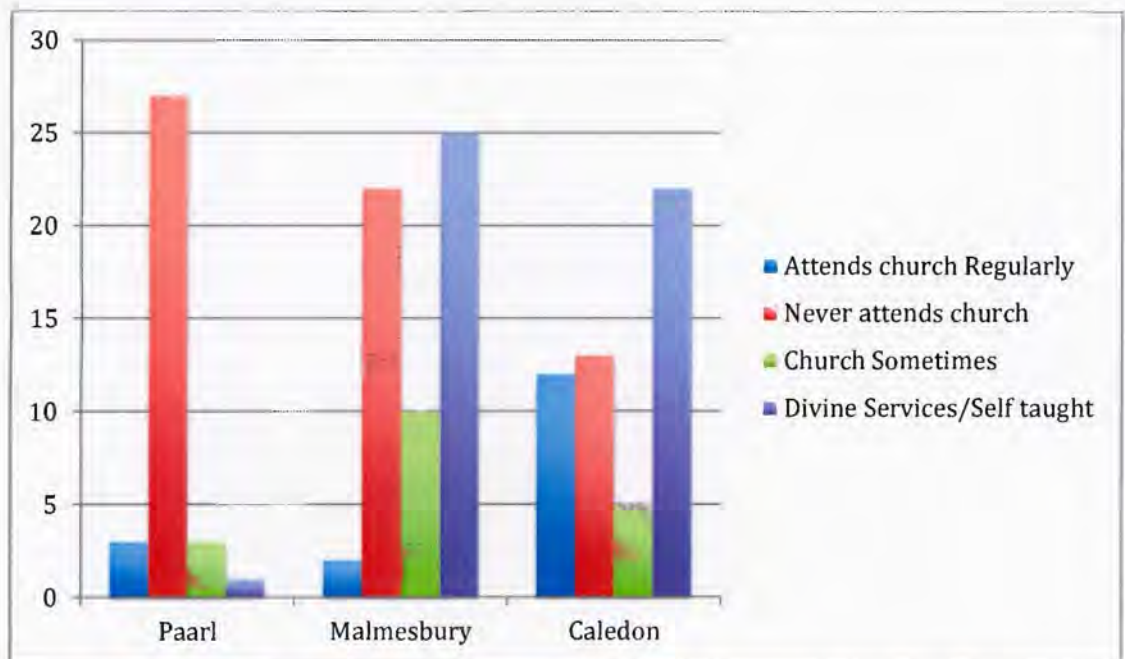
In the district of Malmesbury, fifty-nine of the sixty-two children interviewed answered the question relating to religious instruction. According to their answers, although only two (three per cent) said that they attended church regularly, compared with forty two per cent of apprentices who said that they either attended divine service at the farmhouse or read prayers on their own. This is nine per cent higher than the average of the three districts for divine service or self-taught religious education. Obviously we have no way of knowing whether the children actually did read their Bible and say their prayers, we must merely use these figures as a guide, always bearing in mind the possibility that the apprentices were lying, whether it was to gain sympathy or because they feared the wrath of their master or even because they did not entirely trust the Resident Magistrate. According to their answers, thirty-seven per cent of the apprentices had no form of religious instruction at all in the District of Malmesbury, compared with 79 per cent of those who answered the question relating to religion in the District of Paarl. From my research, it would appear that the farmers in Malmesbury were either much more pious and concerned about the welfare of their apprentices, than the farmers in Paarl. Or it could be a case of churches in the latter district being too far to attend regularly. But in that case, then there should have been more attention paid to divine service and family prayers from home, which, judging by the three per cent (one apprentice) who claimed to receive religious instruction at the farmhouse, was not the case.

When comparing the three districts, it appears that Caledon was definitely the district with the best religious instruction, through both church

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<sup>301</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 5  
For Saunders' report on his time at the Cape and the condition of the apprentices that he worked with, see Chapter 5.

attendance and divine service from the farm house. However, it is important to note that even when the apprentices did attend church they often did not understand the service as it was in Dutch, so most of it would have been wasted on them, especially in the first years, before they learnt to communicate in Dutch.



**Figure 4 Bar Chart showing levels of religious instruction in the three districts**

One apprentice, Joseph Mason in Diepe River, in the employ of Mr. Keyter as a stable boy who, the report states had "good moral habits." He was thirteen when interviewed, and claimed he had been in the Colony for two and a half years. He moved from London. He claimed that he had lost the ability to read and had since sold his Bible.<sup>302</sup> There were cases of children receiving special religious instruction but this was often when either they were apprenticed to a member of the Church, for example, Reverend Robertson, who, according to the report, took it upon himself each Sunday to give his apprentice at the time of the interview, Julia Adamson "special Bible instruction."<sup>303</sup>

<sup>302</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bull from Resident Magistrate of Caledon, James Barnes in "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p. 20

<sup>303</sup> Enclosure No. 6 for the Colonial Secretary John Bull from Resident Magistrate of Caledon, James Barnes in "Report on the present condition and treatment of the Juvenile Emigrant Apprentices in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope," Cape Town, December 1839, p. 22

### **3.2.6 The impact of the emancipation of the slaves on December 1<sup>st</sup> 1838**

The CFS in London was worried that “since the final emancipation of the coloured classes, the society’s apprentices might henceforth be looked upon as the only remaining slaves and will be proportionally hard-worked and despised.”<sup>304</sup> Longmore states that, aside from one solitary case, these worries were to a large extent, groundless. The biggest difference pre and post emancipation, according to Longmore and the farmers themselves, was the availability of labour to herd livestock and cattle and hence, many apprentices had been employed doing this instead of a more useful and suitable occupation.<sup>305</sup> Some apprentices complained to the commissioners of inquiry that since the emancipation of the slaves they had to wash their own clothes. But other than that, there was little mention of the effects of emancipation on the lives of the apprentices.

### **3.2.7 Health and Appearance**

Longmore makes a bold statement regarding health and appearance of the apprentices in his report.

If the efficacy and success of the juvenile apprentice system is to be appreciated under this result, and if health be the effect proof arising from good treatment and good food, proper and sufficient hours of rest and the absence of overwork, it could not be more forcibly demonstrated than by the healthy and florid appearance of all apprentices.<sup>306</sup>

Longmore stated that of the 432 apprentices interviewed, there was only one case where sickness prevented the apprentice from meeting with the commissioners. He reported that there were four cases of weakness in the eyes and one case of scrofulous, which had been treated numerous times at the general hospitable to no avail. Charles Buck, aged eighteen is an example of one of the apprentices with “sore eyes.” He was one of six apprentices to Mr S.J.

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<sup>304</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 6

<sup>305</sup> For more on this subject, please see Section 3.2.2 Trade Taught and Employment

<sup>306</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 6

Marais of Gt. Drakenstein, but even with the sore eyes, Piers reported him to be "well grown and in good health."<sup>307</sup>

Giving credit to Longmore's statements of the healing powers of the Cape colony was the testimonies of apprentices. Many reported that they had been sickly upon arrival in the colony and since then had been completely restored to full health, because of, in Longmore's words, "the salubrity of the climate, doubtlessly assisted also very materially by care and good treatment."<sup>308</sup> An example of the apparently restorative climate of the Cape Colony is James Cairnes, who, at the time of the report had been in Mr. Hugo Lordolff's, of Malmesbury, service for eight months. According to his testimony, before he left England he was subject to fainting fits, but since his move to the Cape, they had all but disappeared.<sup>309</sup>

In his personal observations on the apprentices, Major Piers commented on the appearance of the apprentices, stating if they appeared to be in good health. His most common criticism was that the apprentices, although appearing to be in good health, were diminutive for their age.<sup>310</sup>

William Pitcher, one of Proctor's twelve apprentices, claimed that he was sick for six weeks as a consequence of sleeping in wet clothes (after washing them on a Sunday). He claimed that he did not receive any medical attention and was kept on a "spare diet."<sup>311</sup> A similar story emerged from Blaublommetje's Kloof, Hezekiah Roberts, who had been in Peter Nuthling's service for eighteen months said that he had been confined to his bed for two weeks with a pain in his chest, with no medical attention aside from some medicine from his Mistress. Although these cases were recorded by the commissioners, there was no, as with much of the report, follow up reported, or any investigation carried out into the allegations by the apprentices.

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<sup>307</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 15

<sup>308</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 6

<sup>309</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 26

<sup>310</sup> Enclosure No. 5, 1840 (323) CFS Report pp. 12-16

<sup>311</sup> Enclosure No. 7, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 27

### 3.3 Conclusion

Longmore included in his report the number of apprentices in the colony whose indentures had expired at the time of the report.

<b>Apprentices Expired</b>	<b>Doing well, and now or were lately in the Colony</b>	<b>Deserted and bore bad characters</b>
<b>Males</b>	41	13
<b>Females</b>	12	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	53	16

**Figure 5 Table showing the apprentices whose indenture expired by October 1839<sup>312</sup>**

By October of 1839, the indentures of sixty-nine apprentices had expired. According to Longmore, forty one males and twelve females were still residing in the colony and earning what he described as a "comfortable maintenance," with an unspecified number of females being married. One of the thirteen apprentices who deserted was sent to serve out his time on board Her Majesty's ship *Trinculo*. The three females who deserted were reported to still be in the colony.

Regarding the religious instruction of the apprentices, which was below the standar the Society had hoped for, Longmore sketched a plan in his report. He proposed that each master pay one shilling per annum for each apprentice in the colony (750 in total), in order to raise funds for salaries for three additional members of the clergy. These three additional clergymen would be placed in the Cape Town and Wynberg Districts, Malmesbury and Swellendam. Their duties would include visiting every farm which was too far from a church for regular attendance and they would report to the commissioners four times a year regarding the conduct of the apprentices.

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<sup>312</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.7

In Longmore's opinion the emancipation of the slaves was largely beneficial to the apprentices. He believed that the emancipation of the slaves had released from the masters' property those slaves who were "idle and useless" and who often, according to Longmore, "unsettled and perhaps demoralized" the apprentices.<sup>313</sup>

With regards to female apprentices, Longmore recommended that the CFS in London not send any more to the colony. He states that female apprentices, unless they were married before the end of their indenture, were at risk of exposure to a less-than-desirable lifestyle, as once out of their indenture they were left without family or friends to protect them. This was obviously exacerbated by the death of Mrs. Bourhill, as the commissioners felt great pressure taking care of the females and unless another female superintendent could be appointed, the CFS in London should not send over more female apprentices.<sup>314</sup>

After careful consideration of the embarkation records, I came to the conclusion that there should have been a commissioner of inquiry appointed for the district of Stellenbosch. The embarkation records were vague regarding the areas that the apprentices were sent to. The first shipment of children to be placed further than Simons Town were upon the *Thomas Snooks*, which landed in February of 1835. This ship carried the notorious Edward Trubshaw (see Chapter Four) and nine other boys who were apprenticed to G.H. De Wet, a farmer in the District of Stellenbosch.<sup>315</sup> Eight ships between February of 1835 and August of 1836 had embarkation records which included the districts that the children were sent to. One hundred and sixty children arrived in the Cape during this period, with only eleven per cent of them girls. Of these children, nineteen per cent of them were reported to have been placed in farms in the district of Stellenbosch. There was a large number of apprentices placed in Stellenbosch, and none of them were

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<sup>313</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p.8

<sup>314</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report p. 8

<sup>315</sup> For the full Edward Trubshaw case, see Chapter 4.

ever interviewed by the commissioners of inquiry, leaving large gaps in our knowledge about the conditions experienced by apprentices in the Stellenbosch area.

## Chapter 4: Newspapers in London and the Cape

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The Times, was, from 1837 to 1842 a compendium of poor law crimes...more than 2 millions words to the New Poor Law's administration and recounted some 290 particular instances of personal suffering caused by this odious law. Real as well as fictional stories of its harshness supported the Times expose.<sup>316</sup>

### 4.1. Brenton, The CFS and the Press

Brenton believed in the power of the press. His first public address was a letter to the editor of the *Morning Post*, which was published on December 26, 1831. According to Brenton the press was a "...the choicest gift of heaven to benighted men." He was not unaware of the disadvantages of the press however, stating that:

bad use is made of this powerful weapon, it is the duty of the honest and well-disposed to counteract that evil by disseminating the best principles- but inculcating habits of temperance, obedience to the laws, cleanliness and industry.<sup>317</sup>

In his years spent courting the press, he commended them for opening the eyes of the public to the "crying sin of infant imprisonment, the workhouses and goals, the cellars and the garrets."<sup>318</sup>

The Children's Friend Society was first mentioned in *The Morning Herald*, a liberal newspaper, in March of 1830. They praised the formation of the society

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<sup>316</sup> Roberts, David, "How Cruel was the Victorian Poor Law?" in *The Historical Journal*, 6, 1 (1963) p. 98

<sup>317</sup> "Letter to the Editor of *the London Times*" as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, p. 100

<sup>318</sup> Brenton, Edward P. "Letter to the Editor of *the Morning Post*," September 24, 1833, as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, p.117

and condemned the hulk system that existed in London at the time.<sup>319</sup> As mentioned Brenton started his correspondence relationship with the London Press in 1831, this relationship would last until his death in 1839. He courted all the leading London newspapers for years, first presenting himself, and then, it may be said, preaching to a certain extent in December of 1831, three years after the Society was formed whilst it was still under the name Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Delinquency. *The Morning Post* was a conservative daily newspaper. The above-mentioned letter was the first time Brenton ever addressed the London public as the founder of the Society. He wrote an emotive letter, appealing to the good nature of the rich, in an effect to give direction to their so-called "good feeling towards the poor."<sup>320</sup> He compared Britain to a "ship of war embayed in a gale of wind on a lee shore," and urged the English public to stand up and face the storm. In this first letter he mentioned the cholera epidemic which had just broken in London, referring to it as the "scourge from heaven" believing that it was sent to "rouse us from our torpor, not to thin our population, which has blasphemously been called redundant."<sup>321</sup> He put forward the idea that the cholera epidemic was a chance for everyone who was reading his letter (mainly middle and upper class Londoners) to understand the true value of man to man. He was referring to the classes, and their mutual dependency. He wrote as though leading a crusade (which, it could be argued in his opinion he was), encouraging bravery in light of the "abodes of vice and poverty and filth" which had to be visited and cleansed.<sup>322</sup>

He addressed, in this first letter to the public, the idea of transplanting the poor from their "small dwellings" to be placed in, what he termed more "wholesome locations."<sup>323</sup> Brenton's focused on agriculture in his first letter to the public,

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<sup>319</sup> Excerpts from an article in *the Morning Herald*, March 14, 1830, as seen in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London pp 54-56

<sup>320</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831, as seen in Brenton, J, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, pp.57-61

<sup>321</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831, as seen in Brenton, J, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London,p.59

<sup>322</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831 in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, pp.58-59

<sup>323</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831 in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, pp.58-59

pushing for a move back to agriculture and food produced by manual labour as opposed to the machinery that had taken over in the first half of the nineteenth century with the industrial revolution. He wrote that "...the poor man, instead of being shut up in a goal as a poacher, will be the best guardian of the game."<sup>324</sup> He outlined, in a few lines, his plan for London. He made it sound simple, and addressed the issues that would have touched home with the middle and upper classes of London, such as overcrowding, pollution and crime. He was anxious to prove that his philanthropic endeavor was beneficial to everyone, not just the poor children of London. He wrote of a London where everyone had their place, where London's poor became what he dubbed "agriculturalists,"<sup>325</sup> and would be able to provide food to those in the factories and the factories would provide the clothing. The London that he wrote of had everyone working for the good of society, where the poor stopped being a "drain" on the country's resources, instead adding to them.

In the years following this first letter, Brenton continued to use the press to appeal to the public. He asked for donation of five shillings a year in the majority of letters that he wrote and tried to entreat the public by reminding them of their duty to their fellow-countrymen, and fellow mortals.<sup>326</sup> He did not deny that the poor of London were often criminals, but he did take away the responsibility of the poor for their actions and placed it on the lack of regulation of the Poor Laws, emigration and the convict system.<sup>327</sup> He denounced their crowded habitations, where "gin is easy to be procured" and bemoaned the fact that the English country-sides had been abandoned with the industrialization of England. Until this was changed, he stated, there was no hope of a diminution of crime or of the miseries suffered by the poorer classes.

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<sup>324</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831 in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London p.60

<sup>325</sup> The use of the term agriculturalist by Brenton in his first letter to the public is another example of his careful diction. He avoided, throughout the letter, using the term farmer, or worse, peasant.

<sup>326</sup> Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, 1842, London, p. 94

<sup>327</sup> Brenton, Edward P, "Letter to the Editor" *The Morning Post*, December 26, 1831 in Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, (London, 1842), p.64

#### 4.1.2. The Early Years

Although *The London Times* declared themselves one of the reasons that the CFS dissolved in 1841, they were not always hostile towards the Society. From the early 1830s, *The Times*, along with other leading London newspapers such as *The Herald* and *The Morning Post*, were advocates for the CFS and their cause. As early as 1834, *The Times* reported on the fourth Annual Meeting of the CFS at Exeter Hall in London. The fourth annual report stated that both their funding and applications from children had increased. Apart from reporting on the meeting, including the new name of the Society, *The Times* ended the report with the wish that the Society, with all its increasing prosperity, would become a permanent fixture.<sup>328</sup>

*The Times* published an article following a public address by Brenton in 1833, calling him “a public benefactor of the highest class” and declared his fellow countrymen, whom did not undertake such a project to be “criminal in a high degree.”<sup>329</sup> Brenton was not the only member of the CFS to use *The Times* as a platform for informing the public as to their successful charitable works. For example, in April of 1836, a member of the Committee wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times*, informing the public as to the existence of the Society and what their purpose was. It was in response to a previous article where the writer called for:

some effective means of removing destitute children from the streets and training them up in the habits of industry and virtue, instead of suffering them- nay, encouraging them to become outcasts and burdens to society.<sup>330</sup>

The letter to the editor was accompanied by a short article which described the actions and plans of the Society and ended with the Society’s plans for the future, should they succeed in raising the funds. These future plans included

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<sup>328</sup> “Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy,” in *The Times*, May, 5 1834, p.3

<sup>329</sup> Extract from *The Times*, 11 January 1833, as seen Brenton, Jaheel, *Memoir of Captain Edward Pelham Brenton*, (London 1842)p. 115

<sup>330</sup> Author Unknown, “Letter to the Editor”, *The Times*, April 16, 1836

apprenticing the children in England and not having to resort to sending them to the colonies.

#### **4.1.3. Attack (Or the Role of *The Times* in the fall of the CFS)**

Although *The Times* reported consistently on the goings on of the CFS during the 1830s, it was only in the mid 1830s that their crusade against the CFS, and indeed the prevailing class structure began. One of the first articles that cast suspicion on the CFS was published in August of 1835. The article itself, entitled "Emigration" was a report from a meeting of the ratepayers of the parish of St. James in Westminster. It was not strictly about the Children's Friend Society, as it was a meeting concerning the raising of funds to help poor adults to immigrate to the colonies, but naturally, the CFS was mentioned and opinions were shared. A Mr. Miley, who headed the meeting was highly enthusiastic about the CFS program and is reported to have called it an "excellent institution."<sup>331</sup> However, another member of the meeting, Mr. A Beckett, was entirely opposed to child emigration, claiming that, "it was ridiculous the idea of taking the will of a child of tender years." He was of the opinion that the children would be better off remaining in England. He also stated that he was aware of the conditions in Graham's Town and that his friends over there described the inhabitants to be "in great distress."<sup>332</sup> This was not a very damning article, but it was only one of the first of increasingly aggressive, anti-CFS articles that *The Times* would publish.

By 1838 there were many articles in *The Times* promoted a negative air around the CFS. For example, in 1838, *The Times* reported on a meeting of the homeowners of St Luke's Parish in Middlesex. The meeting was held to discuss whether or not the Guardians of the Poor could give permission to twenty out of the 122 girls at St. Luke's workhouse to be sent under the care of the CFS to the Cape Colony. According to the article, it was clear from the beginning of the

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<sup>331</sup> Author Unknown, "St. James, Westminster- Emigration" *The Times*, 8 August 1835 p.6

<sup>332</sup> Author Unknown, "St. James, Westminster- Emigration" *The Times*, 8 August 1835 p.6

meeting that the proposed plan would be rejected by the attendees. The Guardian of the Poor who was present at the meeting was not well received. He pointed out that the Guardians of the Poor could not find respectable situations within Britain for the girls, but that under the CFS the girls would be provided with employment of "a respectable, a permanent and profitable description."<sup>333</sup> In defense of his proposition he stated that the parish of St. James, Westminster, had, by 1838 already sent out as many as 300 juveniles to the Cape, and all but one had been well provided for.

In response to Greg's proposal, Mr. Simpson stated that the evils of London's parochial system could be remedied without travelling all the way to the Cape. He made the point that as the Queen's subjects no one had the right to send them out of their country, and that so many of them were not, as I have pointed out, over the age of consent, which was, at that time, fourteen. He pointed out that their ancestors had been more careful with the system of apprenticeship, as apprentices were not allowed to be bound out of the city into the country without the consent of four magistrates. Furthermore, he quoted Sir William Blackstone, who was, at the time, the highest law authority, who said, "every man had an indefeasible claim upon the soil on which he was born." This was greeted with cheers by all those in the Parish meeting of St. Luke, Middlesex according to the article in *The Times*.<sup>334</sup> *The Times* reported that the meeting ended with Mr. Ward (it is not explained who this was), coming to the conclusion that the Guardians of the Poor had no moral or legal right to dispose of the children to the CFS, and thus the motion was unanimously rejected.

In their quest to bring down the CFS, *The Times* used the term 'slavery' often with reference to the juvenile apprentices under the CFS. For example, a member of the parish of St. Pancras wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times* in which he stated that "the parish has a great aversion to condemning their unhappy fellow creatures to a state of slavery."<sup>335</sup> This irate member of the public referred to

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<sup>333</sup> Author Unknown, "The Parish of St. Luke, Middlesex," *The Times*, December 11, 1838 p.6

<sup>334</sup> Author unknown, "The Parish of St. Luke, Middlesex," *The Times*, December 11, 1838 p.6

<sup>335</sup> "Letter to the Editor of *The Times* from a O.S.W.A Ratepayer of St. Pancras," *The Times*, December 8, 1838

Brenton's claims that there were efficient committees of ladies and gentlemen in the colonies whom were placed in charge of the apprentices and questioned who was to advocate for an apprentice, indentured to "...a Dutch Boer 500 or 600 miles in the interior." Furthermore, this parish member stated that only three letters were received from the one hundred children that the parish of St. James had sent out, and none of these letters came from children in the interior. Clearly *The Times* did not expend much effort fact checking the articles and letters they published, for example, the article in December claimed that the Parish of St. James had sent out 300 children, and the letter above claimed only one hundred children had been sent to the Cape Colony. However, as Chapter Three shows, there was in all likelihood a lot of truth in the claims that most of the children were not in contact with their families back home.

This irate rate-payer claimed that four children had been sent out to the Cape under the supposed protection of the CFS, and not one had been heard of since. My research found one of these boys, James Stout, aged thirteen who claimed to have been born in the workhouse of St. Pancras. He was indentured to Mr. Peter van der Byl, of Nagtwagt, Caledon, as a 'house boy' and told Major Barnes that he had never written to nor heard from his ten sisters in London. According to Barnes' report, Stout had no complaints to make, was never beaten, and that he received his pocket money regularly.<sup>336</sup> This was never revealed to the English public in the form of a letter or article in *The Times*. Another example of a failure to follow up on the many stories that were printed and the testimonies given by the children to the Commissioners of Inquiry.

## **4.2 Emotive *Times*: Examples of Cases presented to the English public by *The Times***

### **4.2.1 The Infamous Case of Edward Trubshaw**

The case of Edward Trubshaw was great scoop for *The Times*. Trubshaw first appeared in *The Times* in April of 1839. He was arrested for having stolen a few

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<sup>336</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.19

half-pence from an 'apple woman' in the parish of Marylebone. He gave his name as James Johnson at the station house. He was questioned by a Mr. Rawlinson, who was a resident magistrate in London during the 1830s and who took it upon himself to investigate cases put forward by the parents and guardians of children sent to the Cape. The boy testified that he was sent to the Cape by the CFS about two years before where he was assigned to a master who, according to him, "half starved him and ill-used him in the most cruel manner."<sup>337</sup> He claimed that he was "knocked about shameful."<sup>338</sup> He also claimed that he and the other apprentices were sold to a Dutchman for ten guineas a-piece. He testified that the manner in which the apprentices were sold was "similar to the disposal of beast of Smithfield."<sup>339</sup> Trubshaw was very insistent that he had been sold and *not* apprenticed. However, during Trubshaw's testimony, a young man stepped forward who claimed that Trubshaw came from respecting, hardworking parents whom he apparently constantly thieved from. Apparently due to the time he spent with disreputable companions his parents applied that he would be taken in by the Children's Friend Society.<sup>340</sup> According to this "well dressed" young man, Trubshaw had been home from the Cape for about three-to-four months before he was arrested and brought before the court. According to the article, the magistrate Mr. Rawlinson sent for Captain Brenton who arrived and spent fifteen minutes talking to Trubshaw in the clerk's room. Unfortunately the reporter for *The Times* was not privy to the talk between them, nor was he able to hear what Captain Brenton said when he re-entered the courtroom.<sup>341</sup>

In response to the article published on the second of April, J. Sparke, Secretary to the Children's Friend Society wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times*, and, to give *The Times* its due, the letter was published on April 5, 1839. According to Sparke, the accusations by Trubshaw regarding his treatment in the Cape were "almost too absurd for refutation."<sup>342</sup> Sparke then explained the system of apprenticeship as practiced in the Cape of Good Hope. Sparke swore that in the

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<sup>337</sup> Article from the Marylebone Parish Office, *The Times*, April 5, 1839, p.7

<sup>338</sup> Article from the Marylebone Parish Office, *The Times*, April 5, 1839, p.7

<sup>339</sup> Article from the Marylebone Parish Office, *The Times*, April 5, 1839, p.7

<sup>340</sup> Author unknown, *The Times*, April 2 1839 p.7

<sup>341</sup> Author unknown, *The London Times*, April 2, 1839, p.7

<sup>342</sup> Sparke, J, "Letter to the Editor," *The Times*, April 5, 1839

case of abuse or ill-treatment, the Society removed the apprentices from the Masters, the masters then lost their apprenticeship fees and the service of the apprentice and would never be able to take on the Society's apprentices again. In the letter, he was adamant that the masters are chosen by the commissioners and that the selection did not occur in the manner that Trubshaw claims. He concludes that Trubshaw was considered to be "a troublesome and unmanageable lad."<sup>343</sup>

The Commissioners of Inquiry in the Cape Colony, did report on the Trubshaw case. Edward Trubshaw was apprenticed to a Mr. H. De Wet of Rustenberg near Stellenbosch. Longmore, Resident Magistrate of Cape Town, paid a visit to his estate, where he had eleven apprentices working for him. According to Longmore these eleven apprentices were "amongst the most cheerful, contented, well clothed and well-trained...and his system towards them altogether the best-regulated."<sup>344</sup> Longmore testified that their sleeping apartment was clean and roomy, furthermore apparently all eleven boys were proficient in both reading and writing. Sundays were spent doing catechisms and hymns.

#### **4.2.2. The case of E. Smith**

E. Smith's Uncle and Aunt approached Mr. Rawlinson at the magistrates' office in the Marylebone office. According to E. Smith, he arrived in the Cape on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1836.<sup>345</sup> He claims to have been taken to the Governor's Gardens, where he was consequently sold for ten shillings to a farmer whom he claims to have treated him and his companions very badly. At the time of writing the letter (February 15, 1837) he was living with Mr. and Mrs. Filmstar [sic] and was learning the grocery business. Upon reading the letter, Mr. Rawlinson questioned the boy's uncle who said that in 1837 he had approached the CFS office in London regarding his nephew's location and that he had not heard anything from them since then. The uncle expressed his worry for his nephew in light of all he had been reading in *The Times*, his main worry being that his nephew had been

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<sup>343</sup> Letter to the Editor, April 5, 1839, *The Times*.

<sup>344</sup> Enclosure No. 4, 1840 (323) CFS Report, p. 9

<sup>345</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, April 23, 1839, p.6

sold.<sup>346</sup> E. Smith was, brought to the St. James workhouse soon after the death of his father. According to his uncle he was removed to Hackney Wick without any consent from his living relatives. E. Smith wrote a second letter in June of 1838, expressing the need to have his birth registered, as he was worried that he would be made to apprentice for two or three extra years if it was not done. He claimed to be tired of the work in the Cape and wrote that he did not like the Dutch in the Cape. His other complaints were to do with the price of food since the outbreak of the war with the Xhosas in 1835. He spoke of the death of farmers in the war, leaving their farms unoccupied and unworked. He spoke with happiness of a minister being sent to the Cape (one can only assume he was speaking of Reverend Saunders) as he was worried about many of the boys because they were ill-treated by their masters. His final plea was for his uncle to send him some of his fathers' items as he had none and for some books and dried fruit and for some more frequent correspondence from his family to help him pass the time.

The second letter from E. Smith, who is not one of the children to have been interviewed in the 1840 report, is very heart-wrenching. It does not speak of any abuse but rather sounds like the words of a lost, lonely young boy who misses his family. As in cases in the past, Mr. Rawlinson recommended that the uncle contact the CFS again as, due to his many inquiries to the Society himself they had responded with a letter stating that they were "quite ready and willing to attend to all applications made to the them relative to the children sent out by them to the Cape."<sup>347</sup> This is the last mention of Smith and his case that *The Times* reported on.

#### **4.2.3 The M'Donald Case**

In April of 1839, right after the plea had been made for knowledge as to the well-being of E. Smith by his uncle and aunt, "a woman, quite blind and feeble," was

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<sup>346</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, April 23, 1839, p.6

<sup>347</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* April 23, 1839, p.6

led into Mr. Rawlinson's office, and "the tears streamed in abundance down her cheeks."<sup>348</sup> Her name was Rosalind M'Donald [sic] and her story goes as follows: Three years previously her son was sent to Hackney Wick, under the advice of a Lady Henthintower (there is no additional information given as to whom this woman was). According to the article he was taken from there without Mrs. M'Donald or her husband's knowledge and sent to the Cape where he was sold for ten guineas to a Mr. Slow. Mrs. M'Donald stated that she got her information from a boy who had recently escaped and returned to England. She claimed her son was made to "drag heavy loads of timber and stones."<sup>349</sup> Mr. Rawlinson, upon hearing that she had been to the CFS offices in London twelve months previously, advised her to go back and return to him with their answer whereupon he would advise her further. When perusing the 1840 report, I came across one boy with the surname M'Donald, his name was Henry and he apprenticed to a Geit de Wet of Goedvertrouw, near Caledon. However, due to a combination of Barnes' inefficiency and what I believe to be the farmers' own cunning, the boys indentured to him had been removed to his other farm in Stellenbosch when Barnes visited, and hence they were not seen by him. Barnes made no attempt to visit the boys, nor did he question their master or other servants employed on the farm relative to their condition and treatment.<sup>350</sup> Whether this Henry M'Donald was the son of Rosalind who appeared before Rawlinson in 1839, is impossible to know as *The Times* article fails to mention the name of the son, and although Rosalind M'Donald stated that her son was placed with a man named Slow, due to the fact that Barnes did not follow up on the four apprentices under De Wet, it is impossible for us to know whether Henry M'Donald had, at one time, been apprenticed to a man named Slow. Whether or not Rosalind M'Donald followed up with the CFS and consequently returned to Rawlinson's office was not reported in *The Times*.

#### 4.2.4. The Leach Boy

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<sup>348</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* April 23, 1839, p.6

<sup>349</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* April 23, 1839, p.6

<sup>350</sup> Enclosure No. 6, 1840 CFS Report, p. 24

A Mr. Leach approached Mr. Rawlinson in April of 1839 regarding his son who had been sent to the Cape with nine other boys four years previously. Mr. Leach claimed his son was sold in a manner "...similar to that of the boy Trubshaw."<sup>351</sup> It was not revealed how he had come across this information. He stated that he had not received a single letter from his son nor could he get a definitive answer from the CFS office when he went four months before as to where he was, who he was apprenticed to or what he was doing. Mr. Rawlinson again told him to return to the CFS office and return to him with their answer. Again, upon searching the 1840 report, I could find no boy with the surname Leach, however, according to the Embarkation Records, John Leach arrived in the Cape of Good Hope on February 4, 1835 upon the *Thomas Snooks*. The embarkation records contradict Mr. Leach's claim, as according the records, Leach was sent the Cape with twenty other boys. According to the records, which were published in the CFS's Sixth Annual Report in 1836, John Leach was apprenticed to G.H. De Wet, of Stellenbosch, along with Edward Trubshaw. It was not clear in my research whether Edward Trubshaw had any contact with the parents of his fellow apprentices upon his return to England.

#### 4.2.5 The Carr Boy

Mrs. Carr of No. 5 Browhouse-Lane, New Hampstead approached Mr. Rawlinson in May of 1839 about her son. According to her, he was sent to the Cape on the 29 of January 1835 when he was thirteen years old with nineteen other boys. She stated that he and nine of his companions were sold to:

De Witt, the Dutchman, living at Rustenburg, Stellenbosch. Trubshaw was one of the boys who went with him and I am fearful my poor boy is experiencing treatment quite as bad as that related by Trubshaw and which had appeared in the newspapers.<sup>352</sup>

According to Mrs. Carr, despite the seven letters and two parcels she had to date sent to her son, she had only heard from him twice, the last letter received in the summer of 1837, just under two years ago. She stated that she had been to the

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<sup>351</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, April 23, 1839, p.6

<sup>352</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 7, 1839 ,p.7

CFS office and that their response had been that boys don't write, "allowing to their own neglect."<sup>353</sup> Mrs. Carr brought a written statement with all the particulars of her son's departure, including everything she had heard regarding him and the results of the various meetings she had with the Committee. The magistrate assured her that the document would be forwarded to the proper authorities.<sup>354</sup> This story was never followed up on in *The Times*.

#### 4.2.6 The case of Robert Ayres:

William Ayres, from Leatherhead Surrey spoke to Mr. Hoskies, the sitting magistrate about his son Robert Ayres who he believed was being ill-treated in the Cape. Mr. Hoskies did not deal with the case but told William Ayres to come back when Mr. Rawlinson was in the Magistrates office.<sup>355</sup> Ayres spoke of his efforts to get his son sent back from the Cape, where he was sent four years previously. He claimed that despite his many visits to the CFS office, his case was not being dealt with. He asked the reporter for *The Times* to release the particulars of his son's case to the public. The reporter took it upon himself to publish the four letters that William Ayres son had sent him. <sup>356</sup> In Robert's first letter, there does not appear to be any cause for worry, as he writes quite a cheery letter with no complaints, all he asks is for his parents to write back to him and to send him, as in the case of E. Smith, some writing paper and some books. According to Mr. Ayres, not long after he received this letter, he was informed by a soldier in the 98<sup>th</sup> Regiment, who had been at the Cape had seen his son at the Governor's Gardens and that he was "in a most dreadful state without stockings or shoes." Apparently young Robert Ayres had run away from his master, Mr De Witt as he was being mistreated. Ayres then set forth to find out from the CFS where he son was and with whom he was staying. He claimed that it was only after he has sent five letters to the Society that they replied. According to the Society they were going to make immediate inquiries into the

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<sup>353</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 7, 1839, p.7

<sup>354</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 9, 1839, p.7

<sup>355</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 11, 1839, p.7

<sup>356</sup> Police Report, Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 11, 1839, p.7

account given by the soldier but that they did not believe the account against Mr. De Witt to be true as he was "well-known to be a most worthy man and has always been spoken of as an excellent master."<sup>357</sup> Furthermore the CFS declared that all other apprentices who were with Mr. De Witt had written glowing reports to the parents as to their time apprenticed to Mr. De Witt. They therefore could not give credit to the story that William Ayres reported, and he was advised, if he was still not happy to write directly to the Commissioners at the Cape. According to Ayres he continued to write to the CFS. *The Times* reporter copied another letter he received from the CFS regarding the letter sent to the Committee in the Cape. According to the CFS in London, a commissioner from the Cape had recently returned to London and had specifically visited the De Witt farm where he apparently found that "all the lads there were all well and happy."<sup>358</sup> Furthermore, in their letter, they spoke of the proposed Investigation into the CFS in the Cape due to the great number of harmful articles published newspapers regarding the dubious goings-on of the Society, as a way of reassuring Mr. Ayres. They promised that letters from the CFS in the Cape would be forthcoming in a matter of days and (somewhat condescending, but unsurprisingly for the time) advised him to go to his resident magistrate and show him said letter and they would explain it to him. The final letter published in this case was the letter that Mr. Ayres addressed to Mr. Rawlinson, as he was not able to see him in person that day. In the letter were details of his son's treatment in the Cape previously unmentioned, apparently witnessed by a friend of his in the Cape, such as the fact that he was not well fed, he received "bread and water for breakfast and poor soup for dinner, coarse meat strewed up and put into a large dish and all the poor boys eat out of that with spoons."<sup>359</sup> Furthermore he claims his son had no bed to sleep in and was up making bricks for twelve hours a day and that his son had since run away. He spoke of his efforts to get his son discharged and how they had had no impact. Mr. Aryres's

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<sup>357</sup> Police report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* May 11, 1839, p.7

<sup>358</sup> Police report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* May 11, 1839, p.7

intention with contacting Mr. Rawlinson was to attain the discharge of his son so that he could return home.<sup>360</sup>

#### 4.2.7 The Case of Mr and Mrs Everson

Mrs. Everson came before the Marylebone Magistrate to lodge a complaint against the CFS with respect to her two sons whom were sent to the Cape under their care. According to her, her son John Francis Everson was sent to the Cape on the *Britannia* at the tender age of thirteen, having spent a little time at Hackney Wick.<sup>361</sup> According to Everson, her second son, Edward Everson was sent out during September in 1833 on the *Bolton* when he was only twelve.

John Francis Everson had, to date, written to his mother three times, explaining that he was living with a Mr. Alexander Chiappini, of George Street in Cape Town, but she had not heard from him in nearly four and a half years. She also brought up the cost of postage which was making her attempts to contact them very difficult, and that the Committee had not been able to tell her anything about the well-being of her child.<sup>362</sup>

According to Mrs. Everson, although John Francis had left for the Cape in 1833, she only received one reply to her letters in May of 1835 and had not heard anything since. His letter, written, at this stage, over three ago, bore no bad news. He said he was in the service of Lieutenant Daniels of Sweet Milk Fountain in Albany. As instructed by Mr. Rawlinson, Mrs. Everson wrote a letter to each boy's master, to be sent by the magistrate for her. There are no further articles written on this case and I could find no record of her sons in the 1840 report. There is no record of the embarkation roster for the boys shipped over on the *Britannia* in

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<sup>360</sup> Police report, Marylebone Office, *The Times* May 11, 1839, p.7

<sup>361</sup> Report from the Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 30, 1839

<sup>362</sup> Report from the Marylebone Office, *The Times*, May 30, 1839

1833. Her other son, Edward Everson was apprenticed to a farmer, Lieutenant Daniel as a house servant after disembarking at Algoa Bay.<sup>363</sup>

#### 4.2.8 The Case of William Dixon

At the meeting where the Society was dissolved, a young man approached the Committee to give his testimony of his time at the Cape. His name was William Dixon, and at the time of the meeting, he was 20 years old.<sup>364</sup> According to his testimony that was reported in *The Times*, he was thirteen years old when he was placed in the care of the Society, after the death of his father left his mother and him destitute. When the meeting occurred he was home visiting his mother from where he was stationed in the Cape, thirty miles outside of Graham's Town. Although the Society claimed to give the children three months of training before sending them abroad (as seen in Chapter One), William Dixon testified that he was only placed in Hackney Wick for one night before being put on a ship bound for the Cape of Good Hope. Lieutenant Amsinck, a member of the Committee in London interrupted William's testimony to defend the Society claiming that when William was placed in the care of school, they were not fully functional and that was why he did not receive the correct training. According to Dixon, he and his brother were sent to Graham's Town where they were placed with a master for a trial period from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 1833. The conditions were that if they were happy with their master, then after the trial period they would be bound as apprentices.<sup>365</sup> William Dixon was apprenticed to an English merchant named Charles Maynard, where he acted as the servant in his house. According to William he did not receive any wages, despite working for the man for five years. William Dixon claimed to have succeeded in ensuring that his brother was properly trained in a trade. His brother was first apprenticed to a Mr. Mason, the postmaster in Graham's Town, but when he was not being properly educated, apparently William helped him to be transferred to Mr. Footer, a boot maker. Although he testified that his brother was not taught any trade at Mr. Mason's,

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<sup>363</sup> Embarkation Rolls, as seen in Blackburn, Geoff, *The Children's Friend Society*, Access Press, Western Australia, 1993 p.268

<sup>364</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>365</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

William Dixon did testify that he did not hear of his brother being badly treated whilst under his care. Although during his testimony it was uncovered that William Dixon had absconded, he still claimed to have been fairly treated by his master. Apparently he ran away after being "boxed in the ears," although according to him, he "deserved the chastisement."<sup>366</sup> It is important to bear in mind whilst reading testimonies such as this that a box in the ears was considered very normal punishment for a child of the Victorian era. After absconding, William Dixon was found and placed in prison for fourteen days, before being returned to his master who apparently did not exact any revenge or further punishment on the boy upon his return.

Lord Nugent who was interviewing Dixon questioned him in great detail regarding the general conditions in the Cape. According to Dixon, there were "little disturbances between lads and their masters," but that the condition of the boys sent to the Cape was a great deal better than if they had remained in England. He said, "I don't consider people are as free here as they are there. I'm sure there are more slaves in England than are there."<sup>367</sup> Although William Dixon had many positive things to say about his time spent at the Cape as an apprentice, he stated clearly during the interview that his religious and moral education had not been attended to. His reading and writing skills he brought with him from England and although he was allowed to go to church, he was not forced. Furthermore he stated that the boys had not had any guardian on board with them on their passage to the Cape, where, he claimed, they did not have enough to eat. Other than that, he was not aware of any ill-treatment on board the ships. However, we cannot take one young man's testimony as absolute fact, just because he was not aware of any ill-treatment on board the *Maria* or any other ships, does not mean that none occurred. The Society however, used his word as proof of the success of their program, using his testimony to refute any accusations hurled at them.<sup>368</sup> William Dixon's final words in the meeting were "I have only spoken of the children on the frontier, not those at Cape Town."

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<sup>366</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>367</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>368</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

William Dixon was one of the few apprentices who became a soldier during the 1835 Xhosa Frontier War, mentioned in Chapter Two. After the war he went to Bathurst where he set up a line burner. He stated that he attributed his success in his young life to his having been sent to the Cape. He said he recommended all boys in the streets be sent to the Cape, as before he left for the Cape, he was not able find any work as a tailor's apprentice in England. To prove his point, Lord Nugent asked William if he had any other examples of boys who were successful in the Cape. William spoke of a boy named Edward Burns, who was apprenticed to a Mr. King at Algoa Bay, they served together during the Xhosa Frontier War only Burns was injured. The last William heard of him he had a successful career building houses.<sup>369</sup>

#### **4.2.9 Mrs Freeman's children.**

Although the CFS was occupied with ridding the streets of juvenile vagrants, in this particular case, the children involved were not vagrants at all, but rather, it would appear, victims of a fraudster. *The Times* reported on this case. Captain Freeman was the captain of the ship *Phillip*, and had drowned. His widow and children were left with 800 pounds which was to be invested, and the consoles to be used for his children. According to Mrs. Freeman, who appeared before the Lord Mayor in June of 1839, the executor was a member of the family and he had taken the children from her. She, having no means of support had elected to travel to India, accompanying ladies. She stated that since she had returned to England she had been unable to find her children, whom the executor had stated were "...a great distance from London and carefully attended to and educated." Mrs. Freeman however received a letter from her youngest daughter which informed her that she and her younger brother were at the Cape of Good Hope, having been sent out there by the CFS. According the Freeman's daughter, the youngest Freeman boy was ill-treated. The executor claimed to have sent the children there as education was cheaper there but according to Mrs. Freeman, "it was quite evident from the letter one of the children, who is now seventeen

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<sup>369</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

years of age, that education is not promoted amongst the poor children that are sent there.”<sup>370</sup> Furthermore, they included articles from other newspapers such as the *John Bull*. This article, featured on May 20, 1839, was a report on a public meeting with Lord Grosvenor as the chair. According to the article, no one was allowed to inquire or speak up at the meeting, and the information that was transmitted was, according to the *John Bull*, not new or helpful to the public. Furthermore the only answer that the CFS was reported to have given to parents inquiring about their children, was that if the parents had not heard from their children then the children “must be very wicked children indeed.”<sup>371</sup> This article stated that the CFS officials did not address the issues of cruel treatment and they closed the meeting by calling for more subscriptions, even though the article states that four strong cases had been submitted to the magistrates in London that very week regarding the CFS children. The article claimed that one of the parents of the children in the Cape had committed suicide as a “consequence of excited distress.”<sup>372</sup> However, true to form, *The Times* did not look into this alleged suicide.

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<sup>370</sup> Police Report, Mansion House, *The Times*, June 3, 1829, p.6

<sup>371</sup> Article from *the John Bull*, as seen in *The Times*, 20 May 1839

<sup>372</sup> Article from *the John Bull*, as seen in *The Times*, 20 May 1839

## Chapter 5:

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### *Dissolution and the Aftermath*

Following the inquiry in 1838 into the condition and treatment of the CFS apprentices, and the death of Captain Brenton in 1839, the Society's continued existence was on shaky ground. *The Times* was regularly publishing scathing and harmful articles during these years, inciting the public against the Society, as seen in Chapter four. In November of 1840, seven months before the dissolution of the Society, a meeting was held in Exeter Hall, London, to discuss whether to dissolve the Society. Lord Nugent chaired the meeting. He declared that during its ten years in existence, it had done more good, "and relieved a greater amount of otherwise hopeless misery than any other institution in the time."<sup>373</sup> He addressed the charges against the Society made by "anonymous slanderers."<sup>374</sup> The first charge he addressed was that of the Slavery and the Committee's supposed corruption. It was believed, and promulgated by *The Times* and other newspapers that the Society were sending the children abroad as slaves and then pocketing the proceeds. He referred the congregation to the report by Major Longmore, Resident Magistrate at the Cape, where he clearly stated that any money that changed hands was solely an advance of their wages "to indemnify the society for the expense of passage, clothing and food, and for the salaries of the secretary and the inspector at the Cape."<sup>375</sup> He further advised those who accused the Society of enslaving the children to make themselves better acquainted with the principals of slave trade. Justified perhaps, as the term was used rather loosely by *The Times* and the London public in the onslaught leading up to the dissolution of the Society.

The second charge he addressed at this meeting was that of ill-usage by the masters, to which he referred the meeting to the Report (recently published) and

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<sup>373</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society" in *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>374</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society" in *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>375</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society" in *The Times*, November 13, 1840

stated that generally the children were treated well, but there were a few exceptions. In the case of these exceptions, where the punishment exceeded the offence, or was improperly administered, Nugent stated that the masters had been fined. My study of the report revealed that this was not mentioned in the Report. Although there could be record of it elsewhere. According to Nugent, "the masters were not considered tyrannical, and it was only through the conduct of bad and irritating kind that they were made severe."<sup>376</sup> According to him, of the 1135 apprentices that had been sent to the Cape, the number of complaints had been "somewhere about six or eight but he would say ten or twelve."

Nugent was adamant that the only reason that the Society would be dissolved would be because of lack of funds. According to him, the 1840 Report cleared the CFS of all the charges made against them by the London press. But in light of the allegations, and the negative publicity that surrounded it, the CFS had lost most of its funding, upon which it relied.

The reports on the meeting are indicative of a group of people severely disillusioned by the terrible reception they had received from the London public. Mr. Hayes motioned for the Society to be dismissed, for the committee members had got "nothing but abuse for their labours." According to Hayes, the editors of the newspapers that attacked the Society on a weekly basis would not accept the Society's invitation to inspect Hackney Wick and their books. The abuse that Hayes spoke of was indeed a trial that all the committee members had to bear. According to reports, members of the committee were 'pelted' while visiting the asylums. Furthermore, at Brenton's funeral, Mr. A Yates, a committee member, claimed to have overheard a mother insult the Brenton's remains by saying that he was "nothing but a slave-dealer."<sup>377</sup>

Sergeant Adams urged the Committee members to bear the slander a little while longer. He pointed out that they had recently received two hundred pounds from the City of London and that that the Lord Mayor, who had previously declared

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<sup>376</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

<sup>377</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, November 13, 1840

that the Society sold children, had retracted his statement in light of the report from the colonies. He believed that the society would continue to flourish under the benevolence of the public. In his opinion, to dissolve the Society would be to admit guilt and he believed that “a better institution could not be devised.” Despite his encouraging words, the matter remained that the Committee at the Cape, along with the masters, who had been vilified by the majority of English papers, had withdrawn its services and support for the CFS. They stated that since the Society could not look after the children on their own, due to the distance, then they should dissolve the Society.

### **The Dissolution**

The Children’s Friend Society was dissolved at a general meeting held in Exeter Hall, London in late May of 1841, the reason given being a lack of funds.<sup>378</sup> This was a mere days after the final twenty-three apprentices arrived at the Cape aboard the *Dale Park*. These boys were the first apprentices to be sent to the Cape after there was a period of stagnation where no apprentices were sent to the Cape pending the outcome of the 1840 CFS report.

Although *The Times* was good at publishing scathing articles and such on the CFS, my research has shown that they did not follow up on many of the cases they reported to the English public. They did however, assist in promoting their own articles on the CFS, for example, on April of 1839, they inserted a notice that recommended their readers look to the Marylebone police report for fresh instances of “the wicked cruelties, that are perpetuated under the auspices of the Kidnapping Association, which calls itself the Children’s Friend Society.”<sup>379</sup> Upon the official dissolution of the Society in 1841, *The Times* claimed responsibility, or rather credit for the Society’s failure. Their article on the dissolution was extremely severe and unforgiving. They stated:

At length that the heartless imposture “The Children’s Friend Society”  
whose system of kidnaping and transporting it’s victims we have

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<sup>378</sup> Untitled Notice, *The Times*, 25 May 1841

<sup>379</sup> Untitled Notice, *The Times*, April 18, 1839, p. 4

unceasingly endeavored to expose, has terminated its ignominious career by an act of self-destruction<sup>380</sup>

The CFS agreed with them. They blamed the London press at large for their fall. They made a statement at the dissolution of the Society stating “the society has been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented by the public press and to this cause the Society’s failure might fairly be attributed to.”<sup>381</sup> They did not take responsibility for the cases discovered by the Commissioners where there were incidences of ill-treatment or negligence. They to a large extent ignored the worried inquiries of the apprentices families in London and the surrounding areas. These anxious parents, uncles, aunts and siblings of apprentices became the perfect weapon for the London press, but in particular *The Times*.

According to the article published in May of 1841, the day after *The Times* announced that the Society had been dissolved, the repositories of the CFS were explored and it was found that the Society was neither “intestate nor insolvent” but had a total of twelve hundred pounds. *The Times* quipped that it was “pretty well selling youthful orphans into an African exile.”<sup>382</sup> Obviously *The Times* ignored all previous statements made by the Society as to where the money came from, subscriptions, donations and of course, from the masters. In this article, *The Times* clearly took credit for the fall of the society and claimed that the CFS was “bad in principal, and it was, if possible, fully worse in practice.”<sup>383</sup> Their accusations that the final amount of funds would be mismanaged illicitly, prompted a lengthy letter (according to their account of it) from Mr. Maubert and Mr. Hayes, members of the committee who were appointed trustees to the reserved fund to close the accounts. *The Times* did not publish this letter, but did publish a scathing account of it in June of 1841. They did however state that their intention was never to “impute sordid and infamous motives to any member or members of the committee,” but that their condemnation was against what they

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<sup>380</sup> Untitled article, *The Times*, May, 26 1841, p.5

<sup>381</sup> Untitled article, *The Times*, May 26, 1841, p.5

<sup>382</sup> Untitled article, *The Times*, May, 26 1841, p.5

<sup>383</sup> Untitled article, *The Times*, May 26, 1841, p.5

believed to be “mistaken philanthropy” or, as they called it in a previous article, “quack philanthropy.”<sup>384</sup>

*The Times*' final demand what was to be the fate of the children aboard, and if there was some plan to see for their return to their mother country. There are no accounts in the years following the dissolution of the society as to whether any of the children were actually returned to England, or at least given the option.

### **5.1. The dissolution of the Society, as seen in *The Times***

In the ninth annual meeting of the CFS in 1839, the charges brought against the society were addressed by Mr. J Labouchere. The first charge was regarding the issue of consent. The public (and *The Times*) claimed that the CFS had sent the children to the Cape Colony without their consent or their parents' consent. The second charge was that the children experienced great difficulty in writing home to which Labouchere responded that every effort had been made by the Committee to encourage the children to write home. According to *The Times*, this statement was not well received by the majority of the 500 people in attendance at the meeting. The third and final charge addressed at the ninth annual meeting of the CFS was that the children were being ill-treated.

Addressing the first charge, Mr. Labouchere stated that no one child had been sent without the sanction of the committee of management, without the child's consent and without the consent of the child's parents or guardians. A Mr. Wilkes spoke passionately, questioning the level of power consent a thirteen year old can have. His idea was to raise money and use all CFS funds to bring all the children back from the Cape.<sup>385</sup> Longmore responded that when the situation had arisen at Gravesend, when children had changed their minds and wanted to return home, “every facility afforded to them for returning to London” was provided.<sup>386</sup> However, as the 1840 report showed, there were instances of

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<sup>384</sup> Untitled Article, *The London Times*, June 3, 1841

children in the Cape who stated to the Commissioners that they wanted to return to London, and nothing more was made of this then to note it in the report.

Regarding the third charge, Labouchere declined to comment, until the report had been received from the authorities at the Cape. However, he did state that he believed that the reports made regarding the treatment of apprentices were "decidedly false, or at all events, greatly exaggerated."<sup>387</sup>

*The Times* issued their own charges in a separate article. They claimed that the Committee had sold the children aboard as slaves and had pocketed the proceeds, the second charge was that the children had been misused by their masters.<sup>388</sup> On the 25 May 1841, *The Times* reported the official dissolution of the CFS, the official quote from the society was, "The Society has been greatly misunderstood and misinterpreted by the public press and to this cause the Society's failure might be fairly attributed."<sup>389</sup>

During the ninth Annual General meeting, the Earl of Eldon was very outspoken with regards to the accusations of cruelty towards the children sent to the Cape. He said that they were not treated cruelly at all, in fact, the colonists themselves sent their own children to the same masters for apprenticeships. I have no evidence to back up or refute his statements unfortunately. However, interesting to note is that as he pledged his support for the CFS at the ninth Annual Meeting, he also removed his name from the Committee, stating the only reason to be that he did not have time to attend the regular meetings. He claimed to have the "fullest confidence in the honour and integrity of the society and was convinced that they had effected much good."<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>386</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," in *The Times*, May 17, 1839.

<sup>387</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society" in *The Times*, May 17, 1839.

<sup>388</sup> Author Unknown, "Children's Friend Society" *The Times*, 13 November 1840.

<sup>389</sup> Notice, *The Times*, 25 May 1841.

<sup>390</sup> Author Unknown, "The Children's Friend Society," *The Times*, May 17, 1839

At the same meeting, the Earl of Grosvenor stated that “the public press was capable of effecting much good, had in this case been productive of much evil.”<sup>391</sup> According to Grosvenor, with regards to the press reporting on the statements made by children whom had run away from the Cape and the CFS (one can only assume he was referring to Edward Trubshaw and the cases presented to the resident magistrates as seen above) that *The Times* printed with a certain zeal. He found the press to have been too harsh on the Society. He stresses that the press had not given the Society the opportunity to defend themselves, that right which was awarded even to the “greatest of criminals.”<sup>392</sup> A year after the dissolution of the Society, *The Times* was still claiming their victory. They stated that they had ‘attacked’ the society and the Society had had no chance of standing up to “so powerful a newspaper.”<sup>393</sup>

In response to an article published in *The Times* in May of 1841, where *The Times* referred to the “luminaries of the church, Revs Messrs Munroe and Nihil,” Nihil wrote a letter to the editor. He was the chaplain at the Penitentiary and he stated in his letter that one of his duties was to, upon the discharge of prisoners, find them some means of employment that protected them from the temptations of drunk and crime. He defended his associations with the CFS claiming to have “seen to the credit of their benevolent management at their schools at Chiswick and Hackney Wick.”<sup>394</sup> He spoke of the importance of Government involvement in programs such as the CFS, whereby to ensure the protection of the children overseas, but also spoke of the children from the penitentiaries who were often too scared to leave the penitentiary because of various associations that would lead them back into a life of crime, vice and vagrancy. *The Times* did not comment or respond to Nihil’s letter in any way in print, despite publishing his letter.

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<sup>391</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society” Article on the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the CFS, May 16 1839 as seen in *The Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>392</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society” Article on the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the CFS, May 16 1839 as seen in *The Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>393</sup> “The Children’s Friend Society” Article on the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the CFS, May 16 1839 as seen in *The Times*, May 17, 1839

<sup>394</sup> Author Unknown, “The Children’s Friend Society,” *The Times*, May 17, 1839

Although it is difficult to know exactly what the conditions were like that the apprentices lived under, especially in the years before the 1840 Report, it is abundantly clear that *The Times* did not spend much time researching their articles. The main source of evidence would obviously have been the parents of the children of the Society, however without letters from their children, they actually had no way of knowing what the situation was in the Cape, and yet, *The Times* wasted little time conjecturing situations. Despite the findings of the report, in April of 1842, *The Times* published yet another scathing article on the CFS. It stated that no matter how bad things were for the working-class and juveniles in London, it was nothing compared to the horrors they would see in the Cape. According to *The Times*, (and they give no source for their information), the children of the CFS spent their nights “amidst the vermin and the obscenities of Hottentot life.”<sup>395</sup>

## 5.2 The effect to 1840 Report

Following the investigation into the welfare of the children at the Cape of Good Hope, Napier, the governor of the Cape at the Time, on behalf of his fellow settlers, made the point that the Cape of Good Hope would no longer be open to receiving CFS children. As discussed in Chapter two, the Dutch settlers, in the years following the second British occupation, were angered by level of interference by the British Government in their private lives, but more particularly in their labour relations. The 1840 Report followed the upheaval of the final emancipation of the slaves, and Dutch farmers did not appreciate the level of investigation they were put under, considering it an insult.<sup>396</sup> John Bell, Secretary to the Government at the Colonial Office at the time of the report, wrote that he hoped the report would satisfy the Government and “effectively disabuse the public mind in England as to the general treatment and actual conditions of those apprentices.”<sup>397</sup> As seen in Chapter Three, according to the four Commissioners who were appointed to investigate the well-being of the

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<sup>395</sup> Untitled Article, *The Times*, April 2, 1842, p.4

<sup>396</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.1

<sup>397</sup> 1840 (323) CFS report, p.1

children all reported that in most cases, the physical condition of the apprentices had “decidedly improved in all respects since their arrival here.”

One of the issues hotly discussed in London was the issue of trade. Were the apprentices being placed in positions where they would, as long as they worked hard and behaved appropriately, be able to better themselves? The 1840 Report showed the following:

<b>Number of apprentices actually indentured to learn a trade in 1839</b>	
Actually employed in a trade	60
As gardeners/in gardening	20
As clerks/in stores	10
As farm servants (incl. grooms, cowherds and shepherds)	130
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>220</b>

Figure 6 Table showing the trades of apprentices<sup>398</sup>

Many apprentices were promised that they would be apprenticed to a master of their preferred trade upon their agreement to emigrate to the CGH. However, it was also true that the CFS had a tendency to place children in the countryside, the more rural the better, in order to separate them from the temptation and bad companions that they were likely to meet in the cities and towns.<sup>399</sup> The countryside did have its drawbacks that were not anticipated by the CFS in London. One of the biggest worries was the children’s’ religious instruction when placed in the more rural areas- churches were scarce in the rural Cape at the time. However, as shown in Chapter three, it was believed that the evils to be encountered by children in the bigger towns was much more dangerous than the possibility of not being able to attend church regularly. Indeed, in many cases the CFS was counting on the general piousness of the rural Cape population.

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<sup>398</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.4

<sup>399</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.4

All females interviewed by the commissioners worked as house servants. According to the commissioners, there was a prevalence of herding oxen as employment for male apprentices, which, in the opinion of the commissioners would not lead to "...any useful attainment whatever in regard to the apprentices future prospects or respectable means of procuring a livelihood."<sup>400</sup> According to the report, those whose primary obligation was herding, spent their days either sleeping in the sun or strolling after the cattle, with "his only associate some stray Hottentot," and whose only attainment is "indolent and slovenly habits." Indeed, the need for herdnoys was high after the emancipation of the slaves and it was generally recognized in the Cape that the only people who would herd cattle were the aged or "otherwise useless person of colour."<sup>401</sup>

The Commissioners of the report suggested that the Masters be forced to, at the beginning of every year to pay the full weekly allowance into a savings bank, and that whatever allowance he gave to the apprentice during the year, as long as it did not exceed two pence a week would be refunded to him as he was about to deposit the next years' allowance. Furthermore the master was to provide proof of payment to the apprentice by a receipt signed by the apprentice.

Although according to the Report regarding the treatment and condition the apprentices, the apprehensions of the society "were in a great measure groundless,"<sup>402</sup> the achievements of the report for the children were limited. For example, the apprentices who complained that they were not happy in the Cape and that they wished to return home to England were not addressed.<sup>403</sup> Similarly, George Platt, who was apprenticed to Reverend G.W.A Vander Lingen of Paarl, told Major Piers that although he was "sufficiently supplied with food and clothing," he wished to return to England, as he claimed that the only work

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<sup>400</sup> 1840 (323)CFS report, p.4

<sup>401</sup> 1840 (323) CFS report, p.4.

<sup>402</sup> Copy of Despatch from Governor Sir Geo. Napier, K.C.B to Lord John Russell, 24 February, 1840, as seen in "Copy of Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies relative to the condition and treatment of the children sent out by the Children's Friend Society, 1840 (323), p. 1

<sup>403</sup> See Chapter Three, for the four boys apprenticed to Vander Merwe of Wagonmaker's Valley.

his indenture made him fit for was that of a farm-labourer.<sup>404</sup> Children who had absconded and whom were not present on the farms when the commissioners were conducting their interviews were not investigated or reported on, aside from a short note from the commissioner stating why the child was not interviewed. For example, as seen in Chapter three, James Farrel, apprenticed to Vander Merwe of Wagonmaker's Valley, had absconded at the time when Major Piers made his visit to the farm, and the only comment that Piers made on the subject was that the apprentice was "not seen."<sup>405</sup> Similarly, Charles Pool, one of six apprentices indentured to S.J. Marais of Gt. Drakenstein was absent from the farm when Piers was conducting his interviews, apparently doing some business on the behalf of his master. This is a suspicious case, if Reverend Saunders is to be believed the masters were given ample warning of the investigation and should have been able to have all apprentices ready and waiting to be interviewed. It is made further suspicious by the fact that the Marais stated that the Poole was "obstinate and disobedient." However, also to be noted is that this was the same comment that Marias made about all of his six apprentices, all of whom were interviewed and none of who complained of ill-treatment.

Furthermore, there were discrepancies in Major Barnes's report with eight apprentices. Mr Van Der Byl of Eerst River in Stellenbosch had four apprentices, Joseph Palmer, Samuel Morris, William Nicholls and John Camp. This is all the information that Barnes provided about the master and his apprentices; he did not state why he had not interviewed them, instead choosing to merely record their names and the name of their Master. Similarly, Samuel Bowyer, Henry M'Donald, James Guarring and William Everett Pool, bound to Geit de Wet of Goedvertrouw near Caledon were not interviewed as, apparently all four apprentices had been moved to one of de Wet's other farms in Stellenbosch at

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<sup>404</sup> Report on the present condition of the juvenile emigrant apprentices residing in this District by Major Piers, Resident Magistrate: in obedience with the commands of his Excellency the Governor, dated Cape Town, 13 September 1839, as seen in 1840 CFS Report, p.12

<sup>405</sup> Enclosure No. 5, Report on the present condition of the juvenile apprentices residing in this district, By Major Piers, Resident Magistrate: in obedience with the commands of his Excellency the Governor, dated Cape Town 13, September 1839 as seen in "Copy of Report from the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Colonies relative to the condition and treatment of the children sent out by the Children's Friend Society, 1840 (323), p. 12

the end of October 1839. Barnes made no inquiries into why the children were moved, or any other inquiries into their well-being. <sup>406</sup> Again, if the writings of Reverend Saunders are to be believed, the farmer, de Wet would have been aware of the inquiry, and thus, he choice at moving the four apprentices to another of his farms, a few weeks before Barnes appeared at his farm in Caledon, is incredibly suspect. <sup>407</sup>

Evidence of the lack of communication between the metropolis and the Cape, is clear in the case of Joseph Palmer, mentioned above. It would appear that Major Barnes was not aware that Joseph Palmer's father had approached the Committee of the CFS at their ninth annual general meeting regarding the whereabouts and well being of his son, the aforementioned Joseph Palmer. Perhaps if he (Major Barnes) had been aware of this he would have made more of an effort to interview the boys under Van der Byl's care. According to the report and the letter given as evidence in *The Times*, Joseph Palmer was indentured to a Peter van der Byl of Eerste River, Swellendam. According to Palmer Senior, he had only received one letter from his son in the five years that he had been at the Cape. In this letter, which *The Times* reprinted, Joseph Palmer stated that his younger brother Thomas, whom he had been allowed to visit on a neighbouring far, had written many letters but that his master (Henry Dreijer) would not send them. On the other hand however, Joseph Palmer entreated his parents to join him and his younger brother in the Cape, where, in his words, he believed "there was a good chance" for his parents. He furthermore referred to Rev. Mr Saunders arrival in the Cape, when speaking of his "Duty to God."<sup>408</sup> Accompanying his letter was a postscript from Van der Byl who stated that he was entirely satisfied with Joseph Palmer and that he would meet with Dreyer to talk to him regarding the youngest Palmer being allowed to send letters to his parents. The commissioners should have been made aware of cases such as the

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<sup>406</sup> Minutes made on a Visit of Inquiry into the actual state of the juvenile Emigrants in the Districts of Caledon and Swellendam in the months of October and November 1839, by Major James Barnes, as seen in 1840 CFS report, p.24

<sup>407</sup> For more on the case of Henry M'Donald, see Chapter 4, where, a woman whom I believe to have been his mother, placed her case before Resident Magistrate Rawlinson, in the Marylebone office, London.

<sup>408</sup> Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Palmer from Joseph Palmer, November 26, 1838, as seen in "The Children's Friend Society- Meeting in London Tavern," *The London Times*, May 17, 1839.

one above, and should have included, in their visits all of the houses of those apprentices whose parents were approaching the Resident Magistrates in London for information about their children.

<b>Apprentices expired by 1839</b>	<b>Doing well and now or were lately in the Colony</b>	<b>Deserted, and bore bad characters</b>
Male	41	13
Female	12	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>16</b>

**Figure 7 Table showing apprentices after indenture<sup>409</sup>**

It is clear from the table that of the total of 69 recorded 'expired' apprentices, 76% of them (both male and female) were considered to be 'doing well.' However, their category of "now or were lately in the colony" is very vague on the whereabouts or the position of the former apprentices. The report does not give information such as where the former apprentice worked, what their new position was, their weekly earnings, their marital status, or even whether the apprentice stayed in the colony for long after their apprenticeship ended or even if they stayed at all. The only specific details the report gives on the whereabouts of the former apprentices is that they say with certainty that the three females reported to be of bad character or to have deserted were still in the colony.<sup>410</sup>

In the tenth annual meeting of the CFS in London, Earl Grosvenor stated that the report and Government inquiries had completely vindicated the Society. Furthermore he urged the public to consider the situations from which the children were removed, as in most cases the move to the Cape had been an advantageous one.<sup>411</sup> The Statistical Society's report was also referred to, speaking of the misery and filth that existed among the lower classes in Glasgow and the resulting crime, prostitution and drunkenness, which led to disease and death, especially in the districts of White Chapel and Bethnal Green, which was

<sup>409</sup> 1840 (323) 1840 (323)CFS Report, p.7

<sup>410</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.7

<sup>411</sup> Furnished by a correspondent, "The Children's Friend Society" *The Times*, June 4, 1840

where, according to him, many of these children were 'rescued' from.<sup>412</sup> The 1840 report does not support his claim of where the children were 'rescued' from, as under the category of born, no child claimed to be from either district, albeit many of them just stated "London."

His second point concerned religious education- he asked that the public think of the standard of religious education the children would have received had they stayed in London. According to him, in some parts of England only one in twenty people had the opportunity to receive any form of religious education and in other parts only one in ten. Furthermore he reminded the meeting that although there were less churches in the colony the children were also less exposed to vice. According to Grosvenor, "No persons regarded the Sabbath more than the respectable agriculturists in the colony."<sup>413</sup>

The fault that the CFS did admit to was that the children were ill-prepared for emigration, but Earl Grosvenor stated that if funds had been available the Society would have given the children twelve months' preliminary education, before they were sent to the Cape, instead of the meagre three that they received.<sup>414</sup>

### **5.3 The aftermath, as seen in *The Times***

Following the dissolution of the Society, *The Times* continued to write cutting articles on the CFS and their role in its demise. A pamphlet written by Reverend Saunders, who had recently returned from the Cape, was published in *The Times*. *The Times* reported Reverend Saunders' words as fact, and discarding the findings of the 1840 Report entirely.

Reverend J.W. Saunders was sent to the Cape in March of 1838 by the Propagation of the Gospel with explicit instructions to look into the well-being of

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<sup>412</sup> Furnished by a correspondent "The Children's Friend Society" *The Times*, June 4, 1840

<sup>413</sup> Furnished by a correspondent "The Children's Friend Society" *The Times*, June 4, 1840

<sup>414</sup> Furnished by a correspondent "The Children's Friend Society" *The Times*, June 4, 1840

all of the apprentices that the CFS had sent to the Colony.<sup>415</sup> The press had raised the alarms regarding the religious instruction of the apprentices and the CFS had entered into an agreement with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The CFS agreed to pay for the costs of sending a minister to the Colony.

Reverend Saunders was appointed in the district of Stellenbosch and his work with apprentices was well known. The 1840 report revealed that he visited farms that were too far from churches to attend regularly. Not only was Reverend Saunders responsible for the spiritual well-being of the apprentices but during his trips he would check on their general health and well-being too.

The articles published in *The Times* did not reflect the 1840 Report's praise of Reverend Saunders nor did they acknowledge that the Commissioner of the report had recommended that 3 more clergymen be appointed to "superintend and promote religious instruction," one for Cape Town and the Wynberg district, one to reside in Malmesbury and one for the district of Swellendam.<sup>416</sup> Their recommended duties would be to visit every farm that was too far from any church for regular attendance and to report to the Committee monthly reporting on their visits and the general conduct and well-being of the charges.<sup>417</sup> The report recommended that the salaries of these three additional clergymen be paid by the masters of the apprentices. They would be required to pay £1 per apprentice annually and given that there were at the time over 750 apprentices, this would subsidise the annual salary of 250 pounds per clergyman (this is the amount that Reverend Saunders was being paid at the time.)

*The Times* published the first in a series of articles on Reverend Saunders in February 1842. He was, said *The Times*, a gentleman who was sent out by the society for the Propagation of the Gospel, "in order to supply religious ordinances and instruction to these children; but returned home utterly disgusted with the state of things there and hopeless of improving it with any efforts."<sup>418</sup> The article acknowledged the fact that some of the boys sent to the

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<sup>415</sup> Blackburn, Geoff, *The Children's Friend Society* (Northbridge, Western Australia: Access Press, 1993) p.187

<sup>416</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.8

<sup>417</sup> 1840 (323) CFS Report, p.8

<sup>418</sup> Untitled Article, *The London Times*, February 1842, p.4

Cape were “of the worst character,” but that stated that other children were from good families who were tricked by the overseers of the workhouses into believing that the Society could offer their children a better life. Reverend Saunders wrote in his pamphlet that:

These children are fast losing both their religion and language and gradually I fear, falling into the immoral habits and customs of the coloured population with whom in common....they labour daily throughout their apprenticeship.”<sup>419</sup>

*The Times* reported that Reverend Saunders stated that after serving as apprentices, most of the boys were fit for nothing more than continuing their lives as farm labourers with wages never higher than 20 shillings per month, with little chance of ever improving their lot. And to Saunders credit, this corroborates with the findings of the 1840 Report. As mentioned above, the majority of the CFS apprentices were employed in non-skilled labour. Reverend Saunders described the life of a herd boy. According to him, the herd boys were made live in “the bush” without anyone to talk to, furthermore, he stated that they were made to take their food along with them and when they returned at night they either had to sleep in a kraal or in huts alongside the coloured labourers. He criticized the 1840 Report and accused the Commissioners of giving the landowners too much warning and chance to get their boys ready for the inspection. He claimed that his position as clergyman meant that he was able to see the boys and their situation as it normally was, as opposed that which was presented to the Commissioners of the report.<sup>420</sup> When summing up the system of punishment used on the apprentices, Reverend Saunders gave insight to the state of the Cape upon the emancipation of the slaves, his choice statement was “The Dutch farmers have just lost their slaves, without having lost their cruel habit of treatment.”<sup>421</sup> Furthermore, he claimed that the farmers did not think that the ‘free blacks’ worked as hard as labourers should and that they had welcomed the chance to ‘buy’ the young English apprentices. *The Times* relished

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<sup>419</sup>Except from Pamphlet written by Reverend Saunders p.142 as seen in the article, untitled, *The London Times*, February 1842, p.4

<sup>420</sup> Saunders, Reverend J.W, Untitled Pamphlet, pp.200-203 as seen in *The Times*, February 1842, p.4

<sup>421</sup> Saunders, Reverend J.W., Untitled Pamphlet, pp.200-203, as seen in *The Times*, February 1842, p.4

reporting this statement. They relished the opportunity to once again raise the ugly term "slavery," that had plagued the Society since its conception. The Report and the Society, as discussed in Chapters three and four, went to great lengths to reassure the public that money only changed hands as a contribution towards the cost of maintaining the child, transportation costs and administrative costs. Reverend Saunders reported that the Dutch farmers considered the process to be buying, as one would have previously bought a slave and Reverend Saunders stated that he agreed with them. According to him the apprentices merely replaced the former slaves, apparently in some cases they even inherited the slaves' old clothes, not to mention his treatment and "cruel floggings."<sup>422</sup> Reverend Saunders accused some Dutch farmers of using the 'samboe'[sic] to beat the boys, and he described it to Victorian England as:

...a flexible whip made out of the hide of an ox or rhinoceros, every cut which is said to tear the skin and which certainly is so cruel an instrument of punishment that it was unlawful to flog a slave with it.<sup>423</sup>

Reverend Saunders gave testimonies of boys he met whilst in the service in the Cape. One named Adamson he saw while he was attending service in Stellenbosch that he described as "dreadfully fallen away."<sup>424</sup> He stated that he was employed "digging from dawn til dark" and that he was often too tired to walk home and was flogged frequently without, he claimed, knowing what for. He stated that he was made hold onto a tree-trunk so that he could be beaten with a quince stick. Another boy described his day to Reverend Saunders, he claimed he was made wake at half past five, and in digging season was made work from six to eight, when he would get a slice of bread with fat and half a glass of wine, he would then recommence digging until 12 when he would be fed again (he did not state what he was fed for dinner). According to Saunders the Governor saw the boys and was "very much dissatisfied" in their appearance and

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<sup>422</sup> Saunders, Reverend, J.W. Untitled Pamphlet, pp.200-203, as seen in *The Times*, February 1842, p.4

<sup>423</sup> Saunders, Reverend, J.W. Untitled Pamphlet, pp.202, as seen in *The Times*, February 1842, p.4

<sup>424</sup> Saunders, Pamphlet, p.202 written by Reverend Saunders as seen in the article, untitled, *The London Times*, February 1842, p.4

their lodging, however, when the Clerk of the Peace investigated he reported that the farmer had improved on the poor conditions and stated that:

looking at the general low standard of treatment of their servants among the boors [sic]....thought it would be an act of injustice to this individual boor [sic] to single him out for prosecution, when there were several whose treatment of their apprentice was not a shade better, only they had a little more tact.<sup>425</sup>

Saunders spoke the hopelessness of the boys' situation, for example, when they had the courage to run away the majority of the time their masters caught them and returned them to the farms where they were flogged. This is similar to cases of slaves absconding in the pre-emancipation years. In other cases, they were put into prison until their master appeared. When the master appeared, depending on the boy's case (usually dependent on his bruises and welts), he was either fined 10 shillings or acquitted and then the boy was sent back to the farm with said master.

Saunders' pamphlet, and *The Times'* subsequent publishing of it was the last time that the CFS appeared in the London press, apart from being mentioned in sporadic articles over the years. This series of articles was the final word that *The Times* needed. Reverend Saunders' pamphlet justified their entire campaign against the CFS, if they were ever in any doubt. It did not prompt them to continue advocating for the children however, as no follow up articles concerning any of the children were ever published.

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<sup>425</sup> Pamphlet, p.202 written by Reverend Saunders as seen in the article, untitled, *The London Times*, February 1842, p.4

## Conclusion

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This paper looked at the correspondence war that occurred between *The Times*, Captain Brenton and the Dutch settlers through the medium of the positive results of the 1840 Report, regarding the issue of the juvenile emigrants. To reiterate Bradlow, the apprentices were subject to much discussion and little aid. I attempted to shed light on their experiences in the Cape, although their voice was the one that was forgotten, or maybe even never heard. Although the 1840 CFS Report concluded that the majority of the children sent to the Cape were better off in the Cape than they would have been had they stayed in England, and it suggested improvements that should be made, it was too late. The Dutch farmers, smarting over the recent loss of their slaves with the final emancipation in 1838, had suffered enough at the what they saw as the interfering hand of British government in the private affairs of the Dutch, and stated categorically, after the Commission of Inquiry which resulted in the report of 1840, that they would no longer avail themselves to receive London's pauper children as labourers.

While the CFS headquarters was floundering in London and *The Times* was preparing for their victory lap, the final emancipation of the slaves in 1838 brought with it new legislation. The Masters and Servants Ordinance of 1841 proclaimed to be "providing for the protection of the labouring classes."<sup>426</sup> The ordinance stated that the conditions stated in Ordinance 3 of 1836 were to continue in full force, unaffected by the final emancipation of the 'apprentices' or former slaves. All provisions for the apprenticeship of children, were categorically stated to not apply to the children of the CFS. Despite the public outrage towards Brenton and the CFS, following the dissolution of the Society there was no concentrated effort by members of the public or the press to continue investigating the children's situation. What happened to the children after 1842? How many of them stayed in the Colony after their terms of

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<sup>426</sup> "Masters and Servants Ordinance No. 1 of 1841" signed by George Napier as seen in *The Government Gazette*, Issue 1837, March 5, 1841.

indenture were over? Word count and time prevented me from looking into the life of any of the apprentices after 1842, I believe there could be some good micro-histories to be written on the topic and a good look at what role they played in the Cape economy, both specific individuals and as a group.

This new ordinance defined a servant was “any person employed for hire, wages or other remuneration to perform any handicraft or other bodily labour in agriculture or manufactures or in domestic service...”<sup>427</sup> This new legislation offered protection for all labourers in the Cape Colony except those apprenticed under the CFS. For the juvenile apprentices, 1842 did not bring any change to their status in the colony or any extra protection against abuses.<sup>428</sup>

In conclusion, my research indicates that Brenton and his associates were less concerned about the state of labour in the Cape and more concerned with ridding the streets of London of its’ waifs. Chapter two shows that the Cape had more than enough labourers, whether they were former slaves or the indigenous Khoikhoi and the introduction of the CFS apprentices was done in line with the interests of the metropolis as opposed to in line with the interests of the Cape. The CFS children were a cheap alternative to the newly emancipated slaves in the Cape and an attempt to keep the Cape populated with British citizens. *The Times* although claiming to be the champion of the poor, was not inclined to act in the interests of the children but rather to write in the interests of them and nothing more, following the demise of the Society in 1841.

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<sup>427</sup> “Masters and Servants Ordinance No. 1 of 1841” signed by George Napier as seen in *The Government Gazette*, Issue 1837, March 5, 1841.

<sup>428</sup> Masters and Servants Ordinance No. 1 of 1841” signed by George Napier as seen in *The Government Gazette*, Issue 1837, March 5, 1841.

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