

NOT AVAILABLE FOR LOAN

The rural settlement
of
VERLORENVLEI
in historical perspective

by
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April 1980

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THE RURAL SETTLEMENT OF VERLORENVLEI IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVEABSTRACT

The rural settlement of Verlorenvlei (32°19'S; 18°21'E Cape west coast) has been placed within its historical context by a multidisciplinary study of the writings of early travellers up the Cape west coast; land ownership; land usage; human relationships within the settlement community; and the characteristics of the man-made environment created by that community. It was necessary to study historical documents, archival records, deeds office records, all available maps and diagrams, aerial photographs, relevant literature, and most important of all, to become familiar with the settlement itself and the people living in it. Such an investigation has led to an appreciation of the historical significance of the settlement, as well as the reasons for its siting, its growth and subsequent decline. This study has also provided a basis for conservation on historical and architectural grounds, and developed a framework for ongoing research into the historical background of the settlement.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE SYSTEM

The system of referencing used in this report is a combination of two commonly used systems, the one being more appropriate to scientific writings and the other more suited to historical research. As this study is multidisciplinary in nature, one of these two systems is more appropriate at different times, depending on the method or technique being applied, and on the material being covered. For example, in Chapter 6, the Harvard system proves most efficient, while in Chapters 1 and 2, footnotes containing detailed references are essential. In order to allow for the use of the most appropriate system at any stage in the report, the references are listed in detail in the bibliography, in alphabetical order of author, and within alphabetical order in chronological sequence, as with the Harvard system. In the text and in footnotes, wherever a reference is quoted, the details of the source are never given in full, but merely referred to by name of author and date. The only exceptions are references to material which has no author, such as historical documents. In such cases, the details of the document collection are given in the bibliography, and the details of the specific documents in the footnotes. Footnotes are indicated by numerical notation throughout each chapter, and listed in numerical sequence at the end of the relevant chapters.

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INTRODUCTION



Figure 1.2

Photograph: S.Sinclair

Aerial photograph of the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei from the north-west (1979).

The settlement is situated 5 kilometres inland on the Cape west coast, at $32^{\circ}19'S$ and $18^{\circ}21'E$, on the southern bank of the coastal lake called Verlorenvlei or Verlorevlei. Approximately 25 houses, built at different stages in the development of the settlement, are grouped on either side of a boundary fence and an unoccupied sandy depression. Some of the houses are no longer occupied, and have fallen into a state of disrepair or ruin, or been converted for other uses, giving the settlement an air of decay and mystery. In the occupied houses live the 30-40 people that make up the settlement community, all of them related to one another, by virtue of their membership of two families that have been associated with the area at least since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Most members of the present community are middle-aged or elderly, with few children or young adults to regenerate what must once have been a growing population.

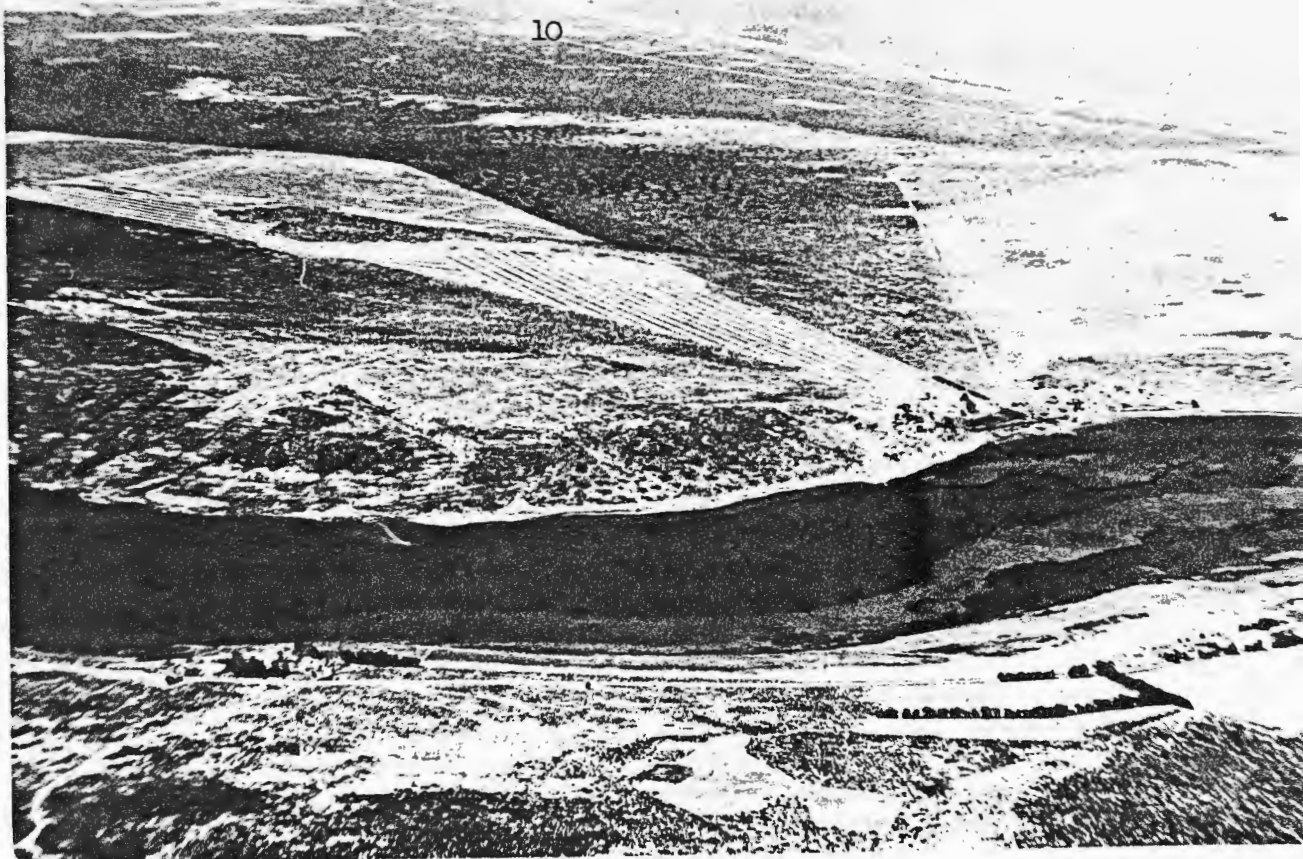


Figure 1.3

Photograph: S. Sinclair

Aerial photograph of the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei from the north-east (1979).

The area surrounding the coastal lake of Verlorenvlei, from Elandsbaai on the coast to Het Kruis 30 kms inland, has fascinated travellers along the Cape west coast for centuries. Much of this fascination stems from the characteristics of the natural environment associated with and dependent upon the coastal lake system. For those with even a slight interest in history, however, and especially for the South African historian, the presence and characteristics of the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei are tantalising enigmas that require unravelling. What was the settlement's raison d'etre? What determined the siting of the settlement? How does one account for the growth and subsequent decline of a small but vibrant community? While such questions present a challenge to historical research, they cannot be answered by an historian working in isolation and using only the techniques associated with his particular discipline. They demand a thorough investigation of the natural and man-made environments, the collaboration of interested researchers from many disciplines, and the application of a number of research techniques associated with those disciplines. In this sense, the placing of the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei in historical perspective is both essential for, and at the same time derives from, an understanding and interpretation of the total Verlorenvlei environment. It is therefore an environmental study, forming part of an attempt to rediscover and re-explore the Verlorenvlei.

That the fascination of the Verlorenvlei area has persisted, if not intensified, with the passage of time, is borne out by the following passage from Burger (1975):

"Die Sandveld is om verskeie redes verreweg die interessantste deel van Piketberg. Dit grens in die weste aan die Atlantiese Oseaan met al sy geheime en moontlikhede, sy eeue-oue geskiedenis, skipbreuke, duikbote, vis, kreef, branderplanke en ontluikende strandoorde. Spore van reisigers, navorsers, sendelinge, vee-handelaars, vlugteling, jagters, see- en veerowers, wat gedurende die eerste eeue die berge wou vermy, lê kruis en dwars deur die sandberge en duine. Onherkenbare paaie, grotte, waters, grafte, ou-oue geboue en vergete myne spreek van alle kante tot hulle wat ore het om te hoor - 'n onontginde gebied wat braak lê vir hulle wat temas vir rillers soek.

Maar nog die aantreklikste is die bevolking van die gebied wat meer as 'n eeu lank in volslae isolasie gelewe het as gevolg van die onbegaanbaarheid en onvrugbaarheid van die swaar sand en nog 'n eeu verwaarloos is, sodat hulle 'n eiesoortige karakter ontwikkel het, 'n eie lewensaard,..."¹

Walton (1972) speaks of the Verlorenvlei settlement specifically, and his words seem to justify this study as a small stage in a total ongoing investigation, and a possible conservation undertaking, within the settlement as a whole:

"Situated on the banks of an estuary, it is one of the most beautiful settlements in South Africa - an ornithologist's paradise, undisturbed by the noise and bustle of modern life. It is a settlement which should be made the subject of a full and detailed study by a team of geographers, architects and ethnographers, for it provides a rare survival of a communal way of life which will very soon disappear. Unless such a record is made now the opportunity will be lost forever."²

The natural environment in which the settlement is situated.

The following description of the Verlorenvlei area is based on a memorandum drawn up by the Cape Provincial Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation. The full memorandum is significant for this study in two ways. In the first place, the memorandum concentrates on the nature conservation and recreational potential of Verlorenvlei, but makes no reference to its historical and architectural value, or to its potential as a site for conservation of the built environment. This study is intended to provide some of the basic research to an historical and architectural conservation proposal to supplement the memorandum. If conservation of the natural and built environments were undertaken simultaneously, the Verlorenvlei area would become a prime example of integrated conservation. Secondly, the memorandum acts as a recent written description of the Verlorenvlei area which can be compared with the early travellers' descriptions considered in this report.

Verlorenvlei is one of a series of wetlands along the Atlantic coast of the South-western Cape. Geologically, 70 % of the surface area of the catchment is covered by sandstones and quartzites of the Table Mountain Series (Cape System) and Tertiary to recent sands, while fine-grained rocks of the Malmesbury Series (Nama System) are exposed over most of the remaining 30 %. Approximately 50 % of the catchment is underlain by Malmesbury rocks. Rainfall is strongly seasonal, more than 80 % falling within the winter half-year, from April to September, and 40 % of the area receives less than 300 mm per annum. The vegetation is classified by Acocks (1975) as Strandveld of the West Coast (Veld Type 34), but should perhaps be classed as an arid form of Coastal Fynbos (Veld Type 47). A detailed study of the vegetation has been recently carried out by other researchers. A large population of Aloe framesii occurs to the east of the Verlorenvlei farm. The vegetation of the entire area is severely degraded by overgrazing, but the 5 km wide strip of land along the southern bank has the highest habitat and vegetation diversity and would be of greater nature conservation value than the more uniform vegetation of the northern bank. The area is considered to be of low agricultural potential because of low rainfall, poor sandy soils, low grazing value of the Coastal fynbos, and extensive subdivision of farmland into uneconomic units.

Verlorenvlei is a large coastal lake with a surface area of some 1000 ha and extensive reedbeds in the upper and lower portions, as well as fringing much of the shoreline. The main body of the lake is 14 km long and up to 1,2 km wide with an average depth of about 2 metres, and a large central basin with a depth of up to 5 metres. The lake is essentially a fresh-water to slightly brackish system and sea water seldom, if ever, enters the main body of the vlei. Verlorenvlei receives its water mainly from the Verlorenvlei river which drains a catchment of 1900 km². The level of the lake fluctuates considerably. During winter, it fills up and overflows into the sea near Elandsbaai, but during summer the level gradually drops through evaporation to reach a lowest level about March/April. The water of the vlei is regarded to be unsuitable for irrigation during periods of higher salinities sometimes attained during summer.

Verlorenvlei is recognised as one of the ten most important wetlands for wading birds in the South-western Cape. It is also important for piscivorous birds such as cormorants, herons, egrets, kingfishers and white pelicans. Also found are coots, ducks, geese, glossy ibises, spoonbills, and flamingoes. Verlorenvlei is therefore a prime water-bird conservation area. As regards fish fauna, four estuarine and three indigenous freshwater species have been identified, Barbus bergi being listed as rare and the Verlorenvlei river being its most northerly distribution.

The memorandum drawn up by the Cape Provincial Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation in June 1978 concludes: "It is clear that the conservation value of Verlorenvlei lake is high and that its conservation in as natural a state as possible has a high priority. The lake also has potential for outdoor recreation...".³ In a report on the archaeological potential of the Verlorenvlei area, dated February 1976, Professor J. Parkington points out the significance of cave deposits, vlei coring, shell middens and rock art which have been studied: "the cave sequence presents an important opportunity to study the pre-historic relationships between man and his environment through at least 20 000 years, a period which included many important changes in both environment and human settlement patterns"⁴... The Verloren Vlei has enormous potential as the focus of interdisciplinary research into present and past environments and human exploitation systems."⁵

While the nature conservation potential and archaeological importance of the Verlorenvlei area are being established by research, the historical and architectural importance of the built environment is also of considerable conservation value, and must not be overlooked. This study is an attempt to use multi-disciplinary methods to explore the historical past of the people of the area and of the built environment they have created. It is impossible at this early stage to write a history of the region, but numerous methods and techniques of research have been employed to enable the present population and settlement to be viewed in the light of historical perspective.

The methods and techniques which have been employed have included deeds office research, archival research, land surveying and cartography, aerial photograph interpretation, library research, photography, sociological interviewing techniques, map interpretation, and reading of relevant literature. The difficulties, limitations and effectiveness of these various methods and techniques for historical research on a regional basis are discussed in this report. The results of each phase of the study are described in some detail so that these phases could be carried further by subsequent research, using similar or complementary methods and techniques. The chapters of the report therefore correspond closely to the major research techniques employed, but at the same time develop the historical perspective chronologically from the earliest material identified through to the present.

The focus of this study has developed naturally from the area as a whole to the Verlorenvlei farm, and then onto the Verlorenvlei settlement which is situated on the farm. This gradual concentration of focus onto the settlement and the community has been paralleled by the organisation of the chapters of the report, and has been compatible with the chronological development of the historical record.

As the amount of research and time required to produce a well-documented history of the Verlorenvlei area is far beyond the scope of this study, the following more narrowly-defined objectives were the aim of the present study. Their achievement should develop a basis for further research, provide the historical perspective necessary to any research in the area, and contribute ultimately to the writing of a true history:

- To trace, examine and analyse all documented descriptions of the Verlorenvlei area, in chronological sequence, in order to distinguish elements of continuity and change in the present environment, and to contribute towards the interpretation and management of that environment.
- To trace, identify, and examine all pictorial representations of the Verlorenvlei area and settlement, in relation to the present state of the subjects depicted.
- To study available newspaper articles and popular literature in order to develop an understanding of the way of life in the area and the settlement at various periods.
- To investigate the derivation and meaning of place-names associated with the area and the settlement, on a chronological basis.
- To collect and interpret a chronological series of maps and aerial photographs of the area, and to use this map series to trace the historical development of the settlement if possible.
- To investigate the eighteenth century system of loan-place allocation in the area, tracing the successive users of each loan-place, analysing land-use patterns, and correlating loan-places with major farms granted under perpetual quitrent in the nineteenth century, where possible.
- To examine in detail ownership and usage of the farm on which the settlement is sited, from the early nineteenth century to the present, and to develop an understanding of family and community relationships in relation to land ownership.
- To produce a map of the settlement which can be used in the course of this study, for future research, and for future resource management and conservation.
- To develop a classification system for the settlement which will facilitate the collection, organisation, and analysis of future data for historical, geographical, social, economic, and architectural research.

- To record photographically the significant features of the settlement, in relation to the map and the classification system, as a basis for future analysis and conservation management of the settlement.
- To identify all pictorial representations, photographic or artistic, of features of the settlement, which contribute to a chronological record of the growth and decline of the settlement, facilitate dating of buildings, and form the basis for a conservation project.
- To examine each man-made feature in the settlement with a view to dating of original buildings, extensions and modifications, identifying methods of construction and design, and relating building materials to natural resources.
- To interview members of the community in order to gain an impression of life in the settlement in the past and of family and community relationships.
- To investigate the role of wheat cultivation and processing in the former life of the settlement, on the basis of evidence found in the built environment.
- To attempt to account for the growth and decline in wheat cultivation and processing on the Verlorenvlei farm and in the settlement.
- To begin to describe the development and character of the settlement in terms of natural resources and environmental conditions.
- To establish contact with various private individuals and organisations interested in and knowledgeable about the conservation potential of the settlement.
- To suggest avenues of investigation which can be followed by future researchers on a multidisciplinary basis in order to develop a complete understanding of the growth and decline of the Verlorenvlei settlement over time.
- To present the settlement in an historical perspective in a format which will act as a basis for further research, and illustrate the effectiveness and limitations of the methods employed.

Footnotes

1. Burger (1975), 236
2. Walton (1972), 2
3. Cape Provincial Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation (1978), 12
4. Parkington (1976), 1
5. Parkington (1976), 4

CHAPTER 1

The Verlorenvlei area through the eyes of the
early travellers

Introductory discussion of library research into early
travellers' journals and maps

Expeditions of exploration and trade by land along the Cape west coast began as early as 1655, and once these expeditions had penetrated as far north as the present Verlorenvlei area, references to the area can be found in the journals of the travellers. There are usually two references, one on the journey from the Cape peninsula, and the other on the return journey. Especially in the earlier journals, the references are difficult to identify because of the various names which successive travellers have associated with the Verlorenvlei area and the river running through it. The references can be detected by careful tracing of each journey from one landmark to the next up and down the coast. Wherever possible, use has been made of annotated editions of the journals published by the Van Riebeeck Society, in which the present place-names are provided in footnotes, often based on actual retracing of routes by the editor. While latitude and longitude, or compass-bearings, are often recorded in the journals, these are usually not accurate enough to pinpoint positions exactly. Although maps often accompany the journals, these are not very detailed, subject to the cartographer's interpretation, and often grossly inaccurate. As the number of expeditions increases, the number of place-names referred to in the journals increases correspondingly, as new places are discovered and named for identification. But successive travellers may allocate different names to the same places, or the same names to different places. Names are sometimes allocated, used by a few travellers, then fall into disuse and become forgotten, to be replaced by other names. The identification of places is further complicated by the tendency of early travellers to use certain names with repetitive frequency, especially those associated with 'berg', 'vallei' and 'fonteyn'. The allocation and spelling of place-names have also become uncertain because of the different nationalities and languages of the early travellers, who were predominantly Dutch, French, English and German. Different nationalities tended to highlight different features or landmarks for identification, to interpret similar words differently, and to spell words of similar meaning differently.

Early travellers' references to the Verlorenvlei area vary in both length and accuracy. Some make only a passing mention, as they travel through.

Some do not travel through it, but make a reference based on casual hearsay picked up before, during or after their journey. Others make fairly lengthy references, but their observations may be related more to their own experiences and difficulties encountered while travelling than to observation and description of the area itself. Yet other long references are fairly detailed, but tend to concentrate on features of significance to the writer of the journal, depending on his field of expertise or interest. It is therefore not safe to assume that features known to characterise the area at present, but not mentioned in the early journals, did not exist at the time of the early expeditions. Nor can it be assumed that features mentioned in the journals, but not found in the area today, did in fact exist previously. The observations recorded in the journals are filtered through the eyes of the early travellers, modified by the hands of the writers of the journals, changed again in translation of the journals, and subjected to reinterpretation by their readers or researchers. In the case of this study, a limited knowledge of the original languages of the journals has necessitated the use of translations into English, in place of the primary source documents, which may also not be accessible if they are held in the country of origin of the expedition leader. All these factors place severe limitations on the value of deductions made about the previous state of the Verlorenvlei area from the observations recorded by the early travellers.

The value of early travellers' writings is further diminished by the fact that the two traditional places of crossing the river running through the Verlorenvlei area were Het Kruis and Wittedrift. Also known by other names in the past, Het Kruis is inland, and to the east of the Verlorenvlei settlement. Wittedrift is at the present site of Redelinghuis. Both were specifically chosen for the narrowness of the river and vlei area at the points of crossing, and for the access they afforded further north. They provide no view of the rest of the area, and suggest little about the existence of the coastal lake system, let alone about its nature or peculiar characteristics. Only those travellers who made a deliberate detour to the west, and explored along the southern and northern banks of the river and the lake it forms, would have been in any position to provide a reliable description of the area which is the subject of this study.

A valuable supplement to the writings of the early travellers are the sketches and paintings which were made by artists who were often deliberately included in expedition parties to make a more complete record of places, people, and animals seen on the journey. In a sense, the artist performed the role of the present-day camera, but the limits are often difficult to draw between the historian's requirement of faithfulness to the original, and the artist's freedom of expression and interpretation. In the case of the Verlorenvlei, a painting has been found which dates from about 1800, and is attributed to the area, but the question of identification of both the painter and the subject of the painting is so complex that it is dealt with in a separate section of this chapter.

Copies of the maps which accompany the early travellers' journals have been useful in developing a chronological record of the series of names which have been applied to the Verlorenvlei area, apart from their obvious value in determining whether or not the routes followed on the outward and homeward journeys did in fact pass through the area.

The initial research into the writings of the early travellers was begun by Professor J. Parkington, and continued by Mr. M. Cottrell. Their work has provided the basis for this study.

Chronology of early travellers

The writings of the following early travellers or commentators have been examined for references to the Verlorenvlei area in general, and more specifically, to the present site of the Verlorenvlei settlement:

15.3.1655 - 3.4.1655	Jan Wintervogel
12.11.1660 - 20.1.1661	Jan Danckaert/Pieter van Meerhoff
30.1.1661 - 11.3.1661	Pieter Cruijthoff/Pieter van Meerhoff
21.3.1661 - 23.4.1661	Pieter van Meerhoff
15.11.1661 - 13.2.1662	Pieter Everaert /van Meerhoff
21.10.1662 - 1.2.1663	Pieter Cruijthoff/van Meerhoff
11.10.1663 - 22.1.1664	Jonas de la Guerre/van Meerhoff
30.10.1682 - 19.12.1682	Olof Bergh
27.8.1683 - 24.10.1683	Olof Bergh
25.8.1685 - 26.1.1686	Simon van der Stel
16.10.1705 - 7.12.1705	Johannes Starrenburg
1705 - 1712	Peter Kolbe
15.9.1724 - 11.11.1724	Johannes Tobias Rhenius
16.7.1761 - 27.4.1762	Hendrik Hop
1774	Carl Thunberg
22.5.1778 - 20.11.1778	William Paterson
15.1.1783 - 1785	Francois le Vaillant
1785	O. Mentzel
17.9.1781 - 20.6.1792	Willem van Reenen
1797-8	John Barrow
26.12.1800- 7.1.1801	Andrew Barnard
1803-6	Henry Lichtenstein

The above chronological list is based on Mossop (1927) , Forbes (1965) , Burger (1975) and Botha (1926).

The naming of the Verlorenvlei area

The area of Verlorenvlei has been known by many different names in recorded history, and the reasons for their allocation, together with their meanings, throw an interesting light on the impressions the area must have made on the early travellers.

Olof Bergh (1682 and 1683) named the river that feeds the coastal lake "de Zeekoe valeij off de Zandtravier",¹ which can be translated into Afrikaans as "die Seekoei vallei of die Sandrivier". The association of the area with sand is to be expected, as all the early travellers refer to the extreme difficulty of travelling by wagon across the sandy plains and over the sandy hills. For the same reason, the area is commonly known as the Sandveld, to distinguish it from the Swartland. The association with 'seekoeie' or hippopotami is less obvious, as there are no hippopotami in the area today, although the name implies that they must once have occurred in the vicinity of the Verlorenvlei. A reconnoitring party from Van der Stel's expedition may have observed them at the mouth of a river that was probably Verlorenvlei.² Van der Stel's journal account of his expedition to the Copper Mountain in Namaqualand refers to what may have been the Verlorenvlei area as "de kleine Olifantsrivier" or "Zeekoejen-valey" (passed on September 9, 1685 and again on January 18, 1686)³. Van der Stel's use of the name 'Klein Olifants rivier' suggests the presence of elephants in the area as well.⁴ On de la Rochette's map,⁵ the Berg River is illustrated with pictures of elephants, and the words, "Aufenthalt der Elephanten im December und Januar".

Starrenburg (1704) used the Hottentot name of Quaecomma River.⁶ Burger explains the possible derivation of the name: "Die Hottentotnaam soos die ontdekker dit op sy Latyn gespel het, was 'Quaecomma' wat dan sou beteken: (kei = groot + kamma = water)".⁷ This name could be interpreted to refer to the broadening out of the river into a coastal lake towards its mouth.

Botha (1926) explains the derivation and meaning of kamma or kama:

"The next group of names which, like the foregoing, have a Bushman or Hottentot origin is that ending in Kama. The Hottentot word for water is Gami⁸ and the word is invariably spelt as Kama and Kamma, the latter being the more common form although the first is the more correct. In the Dutch records

it is indifferently spelt with one or two m's and the letter c is interchanged for the k. In G.F. Wreede's 'Hottentot's Woordelijst' of the 17th century it is spelt with two m's.⁹ According to Stow, Kama is a Bushman word also meaning water."¹⁰

However, although the name might be appropriate because of its association with water, it seems unlikely that it should have come to be spelt as coma in this case, when there are many other cases of its spelling as kamma or kama, still persisting today.¹¹ The only case of its spelling as kamma which has been found to date is on map 1/326 of 1822 in the Cape Archives.

Westphal¹² suggests that the name, 'Quaecoma', could be derived from the Bushman word, 'quai' meaning 'lonely' or 'lost', and the word 'coma' meaning 'pan' or 'vlei'.

Rhenius in 1724 was the first to use the name 'Verloren Vallei', in a portion of his journal translated into English by Mossop as "Thence over a toilsome sand hill to the Verloren Vlei"¹³, spelt in the original Dutch "Verlooren vallij". Burger explains the meaning of the name as follows:

"...waarskynlik omdat die eintlike vlei vir die reisigers wat die riviertjie in die buurt van Redelinghuys moes oorgaan, nog onsigbaar of verlore was; ook raak die water tussen die sandduine verlore voordat dit die see bereik en vloei daar net in die reëntyd 'n aansienlike stroom oor die rotsrif wat die monding versper, anders is die oorloopwater daar net 'n paar duim diep".¹⁴

In 1774, Carl Thunberg also used the name "Verlooren-valley", and his description perhaps gives a clue to another reason for the name. He mentions the fact that the banks are overgrown with reeds and rushes sometimes so high "that the rivulet, in such places, cannot be seen".¹⁵ There could be the suggestion in the name that the river becomes 'lost' among the reeds before widening out into the coastal lake. Paterson (1777-8) talks of the "Verloren Valley or Lost Valley",¹⁶ but does not suggest any reason for the name.

Le Vaillant visited the "Verloren-Valey" in 1783, and translates the name as "loft lake", that is lost lake.¹⁷ In 1797, a different meaning is ascribed to the same name by John Barrow, who translates "the Verloren valley" as "Forlorn Lake",¹⁸ with undertones of the Pilgrim's Progress. His description of the area stresses "the barren mountains of sand, crowned with masses of naked rock"¹⁹ that surrounded the Forlorn Lake

and probably contributed to its 'forlorn' appearance. Barrow also confirms the reason for the earlier name of Sækoei rivier: "There still remains a few Hippopotami toward the lower part of the (Berg) river".²⁰ He throws an additional light on the meaning of the name, Quaecoma River, when he says of the Hottentots: "Hottentot is a word that has no place nor meaning in their language... that by which the whole nation was distinguished is Quaiquae..."²¹ In this sense, Quaecoma could be translated as 'water of the Hottentots'. He confirms the sandiness of the area which gave rise to the name 'Sand rivier,' referring to "these hills, or rather mountains, of sand,..."²²

Andrew Barnard (1800) refers to "Verloorn Valley, one day's journey beyond St. Helena Bay, and about six miles from the Sea."²³ Lichtenstein (1803) speaks of "a pretty large lake, which has the name of the Lost-valley."²⁴ A comparison between these two references indicates one of the major sources of confusion in attempting to find the meaning of the name of the Verlorenvlei area. The word vallij/vallei/valey is related to vale/valley/ and vlei, which raises the question as to whether the adjective 'lost' or 'forlorn' should be applied to the valley, the river flowing through the valley, the coastal lake fed by the river and lying in the valley, or the vlei area formed by the river in the valley. Depending on which feature the adjective is applied to, the meaning of the name changes slightly. Barnard and Paterson apply the name to the valley; Lichtenstein applies it to the lake, as do Barrow and Le Vaillant; while Thunberg applies it to the rivulet. There would thus appear to be several possible combinations of meaning. Of these, 'lost lake' would appear to be most common translation, the probable reasons being (1) the fact that the presence of the lake is not obvious to or even suspected by travellers crossing the river at the most common places, Het Kruis and Wittedrift; and (2) the river and the lake disappear among reeds in the vicinity of Redelinghuis and Het Kruis. A further source of confusion in attempting to find the meaning of the name given to the area by early travellers, is the number of different spellings of 'verlore/verloore/verloren/verlooren', which could be translated as 'lost' or 'forlorn'.

At present, the area is known as Verlorenvlei, Verlorevlei or Vloorvlei by people living outside the area, while local inhabitants call it Verlorevlei, the 'o' being lengthened, and the 'r' being pronounced with what is known as the Malmesbury 'brei' or palatisation of the 'r' common to Afrikaans spoken on the Cape west coast. On the 1:50 000 topographical map currently in use for the area (3218 AD Elandsbaai) the names given to the coastal lake and the settlement are Verlorevlei, but the original farm on which the settlement is situated is called Verlorenvlei. The most recent form of name for the farm in the deeds of ownership is Verlorenvlei. The form with the 'n' retains its association with the original Dutch, while the form without the 'n' is the Afrikaans version. For the purposes of this report, the form with the 'n' has been adopted.

Descriptions of the Verlorenvlei area by early travellers.

Nothing of significance regarding the Verlorenvlei area has been found in the journals for the expeditions from 1655 to 1664. These journals contain detailed information regarding routes followed, but it is difficult to trace exactly which details refer to the Verlorenvlei area, because of the lack of names and the consequent reliance on distance, direction, and inaccurate latitude and longitude readings to pinpoint location. Observations made along the routes are brief and sketchy, such as that made by van Meerhof on his expedition with Jan Danckaert in 1660/1661 to attempt to reach the empire of Monomotapa, or the famed Vigiti Magna:²⁵

"...I wist well that on the west lay the plains ('vlack landt'), having espied them from a high peak."²⁶

Mossop (1927) comments: "He may have looked down upon the flats through which the railway runs today between Verloren Vlei station and Graafwater."²⁷

Olof Bergh's first journey was made from 30 October 1682 to 19 December 1682, and the Verlorenvlei area is mentioned in the journal entry for Thursday, 5 November 1682 as "at a valley at the Sand River, where we spent the night."²⁸ Mossop identifies the Sand River, or "de Sant rivier" in the original Dutch, as "Verloren Vallei River, beyond the Piquetbergen. It is crossed at Het Kruis by the railway line to Klaver. It has been a river of many names...".²⁹

The journal entry for Friday, 6 November 1682, continues:

"This morning the Ensign sent two Hottentots across the mountains to tell the Gregriqua Hottentots to come to us. About 7 o'clock we broke camp and marched N.N.W. across several marshes until about 10 o'clock. We were following the Sand River up to the range we must cross, and here we outspanned. Average course and direction N.N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ mile; we guessed the S.Lat. to be 32 deg. 16 min., and at midday found Lat. 32 deg. 21 min. by observation. Guessed our Longitude to be 18 deg. 55 min. This afternoon between 3 and 4 o'clock we again inspanned the oxen and fared onwards. At first we marched due N. until we were on the mountain, the which gave us much labour ere our wagons got over, since it was all loose, crumbling and shifty sand. We marched then through this loose sand covered with shrubs, thistles and thorns over the mountain in a direction N.E. by Easterly."³⁰

According to Mossop (1927), Bergh's midday outspan was made "At Wittedrift, near Redelinghuis on the Verloren Vallei River."³¹

While homeward bound on his first journey, Bergh again passed through the Verlorenvlei area on Friday, 11 December 1682, but the journal entry is brief, giving no detail except the difficulties of the terrain and the weather.

The reader is left with a strong impression of an area of loose sand covered with prickly shrub vegetation, through which it is difficult to travel. His journey was undertaken in summer, but there nevertheless appears to have been fresh water and grazing at various points along the way, a possible indication of a good rainfall the previous winter. On the map of the first expedition in 1682, points L and M refer to the Verlorenvlei area, and confirm the availability of water at this time: "L We came to the Sant Riv. Found good fresh water both going and returning. M at the Sant Riv. It broadens out considerably. Went along it and from there across the Kloof."³² The journal also mentions the excessive summer heat, which necessitated that most of the travelling should be done in the early morning or after midday.

Bergh's second journey was undertaken from 27 August 1683 to 24 October 1683, the season being winter to early spring. The journal entries for Tuesday, 6 September to Thursday, 9 September relate to the Verlorenvlei area on the outward bound trip. Mossop points out that "this course took the expedition between the mountains on the farm Wittedrift near the present site of Redelinghuis."³³ One of the entries notes: "This night it was so cold that the water in our kettle froze to the thickness of a rix-dollar"³⁴ It is also mentioned that they could find little pasture and brack water: "It was quite dry and there was no pasture. It appeared not to have rained a whole year."³⁵ These references would tend to suggest that 1683, unlike 1682, was a year of poor rainfall. Bergh returned through the Verlorenvlei area on Sunday, 17 October 1683.

Simon van der Stel's journal of his travels through the Piquetberg area makes constant mention of the availability of grass, water and firewood, suggesting that 1685 was a year of good rainfall. Merely passing by the 'Zeekoejen-valey' or 'Kleine Olifantsrivier' on Sunday, 9 September 1685,

van der Stel sent an expedition southwards to explore the coastal end of the Verlorenvlei:

"The Second Mate returned towards evening, and reported, that for 1/6th mile to the SSE he had found the coast a mud-flat with rocks. From there he had gone S by E for 2 miles, where he had found a flat sandy beach until they came abreast of a valley, called the Zeekoejen-valey from the hippopotami found in it, where there were high sand dunes. Continuing S by E another 2 miles they found that the coast formed a bight with a sandy shore. At the end of this was a rocky reef, stretching seaward about ½ mile NNW, and in their judgement convenient to shelter an ordinary vessel if needs be, entirely shielded from the South winds, but as they had foggy weather no sight could be taken."³⁶

The above description refers clearly to the coast from Elandsbaai to the 'rocky reef' of Baboon Point of Cape Deseada which today provides shelter for the fleet of the crayfishing factory.

On the return journey, van der Stel visited the 'Kleine Olifants Rivier' on Friday, 18 January 1686, and mentions an interesting encounter with Hottentots in the area:

"...we camped because the Kraals of Captain Gonjema were near here, who towards evening brought sheep and milk for barter. The water in the pools and the grass were still tolerably sufficient here...

Saturday January 19

In the morning most of Gonjema's Hottentots again came to H.E., and since the old Gonjeman had died they were nearly all in mourning, which consisted in the cutting off of their hair. They requested, that his son might be set in his place, which was done, for which they heartily thanked H.E."³⁷

Johannes Starrenburg visited the Verlorenvlei area under the guidance of the Hottentot Captain, Hannibal. He travelled along the river under rainy, misty conditions, with a strong North-west wind. He mentions the grazing oxen, "which here by the river were up to the belly in grass",³⁸ confirming van der Stel's report on the availability of grass for grazing during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Starrenburg's report also confirms the presence of hippopotami, and the abundant bird-life:

"All this day we continued along the same river... and towards evening (after having covered about 6 miles) we camped on the bank. The river here was at a guess fully a thousand paces wide, and was full of seagulls, divers, ducks and other flying

and swimming things, and among them the hippopotamus could be heard. Going up onto a height I saw the sea, appearing to be about 3 miles distant, into which this river flows according to the report of the Hottentots, who in their language call it Quaecoma. Had our route continued further in this direction I should have wished to see its mouth and examine the shore around it..."³⁹

He then continued northwards, the oxen falling continually into mole-holes along the "very toilsome sandy path" of 3 miles to "Hannibal's kraal, where 6 Captains were come together, making in all 23 huts "⁴⁰

"They let us see their cattle, which were few in number, and for the most part cows. I asked them how it happened that they had so little cattle, seeing that the Hon. Company had never bartered with them, whereat they informed me: that a certain Freeman, generally called Dronke Gerrit was come to their kraal a few years previously, accompanied by some others, and without any parley fired on it from all sides, chased out the Hottentots, set fire to their huts, and took away all their cattle, without their knowing for what reason, since they had never harmed any of the Dutch. By this they lost everything they had, and were compelled to betake themselves to the Dutch living further out, and there steal cattle again, and, if they could get anything, rob their compatriots... in addition they are also plagued by raids from a Nation of Hottentots... to get food and meat for their wives and children (they) must daily fight against the elephants."⁴¹

The above quotation throws light on the presence of Hottentots to the north of the Verlorenvlei area; on the relations between the Hottentot groups themselves and with the few Dutch colonists; on the presence of cattle since the seventeenth century; and on the existence of elephants, as confirmed by rock-paintings found in the hills along the southern bank of the river. From the coast further north, Starrenburg notes: "...we could also see the mouth of the large Quaecoma River in the distance",⁴² suggesting perhaps that at this point in time the mouth of the river opened to the sea.

On his return journey, on Sunday, 15 November 1705, Starrenburg passes to the east of the Piquetberg mountain, and describes the catchment area of the Verlorenvlei river:

"...there are lovely cattle pastures, and the soil should grow corn if it were manured: it is for the most part a light loam, and the mountain is full of gullies, from each of which flows a little brooklet extending into the plain in its little valley, where they all join together and form the beginning of the river spoken of on October the 23rd, which runs from the North corner of this mountain, and after receiving on its way the water from several springs becomes the large Quaecoma (Quaecomaas) river of which we saw the mouth on the shore"⁴³

Starrenburg's observations suggest that pastoralism preceded the cultivation of wheat, which can be dated from the early eighteenth century, according to the archival documents discussed in Chapter 2.

Johannes Tobias Rhenius left Cape Town on Friday, 15 September 1724. His journal describes his passage through the Verlorenvlei area as follows:

"Monday 25th...and passed the Rietvalleij, a cattle station presently a grant to the farmer, Andries Grove. Thence over a toilsome sand hill to the Verloren Vlei ('de Verlooren Vallij') and there took up our station.

Tuesday 26th. Proceeded along the Verloren Vlei to the so-called Company's Ford which we found to be 4 ft. deep: were obliged therefore to unload our wagons and get our people to carry part of our baggage across. Accomplished this about 2 o'clock in the afternoon when we got through this Vallij and remained camping on the far side of the same.

Wednesday 27th. Left the vallij mentioned and advanced through a kloof up a steep and toilsome sandy height and we were here compelled to off-load part of our luggage because the draught oxen could draw the wagons no farther." 44

This trip, being made in the late winter and early spring, suggests a year of good rainfall as the Verlorenvlei river at the Ford was 4 ft. deep.

On the return journey, Rhenius passed through the Verlorenvlei area on Thursday 2 November, 1724:

"We went from the Oliphants Jagt to the Verloren Vallij. Here there died one of the sick Hottentots and was buried after their manner by his companions.

Friday 3rd. Left this resting place and continued our journey onward to the Riet Vallij." 45

The Hottentot who died and was buried at Verlorenvlei was one of the two who became ill on 28 August from the "sickness which raged among the Amaquas".⁴⁶ Rhenius arrived back in Cape Town on Saturday, 11 November 1724.

The following report of a confrontation between Hottentots and Bushmen in the Verlorenvlei area was discovered by R. Ross in the Hague Archives, translated, and sent to Prof. J. Parkington, who has provided it for inclusion in this report. The extract is from the Resolutions of the Council of Policy, dated 19 May 1741. It indicates that corn or wheat was being cultivated in the area by the Hottentots, as well as by the colonists with the assistance of the Bushmen, and that cattle were being grazed, as confirmed by archival documents relating to the loan places of the eighteenth century:

"Letter of Pieter Lourens (Landrost of Stellenbosch) to Governor and Raad.

The undersigned Landrost wishes to inform your Excellencies that some time ago, he heard that the Bushman Captain, called Keyser, had killed a Chirigriqua Hottentot, Claas Hanibal by name. In accordance with the instructions of the Governor, the Chirigriqua Captain, Hanibal, sent his son, Plaatje, and one of his people, Claas, excusing himself on account of his great age and weakness. They testified that, at the beginning of the year, after the cutting of the corn had been finished, the Bushman captain Keyser, with a group of his dependent people ('Onderhoorige manschappen'), came to their kraal in the Verloren valley, behind the Piquetberg.

Captain Keyser and his people (who sought to make war against them) could not get to them, because a large river lay between them. Therefore they called to the son of the Chirigriqua Captain, Claas Hanibal that he must come across to them and bring them some food, and that he had not to fear they would harm him. With another Chirigriqua Hottentot, called Caffer, Claas Hanibal swam across the river, each carrying a sheep, to Captain Keyser and his people. After his arrival, Claas Hanibal went to sit next to Captain Keyser, who gave a pipe of tobacco.

While Claas Hanibal was still busy smoking the pipe, he asked Captain Keyser for some tobacco. Keyser then stabbed him in the body with a knife, at which Claas Hanibal jumped into the river, but while he was still swimming he was wounded by two arrows. He died of the wounds that same day.

The Hottentot Caffer (who, out of fear for Captain Keyser and his people had remained standing by the river) saw Claas Hanibal being stabbed by Captain Keyser and therefore jumped in the river. He was able to reach the shore without being injured, although Keyser's people were firing arrows at him. Captain Keyser had then had a group of the young men of his people swim over the river. When this was seen, the Hottentots went into the kraal to defend the troupe of cattle there. The Bushmen then went to a group of cattle which were running loose in the veld, rounded them up and swam with them back across the river, and then the group left.

Captain Keyser had admitted this... claims... that a Chirigriqua Hottentot, Spring, had taken away a woman (wife) of his ("een vrouw van hem") while he was harvesting with Hendrik Crugel at the Piquetberg. Therefore he had gone with his people to the Chirigriquas to make war on them.

This was confirmed by the local Europeans.

The Europeans were deciding whether or not they would bring Keyser to justice. He claimed that if they did the Bushmen would attack the Europeans, whereas, because of their ('kragtloosheid') powerlessness, the Chirigriqua could not do them any harm.

Also the Landrost was uncertain if they had any jurisdiction over Keyser who 'was a sovereign head of his own people, and always had been a trusty champion of the Europeans, even against his own nation.'" 47

This report, made in 1741, would seem to confirm the reason given by Gerrit Mos for vacating the loan place, "aan de hoek van de verlore valleij",

which was "uit hoofde den moedewil van de bosjesman hottentots gedurende dien tyd".⁴⁸ It is also significant that the name 'Keyser', the Bushman captain, is a form of 'Caesar', and that one of the farms held together with the farm now known as Verlorenvlei is called Caesar'skraal or Tsasaar's kraal.

The journal written by Brink recounts the expedition made by Hendrik Hop, beginning on Thursday, 16 July 1761. On Sunday 26 July, the journal mentions the crossing at Het Kruis. On the return journey the journal entry for Saturday, 17 April 1762, merely records: "At the Verlooren Valley" or "Aan de verlooren valley".⁴⁹ Apart from giving details of the route followed, the Hop expedition as recorded by Brink tells little of what was seen in the Verlorenvlei area. Members of the Hop expedition were later associated with the usage of loan places in the Verlorenvlei area, as discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Carl Thunberg, in his journal, mentions heavy rains in the winter of 1772.⁵⁰ In the account of his third journey, he spent the period from 14 to just before the 25 October 1774 in the Piquetberg area. He provides a detailed description, including many significant points. He stayed with the farmers in the area, whose names appear on the map from the Gordon Collection (figure 2.2), towards the inland, eastern end of the Verlorenvlei:

"Travelling farther on we came to CARRELSPECK's farm, situated under Picquet Mountain; from thence to GERDT SMIDT's, and afterwards to DIRK KUTSE's, where Verlooren-valley has its origin, and springs from a mountain belonging to the long chain of mountains, and, finally, to AND. GREEF's. The estates in this tract are embellished with vineyards, corn-fields, and beautiful gardens."⁵¹

The above quotation confirms the early presence of the Smit and Kotze families in the Verlorenvlei area.

Thunberg describes a strange lemon, a goose's egg, the flocks of ostriches, the many serpents or snakes, and the numerous sand-mole holes that he observed. His description of the area is particularly significant for the references to the prolific bird life, the reed beds, the fact that the river empties into the sea unless the level is low, and the lack of colonists. As Thunberg stayed for about 10 days in the area, and examined it closely, moving along the banks towards the sea, it would appear certain that if the

Verlorenvlei settlement had been developing at that period, he would have commented upon it. The settlement can therefore be dated as post 1774.

"Verlooren-valley is the name given to a rivulet that derives its source from the above-mentioned range of mountains, and empties itself into the sea. Its banks are in many places over-grown with reeds and rushes (Carex, Arundo), which sometimes shoot up to the height of several yards, inasmuch that the rivulet, in such places, cannot be seen. In these impenetrable recesses innumerable multitude of birds have their haunts and places of refuge, such as different sorts of herons (Ardea major and Caerulea), Ducks (Anates), and Coots (Fulicae). In some places it was narrow, and in others broad; but in particular it grew wider and wider the nearer it approached to the sea. In some places there were large holes and deep reservoirs. It runs into the ocean to the northward, and, when it is low, the mouth appears dry, and the current there intirely choaked up with the sand, and stagnating. The nearer it approaches the sea, the deeper it grows in the middle, and the freer it is from reeds. It has many windings, and, in its course, runs, between two tolerably high mountains. The water is sweet and good; but near the sea, from the intermixture of the salt water and especially in the dry season, it grows saltish. We encamped several days along its banks in the open air, till we came to its mouth, in a sandy and barren field, where no colonists dwelt, and where there were only a few places for grazing cattle, which were mostly committed to the care of the Hottentots." 52

On Paterson's second journey, from 22 May 1778 to 20 November 1778, he passed through the Verlorenvlei area on 16 November, while southward bound:

"The fourteenth, we arrived at the Berg Valley, where we stayed all night, at the house of Josias Engelbriht. I dispatched my waggon, on the fifteenth, towards the Picquet Berg, and together, with my companion, passed the day in this place, where I shot variety of birds, which I found in great abundance. The next day we proceeded on our journey; passed a place called the Croffe, where the Berg Valley joining the Venlore Valley, and both assume a westward direction. At noon we overtook the waggon, and rested the afternoon at the house of a Mr. Smith. Towards the evening, Mr. Smith and I made a short excursion towards the hill, and took each of us a gun. On our return we shot four large Flamingoes, from four to five and six feet long. We saw also the Yellow Snake, or Covra Capel." 53

Both Josias Engelbrecht's house at Berg Valley, and the house of a G. Smit (Smith to Paterson?) at Droge Rijst Cloof, are shown on the historical map from the Gordon Collection c1790. Smith or Smit may be related to the Smit family now owning part of the settlement farm and making up the settlement community. 'The Croffe' and later 'the Crois' and 'the Croife' is 'the cross' or Het Kruis. While the above reference gives little detail about the Verlorenvlei area, it is noteworthy that the presence of flamingoes is recorded, and that they are still visitors to the Verlorenvlei, being

sighted in 1979 and 1980, almost exactly two hundred years later. Paterson also records⁵⁴ that zebras inhabit the Piquet Berg, but not in considerable numbers.

Paterson kept a record of observations on the thermometer, winds and weather during his second journey, and these show, for the period during which he passed through the Verlorenvlei area from 15 to 17 November, the 15th was a cloudy day with thunder, then clearing; the 16th was a cloudy day with small rain; and the 17th had heavy rain at 4 in the afternoon.⁵⁵

The Verlorenvlei area is mentioned early on during Paterson's fourth journey, which left Cape Town on 18 June 1779 and arrived back on 25 December 1779. On the outward bound journey:

"This day (the 26 June 1779) we proceeded on our journey to the Piquet Berg, and the next arrived at the Crois, where we stayed all night.

From this place we directed our course westerly, along the Verloren Valley, or Loft Valley; and in the evening came to the house of Mr. Gueff. During the night of the twenty-fifth, a very heavy rain fell, which swelled the river so much that the next day we found it impassable. The farmer was much pleased with our company, and intreated us to prolong our stay for several days, to which, as the river still continued very high, we agreed. Upon seeing the waters subside, we proposed to proceed in our journey, and were assisted by hospitable friend, who supplied us with some of his cattle, which were more accustomed to passing the flood than our own. The river was broad, and in several places the oxen were obliged to swim. When we reached the opposite shore we directed our course northward, through a high sandy country, interperfed with variety of Afpalathufes, Gnaphaliums, etc. At night we arrived at the Lange Valley, at the house of Mrs. Low, an old French woman, who had long lived in this part of the country, and was possessed of numerous herds of cattle...⁵⁶

It is extremely likely that the Mr. Gueff with whom Paterson stayed was Andries Greef, and the houses of both 'Andr. Greef' and 'Juff. Louw' are shown on the historical map from the Gordon Collection. The mention of Mrs. Low/Louw is important because of the fact that she is probably an ancestor of the Low family which is associated with ownership and usage of the northern bank of the Verlorenvlei today. This reference is also significant as it shows that 1779 was probably a year of good rainfall. On the return journey, the area was passed on 8 December 1779, but little of note is recorded.

Le Vaillant, as an ornithologist, provides many details concerning the bird life, and regarded the Verloorenvlei area as an ornithological paradise. Of his visit during the period 1783-1785, he records:

"...they advised me to travel more to the south-west, through Verloore-Valey (loft-lake), where, the pasturage having suffered less in this way, I should necessarily find a better supply..." 57

"In two days I arrived in Verloore-Valey, which I found to be an extensive lake, separated from the sea by a narrow border of sandy downs.

The lake and its banks being covered with birds of every kind, I flattered myself I should find some for my collection that would recompense me for the length of the road. In fact, I saw there not only all the birds that I had met with on Green-River, but also the coot of Europe, different species of grebes, particularly that called by naturalists the horned grebe, and a particular species of penguin." 58

"My visit to Verloore Valey procured me great number of aquatic birds of different species, and among them the purple gallinule, which is very abundant there, and excellent food. In short, the lake swarms with all the water-fowls that may be found dispersed here and there over the rest of this part of the world. It is the only place for an ornithologist to fix his residence, who would wish in a short time to procure a complete collection of the web-footed and shore birds of Africa. I there obtained also a beautiful species of small crested falcon, that feeds only on crabs and fish, which it catches in the same way as the osprey, the bald-buzzard and the kite. I spent eleven days on the borders of this lake, and collected a hundred and thirty-two specimens of birds, large and small. At length my hunters brought me more birds every day than I could tell how to dispose of, and I had not the pleasure of killing a single one myself, so fully was I employed in preparing them." 59

Willem van Reenen passed through the Verlorenvlei area at Het Kruis on 22 September 1791, but no details are recorded in his journal.

Between about the 10 and 21 April 1797, John Barrow made the following observations:

"The united streamlets of water among these hills compose a sheet of considerable extent, called the Verlooren valley, or the Forlorn lake. It had some resemblance to the Knysna, near Plettenberg's bay but was totally devoid of the appendages that beautify the latter. Instead of green knolls, skirted and capped by forest trees, the Forlorn lake was surrounded by barren mountains of sand, crowned with masses of naked rock. The margin of the lake, however, was belted with good ground and tolerably well inhabited."⁶⁰

The final sentence of the above quotation has implications for the growth of rural settlement at Verlorenvlei for it suggests a fairly high agricultural potential for the area in 1797, and an increase in colonization since the visit of Thunberg.

Henry Lichtenstein did not actually visit the Verlorenvlei area in the course of his travels during 1803-1806, but he does refer to it:

"The water that flows through the valley collects itself some miles farther westward towards the coast into a pretty large lake which has the name of the Lost-valley. In heavy rains this lake empties itself into the sea, but for the greater part of the year the evaporation of the waters is as great as the flow from the hills."⁶¹

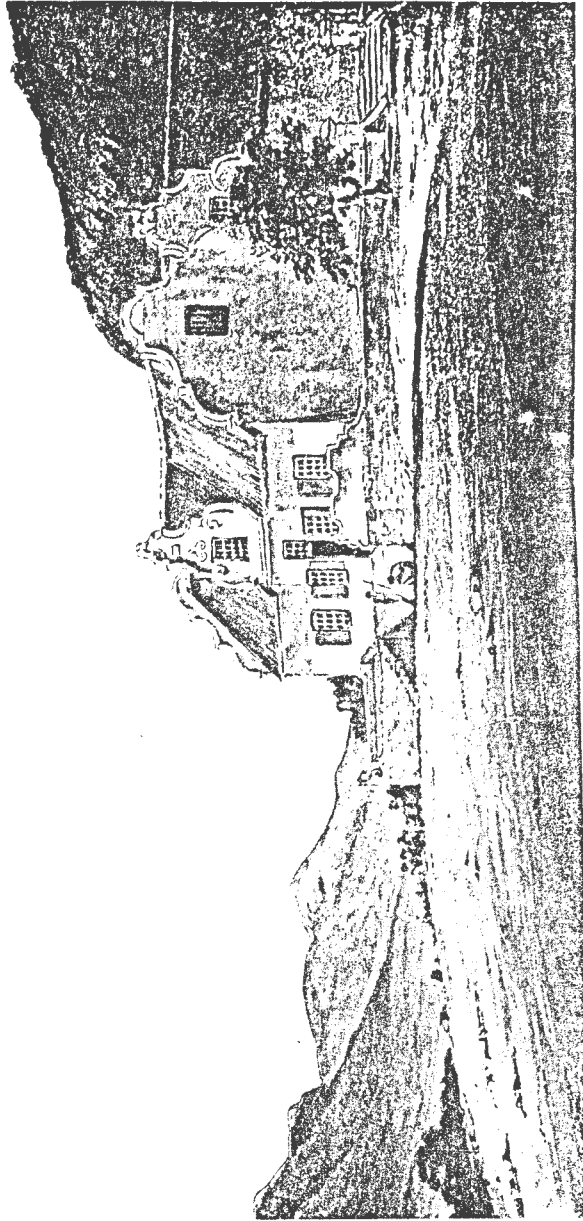
Discussion of early painting attributed to the area.

In an age before the advent of photography, sketches and paintings are an important source of information for historical and architectural research. In the case of the Verlorenvlei area, a drawing has been discovered which has been associated with the area, but an attempt to establish this association has only increased the mystery and complexity of the origins of the drawing.

Attention was drawn by Dr. A. Smith of the Department of Archaeology of the University of Cape Town, to the reproduction of this drawing, in two editions of the letters of Lady Anne Barnard. The earlier reproduction is of part of the original drawing only and appears in Dorothea Fairbridge's 1924 edition (figure 1.4)⁶² The more recent reproduction is in the 1973 edition by Dr. A.M. Lewin-Robinson, and includes the entire drawing (figure 1.5)⁶³ The caption beneath the 1924 reproduction attributes the drawing to 'Verlooren Vlei', while the caption to the 1973 reproduction attributes it to 'Verloren Valleij, near Elands Bay'. The drawing shows a house within a landscape setting. While the landscape setting could well be in the Verlorenvlei area, some way inland from the sea, the house is of a totally different nature from those found in the area, being of a typical Cape Dutch style as opposed to the 'langhuis' found in the Sandveld.

Dr. Lewin-Robinson was contacted at the South African Library, and explained that because of the close family relationship between Lord Crawford and Lady Anne Barnard (née Lindsay) the original drawing is held in the collection of Lord Crawford, Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, in Scotland, the birthplace of Lady Anne. The illustrations for the 1973 edition were obtained from photographs of this collection of drawings taken by the publisher, Mr. Balkema. Details of the drawing appear in a survey by Professor D. Bax (1960)⁶⁴ of the most important drawings of Cape architecture by Lady Anne in the possession of Lord Crawford. This drawing, amongst many others, was photographed for Professor Bax.⁶⁵

Expenses were paid from a research grant from the University of Cape Town, and the photographs were exhibited in the Library of the University of Cape Town on 10 April 1959, on the University's Commemoration Day.⁶⁶ In Professor Bax's survey, the drawing is listed as No. 31, and is described as follows:



VERLOOREN V.L.I.I

Figure 1.4
Fairbridge (opposite 259.)



Verloren Vallei, near Elands Bay

Figure 1.5
Lewin-Robinson (1973), 242.

"A Boors Plaace; a considerable way up the country. 17¼"x11"
 Partly reproduced in Fairbridge, opposite p.259. The drawing shows a landscape with farmhouse and blue sky. The lower part formed by landscape and farmhouse consists of four torn pieces pasted together again on a piece of paper on which the sky is painted. The dwelling strongly resembles the farmhouse on Samuel Daniell's aquatint plate 'A Boor's House' in his book African Scenery and Animals (1804-5). But the landscape is totally different. See for matters of disagreement between Daniell and Lady Anne : A.Gordon-Brown, Pictorial Art in South Africa during three Centuries to 1875 (London 1952), pp. 18-20. The drawing by Lady Anne probably represents Verloren Vallei."⁶⁷

The tear marks referred to by Professor Bax are clearly visible in the 1973 reproduction (figure 1.5).

The identification of the house in the drawing as 'Verloren Vallei' has potential for confusion, as there are two places of that name in the Cape. The one is the area which is the subject of this study, on the Cape west coast. The other is in the Ceres/Pouws River area, and was originally called Verkeerde Vallei⁶⁸ but is now known as Verloren Vallei.⁶⁹ The Ceres Verloren Vallei house (figure 1.6) is in the process of being declared a National Monument on the basis of architectural merit, as confirmed by Mr. B. Bassett of the National Monuments Council.⁷⁰

The Vernacular Architecture Society made a visit to the Ceres Verloren Vallei on 24 September 1966.⁷¹ In his notes on this house, Walton (1976) mentions that the gable is dated 1827.⁷²

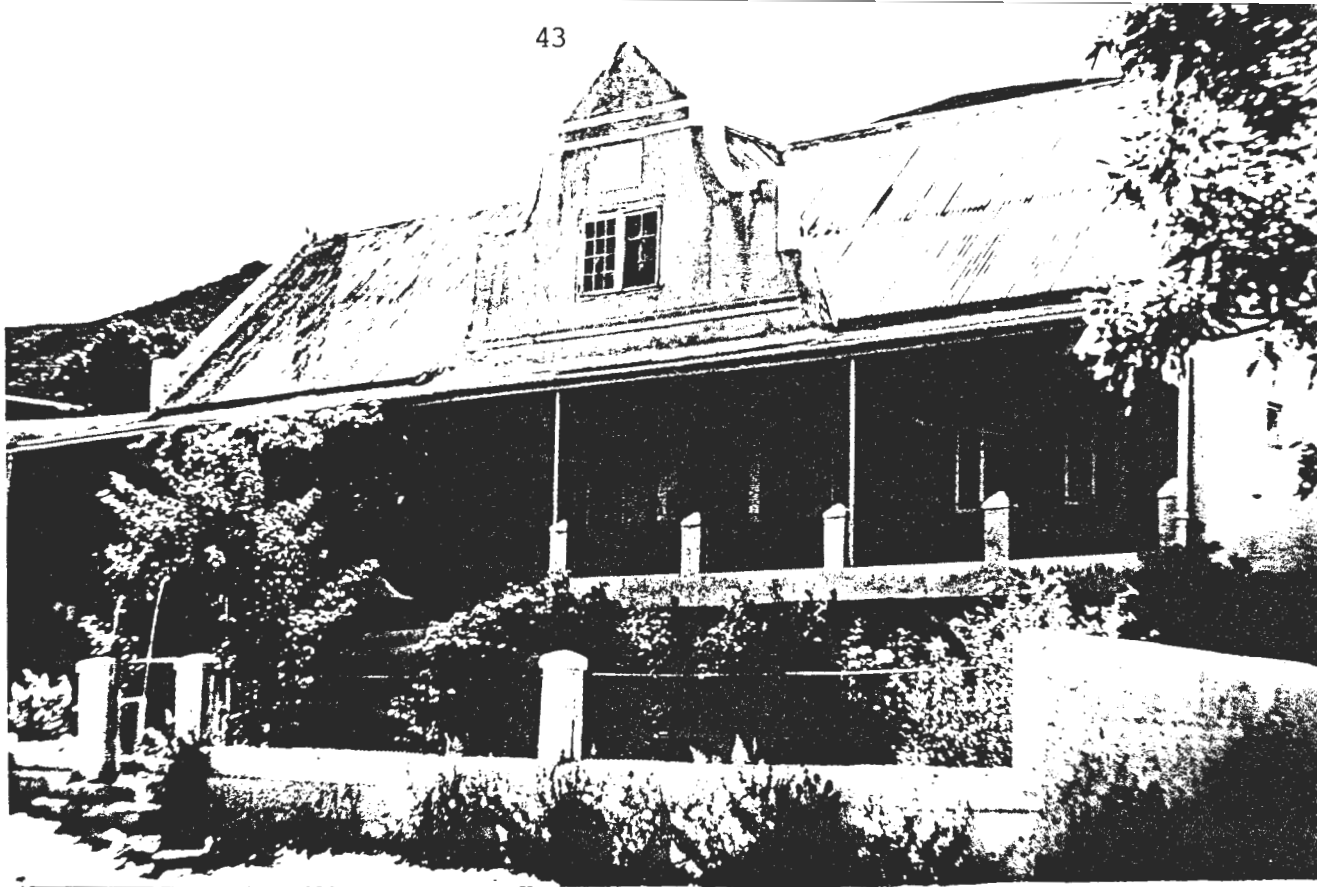


Figure :L6
Verloren Vallei, Ceres (1980)

Photograph: S. Sinclair

A personal visit was made to the Verloren Vallei house at Ceres, and it was found that the mountains behind the house on Daniell's aquatint are capped horizontally (figureL7), while the mountains behind the Ceres Verloren Vallei house show folds at an angle. The central front gable on the Daniell house is fairly elaborate and rounded at the top with a single dormer window (figureL7), while the Verloren Vallei house has a plainer, pointed central front gable with a double dormer window (figureL. 6). The front door and windows of the Daniell house appear narrow, while the front door of the Verloren Vallei house is markedly wider, with two outer double windows.

A facsimile reprint of the aquatint by Samuel Daniell entitled "A Boor's House" may be found in the South African Library,⁷³ and is reproduced in figure 17. In his introduction to the facsimile collection, F.H. Bradlow explains the incident between Samuel Daniell and Lady Anne Barnard, alluded to by Professor Bax, and also explained by A. Gordon-Brown.⁷⁴ In his note to the aquatint, Bradlow mentions Professor Bax's observation on the similarity between Lady Anne Barnard's "A Boor's Place" and Samuel Daniell's "A Boor's House", and his subsequent conclusion that the drawing by Lady Anne probably represents Verloren Vallei. Bradlow adds: "This house is in the Ceres district between Ceres and Touws River at the foot of the Bonteberg",⁷⁵ and draws the reader's attention to the monkey on a pole on the far right of Daniell's aquatint. However, comparison between the Lady Anne drawing, the Daniell aquatint, and the Verloren Vallei photograph shows that while the first two are indeed similar, there are some notable points of difference between them and the Ceres Verloren Vallei house.



Figure J.7
 Daniell, S (1805) plate 16, 88.

A BOON'S HORSE.

Engraved from a drawing by Daniell, S. Published by Messrs. G. & J. Daniell, London.

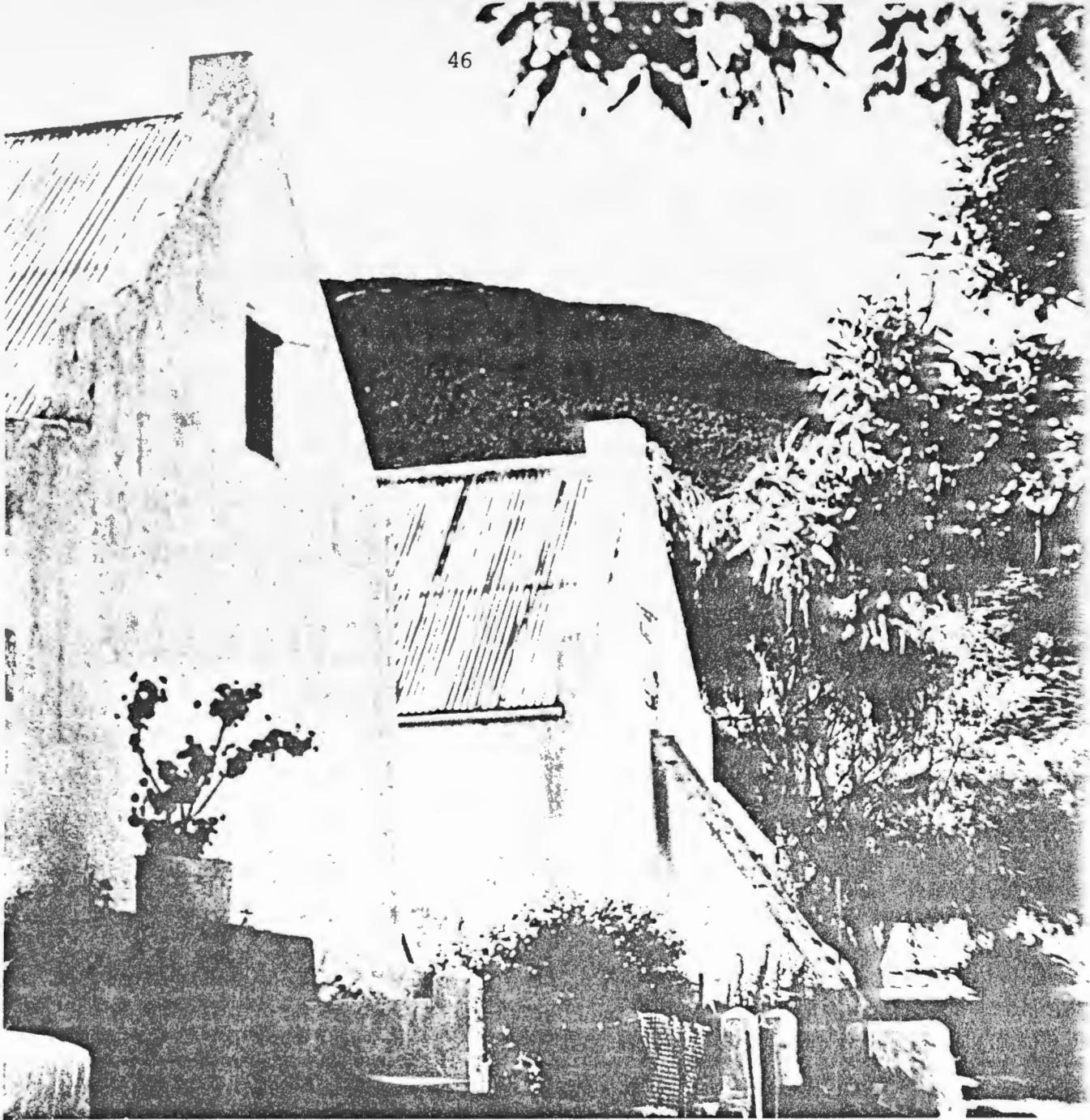


Figure 1.8
Verloren Vallei, Ceres. (1980)

Photograph: S. Sinclair

The Verloren Vallei house is H-shaped, but both the Daniell and Barnard houses suggest a separate building with a gable lying behind the front house. If the drawings represented an H-shaped house and the laws of perspective were applied, the back-end-gable would be shown as protruding beyond the front end-gable rather than receding behind it (figure 1.8). The view to the south-west along the valley provides a topographical outline strongly resembling that in the Barnard drawing (figure 1.5) but on a larger scale. Such a view can only be obtained by standing to the north-east of the Verloren Vallei house. From this position, the observer looks downwards from a slope at the back wall of the house, also with a central gable, whereas in the Barnard drawing, the observer appears to be placed at a position slightly below the front facade of the house and looking upwards.⁷⁶

A. Gordon-Brown (1952) gives both Lady Anne's and the opposing version of the incident, as recorded by John Barrow. Lady Anne took Samuel Daniell into her house as her protégé, and wrote to Lord Macartney on 16 October 1801:

"(Daniell) is stated to have been invited by me to stay with us for the express purpose of giving me an opportunity of robbing him of his drawings, which it was circulated in the Coffee-house I had done by availing myself of the power my own house gave me to steal them out of his bed-chamber and that I meant to publish them as my own on my return to England. ...Mr. Daniell, then up the country, who like a true member of that party, while living in my house in the most friendly confidence, had unknown to me stolen from my table where it lay, the tracing or rather scratch of a young Buck on the back of an old letter, copy'd from a sketch which he was doing beside me and which I thought resembled a little favourite of mine that died while you were here - which Buck being one of the 'Native Animals' he and his friends conceived it very heinous in me to have traced without asking specific leave, tho' he had the unlimited power over my portfolio, and I over his, if there was anything there I happened to like..."⁷⁷

According to John Barrow:

"An eminent artist of the name of Daniels (sic) had collected in the course of a very long tour thro' the country, a great variety of drawings from subjects of natural history from which his expectations were very great, on his arrival in England. Being much pressed by Barnard he became their guest, in this situation he shortly discovered that Lady Anne had privately entered his room, taken of his drawings of figures, animals, etc., and traced them thro' the window - Some of these drawings he discovered in her portfolio which he took out and brought to me, asking my advice how to proceed in a matter which he considered of the first importance to him. The advice I gave him was literally this - "Keep it a profound secret ... but go to Lady Anne and find out to what extent she has robbed you - and insist upon her giving them up". He did so - she confessed the fact - was confounded, ashamed and burnt them all. (illegible) an enormous amount, for she had been very industrious - bound him down to secrecy, and the next morning Barnard offered him a situation of Pounds one hundred a year in the Secretary's office."⁷⁸

Although Daniell may have travelled past the Ceres Verloren Vallei on his "very long tour thro' the country", and on his second journey towards Plettenberg bay with Somerville and Truter mentioned by John Barrow, comparison between his aquatint and the actual house indicates the unlikelihood that the aquatint represents the Ceres Verloren Vallei homestead. Lady Anne may also have visited Verloren Vallei at Ceres in the course of her trip from Swellendam to Saldanha Bay, but she too is unlikely to have drawn the house. The reasons for this conclusion apply to the case of Daniell as well, for, as J. Walton has pointed out, the house at Ceres, Verloren Vallei is dated 1827,⁷⁹ a considerable time after Daniell's two journeys and Lady Anne's journey to Saldanha Bay.

The title to Lady Anne's original drawing describes the house as being "a considerable way up the country", which might be taken in colloquial terms to mean up the Cape west coast. However, Lady Anne, in her letter to Lord Macartney, refers to Daniell as being "up the country" when he is away on his trip to Plettenberg Bay. As the phrase is also applied loosely in modern conversation, it cannot be used as a basis for identifying the location of the house.

The question now remains as to whether either Lady Anne or Daniell had occasion to visit Verlorenvlei on the west coast. No evidence has been found for Daniell having made such a trip, while Lady Anne herself appears not to have travelled north of Saldanha Bay. But her husband, Andrew Barnard, did visit the Verlorenvlei area, under most amusing circumstances. His account of this visit appears in the Fairbridge 1924 edition of letters, and was located by Dr. A. Smith. In a letter dated 25 December 1800, Andrew Barnard writes to the Earl of Macartney:

"I am going to-morrow on an Expedition in quest of Coal. I have got a prodigious fine specimen of some, which is said to be found at a place called Verloorn Valley, one day's journey beyond St. Helena Bay, and about six miles from the Sea. Mr. Kirsten was the Person that gave me the Sample of the Coal; but as he is not always to be trusted, I have determined to ascertain the point myself, and altho' it is a bad season to travel in, yet as it is a matter of such consequence to the Colony, I am resolved to lose no time in finding it if possible. I shall take him with me, and if I find that he has made me go on a Fool's errand, I

shall be tempted to break his Bones, in order to make him tell the truth in future - at least to me."⁸⁰

On 12 January 1801, Andrew Barnard reports the results of his expedition to the Verlorenvléi area:

"...I have failed in the Search I went to make at Verloorn Valley for Coal, and at the same time to tell you that the Specimen I sent you is excellent Newcastle. The fact is that about twelve months ago a Waggon that had some Coals in it for a Smith that lived within a Mile of the place where Mr. Kirsten supposed that Coal was to be found, was by Accident overturned in the Night, and a quantity of the Coals were spilt upon the Spot where he found them - it was about a hundred and fifty yards from the High Road, which made Kirsten certain that they could not get there by chance, and he never gave himself any further trouble in examining the Ground where he found them, but came up Post haste to acquaint Sir George with the great Discovery he had made. I had a most Broiling Journey of twelve days. I am however not the worse for it, and upon the whole I am rather glad than sorry that I was in some degree forced to make it, as I have seen a part of the Country not often visited,..."⁸¹

While the landscape in the Samuel Daniell aquatint is definitely not that of the Verlorenvlei area on the Cape west coast, the landscape in the Lady Anne drawing bears a distinct resemblance to a part of the area inland (figure 1.5) where her husband must have made his "Broiling Journey" in search of coal. A house stands in this part of the area, in a similar relation to the setting as the house in the drawing. This house is Klaarefontein, one of the oldest houses in the area. Although the exact date of the house is not known, the farm was first granted as a loanplace in 1727, and the house is more than 200 years old. It is shown on the map from the Cape Archives (figure 2.1). There is a slight hill behind Klaarefontein, though not as high as the hill behind the house in the drawing. The clump of trees to the left of the middle of the drawing is paralleled by the clump of trees that grows between Klaarefontein and the vlei. The vlei is depicted in a similar position in relation to the house in the drawing as it is to the actual house, although the vlei contains more water in the drawing. The topography of the hills on the opposite bank of the vlei is almost the same in the drawing as in the actual area, although the actual are neither as high nor as mountainous. The presence of the slaves in the drawing could be connected with the four slaves known to be on Klaarefontein farm from the mid-eighteenth century, when it was used as a loanplace by Andries Stephanus Gauche (Gous), as described by W. Burger (1975):

"...Pieter van Asch, bestuurder van Klaarfontein en Pietersfontein; Francois, 'n smid van die plaas - die murasie van die smidswinkel word nog aangewys; Hendriks Pieters, die tuinier wat die akkerbome daar sou geplant het - Pietersfontein heet na hom, en Namakwa, 'n skaapwagter wat van 'n krans teen Namakwaskop af doodgeval het, toe die sweepriem waaraan hy hom laat afsak het om heuning uit te haal, gebreek het. Hy lê daar onder in die kloof onder 'n klipstapel begrawe." ⁸²

The presence of a smithy on Klaarefontein also coincides with the fact that the coal that sent Andrew Barnard on his wild goose chase was destined for "a Smith" in the area, unless Barnard was anglicizing the name, 'Smit'.

At first glance, Klaarefontein is very different from the house in the drawing. However, Klaarefontein is probably the only house that could be considered for such a comparison, being atypical of the Verlorenvlei houses in having a strange front gable, undecorated and roughly edged (figure 1.9). While the present Klaarefontein resembles the house in the drawing only because of its situation and setting, there is much evidence that the present house is a result of considerable modification.

Other interesting details about Klaarefontein were provided by Mr. Johannes Louw. The outbuilding originally housed a horse-mill,⁸³ which gradually fell into disuse and was dismantled, the parts being used for other purposes. On the slope below the house, near a planted palm tree, is evidence of what he feels must have been a water-mill, the wheel being turned by water running down the small valley to the west of the house, from a dam constructed above the house level. Although there is no watercourse in the valley at present, a spring and a rivulet are indicated on early maps of the area,⁸⁴ together with a homestead.

Both water- and horse-mill would have been used to grind wheat.

Although it would appear that Klaarefontein has been subjected to considerable modification, this is no proof that it originally resembled the house in the drawing, with its elaborate gables and imposing Cape Dutch style. Many questions surround the drawing, and none of them can be answered until more conclusive evidence is unearthed. If the drawing were done by Lady Anne Barnard, and based on a sketch of the area around Klaarefontein brought back with her husband from his expedition to the Verlorenvlei area, it is possible that the house could have been drawn from the artist's experience of southern Cape houses rather than depicting the actual house at that time (1800). It is also possible that

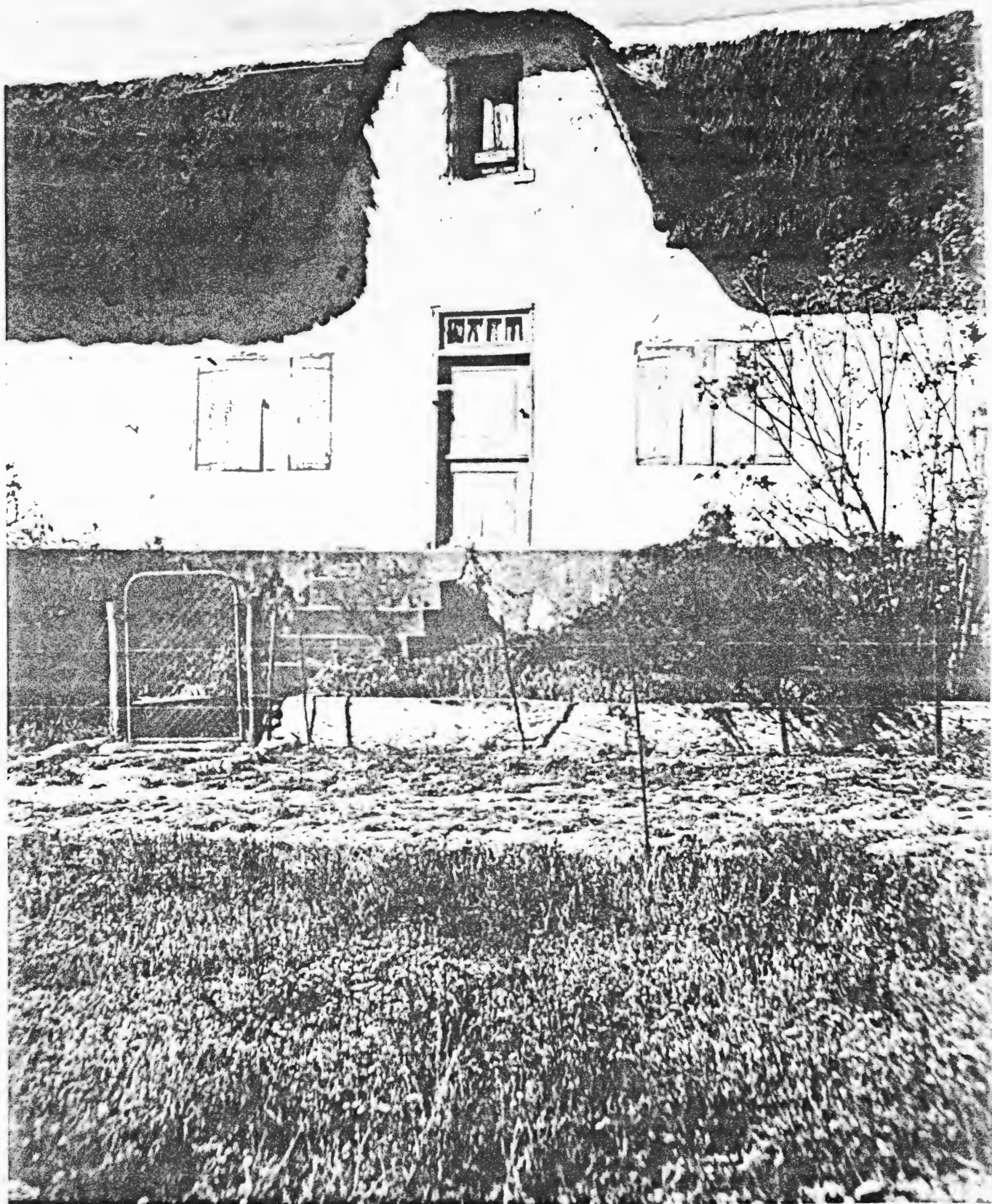


Figure: 1.9
Klaarefontein: Sep. 1979

Photo: S. Sinclair

the original house could have been more elaborately decorated than it is today, but with the lack of craftsmanship and materials in the area, the elaborateness would have deteriorated and been gradually removed, to be replaced by a more appropriate style using local building materials and methods. This possibility is suggested by Burger:

"Immers, in weerwil van hulle isolasie, ten spyte van die groot afstand van kerk en skool, en nieteenstaande die afwesigheid van die meeste beskawingsmiddele, het hierdie skynbaar so trae mense nie alleen hulle taal en godsdiens in ere gehou nie, maar selfs die ou boustyl waarvan hulle in die Kaap gewoon geraak het, in die wildernis bly beoefen. Vir 'n luiaard sou dit baie minder inspanning gekos het om 'n pondok te bou. Maar sodra hulle gevestig was, het hulle op verskeie plase in ons distrik huise gebou wat van 'n sin vir styl- die ou Hollandse styl - getuig: op Klein Voëlrvlei, Suurfontein, Southkloof, Winkelshoek, so ver as Goergap en Klaarfontein langs die Verloreivlei..."⁸⁵

If the link between Lady Anne Barnard, the drawing, the Verloreivlei area, and Klaarfontein could be firmly established, the historical and architectural value of the area and of Klaarfontein would be considerably increased, and hence their conservation potential. It is probable that on such grounds the house could be considered by the National Monuments Commission for classification as a National Monument.

The Verlorenvlei area in the twentieth century

Of anecdotal interest in the record of early travellers in the Verlorenvlei area is the expedition undertaken by four young ladies, three of them teachers, from Redelinghuis to Elandsbaai in August 1928,

"Ons Uitstappie na Elandsbaai

Nieteenstaande alle waarskuwings en gesegdes dat ons dit nooit sou kon doen nie, het ons vier, naamlik Mej. J. Kotze, Mej. A. van Lill, Mej. M. du Toit en Mej. B. Garrytz, Vrydag namiddag ons stappie begin na Elandsbaai.

Die paar dingetjies wat ons wou meeneem, het ons in 'rugs', agter ons rugte vas geespe.

Om drie uur die namiddag is ons by Redelinghuys weg. Toe ons reeds klaar staan om te vertrek was daar nog party wat ons wou probeer afraai, maar nee ons wou self gaan uitvind of ons dit kon doen.

Dit het ons net drie en 'n kwart uur geneem om by Uithoek, die plaas van Mnr. P. von Lutzenburg te kom, waar ons dan ook die nag oorgebly het. Moeg was ons glad nie, want die aand het ons nog lekker om die vuur sit gesels.

Die volgende more vroeg is ons weer daarvandaan, en na twee en 'n kwart uur was ons in Elandsbaai. Daar gekom, het ons net ons pakke afgehaal, baaiklere aangetrek en is weg see toe. Die hele agtermiddag het ons daar rondgestap en kiekies geneem...

Sondagmore nog voor ag is ons weer daar weg en na 'n goeie loop van twee uur, vyf minute was ons weer by Uithoek. Namiddag omtrent twee uur is ons daar weg en nog voor sonder het ons Redelinghuys ingekom.

Waarlik ons het ons stappie geniet. Die weer was baie gunstig. Die Verloren Vlei is nou vol en lyk pragtig. Sondagmiddag het ons nog die kans gehad om met die skuit op die water by Uithoek te gaan.

Wat ons uitstappie nog aangenamer gemaak het, was die gasvryheid en vriendelikheid van die mense by wie ons gekom het...

Ons voete het wel 'n paar blasies opgekom, maar 'wat bang' so gou as die gesond is, sal ons enige tyd weer so 'n toertjie onderneem."⁸⁵

Also of interest is the description of the Verlorenvlei area in a chapter entitled "The Lost Vlei" in a book by Lawrence Green (1948):

"The vlei should really be seen in winter, when the reeds are green and weaver birds manoeuvre round their nests. Then the water flows down the length of the valley and breaks through the blind mouth to join the South Atlantic. Yet even in summer the scene is not without beauty. The people of the 'Lost Valley' prefer to build homesteads of the old type; thatch and gables, clay ovens and white-washed walls are more prominent than corrugated iron. For miles the road is lined with gardens. Palms and pumpkins, even bananas, may be seen growing. I noticed more turkeys in a day than I had seen for years.

Carp exist in the muddy pools during the summer, and flourish in winter when the vlei becomes a wide expanse for miles. You observe the first boats not long after leaving Redelinghuis. Birds and men must feast on fish when the vlei is full. Flamingoes find sanctuary there. Long-billed herons nest in the reed-beds. Cranes and golden cuckoos, gay sugar birds and finches give life and colour to the 'Lost Valley'.

You must go on foot to Baboon Point along the hard beach, past the sand-blocked vlei mouth, over rocks and dunes. I saw the little passage in the reef where the fishermen haul their boats on shore. This is safe when southerly winds blow; but at other times the daring fishermen run for a little nook on Baboon Point itself. Waiting for the right moment, boat after boat races for a sloping, sea-washed boulder. The boats are hauled up on to the granite, and the catches landed. Lives have been lost on this dangerous point. About thirty boats, worked by eighty men (who combine fishing with farming), venture out from Eland's Bay. They supply the whole valley with snoek in the season. Crawfish are caught and loaded into motor-cutters from St. Helena Bay and Lambert Bay.¹⁷⁸⁷

Footnotes

1. Mossop (1927), 155
Mossop (1931), 148
2. Waterhouse (1932), 723
3. Valentyn (1796), 247-8
4. Compare Valentyn (1796), 25
5. Cape archives, map 1/1178, 1789
6. Mossop (1927), 155
7. Burger (1975), 300-301
8. Kingon 'Aboriginal Place Names' (Botha, 1926)
9. Molsbergen's 'Reizen in Zuid-Afrika', 219 (Botha, 1926)
10. Botha (1926), 33-34
11. Parkington (1979), pers. comm.
12. Westphal (1980), pers. comm.
13. Mossop (1947), 127
14. Burger (1975), 300 - 301
15. Thunberg (1793), 143
16. Paterson (1789), 75 and 100
17. Le Vaillant (1796), Vol 2 : 93, Vol 3 : 458-459
18. Barrow (1801), 325
19. Barrow (1801), 325
20. Barrow (1801), 320
21. Barrow (1801), 151
22. Barrow (1801), 371
23. Fairbridge (1924), 241
24. Lichtenstein (1812), 84
25. Mossop (1931), foreword
26. Mossop (1927), 141
27. Mossop (1927), 141
28. Mossop (1931), 87

29. Mossop (1931), footnote p89
30. Mossop (1931), 91-92
31. Mossop (1931), 91
32. Mossop (1931), copy of M77, Cape archives
33. Mossop (1931), 151
34. Mossop (1931), 151
35. Mossop (1931), 151
36. Valentyn (1796), 359
37. Valentyn (1796), 363
38. Valentyn (1796), 23
39. Valentyn (1796), 23
40. Valentyn (1796), 25
41. Valentyn (1796), 25
42. Valentyn (1796), 29
43. Valentyn (1796), 45
44. Mossop (1947), 127-9
45. Mossop (1947), 151
46. Mossop (1947), 149
47. Hague archives (1741), Resolutions of the Council of Policy 19-5-1741
reference located and translated by R. Ross, provided by J. Parkington
48. Cape archives, RLR 9: 349 (SG 409, folio 192)
49. Mossop (1947), 69
50. Thunberg (1793), vol 1, 144
51. Thunberg (1793), vol 2, 141
52. Thunberg (1793), vol 2, 143-144
53. Paterson (1789), 74-75
54. Paterson (1789), 76
55. Paterson (1789), 160
56. Paterson (1789), 100 - 101
57. Le Vaillant (1796), 458-459
58. Le Vaillant (1796), 459

59. Le Vaillant (1796), 460-461
60. Barrow (1801), 325
61. Lichtenstein (1812), 84
62. Fairbridge (1924), opposite 259
63. Lewin-Robinson (1973), 242
64. Bax (1960), Vol 14, no 1: 9-12
65. Bax (1960), 12
66. Bax (1960), 9
67. Bax (1960), 11
68. Cape Archives, Map 1/379, 1750
69. Cape Town Deeds Office, Ceres Vol 4, Folio 344/1/1; Worcester
Quitrents vol 6, folio 22, 8-3-1832
70. Basset (1979), correspondence 2/K/C-S/5, 7-11-1979
71. Walton (1966)
72. Walton (1966), 1
73. Bradlow (1976), Plate 16, 88
74. Bradlow (1976), introduction
75. Bradlow (1976), 87
76. Fransen and Cook (1965), 187 - does not refer to the back facade
77. Gordon-Brown (1952), 18
78. Gordon-Brown (1952), 19
79. Walton (1979), pers. comm.
Fransen and Cook (1965), 187
80. Fairbridge (1924), 241
81. Fairbridge (1924), 259
82. Burger (1975), 316
83. J. Louw (1979), pers. comm.
Walton (1974), 201
84. Cape Archives, Map 2/1369, 1900
85. Burger (1975), 292
86. Piquetberg Herald, vol 1, no 21, 3-8-1928
87. Green, (1948), 108-109

CHAPTER 2

Land usage and settlement in the Verlorenvlei area in
the eighteenth century.

Introductory discussion of archival research into
Maps and Loan Place documents.

In order to conduct any archival research into the historical details of the Verlorenvlei area, it is essential to know under which district the area fell at each change of colonial control. For this purpose, Bøeseken (1948) is a useful reference.

In 1750, Verlorenvlei fell clearly into the District of Stellenbosch (Bøeseken, map 55). At the end of the eighteenth century, just before the period of the Batavian Republic, it was still within the District of Stellenbosch (Bøeseken, map 56), but during the Batavian Republic (1803-1806) it was on the boundaries of the Districts of Stellenbosch and Tulbagh, though probably still regarded as within Stellenbosch (Bøeseken, map 57). In 1814, it was clearly within the District of Tulbagh (Bøeseken, map 58), but by 1826 it had been changed again to the District of Worcester (Bøeseken, map 59, on which Verlorenvlei is actually marked because of its proximity to the boundary between the Districts of Worcester and the Cape). In 1835, Verlorenvlei fell within the Cape District (indicated in Bøeseken, map 62).

Burger (1975), in discussing the area of Piquetberg, which he regards as stretching a few kilometres north of Elandsbaai, analyses the situation with slight differences:

"Vanaf 1750 ongeveer was hierdie area deel van die distrik Stellenbosch wat gestrek het van Kaap 1' Agulhas tot die mond van die Olifantsrivier met die Kaapse Distrik en Swellendam aan weerskante. Van 1801 tot 1814 val dit binne die distrik Tulbagh; van 1814 tot ongeveer 1826 in Worcester; van hierdie datum tot 1855 is dit deel van Swartland en daarna word dit 'n distrik in sy eie reg soos dit ongeveer vandag is, met die verskil dat Porterville vanaf 1949 en Velddrif vanaf 1960 deur hulle eie landrooste bedien word."¹

The analysis of Theal (1840)², however, agrees with that of Bøeseken (1948):

- 1790 - Stellenbosch
- 1800 - Stellenbosch
- 1805 - Border Stellenbosch and Tulbagh, probably Stellenbosch.
- 1814 - Tulbagh
- 1826 - Worcester (Verlorenvlei is actually indicated on the 1826 map).

During the period when the Verlorenvlei area fell within the District of Stellenbosch, it was included within the Drakenstein subdivision of out-lying areas rather than in the Stellenbosch subdivision.³

The archival records which have provided evidence relevant to this study are :

- Map collections (indexed by place names)
- Photographic collections (indexed by persons' and place names
(Elliott, A.G., Jeffreys, and as well as subject categories)
Vernacular Architecture
Society collections)
- Surveyor-General records of loan (indexed by persons' and farm names)
places

Further archival research must be conducted in the following document collections, before a complete history of the Verlorenvlei settlement can be undertaken:

- Wills
- Inventories
- Auction lists
- Slave office lists
- Tax lists ('opgawes')
- Bankruptcy lists
- Magistrate records of court cases
- Journals and Dagregisters

The index to the map collections was consulted according to the administrative districts into which the Verlorenvlei area fell at different periods. A list of approximately 100 maps was compiled, in numerical sequence of map reference number, and each map on the list examined.

The records of loan place allocations are held in the Cape Archives in large bound volumes entitled Oude Wildschutte Boeke. The records may be indexed by farm names or by persons' names, both of which are spelt in a variety of ways in the original documents, so that the records concerning a particular farm or a particular person may appear scattered in different

places in the index files. In some cases, the details of the allocations, such as situation of the loan place and date of allocation, may be given on the index card. In other cases, only the date and volume reference number are given.

The volume reference number is listed in the index with the alphabetical prefix SG, the letters being an abbreviation for 'Surveyor-General'. However, when a volume is requested for examination, the prefix RLR must be used, indicating 'Receiver of Land Revenue'. The index card gives the page number of the relevant document in the volume, but as the documents have been rebound, the page number on the index card is the old SG number, which has been deleted on the document and replaced by a new RLR page number. The document also has a folio number which was used to indicate the original order of arrangement of the records. Each document can therefore be referenced by the original folio number, the old SG page number, and the new RLR page number. The tracing of successive allocations is made more difficult by the fact that at the end of a document, if notice of vacation of the loan place is recorded, and the reallocation noted, the reference is given to the folio number in the original order of arrangement, and as this order no longer exists, successions must be established by persons' names and dates.

Tracing of successive allocations is further complicated by the fact that the loan places are often not given names, and their location is described in vague, broad terms. While various spellings of the farm name 'Verloren Valley' have been used to identify the loan place records in the Verlorenvlei area, it is difficult to establish exactly which loan place or loan places comprise what is now the portion of the farm where the settlement is situated. In some cases, exceptional notes written on the documents, in addition to the standard format for allocation, provide a clue to the location of the loan place. All documents listed in the index under the name of 'Verloren Valley' have been examined in detail. They are written in Dutch, and are difficult to read because of peculiarities of handwriting and spelling, and because of the fading of the script. Some of the references listed under the name of the farm appear not to refer to the area which is the subject of this study at all, while additional references have been traced which do not appear in the index. In research into loan place allocation, therefore, the index

files must be regarded as a starting-point only. It would be possible to say that a complete search had been made only if all the bound volumes were examined systematically, an enormous task of forbidding proportions, and too time-consuming to be feasible. The record of loan place allocations which follows is therefore as complete as the above difficulties and constraints have allowed.

Loan places as an early form of land tenure.

Duly (1968) defines a loan place as:

"a farm or grazing station of approximately 3 000 morgen (6 000 acres or 9 square miles)⁴ held under a one-year lease, which was automatically renewed. Used by the Dutch as their chief tenure at the Cape, the loan place tenure became so encrusted with custom that it became a secure and permanent tenure for the lessee."⁵

Both Botha (1926)⁶ and Duly (1968) stress the importance of water in the selection of loan place sites. "Since water was the first necessity of life, the loan farms were often placed around springs and water holes and thus provided a necessary monopoly to their holders."⁷ Theoretically, the holder of a loan place had no title to the land and could not sell or bequeath it, but any buildings ('opstal') that were erected could be sold or bequeathed.

Duly describes the system of loan places as "a form of legalized squatting":

"No attempt was made to provide uniform blocks of land or to keep loan farms contiguous with one another. Some stretched out along a water course, while others stretched out in all directions. The government's unfamiliarity with the districts and the terrain resulted in its acceptance of the Boers' assurances that their loan farms did not exceed three thousand morgen. But a loan place holder had little reason not to use any neighbouring unoccupied land. ... The loan places, rather than being properly constituted farms, were chiefly established centers of grazing life in the interior. They were the more fixed points in a constantly moving society that lacked governmental direction. There is every reason to assume that any applicant had already tested its soil and grass and was living on the land before he asked for government approval. In some sections of the colony, a grazier had to have two or more farms to provide for his herds, and the government allowed him to hold as many farms as he wished."⁸

The allocation and usage of loan places
in the Verlorenvlei area.

Burger (1975) describes the method of determining a loan place. He also points out that the granting of loan places in the vicinity of the Piquetberg coincides with the 95 % reduction of the Hottentot population by the 1713 smallpox epidemic and the consequent reduction of stock-theft.

"Na die ramp van die eerste pokke-epidemie (1713) was die weerlose Hottentotte in alle geval geen bedreiging meer nie en was die deur na die landstreek om die Piketberge en na die binneland wawyd ope. Van ongeveer hierdie datum af deur die 18de eeu heen dateer dan ook die uitgifte van die leningsplase in hierdie omgewing. As 'n veeboer wat met sy vee in die area vertoef 'n geskikte watterryke plek teëkom, gaan hy Kaap toe, doen aansoek om 'n lisensie en kry 'n sertifikaat - aanvanklik vry, later (1714) vir 6 riksdalers (R3,00) vir 'n halfjaar of 12 riksdalers per jaar en nog later (1732)⁹ 24 riksdalers, keer na die plek van sy keuse terug, en nits niemand daarop aanspraak maak nie, ry hy van die middelpunt af 'n halfuur te perd (op 'n stap) in verskeie rigtings, stel bakens op en, siedaar, hy besit 'n plaas van meer as 3 000 morg. Hy mag dit bewoon of bewei so lank hy sy jaarlikse 'rekognisie-gelde' betaal, anders word dit aan 'n ander applikant verhuur. Indien hy intussen vaste eiendom daarop opgerig het, moet die staat, wat die plaas teoreties mag terugneem, volgens die reg van resumpsie, die geskatte waarde daarvan aan die ou huurder uitbetaal.

Ons weet dat Goewerneur W.A. van der Stel die vryburgers ook in 1700 aangemoedig het om veeboere te word en hulle het gretig van die vergunning gebruik gemaak: teen 1717 word reeds die voorste plase aan die Verloren Vallei uitgegee."¹⁰

Botha (1926) cites the names of a number of farms which appear in the Wildschut Boek or Ordonnantie Boek and which still exist today, more than two centuries later.¹¹ Included amongst the farms in the Piquetberg area are Verloren Vallei, the year of permit being given as 1723, and Klaarefontein, the permit-year being listed as 1727.¹²

Four main series of loan place allocations have been traced in the course of this study, the loan places being described as:

- aan de hoek van de verlore valleij
- de verlore valleij na de kand van de lange valley
- aan de verlore valleij agter de picquet berg
- in de verlore valleij aan de zee kant tuffchen de Piquet bergen en de Oliphants rivier.

The four series cover thirty to sixty year periods, and serve to fill in the record of land usage prior to 1795, when the British abandoned the system of loan places in favour of perpetual quitrent tenure. The record of loan place allocations therefore describes usage and ownership of land in the Verlorenvlei area and on the site of the Verlorenvlei settlement while the Cape was under Dutch control.

The names of the persons to whom the loan places were allocated give some idea of the nationalities associated with early usage of the land, the majority being Dutch, with a few holders of German and French origin. Some of the holders of the loan places can be said with certainty not to have lived in the area, as they are known to have had considerable holdings of land throughout the Cape, and to have lived closer to Cape Town in fairly wealthy and comfortable circumstances. However, on isolated documents there are references to an 'opstal' or building on the loan place, and the transfer of ownership of the 'opstal' is recorded, for although the land could not be bought, sold or inherited, the building could be transferred and the original owner compensated. Such references are vital as they could provide positive evidence of the beginning of rural settlement in the Verlorenvlei area, and more specifically, on the Verlorenvlei farm.

Every document pertaining to the Verlorenvlei area contains two basic conditions of allocation which indicate the predominant forms of land usage in the eighteenth century. The loan places are granted to their holders for the purpose of grazing animals, probably cattle. The actual phrase is: "met zijn vee te moogen blijven leggen en wijden". In the card index to loan places, 'vee' is translated as 'sheep', but the more correct translation is probably 'cattle'.¹³ The fact that the Verlorenvlei area has been subject to grazing from the early eighteenth century is borne out by the severe environmental degradation that can be observed around the settlement at present.

The second condition of allocation was the stipulation that the holders of the loan places should deliver a tithe of one tenth of their annual wheat harvest to the Dutch East India Company. The spelling of the actual phrase varies from one document to the next, but is usually "de thiende van't aldaar t'oegste Coorn". The word 'oegste' is related to the Afrikaans 'oes', meaning 'harvest', while 'Coorn' can be translated as 'wheat',

the full phrase meaning, 'a tenth of the harvested wheat'. This condition of allocation is not found in all loan place documents as a standard stipulation, but only in those documents pertaining to areas in which wheat was cultivated.¹⁴ Its inclusion indicates that there were established wheat fields prior to the dates of the allocations, the earliest traced thus far being dated 1730. Further research in the tax lists or 'opgawes' would reveal how much wheat was sown in the area in relation to the amount produced.¹⁵

Most of the loan place documents examined for the period 1730-1784 were indicated as pertaining to the district of Stellenbosch, in confirmation of the analyses used as guidelines for archival research.

The first loan place, "aan de hoek van de verlore valleij", may be indicated on the historical map from the Gordon collection c1790,¹⁶ which shows a building on the site of the present settlement, and has the words 'Verloren Valey hoek' written in the clear area representing the sea, just off the point now called Baboon Point. There is a note on the loan place document referring to an 'opstal' which was sold in approximately 1750, and may have been built in the period 1740-1750. If this loan place is equivalent to the site of the present Verlorenvlei settlement, the record of human rural settlement can be dated at approximately 240 years before present.

The first allocation of this loan place was to "den Landbouwer Gerrit Mos," in May 1731.¹⁷ The location is described as being "aan de hoek van de Vloorene Valley", the name being difficult to decipher. The allocation was renewed in 1732, 1733, 1734, 1735, 1736, 1737 and 1738. However, in the notice of vacation on 21 October 1740 an interesting reason for vacation is given: "veeplaats door hem... word verlaaten... uit hoofde den moedwil van de bosjesman hottentots gedurende dien tyd...". The holders of loan places were often forced to leave because of the stealing of their cattle. According to de Villiers (1966),¹⁸ Gerrit Mos was from Amsterdam, married Elizabeth Uys in 1722, and had his last child in 1747.

On 22 October 1740, the loan place was allocated to "den Landbouwer Michiel de Groot", and was renewed annually from 1741 to 1750.¹⁹ A note indicates that an 'opstal' was sold from a deceased estate to "den burger Lieutenant Jacobus Cuijlets". The date of vacation of the loan place was

1 January 1750. Michiel de Groot cannot be traced in de Villiers, but Hoge (1958) refers to Michiel Grosz as being the same man, who arrived in the Cape in 1727 as a soldier from Germany, became the superintendent at Vissershok, and married Geesje Piepers, the widow of Adam van Dyck.²⁰

On 10 September 1751, the records transfer the loan place to "den burger Lieut Jacobus Cuijlets".²¹ On 14 November 1753, notice was given by Tobias Jan de Vlamingh, "lasthebbende" of Cuijlets, to the effect that the loan place was being vacated.

The last direct reference to this loan place is its allocation on 14 November 1753 to "den Landbouwer Gerrit Kloete", the surname being deleted and replaced with "Cloete".²² A renewal was made in 1754, and the vacation notification was made by "burger Hendrik Kruger Jacobsz: als lasthebbende van den landbouwer gerrit Cloete Jacobsz", the "Jacobsz" in both names meaning 'Jacobs zoon' or 'Jacob's son'. Although not directly stated, it is possible that the loan place was then taken over by Hendrik Kruger Jacobsz. It is likely that this was the same Hendrik Kruger/Cruger/Kröger who was a member of Hop's expedition up the Cape west coast, and is described by Mossop (1947) as being:

"...the sixth child (fourth son) of Jacob Cruger of Berlin and of Sadenbeck in Germany and Johanna Kemp, spinster, born at the Cape of Good Hope. His parents were the stamvader and stammoeder (the founders) of that Kruger family into which, five generations later, in 1825, Paul Kruger, who became the President of the South African Republic, was born....

... Six years after their marriage the younger sister of Francina Cloete - Maria Margaretha - married young Jacobus Coetsee Jansen who was about to obtain a grant near Piketberg."²³

Burger (1975) describes Gerrit Cloete, "skoonvader van Jacobus Coetsee en Hendrik Kruger", as "huurder van Verlore Vlei en Grootdrift,...opsiener oor die kuddes van sy skoonseuns."²⁴

If the loan place, "aan de hoek van de Verloore Valley", is the site of the present Verlorenvlei settlement, it can be established that usage of the site was linked with members of the Kruger family.

The second loan place for which a series of documents has been found is described as "de verloore valleij na de kant van de lange valley". On 1 September 1730, the loan place was allocated to the "landbouwer Johannes Niël", and renewed in 1731, 1732, 1733, 1734 and 1735.²⁵ In September 1736, the "Landbouwer Ockert Schalkwyk," who had married the widow of Johannes Niël ("als in Huwelijk hebbende de Wed^e van Joh^{es} Niël") gave notice of vacation.

On 11 September 1736, Jan Coetze took over the use of the loan place, and one renewal is recorded in 1751.²⁶ On 10 February 1756, notice of vacation was given by Coetze's widow, Anne Elizabeth Pal. The father of Johannes Coetse, and the grandfather of Jacobus Coetse, Jansz: was Dirk Coetse (or Coetsee) who arrived at the Cape in 1679, was granted Coetsenberg in 1682 by Simon van der Stel and who married Sara van der Schulp.²⁷ A note at the end of the loan place allocation indicates that the loan place was next taken over by Jacob Coetsee Jansz.

The actual allocation to Jacob Coetzé Jansz is dated 10 February 1756.²⁸ Mossop (1947) provides the following information about Jacob or Jacobus, who five years later was granted rights to Klipfontein, the present site of Aurora:

"In 1754 he married Maria Margaretha Cloete, daughter of Gerrit Cloete d'oude and Hubrecht Slabbert, and thereby became a relation by marriage of Hendrik Kruger....

. . . Coetse during his lifetime appears to have claimed only to be the first European to have penetrated far beyond the Great (Orange) River... It is however improbable that he was the first to cross it or trade beyond it."²⁹

The loan place "aan de Verloore Valleij na de kant van de Lange Valleij", which he took over from his mother, was vacated on 7 February 1764, and reallocated to Dirk Jacobus Coetsee, his son.³⁰ From 23 April 1763 to at least 1775, Dirk Jacobus Coetsee also had use of the loan place, "in de verlore valleij aan den Seekant tuffchen de Piquet bergen en d'oliphants rivier/: zynde verlatene plaats van den meede landbouwer Gerrit Coetsee Jacobusz:/", as will be noted in the discussion of that loan place. The loan place presently under discussion was renewed in 1765, 1769 and 1770. It was vacated on 24 September 1771.

On the same date, the loan place was allocated to Jan Jurgen Kotzé, "Landbouwer" like those before him.³¹ Also known as Jurgen Coetsee, but more correctly as Jan Jurgen Kotze, he was another member of the Hop expedition. According to Mossop (1947), he was:

"...the fifth child and fourth son of Dirk Kotze and Maria Magdalena Carstens. Descended from Jan Kotze of Konigstein, who arrived at the Cape in 1691, he was not related to Jacobus Coetse, Jansz:

For seven or eight years he rented the grazing rights of 'Verloren Valleij this side of the Lange Valleij', beyond the Piket Mountains, a farm he must have had the opportunity to see when he was with Hendrik Hop."³²

Burger (1975) mentions that: "J.J. Kotze 'n plaas langs Verlore Vlei aangeskaf het",³³ and that he also held rights to Langrietvlei on the Berg river at the time of the Hop expedition, 1761-2.

Jan Jurgen Kotzé vacated the loan place on 21 March 1781, after renewals in 1774, 1777, 1779 and 1780. In 1781, on the same date, it was allocated to "den landbouwer Johannes van Nieuwerkerken Hendrikszoon".³⁴ On 20 April 1785, notice of vacation was given by Willem Wouter Venter. A note at the end of the document indicates that the loan place was re-allocated but not to whom, and gives as a reference 27 ord. boek fol. 4 (or 6?). Subsequent allocations could not be traced using either the reference or the name of Venter.

The third loan place for which a series of successive allocations has been traced is described as being "aan de verlore valleij agter de picquet berg". Andries Greef was one of the users of the loan place, and the historical map from the Gordon Collection c1790 (figure 2.2) indicates a building with the name 'Andr. Greef' at the point where the coastal lake is shown as narrowing down to a river, but before 'het Kruys', also shown on the map. This building on the map could indicate the position of the loan place in question, although Greef did use other loan places in the area. These were not listed in the index under 'Verloren Valleij', but were discovered in the course of research. According to Burger (1975) Andries Greef had three loan places "langs Verlore Vlei".³⁵

The first allocation which has been traced was made to "den landbouwer Johannes Hend. Blanckenberg" on what appears to be 27 December 1730.³⁵ It was renewed annually in the period 1732 - 1750, except for the years 1738, 1740 and 1744. No notice of vacation is given on this document, but on a supplementary document issued on what appears to be the 27 October 1730,³⁷ the years of renewal are given as 1750 and 1751, with notice of vacation on 14 December 1752. Notice of vacation is given by "den Burger Raad Johannes Hendricus Blankenberg". A further note indicates that the loan place was then allocated to "den Burger Cornet Petrus Michiel Eksteen." Blanckenberg was President of the Orphan Chamber, a man of great property and wealth as may be seen from the detailed inventory,³⁸ and owning many farms. It is consequently unlikely that he lived on the loan place.³⁹

The next user, Petrus Michiel Eksteen, is recorded as taking over the loan place on 15 December 1752.⁴⁰ It was renewed in 1755, 1762, 1768 and 1769, with notice of vacation on 26 August 1773. This notice was given by "den Landbouwer Andries Greef, als lasthebbende van den oud-burgerraad Petrus Michiel Eksteen". Eksteen, who married Sophia Cloete, was also a moneyed man with many farms, and probably did not live on the loan place.⁴¹

The document allocating the loan place to Andries Greef is dated 26 August 1773, and describes him as "den Landb".⁴² Above this is an insertion which is difficult to decipher but appears to refer to a 'David Kriel'. The loan place is described as "op de plaats ~~van~~ (sic) de verlore Valleij agter de piquet berg", with the 'gent' deleted. According to de Villiers (1966) Greef was born in 1732, and is thought to have married Hester van Zyl.⁴³ In 1777 arrears were paid by Jurgen Prins on behalf of Greef and by Greef himself. In 1779, it was renewed by "Prins... als lasthebbende". It was renewed subsequently in 1782, 1784 and 1785. On 7 September 1790, notice of vacation was given by "den Landbouwer david Kriel", and the notice mentions that "den opstal... aan den Landbouwer Gideon van Zyl is verkogt geworden", which appears to be evidence of a building on the loan place at this stage.

Up to this point, the record of allocation of the loan place, "aan de verlore valleij agter de picquet berg" is complete for a period of 60 years. Paterson mentions visiting the house of 'Mr. Gueff' on the southern bank of the Verlooren Valley, June 1779.⁴⁴

The fourth loan place for which a successive record of allocation exists is "de plaats geleege in de verlore valleij aan de Zeekant tusjchen de piquet bergen en d'oliphants rivier". One of the documents in this series refers to Atjars fontein, which is situated on the original Verlorenvlei farm. It is therefore possible that this loan place corresponds with one of the two semi-circular farms on the diagram attached to the original quitrent grant for 'In de Verlorene Valley and Keurfontein', being 'Keurboschfontein'. Atjars fontein is indicated within the semi-circular extent of the farm, with the servitude being described as "road for kotzee's cattle to and from atjar's fontein". Keurboschfontein lies with the edge of the semi-circle along the coastline to the south of the Verlorenvlei, and the farm immediately to the south of Keurboschfontein is Zoutekuylen or Brakkekuij. This fact can be established by determining whether van Schalkwyk used the loan place corresponding with Brakkekuij.

The loan place "aan de Zeekant" was allocated to Nicolaas Bronnert.⁴⁵ He did not live on the loan place, and was married to Sarah Krugel, daughter of Andries Krugel, who farmed on the Piquetberg. This Krugel family may have been the family of the Hendrik Krugel who received help with his harvest from the Bushman captain, Keyser.⁴⁶

From 23 July 1731 to 7 January 1735, the loan place was used by Andries Grove "den heemraad".⁴⁷ Grove renewed the allocation annually, in 1732, 1733 and 1734. Grove is known to have lived at Rondebosch in Cape Town, next to the ground on which the Josephine Mill is situated, called Roodenberg.⁴⁸

After an unaccounted gap in the series of about seven years, the loan place was taken over by Gerrit Cloete, Jacobusz. The loan place is described at this stage as "de verlaatene plaats van Nicolaas bronnert".⁴⁹ Cloete, "den Landbouwer," renewed his right to use the land in 1743, 1744, 1745, 1746, 1747 and 1751. On 22 April 1763, when he gave notice of vacation, a note was placed on the document to the effect that the loan place was allocated to Dirk Jacobus Coetsee. There is a discrepancy on the actual document which confirms the allocation to Dirk Jacobus Coetzee, as the loan place is referred to as "de verlatene plaats van den mede landbouwer Gerrit Coetzee Jacobusz", not Gerrit Cloete.⁵⁰

On 23 April 1763 the loan place was taken over by Dirk Jacobus Coetzee.⁵¹ It was renewed in 1767, 1769, 1770, 1774 and 1775. In 1776 it was renewed by "de burger Lodewijk Pengelez" on behalf of Coetzee. In 1778, it was renewed by "den burger Ernst Fredrik Heydenneyk, als lasthebbende" of Coetzee. In 1785, the last renewal was recorded as being made by "den Burger hermanus de milander, als laschebbende" of Coetzee.

In a note dated 7 July 1776, it is stated that:

"Worden Landbouwer Dirk Jacobus Coetsee aan den Edelen heer gouvenerneur versook gedaan zijnde dat seekere fonteijn gent. Atjas fonteijn leggende tusfchen bovengem. Plaats van heer Cotsee en die van den meede Landbouwer Dirk van Schalkwijk Theunisz geleegeen aan de bracke kuijl tusfchen de verlooren valleij en den St. Helena baaij, vermits d'eenigste drenk fonteijn voor derselven vee quam te wesen gerief alleen mogte blijven; heeft welopgem. heere gouvenerneur daar inne de voorste Atjas fonteijn deselve door mogte werden verkogt niet uijtgegeven werden."

A footnote suggests that a corresponding insertion was placed in the document pertaining to Dirk van Schalkwyk in "12 boek folio 67".

Other loan places in the Verlorenvlei area have been traced, but do not have long series of successive allocations which would allow for a detailed description of their usage. The actual situation of these loan places has not yet been identified in most cases.

The loan place, "aan de modder Fontaine gelegen in de Verloorene Valleij" was allocated to "den Burger Johan Hendr Blankenberg", on 19 September 1731.⁵² Blankenberg's name was inserted after the deletion of 'Johannes Meijburn'. The loan place was renewed annually from 1732 to 1737. On 11 September 1741 Blankenberg gave notice of vacation, and a note indicates that on 2 October 1759, it was reallocated to "den Landb. Erasmus Smit". The Smit family is one of the two major families making up the community of the Verlorenvlei settlement. It is significant that in the present Deeds Office card index system, filed under the name 'Smit, T.E.' or 'Smit, Theunis Erasmus', born 2 January 1937, are considerable portions of the farm Modderfontein. If this farm and the loan place are one and the same area, the Smit family has been associated with its usage for approximately 220 years. Another loan place associated with a Smit is that described as "de plaats gent de verlore rivier get. aan 't boven eijnd van de Oliphants rivier".⁵³ This loan

place was vacated by Hermanus Kriel, "den meede Landbouwer", and allocated to Jacobus Smit Hendriksz, "den Landb.", on 8 April 1784. No notice of vacation is recorded on the document. On the historical map from the Gordon Collection, c1790 (figure 2.2) a building is marked on the farm Droge Rijst Cloof, and the name 'G. Smit' next to it. On Paterson's second journey while travelling southwards down the west coast, he records passing 'the Croffe' or Het Kruis, and resting the afternoon at the house of a Mr. Smith, with whom Paterson went out shooting flamingoes. It is likely that Mr. Smith is Mr. Smit.⁵⁴ Various members of the Smit family have therefore been associated with a number of farms in the Verlorenvlei area and its vicinity for over two hundred years, as is the case with the Coetzee family and the Louw family, all three families being major landowners and residents in the area today.

"Den Landbouwer Andries Greef", in addition to other loan places in the area, was allocated the loan place "aan de verlooren valleij genaamt de groot Drift/zijnde de verlatene plaats van den Oudburgerraad Petrus Michiel Eksteen", on 26 August 1773.⁵⁵ In 1777, arrears were paid by "den burger Jurgen Prins" on behalf of Greef. On 14 November, 1778, Hendrik Nicolaas Cotse, "als lasthebbende" of Greef, gave notice of vacation, and a note confirms that the loan place was then granted to Cotse. It is likely that this loan place is equivalent to the present farm on the southern bank of the Verlorenvlei, east of the Verlorenvlei settlement, called Groote Drift. Paterson mentions visiting the place of Mr. Greeff in the Verloore or Lost Valley in the account of his fourth journey, on 28 June 1779.⁵⁶

Present and future value of archival research

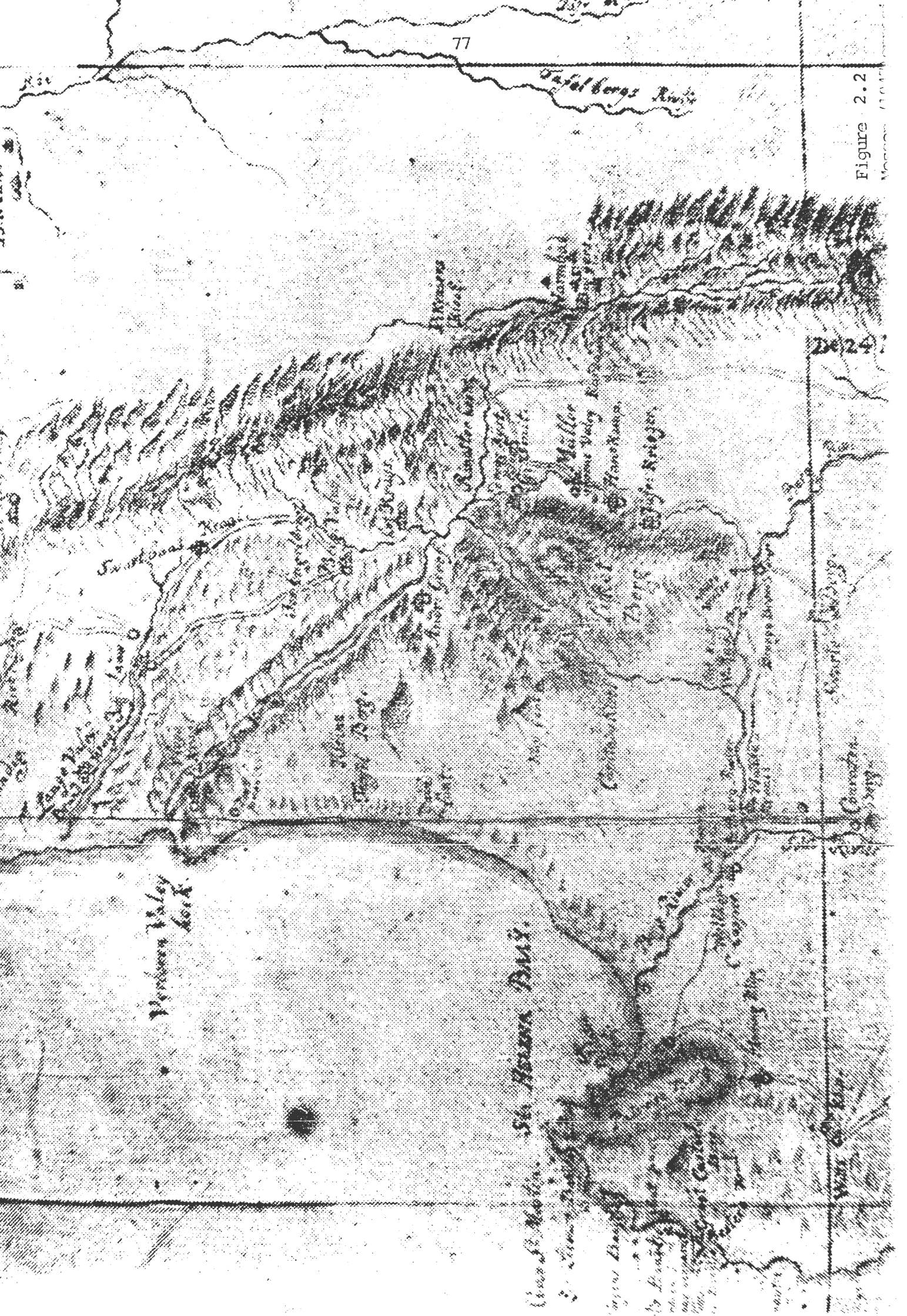
From an investigation of loan place documents, it has been possible to trace the major loan places in the Verlorenvlei area, and to establish with some degree of certainty those loan places associated with the farm on which the present settlement is situated. The people responsible for usage of the area during the eighteenth century and the forms of land-usage they practised, have been identified. Grazing and the cultivation of wheat have emerged as the predominant forms of usage to which the area has been subjected for over 250 years. The temporary nature of the allocations and the insecurity of tenure encouraged less responsible exploitation of the grazing and agricultural resources. The short-term rather than long-term perspective on resource usage has contributed to the overgrazed and overutilised condition of the land around the settlement at present, reducing carrying capacity and fertility. The overgrazing of the vegetation and overutilisation of the soil would have reduced the catchment potential of the area to the south of the settlement, accounting for the disappearance of the stream which appears on archival maps at the end of the eighteenth century (figure 2.1).

References in the loan place documents to the occasional 'opstal', and the indication of places of habitation on various archival maps, confirm the existence of settlement in the area as a whole, and on the site of the present settlement, during the eighteenth century. Lack of secure tenure may have discouraged large scale settlement, although the fact that 'opstalle' could be sold or bequeathed would have encouraged some permanent habitations to be constructed. The existence of a stream flowing into the coastal lake at the present site of the settlement, is an environmental factor which would have encouraged the development of large-scale settlement at that site. The loan place documents, archival maps, and writings of early travellers confirm the association of the Smit, Coetzee and Louw families with the Verlorenvlei area as a whole.

Research into loan place documents and archival maps has therefore revealed valuable clues as to the nature of land usage and settlement at Verlorenvlei in the eighteenth century. Further archival research could

reveal the extent of grazing and wheat cultivation, the number of people living in the area, the nature of their habitations and possessions, and their relationships to one another and to the natural environment.

Archival documents could also throw some light on land usage and settlement during the transitional period between the loan place system of the eighteenth century and the perpetual quitrent system of the nineteenth century.



Washoe Valley

Western Valley

St. Helena Bay

Figure 2.2

FOOTNOTES

1. Burger (1975), 1
2. Theal (1890) - reference provided by M. Cairns
3. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
4. Duly, (1968), 15
5. Duly (1968), XIV
6. Botha (1926), 48
7. Duly (1968), 17
8. Duly (1968), 16
9. Duly (1968), 15
10. Burger (1975), 24
11. Botha (1926), 103
12. Botha (1926), 106
13. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
14. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
15. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
16. Mossop (1947), opposite 18 - reproduced as figure 2.2
17. RLR vol. 9: 349 (SG. 409, folio 192)
18. de Villiers (1966) -reference provided by M. Cairns
19. RLR vol. 10: 154 (SG 255, folio 95)
20. Hoge (1958) - reference provided by M.Cairns
21. RLR vol. 12: 391 (SG 611, folio 237)
22. RLR vol. 13: 174 (SG 553, folio 116)
23. Mossop (1947), 96
24. Burger (1975), 297
25. RLR 9/1: 9 (SG 11)
26. RLR 38: 304 (SG 431) -reference provided by M. Cairns
27. de Villiers (1966) - reference provided by M. Cairns
28. RLR 14: 166 (SG 267, folio 126)
29. Mossop (1947), 93-95
30. RLR 18/1: 105 (SG 161, folio 94)
31. RLR 21/2: 281 (SG 455, folio 222)
32. Mossop (1947), 118-119
33. Burger (1975), 297
34. RLR 28/1:34 (SG 59, folio 94)
35. Burger (1975), 297
36. RLR 9: 184 (SG 221, folio 109)
37. RLR 38/1: 65 (SG.91, folio 36)
38. MOOC 8/14, no. 59 - reference provided by M. Cairns
39. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.

40. RLR 13: 245 (SG 85, folio 54)
41. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
42. RLR 23/1: 7 (SG11, folio 5)
43. de Villiers (1966) - reference provided by M. Cairns
44. Paterson (1789), 100
45. RLR 10: 228 (SG 389, folio 141)
46. Hague Archives, Resolution of the Council of Policy, 19-5-1741
47. RLR 9, 422 (SG 505, folio 233)
48. Cairns (1980), pers. comm.
49. RLR 10: 228 (SG 389, folio 141)
50. RLR 18/1: 7 (SG 13, folio 7)
51. RLR 18/1: 7 (SG 13, folio 7)-difficult to decipher and translate
52. RLR 9: 469 (SG 563, folio 187)
53. RLR 32: 19 (SG 39, folio 19)
54. Paterson (1789), 75
55. RLR 23/1: 11 (SG 15, folio 7)
56. Axelson comments that Forbes (in press 1980), in a footnote to Paterson's narrative, refers to "du Plessis, Ondersoek, p.328 " and to Thunberg's visit to Greef, mentioned in Travels vol. 2, 141. Forbes also gives the documentary reference to Greef's loan-place occupied by him from 1773 to 1779.

CHAPTER 3

Land ownership and usage of the Verlorenvlei farm
from the nineteenth century.

Introductory discussion of deeds' office research into maps, diagrams and deeds

Two useful guides exist for the investigation of land ownership records at the Cape Town Deeds Office (Cairns, 1975, and UCT Land Surveying). For the purposes of this study, the ownership summary record for the farm on which the Verlorenvlei settlement has been built, and which has undergone a number of name-changes like the Verlorenvlei area as a whole, may be found in Volume 1, Piketberg, farm no. 8

Perpetual Quitrent as a form of Land Tenure

The documents which have been traced in the Cape Town Deeds Office provide a record of the succession of ownership of the land on which the Verlorenvlei settlement is situated from the late 1830's to the present. The conversion of loan places to perpetual quitrent tenure took place on 6 August 1813, under Sir John Cradock. While the documents relating to loan places are found in the Cape Archives, those relating to perpetual quitrent tenure are found in the Deeds Office.

According to the preamble to the Proclamation regarding conversion of Loan Places to Perpetual Quitrent, the intention was to encourage agriculture, as the chief source of prosperity of the Colony, by certainty of tenure which was not provided by the loan system. It was felt that certainty of tenure would encourage farmers to make improvements and increase productivity. It was decided to grant to the holders of all lands on loan, on application, the same places on perpetual quitrent with conditions including the following:

- application must be made by memorial to the Government
- no loan place should exceed three thousand morgen, and special application had to be made for additional quantities.
- the holder would have the right to hold the land hereditarily and to alienate it.
- the Government reserved the right to precious stones, gold and silver and the right to make and repair public roads or to raise materials for that purpose.
- in all places adjoining to the sea, or communicating with the sea by inlets, the rights of the Crown were reserved, with the power of re-assumption for public purposes land not exceeding twenty morgen.
- laws relating to freehold lands would also relate to perpetual quitrent.
- a yearly rent, not exceeding 250 rixdollars, would be paid, according to situation, fertility, and other favourable circumstances of the land.
- the surveyor could not charge more than 100 rixdollars to be paid from the district treasury, unless the survey took more than five days, in which case he could charge 10 rixdollars for additional days.
- on division of a perpetual quitrent place, each holder was bound for the full amount of the rent.

- no alienation could take place without survey, transfer and registration.
- application for conversion must be made within twelve months of the proclamation.
- the title deed would be granted after survey by a surveyor assisted by the landdrost.¹

According to Duly (1968), there was to be a clause in each title requiring the holder to cultivate as much acreage as possible in the grant² by the end of three years and prohibiting the transfer of the property during that period. Although applications for conversion were to be made within twelve months, the time period was extended indefinitely because of poor response. To encourage conversion, Cradock prohibited occupation of new land until conversion had been effected.³ In a wider context:

"Cradock used land policy as a tool to accomplish his great goal: the retention of the Cape by the British. In exchange for a secure title to his lands, the Boer was to accept and even demand the continuation of British overlordship. Cradock's convictions, based on inadequate information and circular reasoning, resulted in the first fundamental change in the colony's land code. The Cape's basically self-devised and self-operating loan-farm tenure was rejected for a more regularized tenure of perpetual quitrent."⁴

Despite the proclamation, actual conversion took a long time and the backlog of applications for land caused a considerable delay. This delay accounts for the lapse of time between the last loan place allocations which have been traced prior to British acquisition of the colony in 1795, the Cradock proclamation of 1813, and the quitrent grants relating to the Verlorenvlei farm in 1837 and 1839.

Detailed discussion of land ownership and land-usage

The initial grant of the farm on perpetual quitrent, signed by Sir Benjamin d'Urban and dated 25 May 1837, was made to Michiel Johannes de Beer. The size of the quitrent grant was 5598 morgen 400 square roods, and the farm was described as "situated in the Cape District at Verlorene Valley including the Loan places 'In de Verlorene Valley' and 'Keurfontein' extending North to the Verloren Valley, and Land, reserved for persons coming to fish; West to the Sea Shore (high water mark is understood) S.S.E. to the Quitrent place named Zoute Kuilen and E.S.E. to the Place Tsasaarskraal". The grant was made on condition "That the Road - marked on the diagram - for the Cattle of the place Zoute Kuylen to approach and Drink at the Atjarsfontein, as well as all other Roads and Thoroughfares shall remain free; That the Salt pan shall be allowed to be used by the Neighbouring Inhabitants - that the public shall have the right of proceeding over this Land - to the 'Ground reserved for persons coming to Fish'. M.J. de Beer was required to pay, at the end of each year, four pounds and four shillings sterling. He was bound to have the boundaries properly traced out, and the land brought into such a state of cultivation as it was capable of, and was subject to all the duties and regulations applied to lands granted under such tenure.⁵ Written notes on the grant refer to Audit Office folio 634, and reserved new farm register, Piquetberg, folio 61.

Attached to the quitrent grant is the Surveyor's Diagram No. 374/1837, drawn by the Surveyor Knobel, and indicating the position of the farm, 'The Roode Verlooren Vally' on the southern bank of the 'Verlooren Valley'. A dotted semicircular line represents the original farm boundary, the radius of the semi-circle being determined by the distance that could be covered in half an hour on horseback at a walking pace. On the diagram, at the position of the present farm settlement, are marked only an 'old foundation' and a 'hut'. These appear to be central points within the semi-circle, suggesting that they were used to determine the extent of the semi-circular farm, the original loan place. It was common practice for the original loan places measured in this way to be circular in shape, but the position of this farm on the bank of the coastal lake must have caused it to be semi-circular rather than circular. In order to make up the full extent of the usual loan place, it would seem that the semi-circular 'In de Verlorene Valley' or 'The Roode Verlooren Vally' was combined with 'Keurfontein' or 'Keurbosch Fontein', also a semi-circular loan place because of its position along the coast. The centre

Sand of Bontehouet.

S.G. Est. No. 374/1837

Verlooren Valley

Wavians Berg

Stone

new bul. Foundation

Boat Land reserved for persons coming to Fish

The Rode Verlooren Valley

A 437/37

A 438/37

Call upon to be free for the use of the which having in the future

Waver

Waverbusch Fountain

Waver Fountain

Waverbusch Fountain

Waverbusch Fountain

Waverbusch Fountain

This... of this diagram has been CANCELLED under SECTION... of Act No. 8 of 1927 and is superseded by Diagram No. 21/1932... amended to... Cert. of Amended... Title... Resd... 3092... 6:1933... (Int.) A.J.S. Curver-General.

THE DACH No. 6
FIKEDBERG

The... of the... of Sand...

of the Keurfontein semi-circle appears to be the Keurbosch fontein itself. The radius of the semi-circle is approximately 750 Rhineland Roods, according to the scale given on the diagram, and the diameter is therefore approximately 1500 Rhineland Roods, or the length of the scale given on the diagram. The area of each loan place, and therefore the total farm, can be calculated. The boundaries of the farm granted under perpetual quitrent to Michiel Johannes de Beer were drawn to include both semi-circular loan places and the land inbetween.

On the land inbetween, as shown in the diagram, is a 'Saltpan to be free for the use of the neighbouring inhabitants'. Coarse salt is still distributed to farmers even today, and Mr. Piet Coetzee stores his allocation of the salt in VV05L next to the horse-mill.⁶ Also shown on the diagram, within the semi-circular boundary of Keurbosch Fontein, is an early example of a servitude, the "road for Kotzee's Cattle to and from atjar's fontein". A note at the bottom of the diagram, signed by the surveyor, Knobel, describes the land as being "situated in the Cape district in the Sub-division of Verloren Valley being the Farms Rode Verlooren Valley and Keurboschfontein...". The S.S.E. boundary is described as Brakkekuylen and alternatively Zouckekuylen, while on the diagram it is denoted as Brakkekuij.

Two years later, on 17 January 1839, the farm 'Tsasaars Kraal' was granted to Michiel Johannes de Beer. The extent of this farm was 5128 morgen 400 roods. The sequence of ownership for both farms owned by Michiel Johannes de Beer becomes uncertain at this point, as the folio register summary indicates four successive deeds transferring the land from persons with the surname 'de Beer' (M.J.; A.H.P.; H.C.; and M.J.) to Theunis Erasmus Smit, in the proportions $\frac{1}{2}; \frac{1}{8}; \frac{1}{8}; \frac{1}{4}$. There is no indication in the summary of how the two farms came to pass from Michiel Johannes de Beer to the four portions under de Beers. On the quitrent grant, however, a note records that a half-share was transferred to T.E. Smit by Deed 126 on 5 June 1856, and a half-share to H.C. de Beer and others by Deed 102 on 8 October 1860. This latter deed is not recorded in the folio register summary.

Deed 126 of 5 June 1856 is the second entry in the folio register for both properties.⁷ It declares land sold by Michiel Johannes de Beer to Theunis Erasmus Smit of Melkplaats, Berg River for 1400 pounds sterling.

The land is described as a "certain one half part or share in the perpetual quitrent places called 'In de Verloren Valley' and 'Keurfontein' also known by the names of 'Roode Verloren Valley' and 'Keurboschfontein' situated in the Cape district (now Malmesbury) at the Verloren Valley, measuring 5528 morgen 400 square roods"; also a "certain one half part or share in the perpetual quitrent place called 'Caesarskraal' situate as the above at the Verloren Valley measuring 5128 morgen and 400 square roods". The transfer is subject to the conditions in the original quitrent grants to Michiel Johannes de Beer. Deed 102 of 8 October 1860 effects the stipulation of the will of Michiel Johannes de Beer and his surviving spouse, Glaudina Maria Louw, that the other half share in the three perpetual quitrent places be divided between their sons, Hendrik Cornelis, Albertus, Michiel Johannes, and Abraham Hendrik Petrus. In 1859, Albertus mortgaged his one-eighth share. The property held by the de Beer sons was valued at £1100. By 1860, therefore, a half-share in the three quitrent places was held by Theunis Erasmus Smit and the other half-share divided equally between the four de Beer sons.

The next three deeds in the folio register summaries for both Roode Verloren Valley/Keurboschfontein and Tsasaars Kraal effect the transfer of the shares in the land held by H.C. de Beer and others from Deed 102 of 8 October 1860 to Theunis Erasmus Smit. The first of the three deeds, 171 of 10 October 1874, transfers from Abraham Hendrik Petrus de Beer to Theunis Erasmus Smit an 1/8 share in 'Inde Verloren Valley' and 'Keurfonteyn', and an 1/8 share in 'Caesar's kraal' for £950. The second of the three deeds, 21 of 6 January 1875, transfers from Hendrik Cornelius de Beer to Theunis Erasmus Smit a further 1/8 share in 'In de Verloren Valley/Keurfontein' and 'Caesars kraal' for £800. A receipt is filed with the deed for the payment of one year's rent on 'Inde Verloren Valley' and 'Keurfontein' up to 31 December 1874, as both this property and 'Caesar's Kraal' were still quitrent farms at that stage. The third deed, 123 of 9 February 1883, transfers from Michiel Johannes de Beer and Albertus de Beer to Theunis Erasmus Smit Sr a 1/4 share in the properties for £1000 and £1500. In this deed the properties are described as being in the division of Clanwilliam in the Verloren Valley, while Deed 171 describes them as being in the Cape District (now Malmesbury), and the power of attorney attached to this deed as being in the Field Cornetcy of Verloren Valley, division of Piquetberg. Deed 21 describes the properties as being in the division of Piketbergen, while the attached power of attorney describes them as being in the district of Malmesbury. Significantly, filed with Deed 123 are two receipts for transfer dues made

out to T.E. Smit, and for the first time in the documented record the name 'Verloren Vley' or 'In de Verloren vley' is used, indicating a change in popular usage from 'Vallei' to 'Valley' to 'Vlei'. At the same time the original name of 'Roode Verloren Valley' is given as an alternative in all three deeds. The effect of the transfers thus far has been to place all the land included in 'In de Verloren Valley'/'Keurfontein' and 'Caesar's Kraal' in the hands of Theunis Erasmus Smit.

On the death of Theunis Erasmus Smit, the farms 'In de Verloren Valley'/'Keurfontein' and 'Caesar's Kraal' were divided between Daniel Erasmus Smit and Teunis Erasmus Coetzee, heads of the major families forming the community of the Verlorenvlei settlement. By Deed 9930 of 31 October 1924, Daniel Erasmus Smit and Teunis Erasmus Coetzee each inherited half-shares in part of the property owned by Theunis Erasmus Smit, which included Lot B of the farm Bonteheuvel on the northern bank of Verlorenvlei; 'In de Verloren Valley'/'Keurfontein'; and 'Caesar's Kraal'. The farms were bequeathed in the joint will of the late Theunis Erasmus Smit and his predeceased spouse, Maria Magdalena Smit (born Kotze), the will being made at Klipfontein in the division of Piquetberg on 27 January 1888.

The original bequest was made to the son, Daniel Erasmus who died on 6 December 1902, and to the daughter Maria Magdalena, who died on 4 April 1924, so that the farms passed to the son of Daniel Erasmus and the son of Maria Magdalena. Daniel, son of Daniel Erasmus, was the grandson of Theunis Erasmus Smit by his second marriage to Maria Magdalena Smit (born Kotze); and Teunis Erasmus Coetzee was a son of Maria Magdalena, the daughter of Theunis Erasmus Smit by his second marriage to Maria Magdalena Smit (born Kotze), and herself married to Daniel Nicolaas Hermanus Coetzee. While Theunis Erasmus Smit, who died on 26 April 1892, and Maria Magdalena Smit, (born Kotze) who died on 1 March 1888 were living at Klipfontein up to the time of their deaths, Daniel Erasmus Smit and Maria Magdalena Coetzee (born Smit), as well as her husband Daniel Nicolaas Hermanus Coetzee, were living at Verloren Vallei or Roode Verloren Vlei at the time of their deaths, and were probably members of the Verlorenvlei settlement.

A note on the deed points out the confusion in the preceding transfers, whereby the properties are described as being situated in the Malmesbury, Piquetberg, and Clanwilliam divisions, and recommends that the correct division be ascertained. Also filed with the deed, in addition to the death notices for Theunis Erasmus Smit, Maria Magdalena Coetzee (born Smit), and Daniel Nicolaas Hermanus Coetzee, and the baptismal certificates ('Dooop Cedel') for Daniel Erasmus Smit and Teunis Erasmus Coetzee, is a handwritten note from "Teunis Erasmus Coetzee, een boer van Roode Verloren Vlei, Piquetberg". This note testifies that although his father's name is spelt 'Koetzee' in his baptismal certificate, both he and his father have always written their names 'Coetzee', which is the recognised family name.

The farms, according to the terms of the will, had been subject to a life usufruct in favour of the survivor and the said Daniel Erasmus and Maria Magdalena, which had lapsed by reason of their death. Other properties owned by Theunis Erasmus Smit at the time of his death were the farms, 'De Plaat', 'Gedeelte van Melkplaats', and 'Jakhalsfontein', all in the division of Piquetberg. In an article in the Cape Argus dated 18 July 1947, it is stated that in 1839, "Oom Theunis Smit, the patriarch of the family, bought the farm Velddrift to use as 'soetveld' for his sheep and cattle during part of the year. He had many people working on his other farms as foremen, shepherds and farmhands..."⁸ Smit's property holdings in the area were therefore extensive, and he has been compared to a feudal overlord, a patriarch, and a cattle baron. Although he died in 1892, the transfers of Deeds 9930 and 9931 were not made until 1924, after the death of his daughter Maria Magdalena, as the will specified:

"Dat na den dood van de langstlevende van de beide testateuren, de gesegde legatarissen (Daniel Erasmus and Maria Magdalena) te hebben volle rechten op, en de vruchtgebruiken, van gezegde plaatsen, voornoemd, maar dat de gesegde legatarissen voornoemd niet het rech hebben zullen gedurende hun leeftyd transport te verkrygen in hunne naam, van de gesegde plaatsen..."

Dat na den dood van Daniel Erasmus, en Maria Magdalena (gehuwd met Daniel Koetzee), zullen de plaatsen hun toekomstige getransporteerd worden aan Daniel, zoon van Daniel Erasmus, en aan Theunis, zoon van Maria Magdalena..."⁹

In the interim, the properties were held by the Executors. Deed 9931, dated 31 October 1924 like deed 9930, effects the transfer of the other half share in Lot B of Bonteheuvel; 'In de Rooi Verloren Valley'/'Keurfontein'; and 'Caesar's Kraal' to Teunis Erasmus Coetzee. A note has been added to Deed 171, indicating that 1/16 share was transferred to D.E. Smit by Deed 9930, and 1/16 to T.E. Coetzee by Deed 9931. A note has been added to Deed 123, to the effect that 1/8 share was transferred to D.E. Smit by Deed 9930 and 1/8 to T.E. Coetzee by Deed 9931.

On 31 October 1924, the farms 'In de Verloren Valley'/'Roode Verloren Valley', 'Keurfontein'/'Keurboschfontein', and 'Caesar's Kraal'/'Tsasaar's Kraal' were owned in half shares by Daniel Erasmus Smit and Teunis Erasmus Coetzee, the grandsons of Theunis Erasmus Smit. The final entries on the folio registers for both properties, folio 6/1 and 7/1, are references to Deed 3092 of 1 June 1933, which was a Certificate of Amended Title, made out to Teunis Erasmus Coetzee and Daniel Erasmus Smit, consolidating the two properties into the farm Verloren Vlei, Farm No. 8, Piquetberg, area 11008 morgen 8365 square feet. The folio register continues on folio 8/1, and the farm is shown on diagram 811/1932.

By the Certificate of Amended Title, the property was now to be described as: "Certain piece of quitrent land in the division of Piquetberg, called Verloren Vlei, comprising (1) the farms Roode Verloren Valley and Keurboschfontein and (2) the farm Tsasaarskraal or Caesar's Kraal. Measuring 11 008 Morgen, 8365 square feet." The Receiver of Revenue certified the quitrent paid up to 31 December 1932.

At the same time on 1 June 1933, the property was partitioned. Deed 3093 transferred 5504 morgen known as Verloren Vlei A, portion of Verloren Vlei, to Teunis Erasmus Coetzee. Deed 3094 transferred 5504 morgen and 8365 square feet, known as the remainder of Verloren Vlei, to Daniel Erasmus Smit. At this point, in 1933, the land on which the settlement is situated was divided in ownership between the Smit and Coetzee families. Daneel Erasmus Smit was granted a right of way 150 feet wide across Verloren Vlei A (P to Q on figure 3.2), while Teunis Erasmus Coetzee was given a right of way 12 feet wide over the remainder of Verloren Vlei (R to S on figure 3.2). The salt from the salt pan was to be used in common, with Teunis Erasmus Coetzee having the right over half the salt as well as the right to cross the land of Daniel Erasmus Smit to gather and remove the salt.

The ownership record of the two sections of the settlement will now be dealt with separately. By Deed 10872 of 31 July 1958, the remainder of Verloren Vlei (reduced by 2 morgen transferred to the Educational Trustees for the school district of Piquetberg) was transferred in equal shares to the five sons of Daniel Erasmus Smit and Francina Johanna Smit: Daniel Erasmus Smit, Johannes Nicolaas Petrus Smit, Pieter Matthys Smit, Theunis Erasmus Smit, and Dirk Johannes Brand Smit. Daniel Erasmus Smit (snr) retained usufruct until his death in 1972 at the age of nearly 92 years. In addition to the rights of way mentioned above, the following conditions were applied:

"na water te boor of te grawe en indien nodig 'n pomp op sodanige plek waar water gekry word, op te rig, 'n opgaardam te bou en die water deur middel van 'n pyplyn te vervoer na die grond hierdeur getranspoteer te word op voorwaarde dat die transportgewers en hulle opvolgers in titel geregtig sal wees om sonder enige vergoeding water uit genoemde boorgate te neem vir primêre doeleindes.

Die transportnemer of hulle opvolgers as eienaars van die grond hierdeur getranspoteer te word sal die reg om uit die vlei bekend as Verlorenvlei in soverre dit gelee is op die bogenoemde resterende gedeelte van Verloren Vlei, soveel water as wat hulle vir primêre en tertiêre gebruik mag nodig hê, te neem en dit na die grond hierdeur getranspoteer te vervoer en om vir hierdie doel die nodige pompinstallasies en ander werke en pyplyne op te rig op die bogenoemde resterende gedeeltes van Verloren Vlei en Rheboks Plaat Berg. Indien transportnemer as eienaars van die grond hierdeur getranspoteer te word en sy opvolgers in titel van ander persone of ingevolge 'n Bevel van enige Hof die reg verleen word om uit ander dele van die Verlorenvlei water te neem sal hy die reg hê om dit by wyse van 'n pyplyn en die ander nodige werke oor die bogenoemde resterende gedeelte van Verloren Vlei en Rheboks Plaat Berg te neem na die grond hierdeur getranspoteer te word. "10

On 31 August 1960, by Deed 13656, Daniel Erasmus Smit (Jnr) transferred his one-fifth share in the remainder of Verloren Vlei (5500, 1688 morgen) to Theunis Erasmus Smit. With a Certificate of Registered Title (No. 13657 of 31 August 1960) to his own one-fifth share, Theunis Erasmus Smit acquired the one-fifth share of Dirk Johannes Brand Smit by Deed 15251 of 30 September 1963 and the one-fifth share from the estate of Pieter Matthys Smit by Deed 10482 of 27 April 1973. The one-fifth share of Johannes Nicolaas Petrus Smit was transferred to Elandsbaai Handelsmaatskappy, the director of the company being Willem Johannes Engelbrecht. The property was then partitioned between Elandsbaai Handelsmaatskappy (950 ha) and Theunis Erasmus Smit (3759 ha), with portions expropriated

by ISCOR for the construction of the Sishen-Saldanha railway. On 25 August 1977, a further 60 ha was transferred by Theunis Erasmus Smit to the Piquetberg Divisional Council, leaving ± 3698 ha as the extent of the remainder of Verloren Vlei.

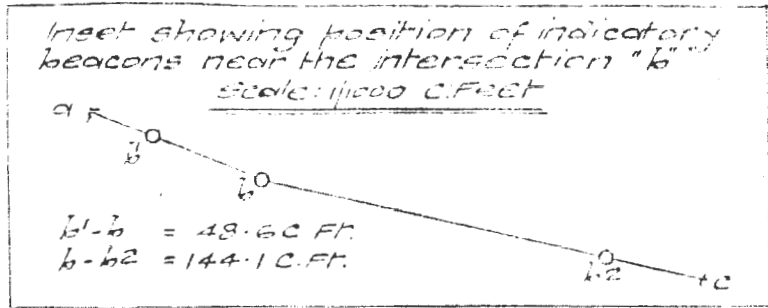
Verloren Vlei A, or portion 1 of Verloren Vlei farm, was divided in equal shares on 3 October 1950, between the five sons of Teunis Erasmus Coetzee and his wife, Anna Moressa Jacoba Coetzee (née Smit). Daniel Erasmus Hermanus Coetzee (Deed 14831), Theunis Erasmus Daniel Coetzee (Deed 14832), Hendrik Frederik Coetzee (Deed 14833), Johannes Nicolaas Coetzee (Deed 14834), and Piet Adriaan Smit Coetzee (Deed 14835).

The conditions of the will dividing the property between the five sons include the following:

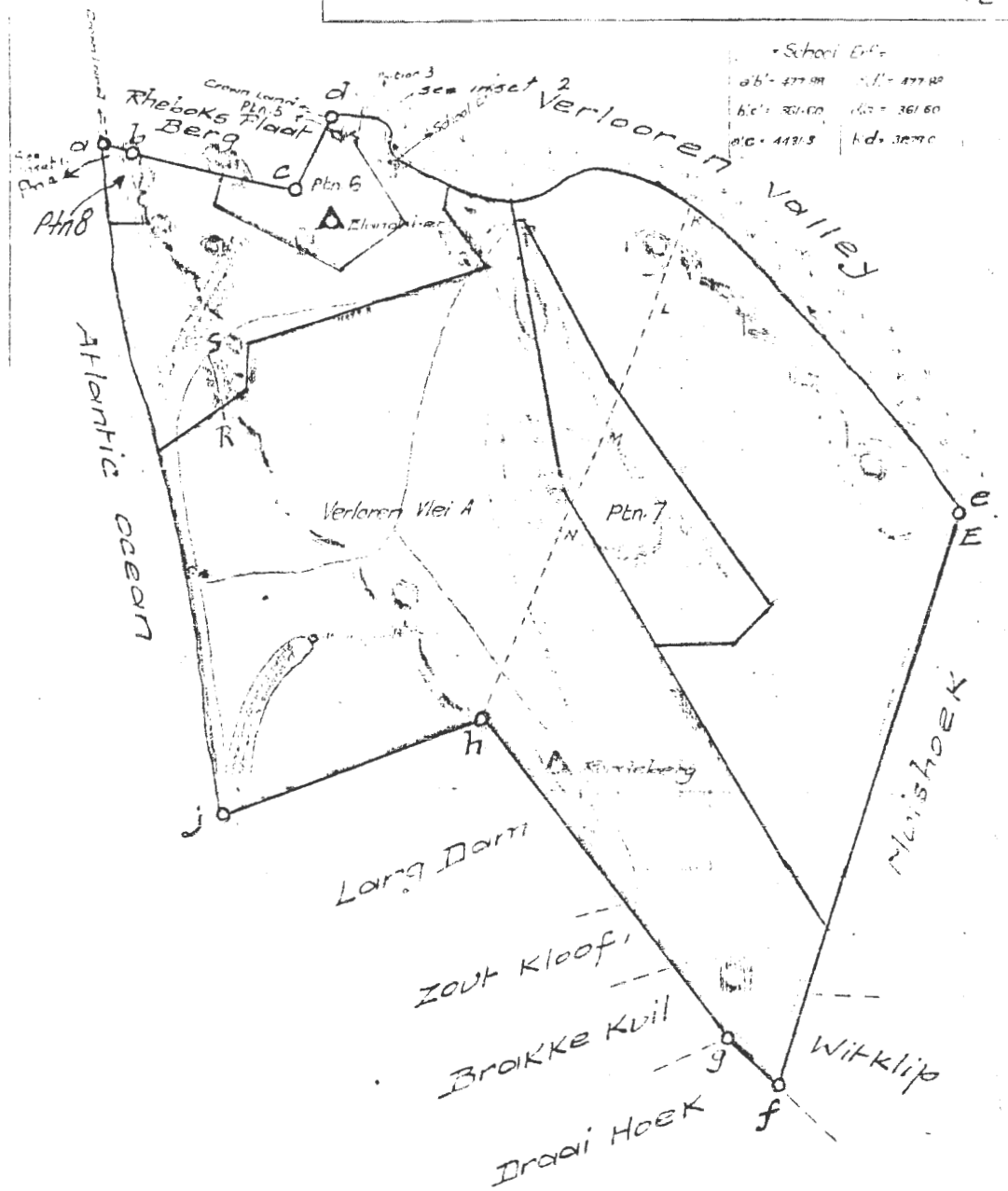
"...en as een of meer van hulle kon te sterwe sonder kroos na te laat, verval sy of hulle aandeel of aandeel op die kinders van die ander erfgename van die Vasgoed wat Teunis Erasmus na die Testateur in hierdie testament heet en sy naam dra." ¹¹

On 31 August 1952, by Deed 11836, the one-fifth share from the estate of Daniel Erasmus Hermanus Coetzee was transferred to Teunis Erasmus Coetzee, who sold his share to Elandea Visserye (Eiendoms) Beperk on 5 July 1978, with Deed 15456. The one-fifth share from the estate of Johannes Nicolaas Coetzee (Snr) was transferred to Johannes Nicolaas Coetzee (Jnr) by Deed 8326 of 7 April 1975, with a lifelong usufruct to Alida Hendrika Coetzee.

According to the records filed in the Deeds Office, the ownership of the land on which the settlement is presently situated would appear to be divided between Theunis Erasmus Smit, and four members of the Coetzee family, Theunis Erasmus Daniel Coetzee, Hendrik Frederik Coetzee, Johannes Nicolaas Coetzee, and Piet Adriaan Smit Coetzee. The division of the settlement originated when the land was divided between the grandsons of the patriarch, Theunis Erasmus Smit (1804-1892), the one grandson being the child of Theunis Erasmus's son by his second marriage, and the other grandson the child of Theunis Erasmus's daughter by his second marriage, herself married to a Coetzee. Members of the Smit and Coetzee families, including the sisters of the present owners and their husbands, occupy the houses in the respective sections of the settlement. The two families are however, so closely related that the community forms one large, extended family.



ST	Cup
ab	17
bc	17
cd	2
de	32
ef	27
fg	17
gh	12
hj	12
jd	31
ee	



Area
 Ver
 Aha

Area
 ver

Point	Value
a	17
b	17
c	2
d	32
e	27
f	17
g	12
h	12
i	31
k, l, m, n	

Figure 3.2:
 Cape Town Deeds Office, Certificate
 of Amended Title 3092,
 diagram 811/1932

Scale: 1/100,000 Cape Fl.

Atlantic Ocean
 Verloren Valley efg,h,j High Water Mark
 Verloren Vlei
 Commencings: 1. The Farms Roodt Verloren Valley and the
 2. The Farm Marishoek and the Farm Marishoek and the Farm Marishoek
 the left bank of Verloren Valley K.L.M.N.H.J. High Water
 the left bank of Verloren Valley K.L.M.N.H.J. High Water
 the left bank of Verloren Valley K.L.M.N.H.J. High Water

Land ownership, land usage and community relationships

Community relationships in the Verlorenvlei farm settlement are closely linked to family relationships. Almost every person occupying one of the houses in the settlement is related by birth or marriage to all the others, so that a complex web of interrelationships binds together all members of the community throughout time. It is as if an enormous diagram could be drawn of all members from the beginning of the settlement through to the present, reading vertically the members and their relationships chronologically, and reading horizontally the members and their relationships within the settlement at any one point in time.

Information on community relationships, which are essentially family relationships, is obtainable from a number of different sources. The Cape Town Deeds Office records contain considerable family details, interfiled with the ownership records of the Verlorenvlei farm. The Deeds Office records include copies of birth, marriage and death certificates, so that the history of land ownership is intricately interwoven with the history of community relationships, and ultimately with the history of the area. Ownership of the Verlorenvlei farm is predominantly confined to two major family groups, the Smits and the Coetzees. Subdivision is based on family relationships, as it is determined by inheritance. The web of relationships which binds the members of the settlement extends outwards to encompass the area as a whole, many of the people in the area being related by marriage or birth. Three of the major families in the area are the Smits, the Coetzees and the Louws, the ownership of the Smit and Coetzee families being based mainly on the southern bank of the lake, and that of the Louw family on the northern bank. There has been considerable intermarriage between these three families and other families in the area. The records of allocation of loan places in the area indicate that these three families have been associated with the Verlorenvlei since the early eighteenth century.

It should be possible, ultimately, to trace the details of all family relationships and land ownership in the area from the early eighteenth century. Details about family relationships can be supplemented and cross-checked from various sources. Copies of wills are held in the Cape Archives and the Master's office; copies of the baptismal, death and marriage certificates are held by the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk; details of population, including census statistics and voters' roll

details, are kept by the Department of the Interior in Pretoria and Cape Town.

A further source of information has been the graveyards in the Verlorenvlei area. Both the family graveyards on the Smit and Coetzee sections (VV01J and VV060) of the settlement have been visited, and a complete record made by transcribing details of individuals from the still legible grave headstones, including date of birth or baptism, death, and relationships to others who erected the stones or are buried alongside. Unfortunately, some of the oldest gravestones are illegible or non-existent, but a considerable body of family data has been collected from this source. The earliest birthdate on a grave that can be identified in the Smit graveyard is that of Theunis Erasmus Smit, born 15 January 1864; and the second earliest is that of Johanna C. Smit, born 15 February 1866. The earliest legible grave in the Coetzee graveyard is that of E.J. Smit, born 19 October 1847, and died 10 October 1913. The second earliest is that of Johannes G.M. Mostert, from 25 October 1848 to 6 February 1935.

An index card has been made out for each person traced in this way, with all known details concerning that person being written in on the card, and additional details which emerge about the person from interviews or background reading being added where applicable. The cards have been filed in alphabetical order of family, (two cross-referencing cards being made out for married women, one in the maiden name and one in the married name(s)), and within family in chronological order of date of birth. This index system forms the basis for the gradual collection over time of a complete record of family relationships. It can be supplemented, for example, by private individuals who have researched their own family backgrounds out of interest. Ultimately it should be possible to account for every person who has lived in the settlement, to estimate the number of people living in the settlement at various points in time, and to develop a pattern of population growth and decline. The names of the people living in the settlement at the various points can be combined with knowledge about the occupation record of the houses to build up the pattern of development of the built environment and to date the houses. It will also be possible to identify major family units and individual personalities whose association with the Verlorenvlei settlement contributes to its historical significance. In some cases, it has been

possible to obtain photographs of family units or individual personalities so identified, selected photographs being reproduced in this report.

Diagrams of family relationships, or family-trees, have also been drawn where sufficient details have been found, and these diagrams linked to the houses with which the families are known to have been associated. Old family bibles and illustrated wall-hangings of 'geslagsregisters' found during the course of interviews and field research have been used as the basis for family-tree diagrams where possible. As most of the families in the settlement appear to derive from German, Dutch or French immigrants, the first six generations may be traced in the two volumes by de Villiers, recently updated by Pama. Other 'geslagsregisters', such as that of old German families in South Africa, may also be of assistance.

FOOTNOTES

1. Cradock Proclamation (1913)
2. Cape Town Deeds Office, Cape Quitrents, vol 8, 50
3. Duly (1968), 49
4. Duly (1968), 179
5. Cape Town Deeds Office, Cape Quitrents, vol 8, 50
6. P. Coetzee (1979), pers. comm.
7. Cape Town Deeds Office, Piketberg, folio 8/1
8. Cape Argus, 18-7-1947
9. Copy of will filed Cape Town Deeds Office, Deed 9930, 31-8-1924.
Will dated 27-1-1888.
10. Cape Town Deeds Office, Deed 13656, 31-8-1960
11. Copy of will filed Cape Town Deeds Office, Deeds 14831-14835, 3-8-1950

CHAPTER 4

The mapping of the Verlorenvlei farm settlement

Introductory discussion of Mapping Project

A detailed map of all man-made features in the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei is essential to this and other studies in the area. The production of such a map was undertaken by the Department of Land Surveying of the University of Cape Town, as a project in practical surveying for third year Civil Engineering students, during the period November 16-23, 1979. The project was supervised by Mr. H. Ruther, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Surveying, with the assistance of three demonstrators from final-year Surveying: Grenville Nicholson, Izak Rumboll and Adrian Besserling, and two demonstrators from final-year Engineering: Ian Kennedy and Michael Pitt. The Engineering students were required to spend five days in the field, and a further week in map preparation.

The total area of the settlement was divided into two sections, coinciding with the division of land ownership between Theunis Erasmus Smit and the Coetzee family. The owners were approached for permission to carry out a survey of their property. Once permission had been granted, the demonstrators conducted a reconnaissance of the total area in order to divide each section into three sub-sections, so that the six sub-sections would require equal surveying effort. The sub-sections were drawn onto an aerial photograph of the settlement. The optimum positions for the 10 major control pegs were also established on the site and indicated on the aerial photograph. These control pegs were used as hinge points for sightings by adjacent surveying groups, so that the maps of adjoining sub-sections could be connected to form a combined map of each section and of the settlement as a whole. The demonstrators then conducted a detailed reconnaissance of the six sub-sections. During this reconnaissance, visits were made to houses within the settlement to inform the residents of the nature of the survey. At the same time, the names and family relationships of the residents were obtained to update the historical record of occupancy of houses comprising the farm settlement.

The 24 Engineering students assigned to the project were divided into 6 groups, each group of 4 students being allocated one of the sub-sections for surveying and mapping. At a later stage an additional group of 4

students was assigned to assist in surveying half of sub-section 5. The groups carried out a reconnaissance of their sub-section under the supervision of a demonstrator. The students were made familiar with the purpose of the project, to produce a map of all man-made features in the settlement. Man-made features were to include all houses, sheds, stables, derelict buildings, foundations of ruined buildings, graveyards, animal enclosures, fences, roads, pathways, patches of cultivation, wind-mills, water tanks, telegraph lines and planted trees.

In terms of surveying procedures, the students were required to:

- (1) establish a line of traverse points around their sub-section;
- (2) level a distance of 1 km to transfer a height from a tide gauge in the bay to the Verlorenvlei settlement;
- (3) carry out resection on a point established on Bobbejaansberg.

After all the surveying procedures had been completed, tracing-paper maps were produced on a 1:500 scale of each sub-section of the settlement. The slope of the ground was represented on the map by contours drawn in at appropriate positions. Heights of the buildings relative to the height of the relevant survey point were also noted. A set of floor plan outlines was drawn separately on an enlarged scale.

During the project, all buildings and ruins were photographed from front and rear, and as many additional angles as necessary to highlight significant features. The colour slides were numbered to correspond with the numbers assigned to the features on the site plans. This collection of 120 slides provides a record of the current status of each building to update the historical record derived from old photographs, paintings and sketches, written and verbal descriptions. Selected prints, made from black and white copies of these slides, are used for illustrative purposes to supplement the text of this report, in discussion of features of historical or architectural significance, and of the development pattern of the settlement. A horse mill on the Coetsee farm was photographed and measured by an architect, Mr. P. Holtrop, in order to produce the detailed diagrams, which are included in Chapter 5 of this report.

Each 1:500 map of a sub-section of the settlement was microfilmed for purposes of security and rapid, variable-size reproduction. Prints were made in A4 size of the six sub-section maps, and combined to produce maps of the two major sections of the settlement, as well as an overall map of the settlement as at November 1979. Rough estimates of the age of the various man-made features which were made at the time of the survey were used (in conjunction with the chronological series of aerial photographs) to create maps of the settlement at various stages of development. These development maps are included in Chapter 6, to illustrate the hypothetical analysis of development patterns within the settlement. The development maps are based on data gathered thus far, and although their accuracy can be questioned at this point, they will be of use to human settlement geographers and historians as the study of the past of the Verlorenvlei settlement deepens.

Value of maps produced

Besides their value to this study, the maps of the Verlorenvlei settlement are potentially useful for other purposes:

- they could assist local landowners in future land-use decisions and farm management policy;
- they could be of use to local authorities to ensure that administrative decisions are made with due regard for the historical and architectural value of the settlement;
- they could act as site plans or common points of focus for various studies of an historical or architectural nature which might be undertaken in the area in the future;
- they provide a framework for the collation of research, establishing the position of excavations, sketches, diagrams and photographs resulting from the work of various researchers in the past and future;
- they will assist researchers from other disciplines to become familiar with the area;
- they can be related to aerial photographs taken of the area, and provide considerably more detail than the latest set of Trigonommetrical Survey aerial photographs because of the height at which these were taken;
- because of the detailed ground survey, description, and inventory, which were carried out in the course of mapping, an up-to-date record has been produced of the state of the settlement at a specific point in time, of potential value to historical and architectural conservationists and rural settlement geographers.

Without the co-operative effort of teams of undergraduate students, supervised by the Department of Land Surveying of the University of Cape Town, the maps required for an investigation into the nature and historical background of the human settlement at Verlorenvlei could not have been produced. The reduction of the 1:500 maps to more manageable sizes has rendered any minor inaccuracies insignificant, and has resulted in a set of maps which will be of use to any researchers studying the settlement in future. Researchers will have access to a set of tracing-paper maps of each sub-section, from which paper copies can be made, if a 1:500 scale is required. The set of microfilm negatives of the maps of each sub-section allow for rapid and inexpensive production of map copies from A4 to A1 size. A collage of the A4 copies and a tracing from this collage, both made by Mr. P. Holtrop, can be photocopied to produce map copies of the two main sections or of the settlement as a whole.

Maps of the Settlement



Coetzee section

Smit section

Figure 4.1
Map of Verlorenvlei settlement

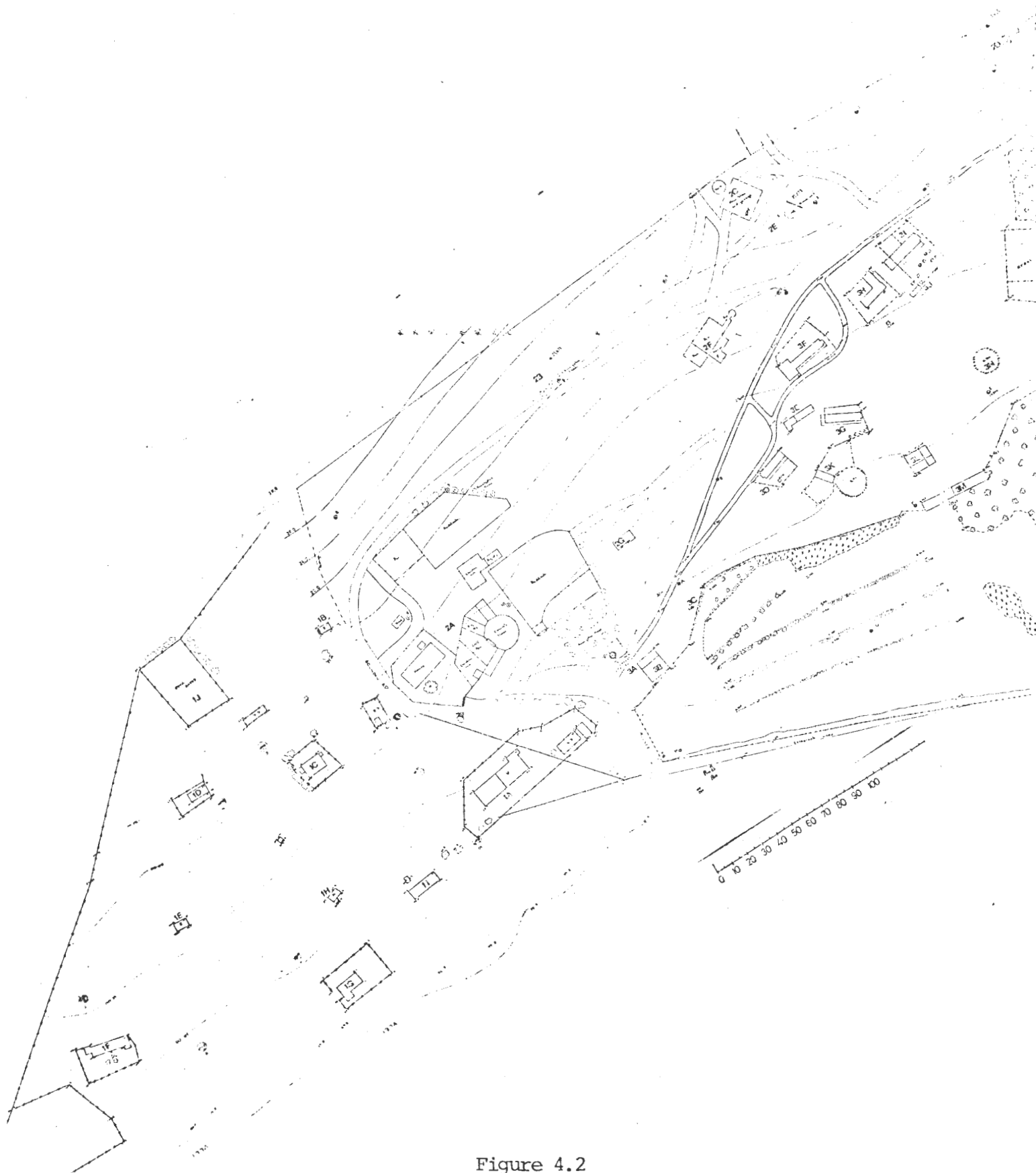
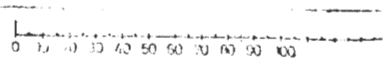


Figure 4.2
Smit section - Verlorenvlei settlement



Figure 4.3
Coetzee section - Verlorenvlei settlement



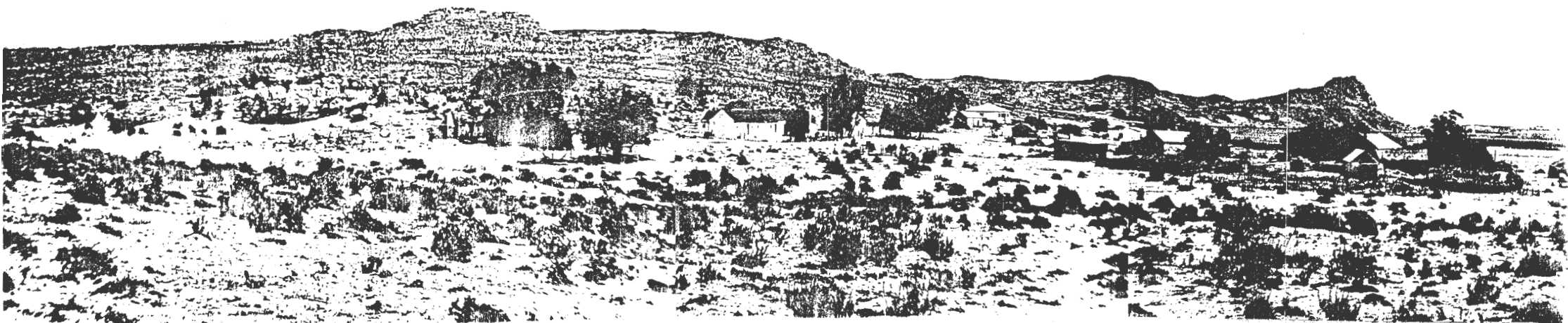


Figure 4.6

Sub-section 6

Sub-section 6.

Sub-sections 4 (foreground) and 5 (background) Photograph: S.

Panoramic view of Coetzee section - Verlorenvlei settlement

Coetzee
section

Smit
section

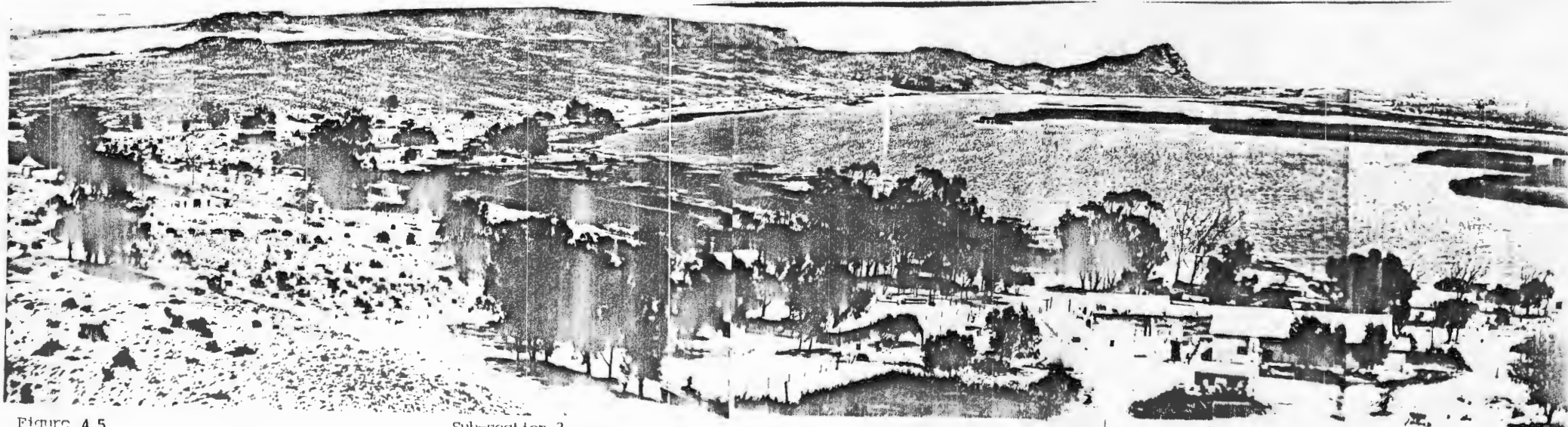


Figure 4.5

Sub-section 3

Panoramic view of Smit section - Verlorenvlei settlement (1979)

Sub-section 2

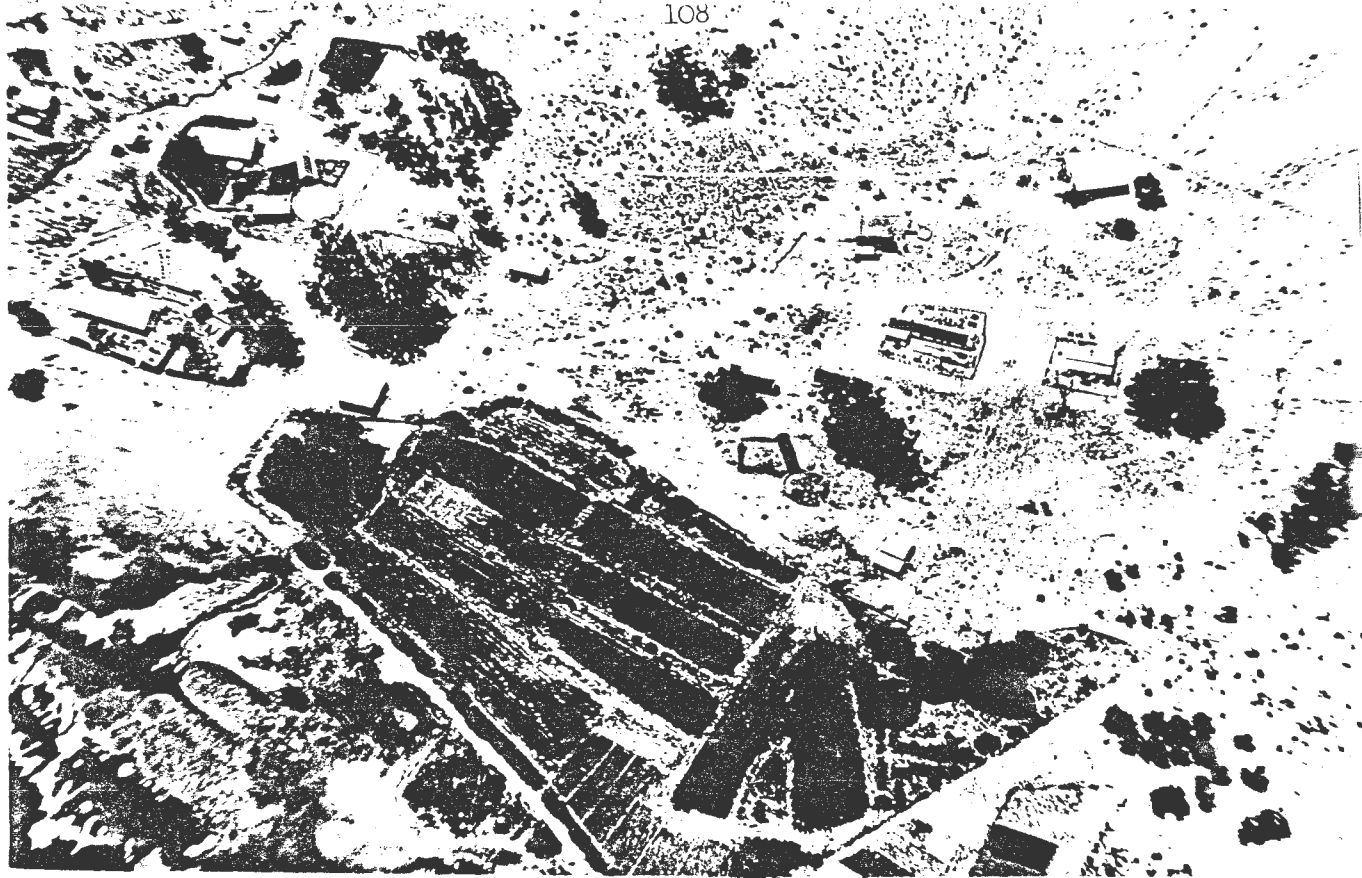


Figure 4.4

Photo: S. Lane

Aerial view of Smit section - Verlorenvlei settlement (1979)

Development of an information system based on maps

The maps which have been produced in the course of this study indicate all man-made features in the Verlorenvlei settlement which could be detected by detailed ground study and survey in the period 16-23 November, 1979. A numbering system has been devised which uniquely identifies each man-made feature, and which allows for additions if features are discovered by future ground study or excavation.

Simultaneously with the mapping, a photographic record in the form of colour slide transparencies was made of every man-made feature, and the same numbering system used to link the slides with the maps. The slide collection is arranged in alphanumerical sequence for easy reference, and each of the slides has been dated. The intention is that this collection should provide the nucleus or framework for the classification and amalgamation of the numerous privately-owned reproductions of Verlorenvlei settlement buildings which have been traced to date. The Vernacular Architecture Society, for example, made an excursion visit to the settlement on 9-10 September, 1972, and the slides which were taken during that visit were lodged with the Cape Archives. Copies of these and other slides, photographs or sketches which can be traced, can be numbered to correspond with the map, and interfiled with the nucleus collection in chronological sequence within alphanumerical sequence.

At the same time as the settlement was being mapped and photographed, a description of each man-made feature was compiled, including wherever possible, past and present occupancy, present condition, past and present usages, modifications and extensions, unusual features, building materials, relationship of present occupants to other members of the settlement community, and details likely to be of importance in tracing the history of the house and its occupants. Each of these descriptions has been numbered to correspond with the relevant features on the maps and in the slide collection. Additional details and facts which can be supplied by other research and researchers can be added to this basic data collection in chronological sequence within the numbering system.

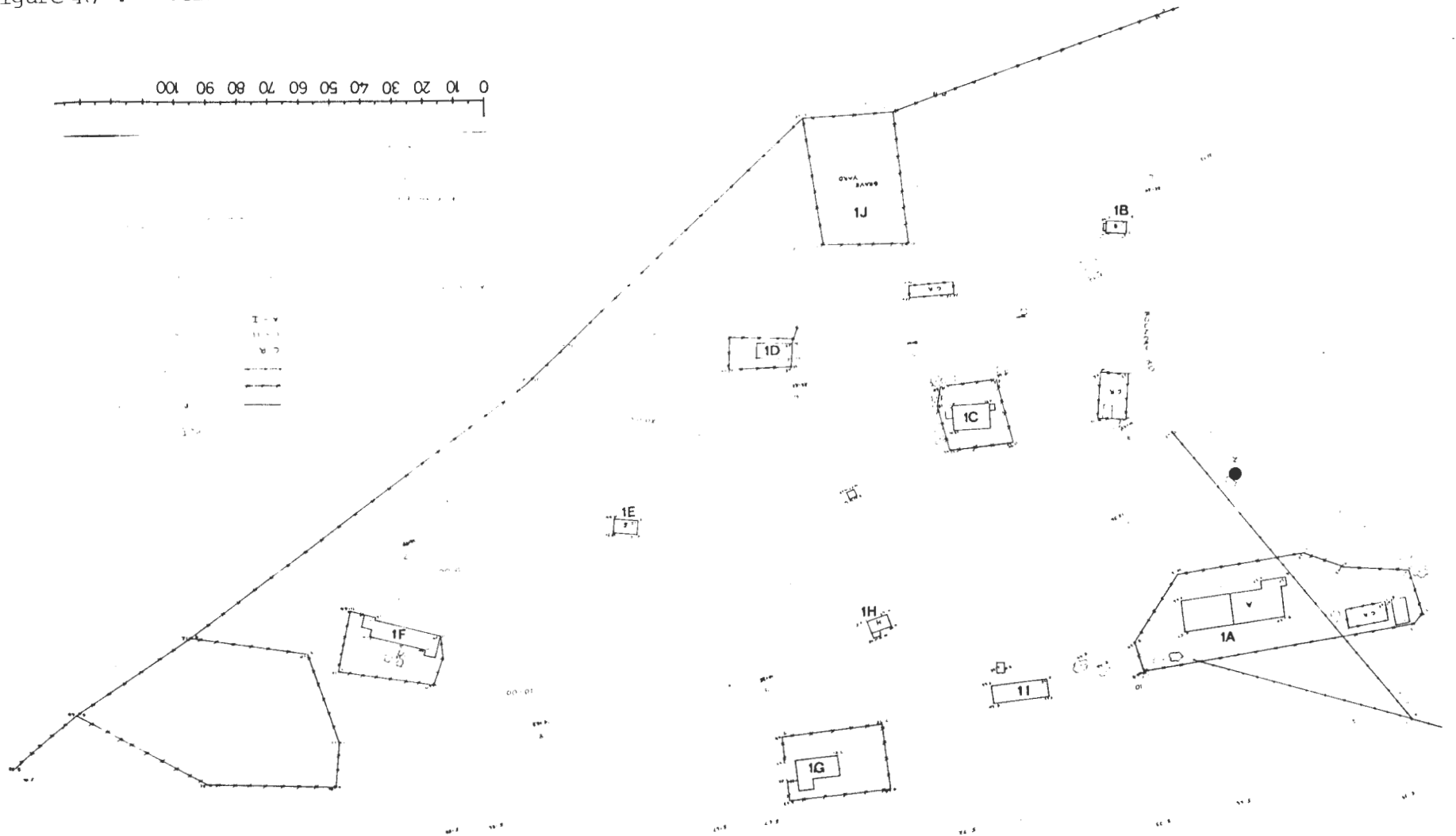
It is recommended that there should be an ongoing amalgamation of slides, photographs, sketches, plans, diagrams, descriptions, historical details, family tree diagrams, lists of furniture and utensils from auction lists

and wills filed in the archives, and recorded interviews with previous and present occupants associated with individual settlement buildings.

The envisaged end-product of such a process of amalgamation would be an extension of the nucleus information system developed during the course of this study. An information system based on maps and the collection of visual, verbal, and written records from numerous sources at all possible points in time, is essential in building up a complete history of the Verlorenvlei settlement.

Maps and descriptions of man-made features in each sub-section of the settlement.

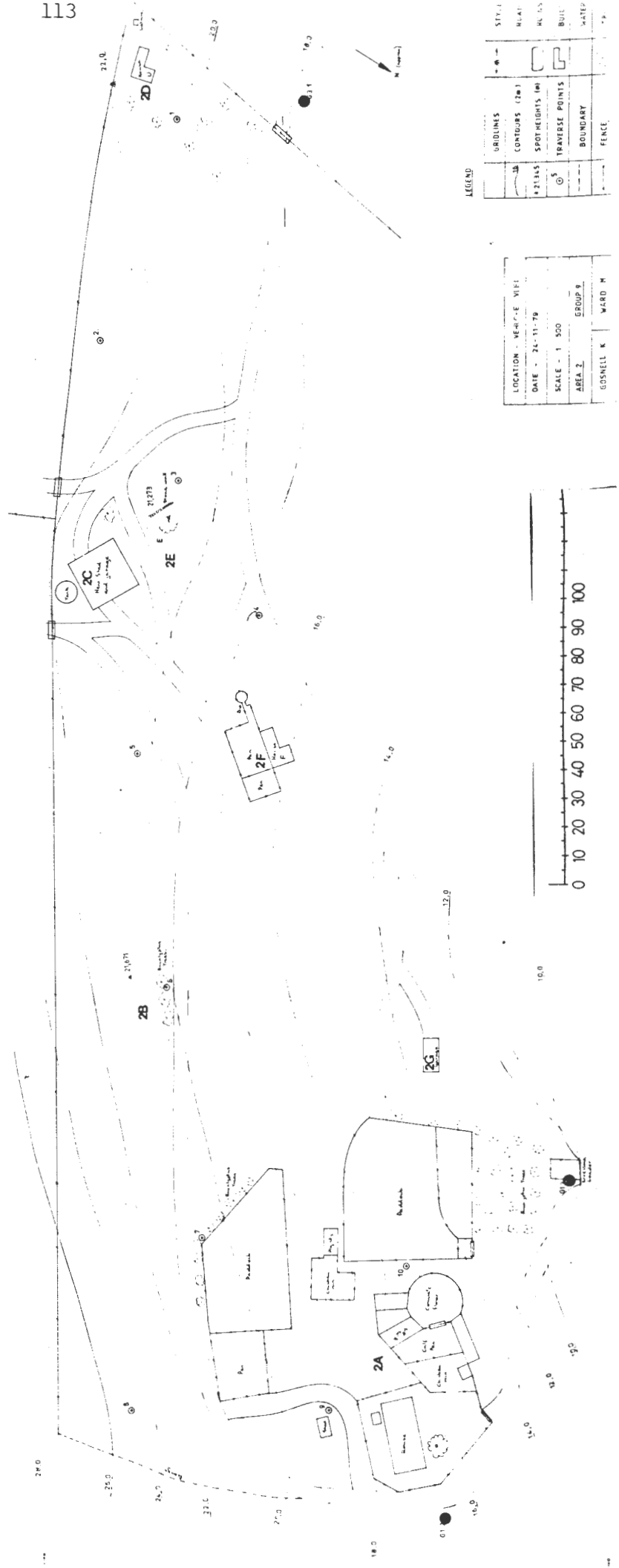
Figure 4.7 : Verlorenvlei settlement - Sub-section 1



Sub-section 1

- WV01A House - modified 'langhuis'
- WV01B Presently an outbuilding, but possibly a small cottage
previously
- WV01C House
- WV01D Outbuilding, possibly a wagon-shed previously, with evidence
of a 'trapvloer'
- WV01E Outbuilding, possibly a wagon-shed previously, with evidence
of a 'trapvloer'
- WV01F House -- modified 'langhuis'
- WV01G House
- WV01H Outbuilding
- WV01I Outbuilding
- WV01J Graveyard of Smit family members

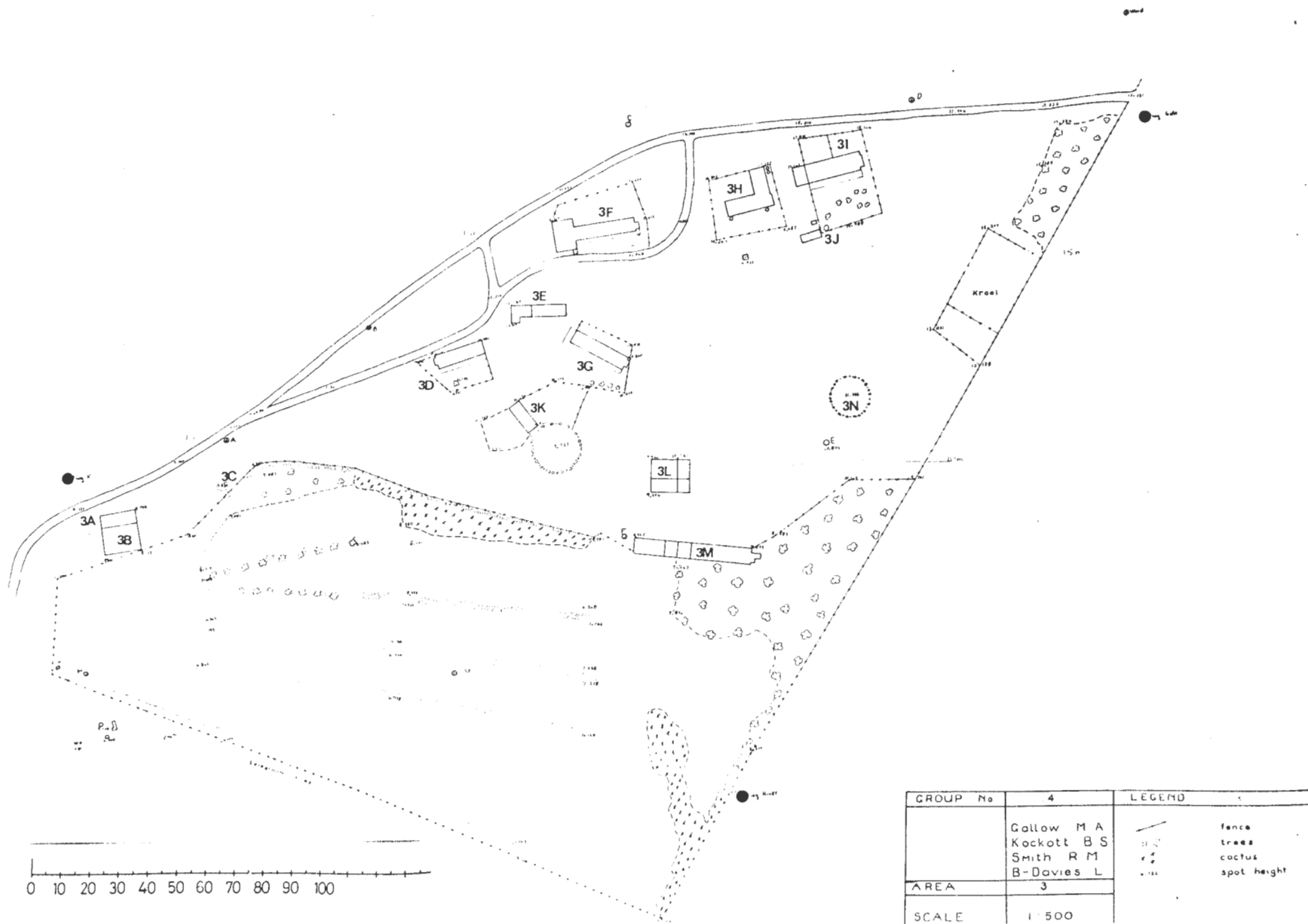
Figure 4.8 : Verlorenvlei settlement - Sub-section 2.



Sub-section 2

- VW02A House, modified 'langhuis', surrounded by complex of animal enclosures and outbuildings, including a 'trapvloer'
- VW02B Ruin of house - demolished 'langhuis'
- VW02C Large outbuilding
- VW02D Labourer's cottage, with evidence of a small 'trapvloer'
- VW02E Ruin of outbuilding, including evidence of a 'trapvloer'
- VW02F Outbuilding with cattle dip trough, and evidence of a possible 'trapvloer'
- VW02G Outbuilding

FIGURE 4 9 : Verlorenvlei settlement - Sub-section 3.



Sub-section 3

VW03A	Outbuilding
VW03B	Garage, built partially on the site of a 'trapvloer'
VW03C	Ruin, possibly a sheep-dip previously
VW03D	House, renovated 'langhuis' presently used as research station
VW03E	Presently a dilapidated outbuilding
VW03F	House - modified 'langhuis'
VW03G	House - 'langhuis'
VW03H	House - modified 'langhuis'
VW03I	House - modified 'langhuis'
VW03J	Outbuilding
VW03K	Outbuilding - possibly a wagon-shed previously, with evidence of a 'trapvloer'
VW03L	Outbuilding, previously a horse-mill with adjoining horse stall
VW03M	Demolished 'langhuis'
VW03N	Disused 'trapvloer'

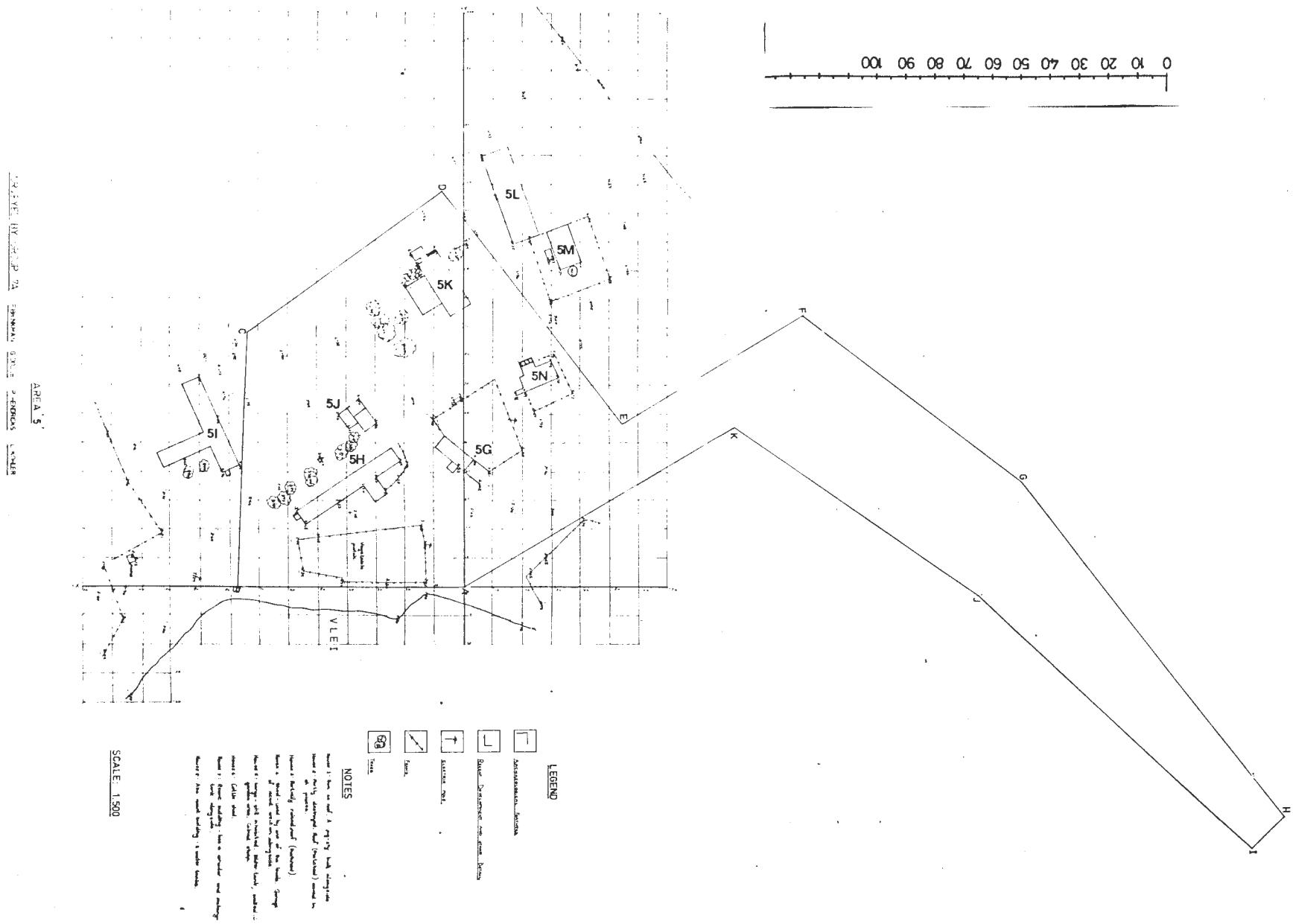
Sub-section 4

- VW04A Outbuilding, previously including a horse stall
- VW04B Outbuilding
- VW04C Outbuilding, with sheep dip of recent construction
- VW04D Outbuilding, probably a wagon-shed previously, with
 adjoining 'trapvloer'
- VW04E Animal enclosure
- VW04F Outbuilding, presently used for hay bale storage
- VW04G Outbuilding, of recent construction, housing a tractor
- VW04H Diesel tank
- VW04I Sheep dip of recent construction

Sub-section 5(i)

- W05A Outbuilding, previously including a storehouse, wagon-shed,
and animal enclosure, with evidence of a 'trapvloer', now
planted with trees
- W05B House - 'langhuis'
- W05C Outbuilding, probably a wagon-shed previously, with evidence
of a possible 'trapvloer'
- W05D House - 'langhuis'
- W05E House, of recent construction
- W05F Outbuilding, possibly a wagon-shed previously, with an ad-
joining 'trapvloer'

Figure 4.12: Verlorenvlei settlement - Sub-section 5(ii)

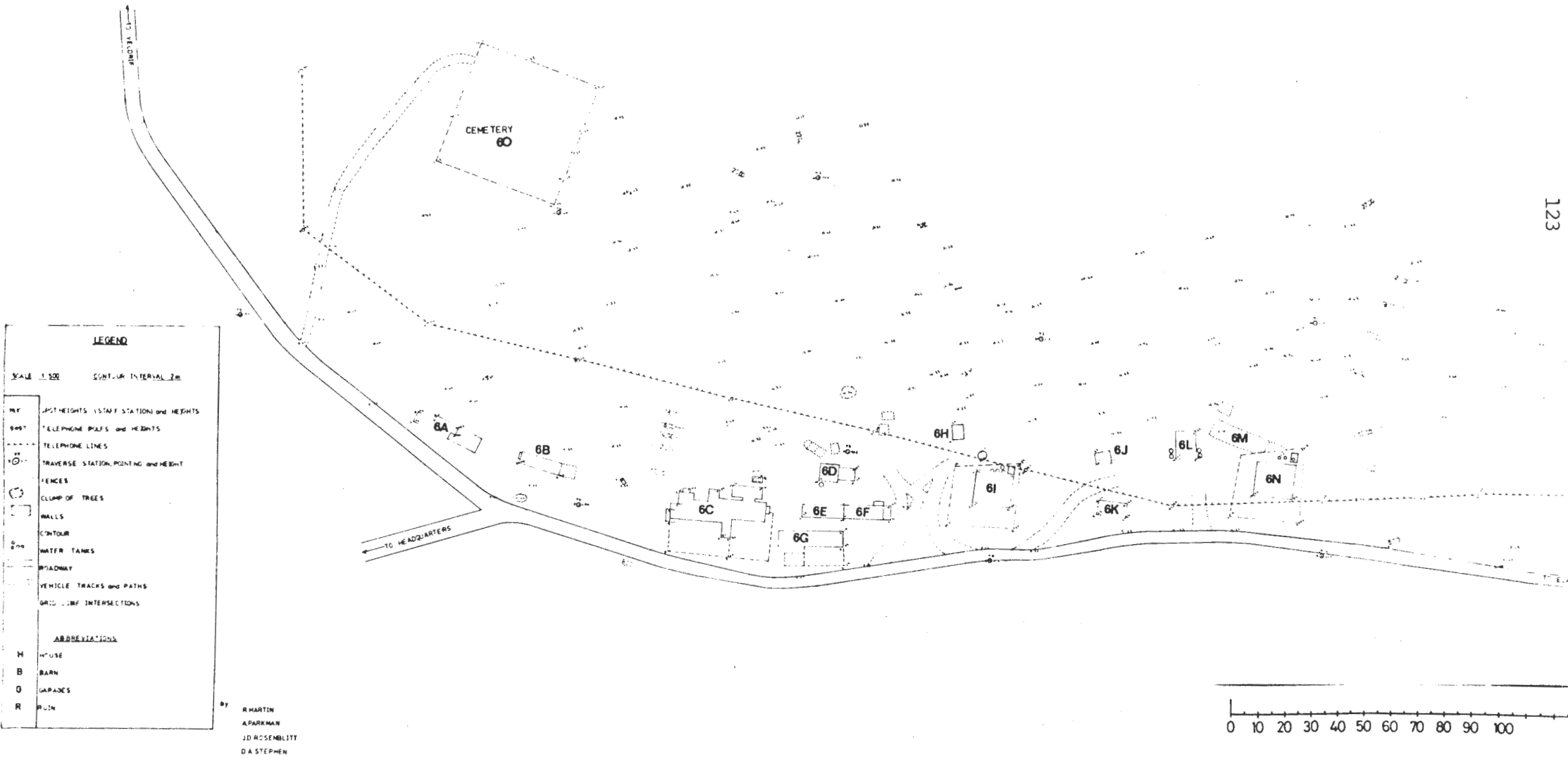


Sub-section 5(ii)

VV05G	Outbuilding, with evidence of a 'trapvloer'
VV05H	House - 'langhuis' with T-extension
VV05I	House - 'langhuis' with T-extension
VV05J	Outbuilding
VV05K	House
VV05L	Outbuilding, including horse stall, horse-mill, and 'slaghuis'
VV05M	Outbuilding, of recent construction
VV05N	Pre-fabricated house of recent construction

Figure 4.13: Verlorenvlei settlement - Sub-section 6.

SURVEY MAP OF AREA 6 (VERLORENVLEI)



Sub-section 6

VW06A	Stone foundations of ruin
VW06B	Dilapidated 'langhuis'
VW06C	Semi-detached house - modified 'langhuis'
VW06D	Outbuilding
VW06E	Outbuilding
VW06F	Outbuilding
VW06G	Previously a house, converted into outbuilding with horse-mill
VW06H	Outbuilding - garage
VW06I	House - constructed in the 1950's
VW06J	Outbuilding
VW06K	Outbuilding
VW06L	Outbuilding - garage
VW06M	Stone foundations of ruin, probably a 'langhuis'
VW06N	House, constructed in the 1950's

Value of information system

The following examples demonstrate the value of such an information system to an attempt to place the settlement in historical perspective, as well as to any future historical or architectural conservation undertaking in the area. Each example is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 and illustrated with selected photographs and sketches.

The house WVO3M is at present only a stone foundation outline surmounted by a heap of rubble and half-walls, from which it is difficult to determine the original plan of the building, or even to envisage the prior existence of a house. However, being important architecturally and historically as reputedly one of the oldest houses in the settlement, it was visited before its demolition during an excursion made by the Vernacular Architecture Society in 1972. Slides of the house, then still occupied, were filed with the Cape Archives, and the house is described in the notes for the excursion compiled by J. Walton. Also included with the notes are a sketch of the house by J. and C. Walton and a detailed floor plan by J. Walton. Mr. J. Walton has permitted the inclusion of both the sketch and the floor plan in this report together with prints of photographs taken by him in the same year.

A second example, the house WVO2B, is also only a stone foundation at present, but a colour slide of the house before its demolition was taken by Professor J.R. Grindley, who has allowed a reproduction to be included in this report.

The house, WVO1A, has undergone extensive modification since 1970, and the nature of this modification can only be fully explained with reference to photographs taken by Mr. J. Walton in 1970. To the casual observer, the present house appears to be of recent construction, and unrelated to the older 'langhuise' of the settlement, whereas in fact it is a converted 'langhuis'.

All the above houses have been occupied by members of the extended families which form the settlement community. Both WVO3M and WVO1A have 'brand-solders', and WVO3M is situated near to two relic 'trapvloere' and an out-building which once housed a horse-mill. Knowledge of the existence and nature of these houses is therefore vital to any interpretation of the past life of the settlement community.

CHAPTER 5

Interpretation of the built environment in the Verlorenvlei farm
settlement

Introductory discussion of interpretation of the built environment

The most significant features of the settlement, from an historical and architectural point of view, have been selected from the nucleus information system for inclusion in this report. The selection has been based on criteria such as the approximate age of the original building; architectural characteristics uncommon in relation to other settlement features; architectural characteristics representative of the other settlement features; characteristics which illustrate use of local natural resources, response to environmental conditions, or local building methods and technology; association of the feature with families or individuals of historical interest; and contribution of the feature to an understanding of the past way of life of the settlement community. While photographs and detailed descriptions of every feature in the settlement were made during the course of mapping, they have only been included where they contribute directly to the development of historical perspective. Further study will enable the history of each building in the settlement to be traced in detail, with a chronological record of usage, occupancy, and modification or extension.

Building methods and materials

The majority of the houses in the Verlorenvlei settlement are of the style termed 'langhuise', literally 'long houses'. The term derives from their method of construction.

When extension lengthways was no longer practical, extension continued at right-angles from the middle of the 'langhuis', to form a T-shape, as in the case of VV05H and VV05I. A 'stoep' was constructed along the front of the house, usually the vlei-facing elevation, or north elevation. In front of this stoep a row of trees was planted to provide shade from the excessive heat, for privacy and for aesthetic purposes, as discussed in Chapter 6.

Walton (1952), in describing early Cape houses, explains their construction as follows:

"The earliest houses consisted of a single room with a large open fireplace at one end and a portion curtained off at the other to serve as a bedroom. Eventually this temporary screen became a permanent wall dividing the house into a kitchen-living room and a bedroom... Later the kitchen was separated from the living-room to provide a block of three rooms. The doorway with its half-doors, or 'stable door', led into the living room which was flanked by the kitchen on one side and a bedroom on the other. Light was provided by window openings which were unglazed, for all glass had to be imported from Europe. (In the case of Verlorenvlei, these window openings can be covered by roughly-made wooden shutters)... When a son was born an extra room was built on to the house, the 'buite kamer' or 'outside room'. This was normally added to the end of the house opposite the kitchen and was entered by a separate door from the outside... In the early days houses were scattered and visiting entailed long journeys by ox waggon or on horse back so that the 'buite kamer' served as a visitors' room as well as a bedroom for the eldest son, a store room and, when a member of the family died, the resting place for the corpse until it could be buried."¹

Outbuildings were built in a similar manner, lengthways. Their original use as outbuildings is confirmed by the lack of a chimney, which characterises those buildings now used for storage, but originally used for human habitation. Where an outbuilding, either singly such as W04A, or in a row such as W05L, was used as a horse stall or 'perdestal', the interior is characterised by a long trough built of stone, with a plaited leather rope attached to a metal ring at either end, and running the length of the trough, for the purpose of tethering the horses. If an outbuilding was originally used as a 'slaghuis' or abattoir, it is characterised by a door with long vertical slits in the upper half to allow for ventilation. Many outbuildings contain constructed storage bins. More recent outbuildings are constructed from corrugated material, IBR, or cement bricks, (one example being asbestos-clad mudbrick), and have steel-frame windows.

The foundations of the houses in the Verlorenvlei settlement are built of two or three layers of large stones, extending into a 'stoep' made of random rubble. The walls are constructed of a variety of materials erected in a variety of methods. Part of the wall might be made of clay, which appears to have been obtained from a number of sources including the alluvial fan of the stream dividing the settlement. The building clay was prepared well in advance. Days before the building began,

the first batch of clay was prepared, enough for one day's building. This clay was kneaded by foot to expel all the air, and left until the next day, when a new batch of clay was made, and the first batch re-kneaded. This process was repeated until 15 days' worth of clay had been prepared, and the building began, additional clay batches being prepared each day. Two wooden planks were stood on end lengthways and parallel to one another above the foundations, bolted together, and the clay packed between them. When the clay had dried, the wooden supports were removed, and re-erected on top of the layer of clay, so that a new layer could be laid on top of the first: The resulting horizontal lines demarcate the separate layers of clay. The process was repeated until the wall was the desired height.²

Mudbricks were also used in the construction of walls, usually called 'green bricks' as they were sun-dried rather than baked, and were made of clay and straw. These are of two colours: a dark grey or blackish colour similar to the colour of the vlei mud, and suggesting the vlei as the origin of the material; and a reddish-yellow colour similar to the surrounding sand colour, probably from the alluvial fan of the settlement stream. Both forms of brick in the older, more derelict buildings, crumble into sand very easily, especially directly above the foundations where the walls have probably been exposed to more damp and wind erosion. These bricks are held together by mud dagga. The mud-brick walls are plastered with a mud dagga, occasionally mixed with dung, or in some cases with patches of cement plaster, which usually peel away from the mud walls. More modern baked bricks can also be found, often at the tops of walls in buildings where the thatch has been removed and replaced by corrugated asbestos roofing. These baked bricks are usually of a cement colour, and could be from the cement factory at Piquetberg. They are held together with cement dagga, and may be plastered with cement.

On the inside of some of the houses such as W05K, the walls are covered with red clay, giving them a deep pinkish-red colour, and making the interior dark and cool. The exteriors are painted with white lime-wash, which needs constant retouching. Shutters and stable-doors are wooden and painted. The floors in the older buildings appear to be of mud and possibly dung, but more recent houses have cement floors. Some of the houses, such as W01A and W05K, have 'brandsolders' or lofts, which

provided for storage and for protection against fire if the thatched roof were to catch alight. The loft is usually entered by means of a doorway in one gable which can be reached either by a stepladder or by constructed steps (VV05K). Reed ceilings can be found occasionally, or dark wooden ceilings, but many of the 'langhuisse' have thatched roofs, with no ceilings, and exposed wooden pole rafters. The thatch is made of reeds and wheat straw. Clumps of Juncus Kraussi are often split apart and straddled across the top of the roof as capping. On older houses, moss and the occasional plant may be found growing on the thatched roof. More recent houses are roofed with corrugated asbestos, and have asbestos gutters draining into water tanks. The desperate need for water collection is indicated by the tendency to use all corrugated roofs for drainage, no matter how small the surface area, even those on outhouses (figure 5.1).

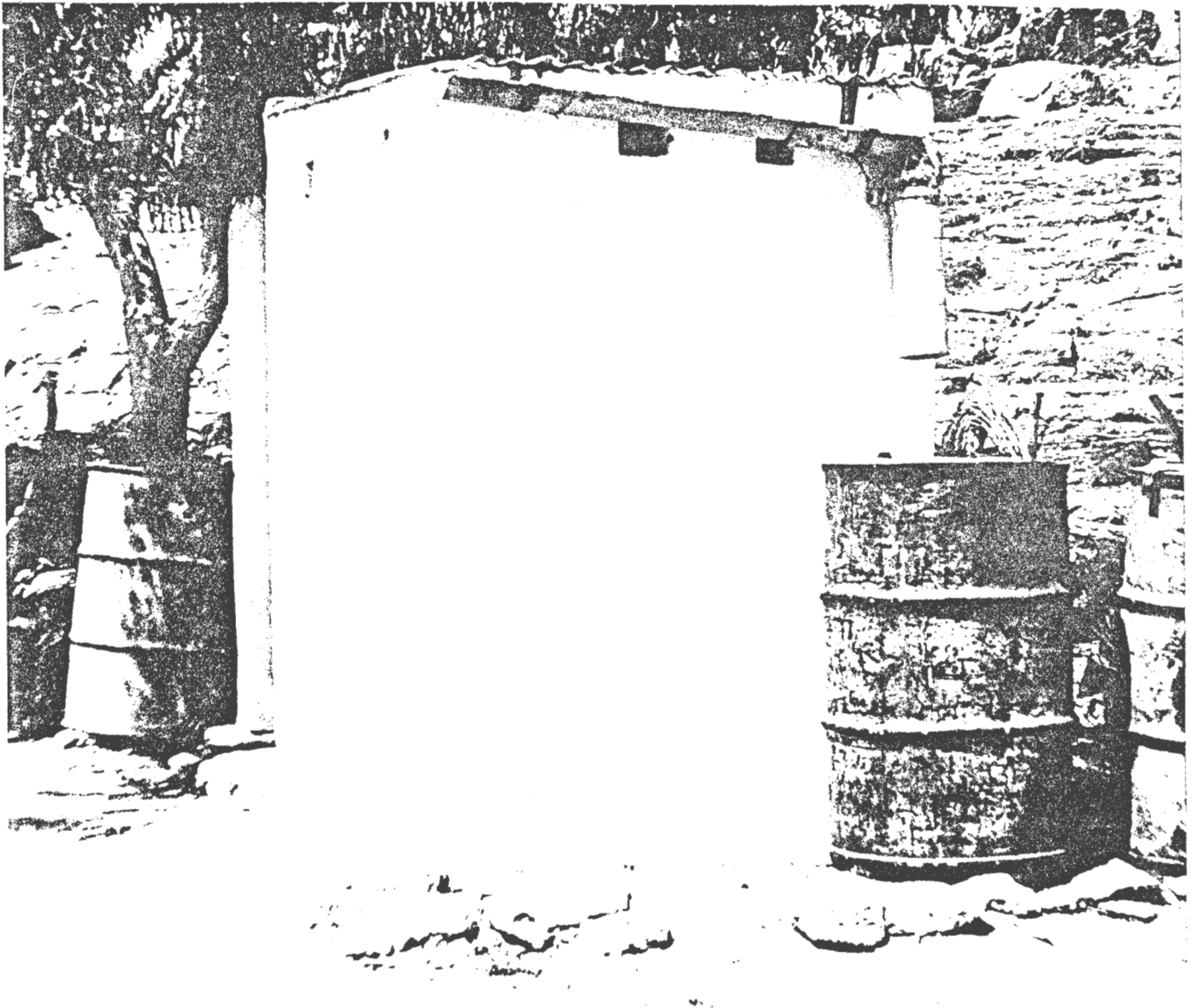


Figure 5.1

Outhouse with water drainage and collection.

Photograph: S. Sinclair

Detailed descriptions and photographic record of man-made features
in the settlement.



WVOLA



Figure 5.2
 WVOLA : 1970
 N/E elevation

Photograph : J. Walton

Originally a 'langhuis', the house has been extensively modified and subdivided into semi-detached houses, the western half being occupied by a Scotsman, Mr. James Coull, and his wife, Mrs. Anna Coull (Neë Smit), the sister of Mr. Theunis Erasmus Smit. The eastern half is occupied by Mr. Jan Smit, brother of Theunis Erasmus Smit, and his wife, Mrs. Anna Smit (neë de Villiers). Photographs of the house in 1970 prior to its present modification and subdivision have been supplied by Mr. J. Walton, and show the house with a corrugated roof. Figure 5.4 shows the stairs to the 'brandsolder' on the east elevation, and a chimney with external access to the fireplace on the same elevation. As there is a chimney on the west elevation as well, (figure 5.3) and two water tanks, one a square tank draining water from a rough gutter along the eastern half of the north elevation, and the other a round tank on the front stoep draining from the western half, (figure 5.2) it would appear that at the time of the 1970 photographs, the house was occupied by two families. Also obvious in the photographs is the line of beams (figures 5.2 and 5.3) indicating the floor of the brandsolder, and the wooden ceiling, which may still be seen in the living room of the Smit side of the house, (also



Figure : 5.3
 WOLA : 1970
 S/W elevation.

Photograph: J. Walton

found in VVO5K). The windows of the house are unusually long and narrow compared with the other 'langhuise' in the settlement, and the doorways are raised some way above the stoep level, the stoep appearing concrete rather than random rubble (figure 5.2).

Further modification extended the house out onto the stoep, forming an enclosed front porch on the Smit side (figure 5.5), and an open porch with pillars on the Coull side (figure 5.6). The distinction between the two sides is reinforced by paint colour, the Smit side being painted yellow and brown, the Coull side white and blue. The eastern side of the house has been extended to form a kitchen, with no ceiling, so that the original fireplace now forms the wall between the kitchen and living room, and the stairs to the 'brandsolder' pass up into the back wall of the house in line with the chimney (figure 5.5). The Coull side of the house has been extended on the south elevation. The present stairs to the 'brandsolder' on the western elevation are unusual in that they are made up of split steps, the purpose of which is not apparent (conventional stairs appear in figure 5.3).

The tall eucalyptus in front of the house in figure 5.2 have since been removed, the garden enclosed and developed. In the garden are a garage and two chicken runs, with some planted trees for shade. There are now



Figure 5.4
WOLA : 1970
S/E elevation

Photograph: J. Walton

six water tanks attached to the house on ground level, of which four supply the Coull section of the house and two the Smit section. In addition, there is one elevated tank, and on the hill above the house another tank, both of which appear to supply the Smit section. The tank above the house is probably supplied from the borehole, from which water is pumped through an exposed pipe across the lower vleis road, up to Theunis Smit's house, then to house WV01C, then to WV01A. This water is used for reserve and non-consumptive purposes, the rain water being preferred for human consumption.

A telephone pole supplies a telephone line to the Smit side of the house, and this connection can also be seen in the 1970 photograph (figure 5.2).

Historically, the house is important as it was apparently originally a school.³ This is not the school referred to by W.A. Burger (1975) in the following two quotations:

"In die Primêre Skool op Nuwedam (Elandsbaai) het daar 18 jaar lank (1931-1949) 'n man uit Aurora met die naam van Johannes Albertus Visser onderwys gegee. Hy is gebore in 1904 met 'n gebrek aan sy spiere... Deur matriek op Piketberg in 1924 en die onderwyserskursus in 1926, het hy hom aan die onderwys gewy en is in 1931 op Verloren Vlei aangestel... Hy het hier met sy studies voortgegaan en in 1938 sy B.A.-graad



Figure 5.5
 WVOLA : Sep. 1979
 N elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

verwerf. Toe hy nie meer voor sy klas kon staande bly nie, het hy dit in 1949 gewonne gegee en uit die onderwys getree."⁴

"Op die plaas Verlore Vlei was daar vroeg in die geskiedenis reeds 'n ander skool. Dit was in hierdie nederige skool wat Johannes Albertus Visser na vyf jaar onderwys elders, in 1931 sy kragte kom inwerp het...

Sy werk word sedert sy uittrede 'n paar myl van sy ou skool op Verlore Vlei voortgesit in 'n netjiese nuwe skool met onderwyserswoning teen die noordelike hang van Baviaansberg, halfpad tussen Verlore Vlei en Elandsbaai deur die geniale mnr. Gert Steenkamp en sy een assistent. Hierdie skool kon homself handhaaf en het gegroei sedert die uitbreiding van die kreefbedryf in die veertigerjare."⁵

The school that existed in WVOLA must have been prior to 1931, and it is possible that the two school teachers in a photograph owned by Mr. H. Smit (resident in WV03F until March 1980), taught in this school. Mrs. Ackerman (resident in WV01F as at March 1980) attended this school as a child.

Architectural analysis of this house, aided by earlier photographs located during the course of the study, has therefore revealed a number of important facts about the house, its modification and extension, its usage and role within the settlement, and its prior occupancy. Like WVOLA,

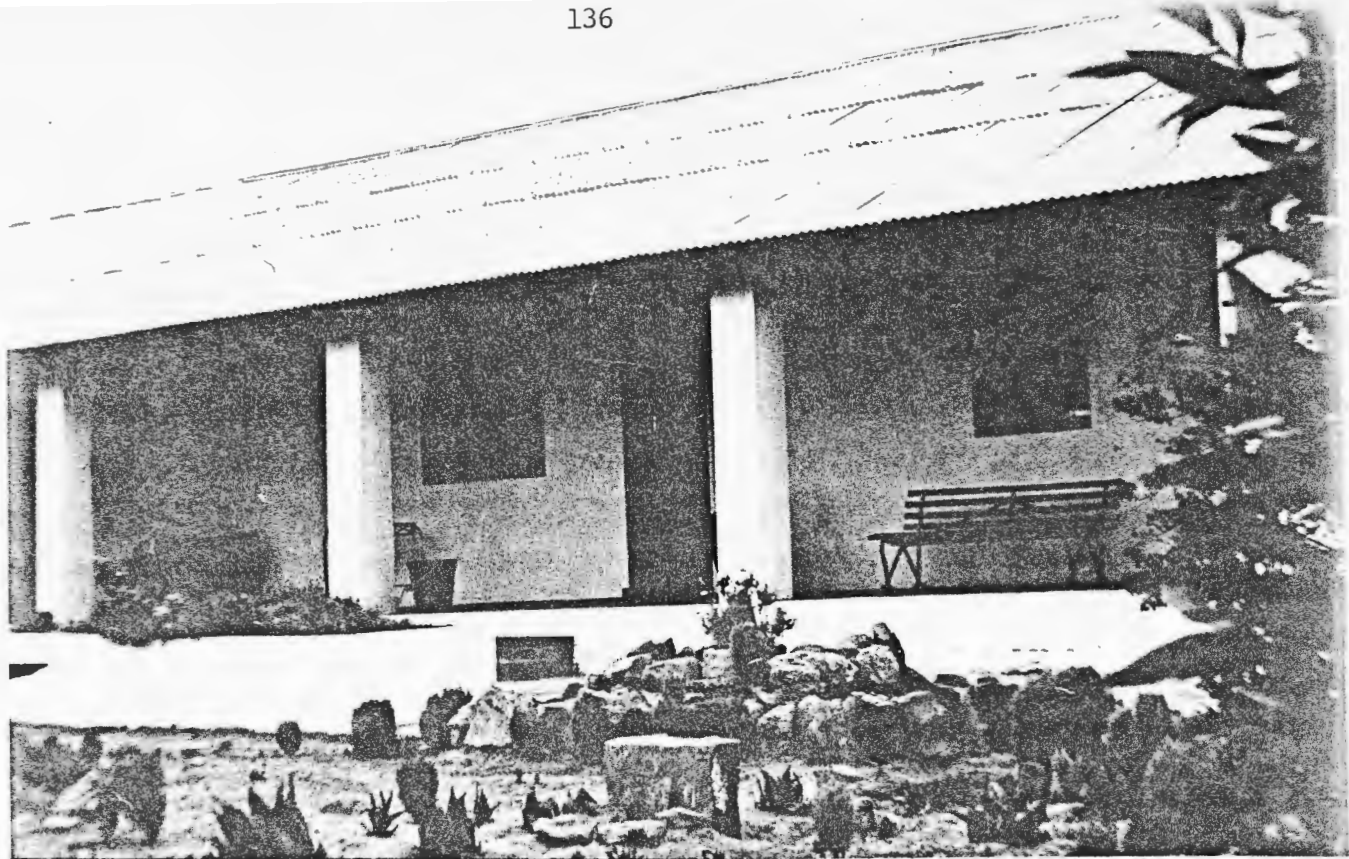


Figure 5.6
W01A : Dec. 1979
N elevation

Photograph: S. Sinclair

W02A appears at first glance to be of more recent construction, but on closer inspection is revealed as a modified and extended 'langhuis'. Interpretation of the built environment is therefore essential in any attempt to place the settlement in historical perspective.



Large tent
May 1871
W. B. Smith

Photograph by J. B. Buckley

WO2B

The following report of the...
...of the...
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Figure 5.7
W02B : 1975
N/E elevation

Photograph : J.R.Grindley

The present state of this feature is shown in figure 5.8. The prior existence of a house is evidenced by the row of eucalyptus trees along the northern elevation as with W06M. A photograph was located of the house before its demolition (figure 5.7), and shows the buttresses that had been constructed to reinforce the deteriorating walls.



Figure 5.8
VVO2B: 1979

Photo: S. Sinclair

VVO3K

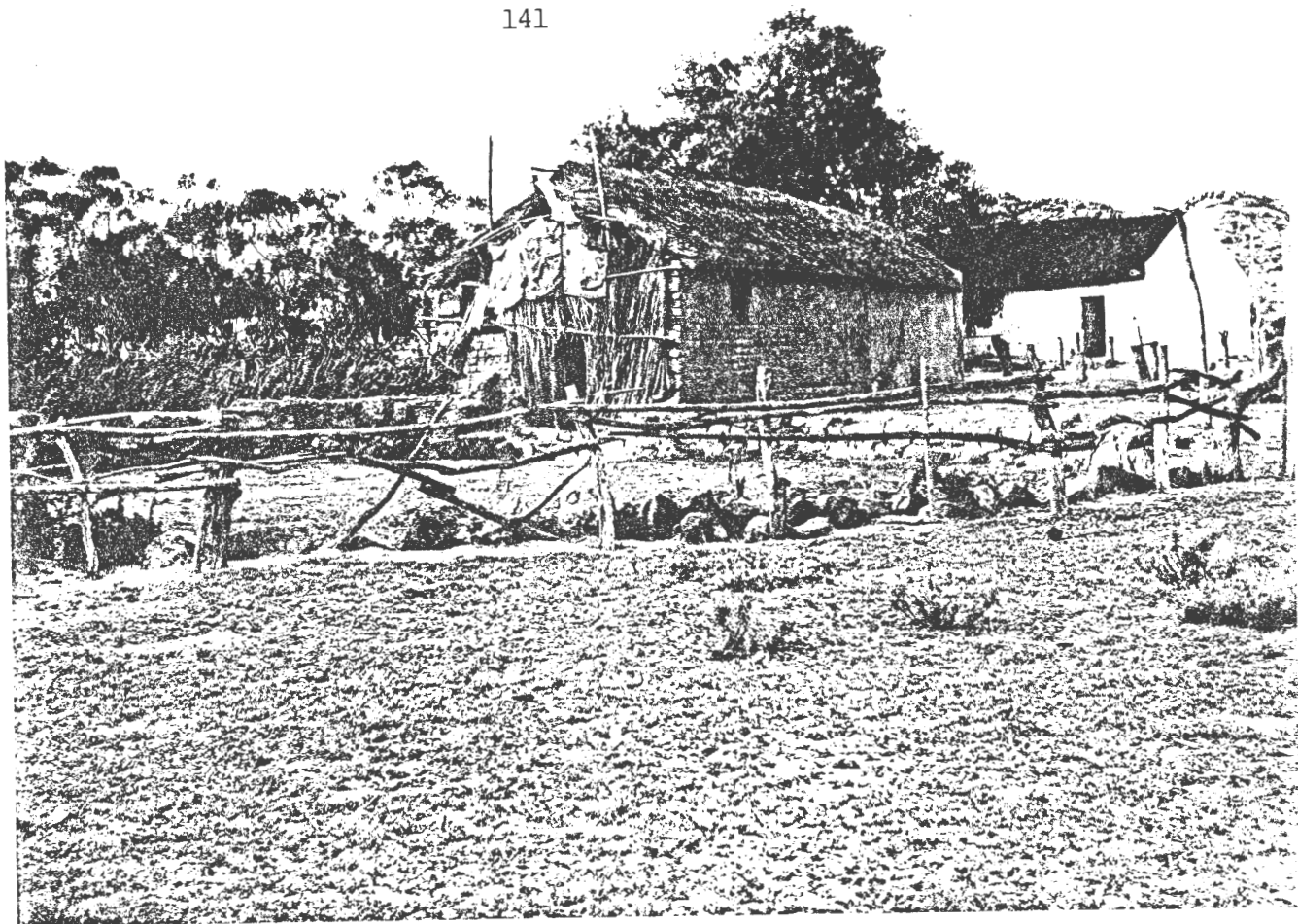


Figure 5.9
 W03K : 1972
 N/W elevation

Photograph: J. Walton

The 'trapvloer' W03K is typical of the 10-12 threshing floors, including W03N, that have been identified in the settlement. At present, of this and most of the floors, only the vestiges remain and are not recognisable at first glance as significant features of the built environment. The past manner of use of the threshing floors is illustrated by Kolbe (1727) as shown in figure 5.10, and described as follows:

TAB. I

Fig. 1.

P. 68



The Manner of Flouring at the Cape

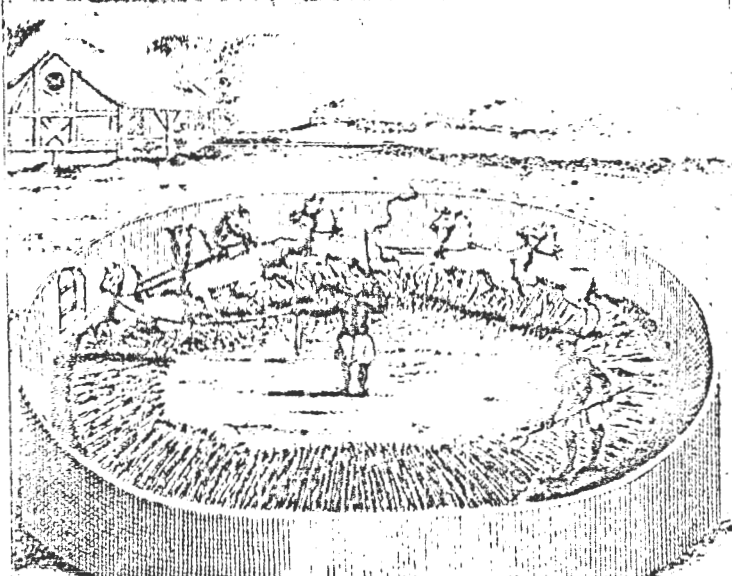


Fig. 2. The Manner of Threshing of Corn at the Cape P. 73.

Figure 5.10

Kolbe (1727)

"...Europeans at the Cape... don't thrash out their Corn, but have it trodden out by Oxen or Horses; not in a Barn or cover'd Place, but in the Open Air; on a Floor, which is made in the following Manner - They take Cow-Dung and a little Straw; and with Water, mix and work 'em together. When they have made a sufficient Quantity of this Loam, they spread it pretty thick in a Circle, of about 10 Yards Diameter, and turn Horses upon it to tread it close down. They then leave it to harden in the Sun; and in a few Days it becomes as hard as Stone.

On the Extremities of this Floor they lay two Rounds of Sheaves, Ears to Ears; and drive over them a Team of Eight Horses or Oxen, round and round, now and then turning the Sheaves, till they judge the Corn is all trodden out. This, without Doubt, will put the Scripture Reader in Mind of the Custom of Treading out Corn by Oxen among the Children of Israel. But for this Business I must needs prefer Horses to Oxen. Horses not only tread more firmly than Oxen, and consequently tread Corn out much sooner; but they are much more cleanly. Oxen scatter their Dung very liberally among the Corn. Horses in their Discharges, are neither so frequent nor so filthy. 'Tis indeed, a nauseating Matter to a Stranger, to see either Oxen or Horses dunging among Corn. But the Sun quickly dries the Dung to such a Degree, that 'tis an easie Matter to clear the Corn of it all.

'Tis most certain, that Corn is much more expeditiously got out of the Ears by the Tread of Horses and Oxen, than it is by Threshing. A Team of Eight Horses or Oxen will tread out more Corn in a few Hours, than a Dozen Men can thresh out in a whole Day. The Crops of Corn are, in the General, so large at the Cape, that it would, in all Likelihood, cost the farmers there a whole Winter to thresh it out; whereas, by Treading, the whole Business is perform'd in less than a Month.

When the Corn is trodden out, they winnow it. After which, they pass it through a Machine they call Harke, which performs the Business of a Sieve; clearing the Corn of all Sand and other Dirt, too heavy to be carried off by the Wind. The Corn in the Ears, that escape the Tread of the Cattle, is very inconsiderable. In the Season for the Treading it out, Flocks of Birds, of various Kinds, hover and fettle about the Floors, feeding luxuriously on the Waste-Grains." ⁶

Mentzel (1785) criticises both the illustration of the threshing-floor and the description of threshing given by Kolbe (1727):

"On his first copperplate on page 112, Kolbe has shown six horses and a negro on an African threshing-floor with the grain spread out on it. Now, if a sensible person sees such a drawing, gives it some credit and examines it thoughtfully, he can come to no other conclusion than that those colonists are truly stupid people who do their work in a crude fashion without knowledge or intelligence. One cannot deny that Kolbe saw a great deal in Africa, but he also obtained knowledge of many more things from hearsay; but what he saw, he observed without attention, without thoughtfulness (I almost said without intelligence): nor did he ascertain the cause, or the reason why a thing was done in a certain way and not otherwise; and from what he discovered by hearsay only, one can easily see that many fables were told him. But be that as it may; I want to come back to the method of threshing in that country once more, even though it may seem superfluous, and describe it a little more clearly and in greater detail. In the first place, a threshing-floor is a round level piece of ground, thirty-five to forty Rhenish feet in diameter, whose floor is solidly laid out and levelled with clay and cow-dung like a barn-floor. This barn-floor is surrounded by a wall of four or five feet high, solely for the purpose of preventing cattle from walking on it and befouling it, or damaging the surface during wet weather. Even then it has to be repaired and improved every year before harvesting time. Only horses are used for threshing the grain and never oxen, for these, when driven quickly drop thin dung and dirty the grain.

Now during threshing time, in the early morning at daybreak, a slave throws as many sheaves from the stack onto the threshing-floor as are necessary to cover the entire floor all round in a circle of such breadth that four horses coupled side by side can tread on the sheaves. The proper performance of this work (of threshing) depends chiefly on the proper covering of this floor with sheaves. Thus, for the circle to be formed, first a few sheaves are laid lengthwise at an angle up to a width necessary for four horses, walking abreast; for in the centre of the threshing-floor a circular spot remains empty around the slave who guides the horses lest the horses become dizzy or giddy on account of the sharp turn. When four or five sheaves have been laid end to end across the threshing-floor the other slaves start putting on the rest in an orderly way. The first are laid with their ears on the sheaves lying crosswise and now they keep in laying on the sheaves, going from right to left, so that the ears of the following rows reach no further with their tips than up to the ears of the sheaves lying under them. The ears, therefore, since they lie upwards and a little higher than the other end of the sheaf where there is only straw, which rests on the bare floor and lower, lie altogether on top of the straw, and when the entire circle next to the wall has been stacked, so that two or three rows of sheaves still have to be stacked, the sheaves first laid across are removed but those laid on them lifted up, and the last batch to be laid on is pushed below those first put in place and now lifted up. In this way one sees nothing on the whole floor but the ears lying on top and hardly any straw; indeed one cannot see either the beginning or the end of the circle, since

the last sheaves were as far as necessary pushed below the first, so that the ears all lie adjoining one another. On Kolbe's copper engraving on the other hand, the ears are quite wrongly placed and all turned towards the centre of the floor, which would give an entirely unsuitable position for treading them out. When the threshing-floor has thus been fully covered and seems to be filled with ears only, everything is left like that, for the sun to dry out the moisture which the grain may have absorbed in the stack, thereby having become clammy. Thus it is made more suitable for treading out. At 8 o'clock then, a solid breakfast is taken, and immediately afterwards eight horses, in two teams of four abreast and bound to two ropes, are led onto the threshing-floor and driven over the grain by a slave standing in the centre of the floor with a small whip in his hand, not at a gallop but merely at a steady trot. The circular course of the horses has also to be regulated systematically; for, as the sheaves were laid from right to left, the horses have to be driven in the same direction, i.e. anti-clockwise, towards the ears, so that they first tread them from the straw, or break them off. Indeed, since the ears lie foremost and a little upwards on the sheaves, they are almost entirely ripped off when the horses have made hardly twenty rounds. As the horses tread with their flat unshod hoofs on the ears lying on top, they move and rub them at the same time, so that the grains have to fall out so cleanly that nothing can remain in the ears. When the horses have thus circled for two hours they are let out for a blow, and meanwhile the already half trodden-out straw is shaken up with wooden forks and turned over, so that the trodden-out grains can fall through onto the threshing-floor and the untrodden ears come to the top as much as possible. Afterwards the horses are brought back and driven round for about another hour. In the meantime noon draws near, everything is left lying as it is, and the midday meal is taken.

There is generally a light South-Easter every day at this season, seldom stronger than a pleasant breeze. After the meal, the straw is shaken up with wooden forks and the wind carries off most of it; unless the farmer has built a shed close to the threshing-floor whose side wall is open on top in the direction of the South-Easter, in such case the wind would blow most of the straw into the shed where it is kept for mixing with the manure. If the farmer has no such shed but still wants to keep some straw for litter, the slaves would have to gather it from the floor with their hands, shake it out and carry it to where it is to be stacked." 7

VVO3M

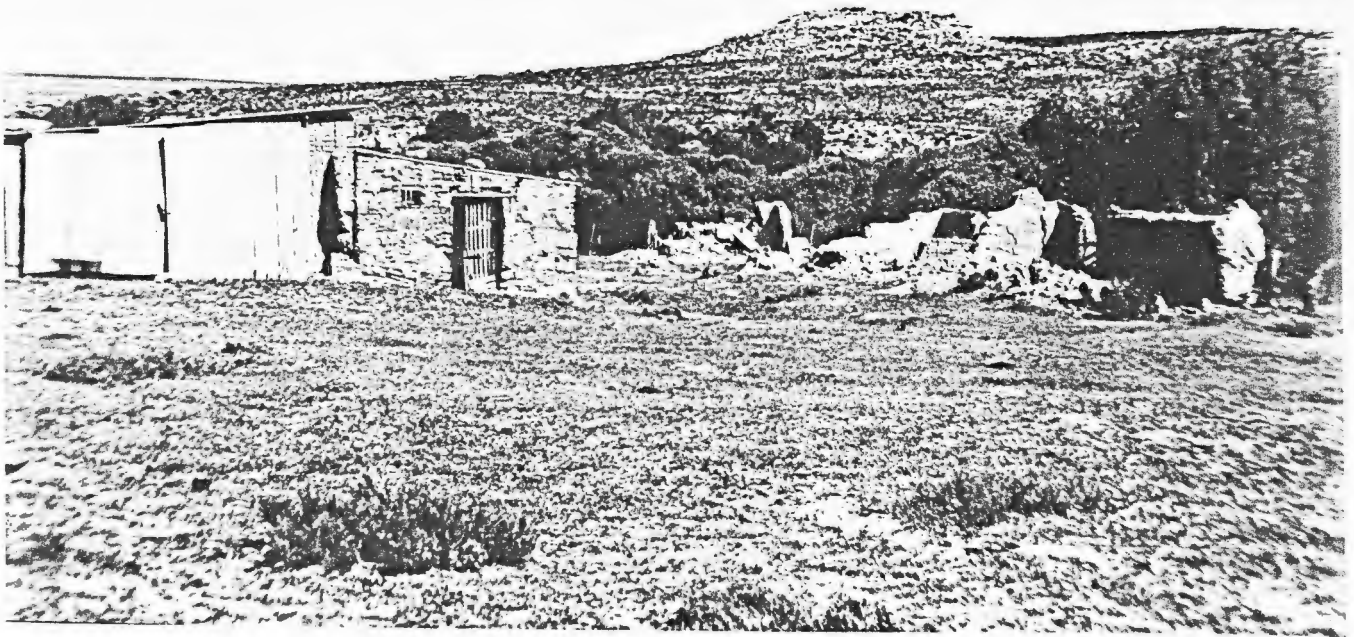


Figure 5.11
 WVO3L/WVO3M : Sep. 1979
 E. elevation.

Photograph: S. Sinclair

Now a heap of rubble, the house WVO3M was visited before its demolition by the Vernacular Architecture Society in 1972, and was described by Walton (1972) as follows:

"The oldest house is over 45 metres in length, but, as is typical of Sandveld houses, it grew in stages. It began as a two-roomed dwelling - voorhuis and kitchen, both with clay walls and floor and under thatch. The voorhuis is open to the rafters but the kitchen has a board ceiling. The voorhuis is entered by a central doorway, with a halved door, and it has a shuttered window opening on each side. The kitchen is illuminated by a glazed window and it has a rear entrance, screened by a later lobby, both of which have halved doors. At the end is a projecting chimney stack with a large bread oven behind. The opposite gable of the original house still has a tiny gable window opening. Two bedrooms were added, and both have reed ceilings and shuttered window openings. Beyond the bedrooms is a still later addition, over 20 metres long, for housing wagons and farming implements. The farm had a separate horse mill which was demolished, but the trapvloer is still intact."⁸

This house was reputedly occupied by Andries Greef and Michiel de Beer in the earlier days of the settlement,⁹ but its actual age has yet to be determined. If it can be established as Greef's house, it may be the habitation shown on the Gordon collection map c1790 (figure 2.2), and would then be about 200 years old.

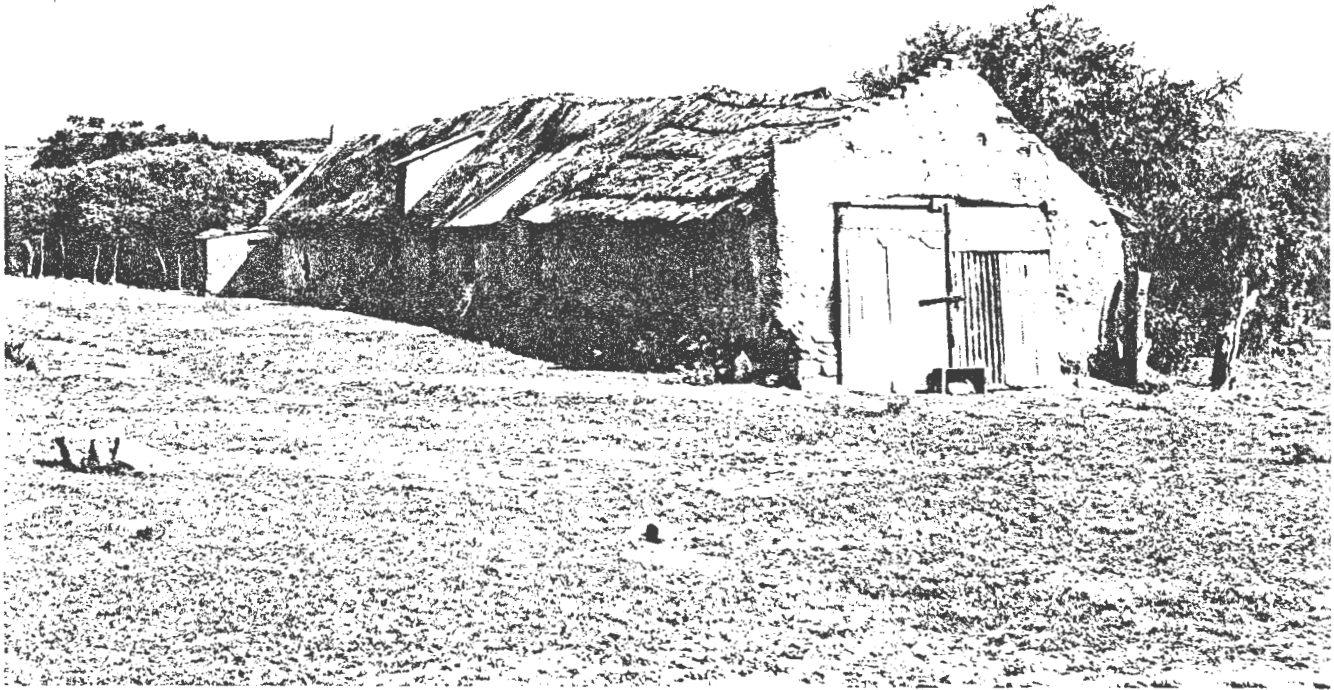


Figure 5.12
W03M - S & E elevations
1972.

Photograph: J. Walton

The occupancy of the house by Michiel de Beer, owner of the farm from 1837 to 1860, and therefore the position of W03M as the central farmhouse on the Smit section of the settlement, appears to be confirmed by an extract from the will of Michiel Johannes de Beer and his wife, Glaudina Maria Louw, dated 3 February 1854:

..."het 'Woonhuis' en het 'Broodhuis' naar mynen dood uitdrukkelyk en wel byzonderlyk aan mynen Zoon Michiel Johannes zal moeten toebehooren, en door hem als vrye en eigen Goed bezeten te worden - en verder dat de Molen met desselver Gebouwen daar aan, aan myne Zoonen gezamentlyk zal toebehooren"¹⁰.

As W03L is the site of the mill or 'Molen', it is likely that the 'Woonhuis' referred to in the will is a part of W03M. The building described as the 'Broodhuis' / bakery was probably the western end of the extended building, to which is attached the 'bakoond', while the 'Woonhuis' was probably the eastern end.¹¹ The presence of a bakery bears out a comment made in an interview by a member of the community to the effect that the women of the settlement used to bake up to 24 loaves of bread in the oven of W03M.



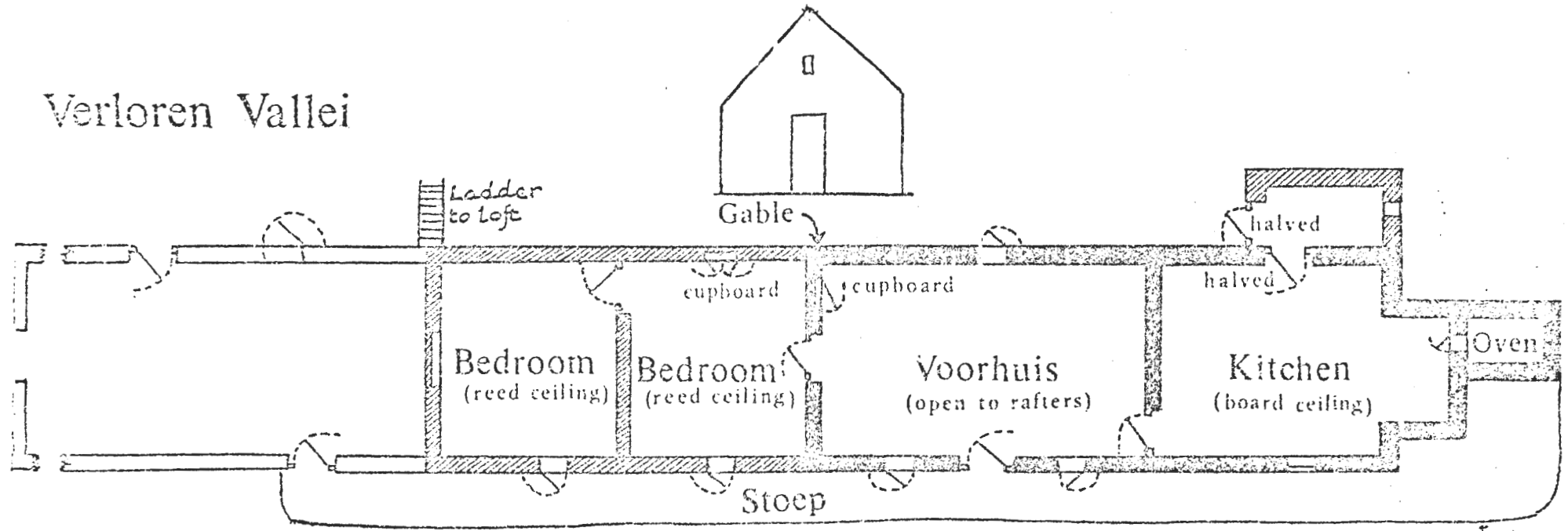
Figure 5.13
 W03M : 1972
 N/W elevation with 'bakoond' on the W elevation.

Photograph: J. Walton

Together with the horse-mill, now dismantled, the 'perdestal' or horse-stall (W03L) and probably the two threshing-floors (W03K and W03N), this house with its 'bakoond' and 'brandsolder' forms one of the wheat-processing units or nodes which are fundamental to an understanding of the development of the settlement over time. This unit was later associated with the Kotze family, while the two houses to the south, W03D and W03G, were occupied by members of the Pretorius family.

A floor plan of W03M was made by J. Walton, and a sketch by J. and C. Walton. A number of black-and-white photographs of the house were taken by J. Walton in 1972, while colour slides taken during the Vernacular Architecture Society excursion are filed in the Cape Archives.¹¹ The floor plan, sketch and some black-and-white photographs are included in this report with the permission of J. Walton.

Verloren Vallei

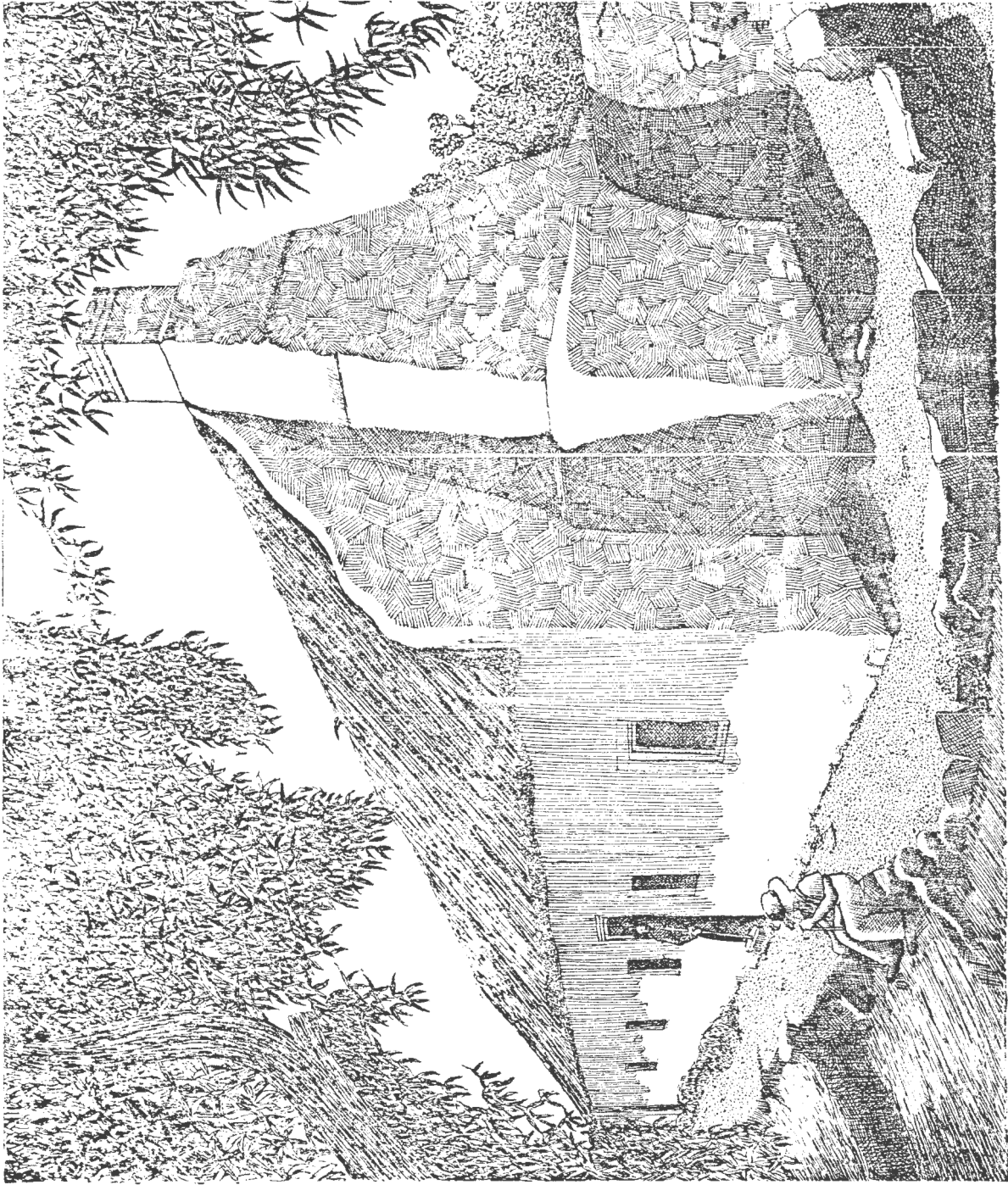


150

Walton
1970

Original house
Later additions

Figure 5.14



James and Constance Walton

Verloren Vallei

VVO4A

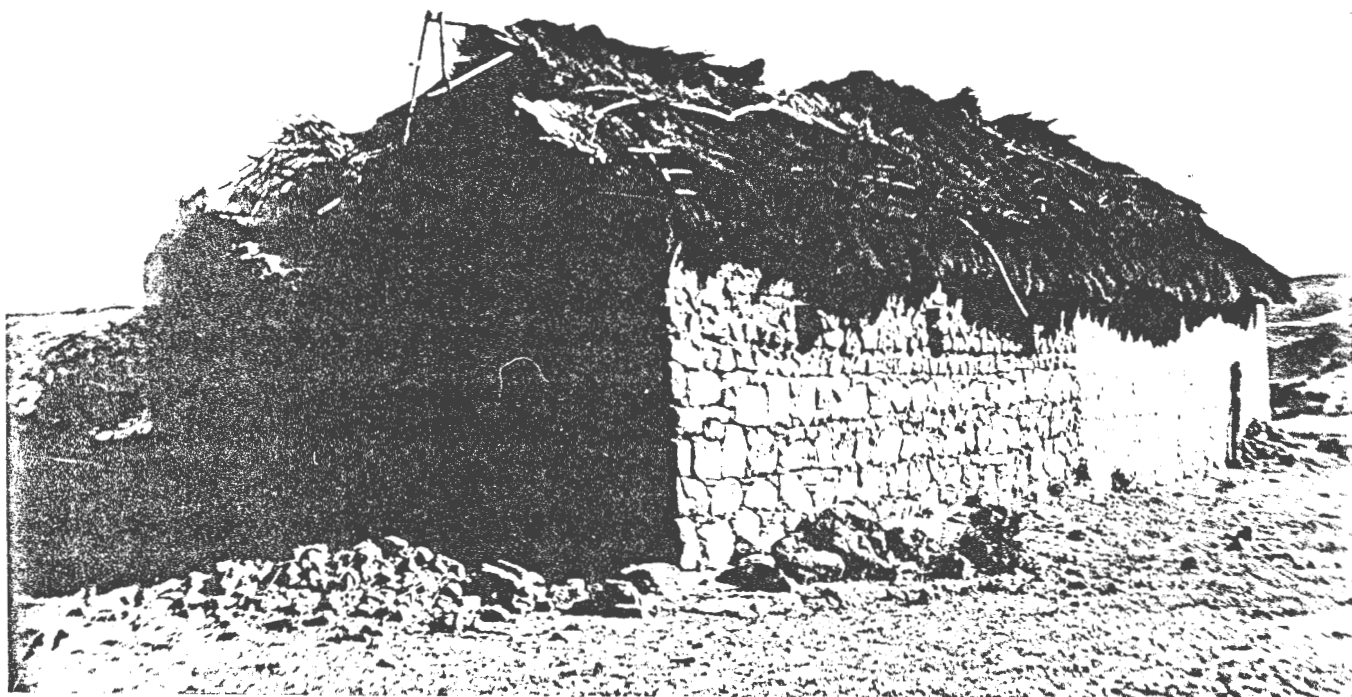
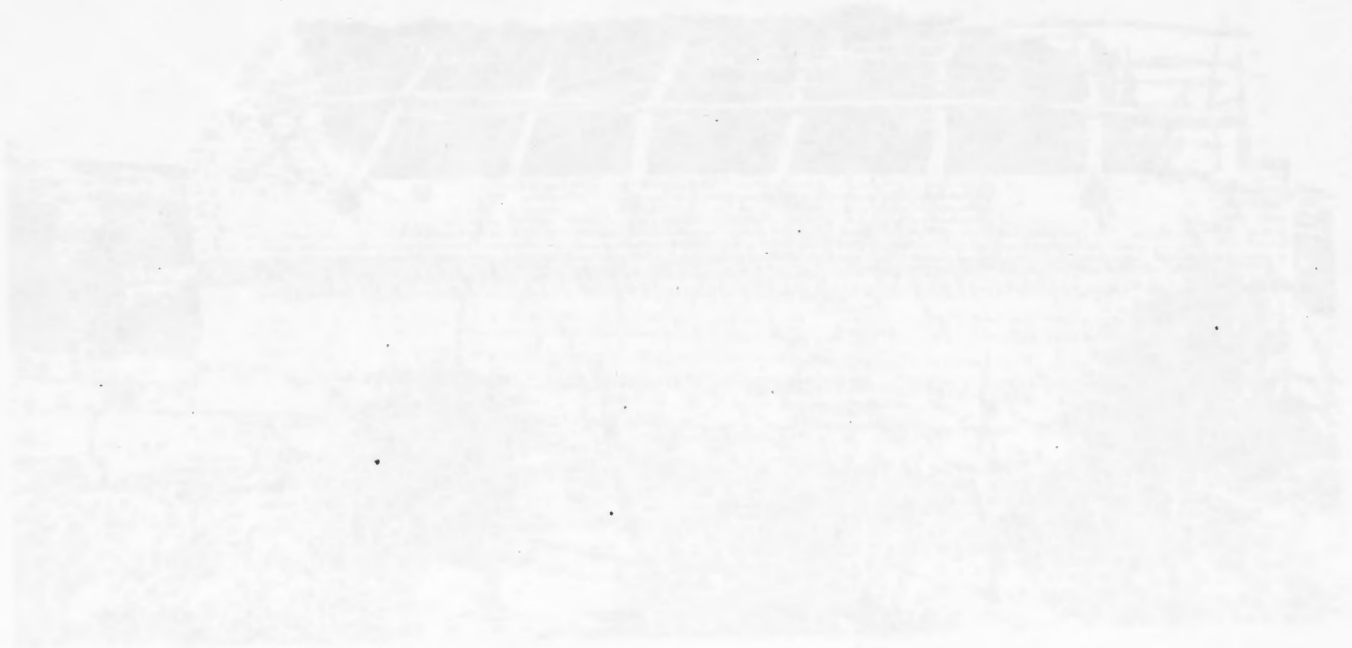


Figure 5.16

VV04A : December 1979
W elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

The use of horses for turning the mills in the Verlorenvlei settlement represents the heavy reliance of rural communities of the nineteenth century on animal power for grinding of corn, threshing of wheat, and transportation, including buck-wagons, (figure 5.18), Cape carts and riding. This heavy reliance on animal labour explains the number of disused horse-stalls in the settlement, such as VV04A. More than half of the horse-stall wall is of stone, suggesting that it was originally a stone animal enclosure, and only later built up of stone and mud-bricks to allow for roofing with thatch. The windows are small, with bars of thin, round pieces of wood.



WO4D

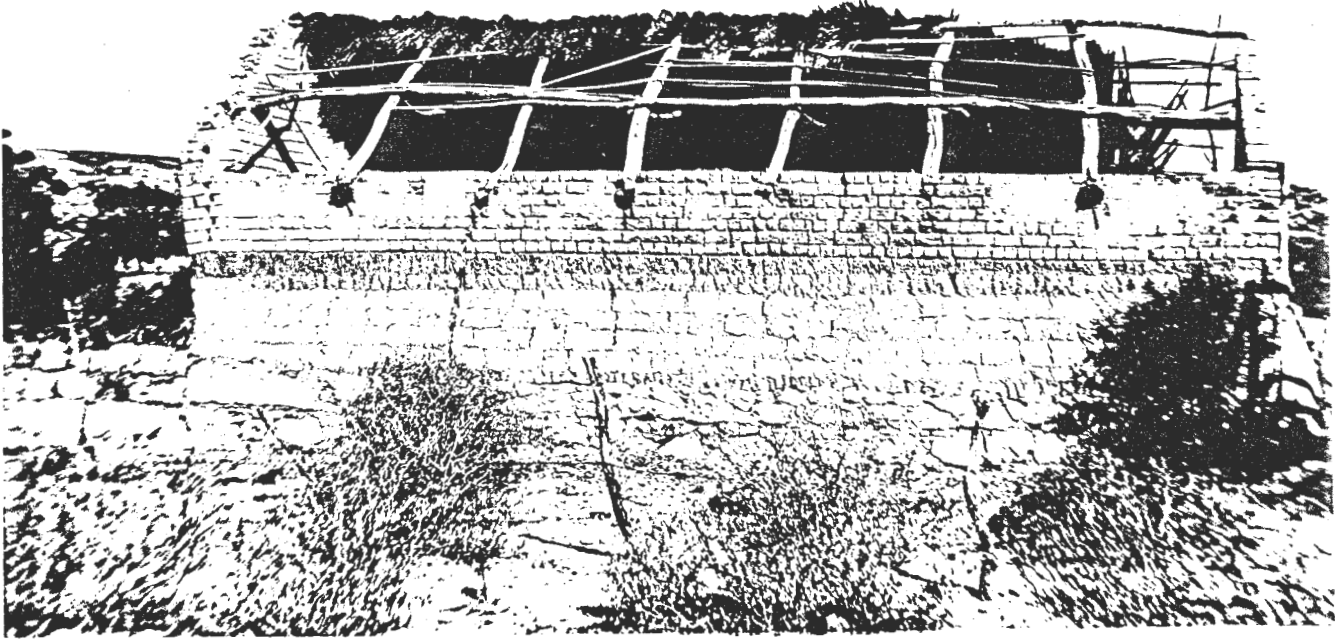


Figure 5.17
 VVO4D : December 1979
 W elevation

Photograph : P. Holtrop

This outbuilding appears to have been built as a wagon shed, to house a wagon such as the one shown in figure 5.18. It has a wide doorway in the southern elevation, opening onto a threshing-floor, and is similar to VVO5F. It presents an interesting profile revealing the variety of building materials and methods which have been used in the construction of the built environment of the Verlorenvlei settlement. The lowest stratum is of stone, followed by a stratum composed of layers of clay mud, then by one made of dark grey mudbricks, and finally by one of yellow-red mudbricks.

The wagonshed and 'trapvloer' appear to form part of one of the wheat-processing units, together with horse-mill and horse-stall in VVO5L, and the house VVO5K, with its 'brandsolder' and 'bakoond'.

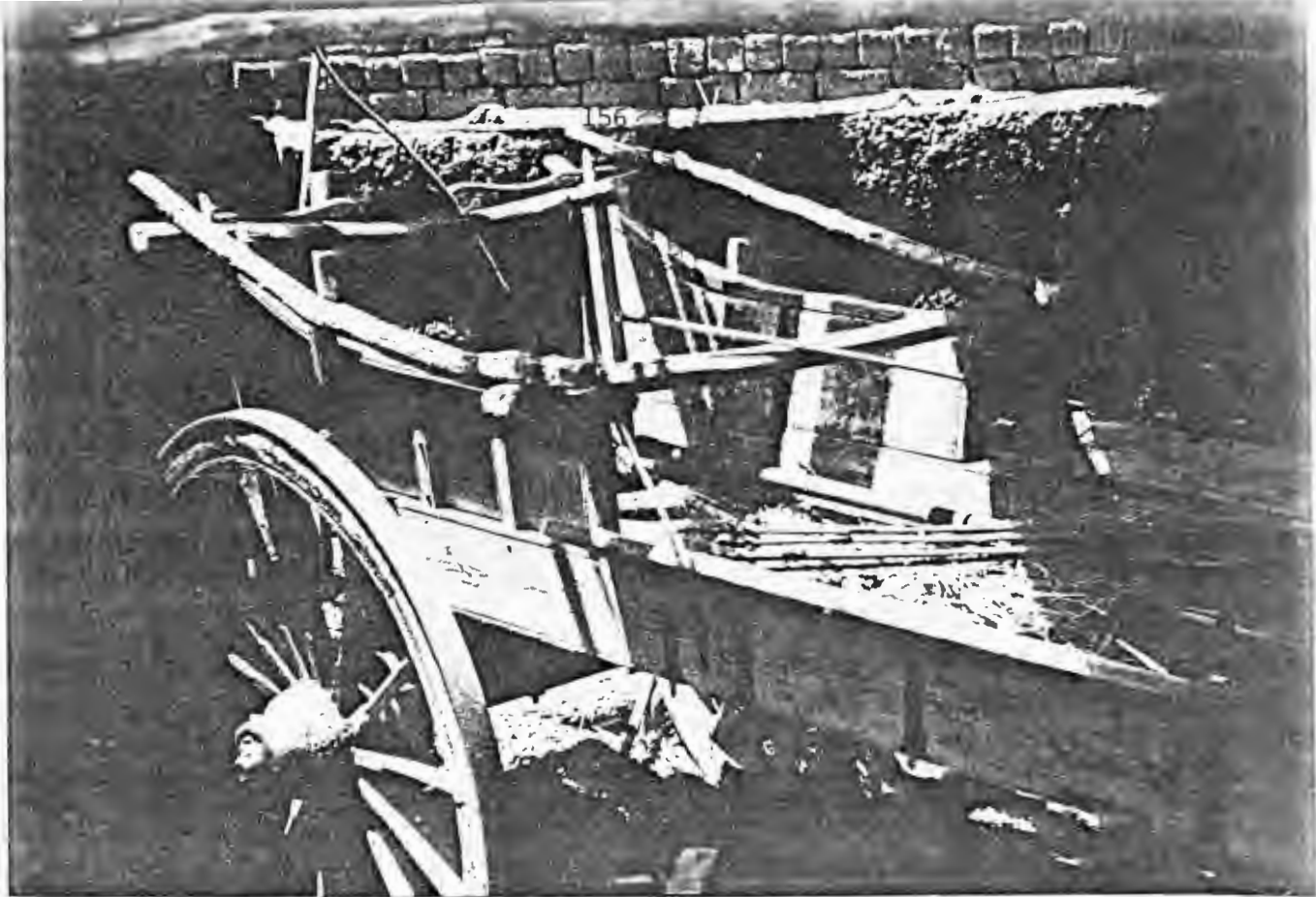


Figure 5.18
Buckwagon

Photograph : P. Holtrop

VVO5H



Figure 5.19
VVO5H : December 1979
E/N elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

A T-shaped house with three fireplaces and chimneys, one at each end of the T, it was sketched in 1978 by Mr. T. Grogan, 12 and the sketches are included in this report with Mr. Grogan's permission. The 'bakoond' on the northern elevation has had the layer of limestone removed, although the oven door can still be seen inside the northern kitchen.



Elmhurst

Figure 5.20
VVO5H - June 1978
N/W elevation

T. Grogan



Figure 5.21
W05H - S elevation

Tommy Ferguson
June 1978

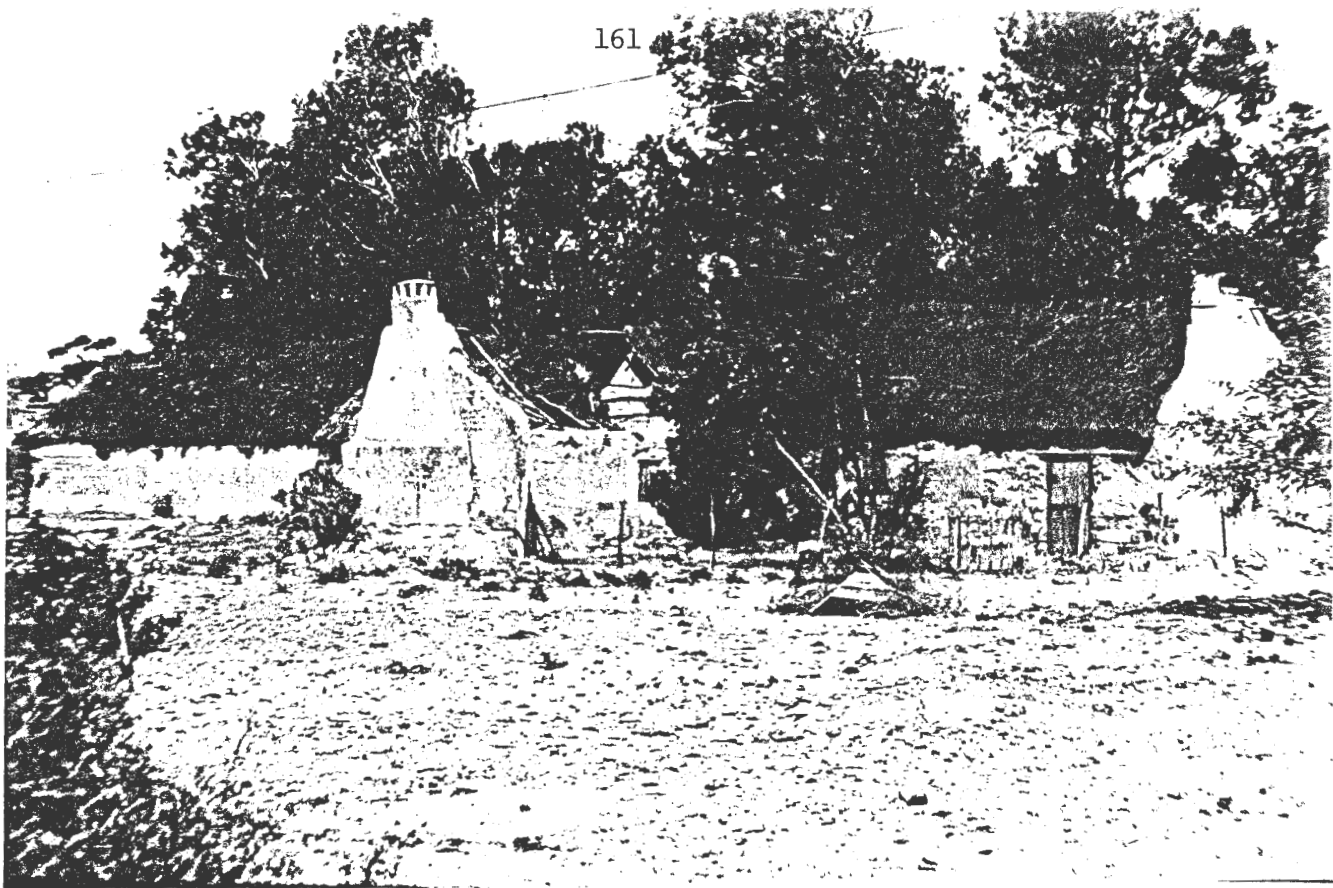


Figure 5.22
VVO5H - December 1979
W elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

W051



Figure 5.23

W05I - 15.12.79
W elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

Also T-shaped, the house is in an advanced stage of deterioration, especially noticeable on the east-west wing. The erosion of the lower part of the walls was by water, at a period when the level of the vlei rose to the houses closest to the vlei edge in sub-section 5, possibly during 1925.¹³

W05L



Figure 5.24
 W05L - December 1979
 N elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

The horse-mills of the Verlorenvlei settlement

There were originally three horse-mills in the Verlorenvlei settlement. One was in the Smit section, situated near the threshing floor in the vicinity of the now-ruined house, W03M, but has since been dismantled. The other two are still in existence, in the Coetzee section. The older horse-mill is situated in one of the rooms of the building, W06G, which was once a house, but now functions as a row of outbuildings. The more-recently constructed horse-mill is in one of the rooms forming a row of outbuildings, W05L (figure 5.24). The oldest room in the row was and still is a horse-stall, with a loft above it for the storage of summer fodder. The next room in the row is also used as a horse stall, and stores the implements previously used for threshing the wheat, including a 'strooigaffel' (figure 5.25) a sieve and a 'vloerskrop'. Examples of these implements and others associated with the processing of wheat may be found in the Wheat Museum at Moorreesburg, together with a small-scale model of a horse-mill (figure 5.26) The room which houses the horse-mill was previously used as a dairy. The next room in the row was originally used as the 'slaghuis' or slaughter-house, and has a door with vertical slits for ventilation, but is now used for storage, particularly of dried sheepskins and bags of coarse salt obtained from the salt-pan at Nuwedam. Many of the parts have been removed from the older horse-mill, but the newer one, built by a Hottentot wheelwright,¹⁴ is in good condition. In the same room as the newer horse-mill may be found many items associated with the mill, such as a wooden ladder and a wooden chute for access to and from the open loft above the mill wheel, a pair of blinkers for the animal turning the wheel, a grain storage bin, and a leather bag for catching the ground grain as well as a plaited leather rope or "meultou". Outside the door of the mill, almost buried under sand and a bush, are two millstones.

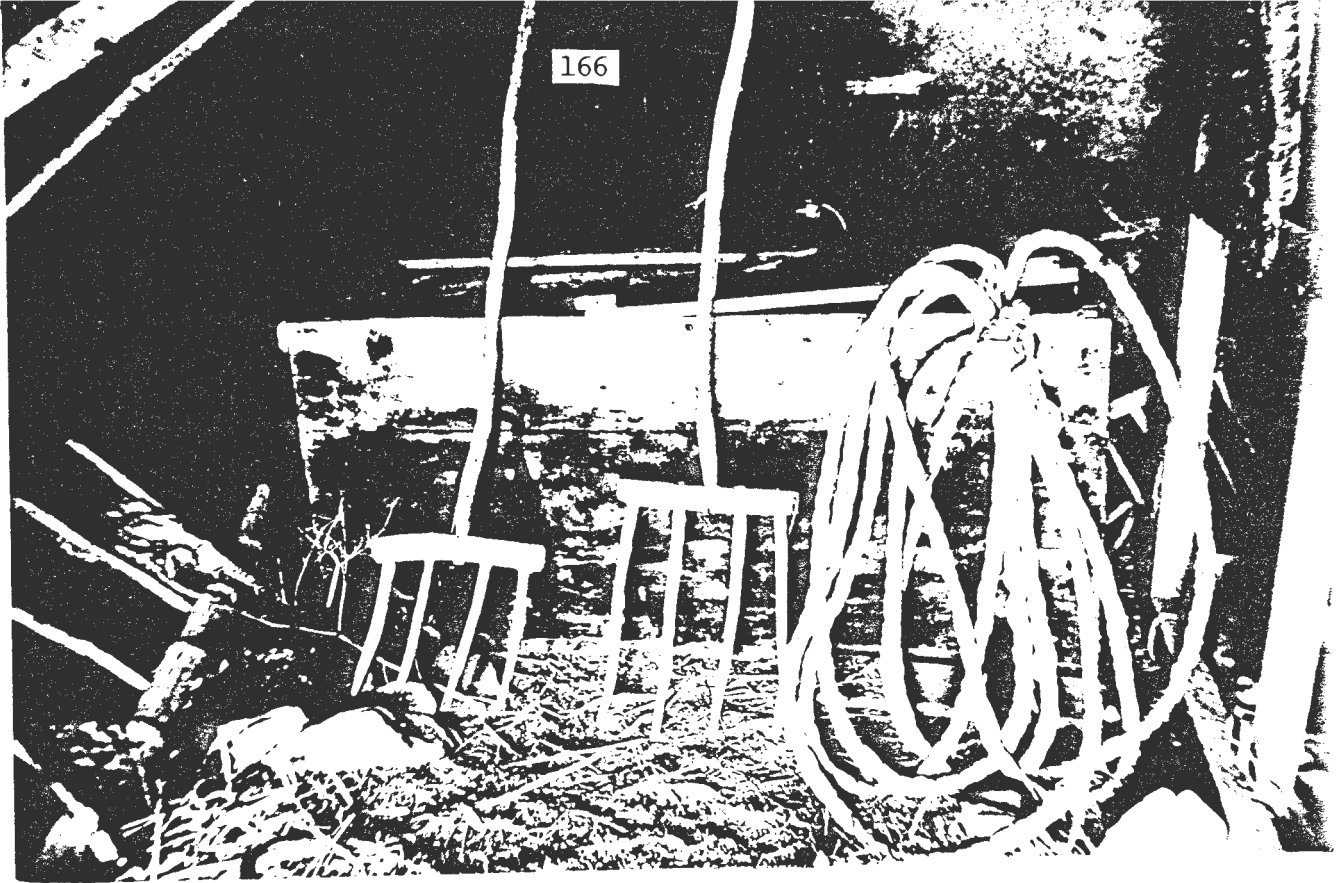


Figure 5.25
Ladder, 'strooigaffels' and 'meultou'.

Photograph : P. Holtrop

In the past history of the Verlorenvlei area, and of the Swartland, mills of various kinds for grinding corn were common because of the importance of wheat as an economic activity, and the suitability of the natural environment and climate for wheat cultivation. Horse-mills were more common than water-mills because of the aridity of the area, and the seasonal variability of the rainfall, with rivers often drying up completely in winter. In the Verlorenvlei area, there is evidence of a water-mill at Klaarefontein,¹⁵ although this is not listed by Walton (1974) because the mill itself no longer exists.

"...in many parts of the country, where streams are unreliable or non-existent, horse-mills continued in use well into this century, and several complete examples have survived. In wheat-growing areas where streams often dry up for several months, or even years, almost every farm had its horse-mill for grinding its wheat."¹⁶

Walton (1974) has made a detailed study of horse-mills in South Africa, and from the distribution map included in his book,¹⁷ it can be seen that the north-western Cape is the predominant area for occurrence of horse-mills. In his Index,¹⁸ Walton lists the farms with horse-mills in the Piquetberg district: Aurora (the mill now being in the Swellendam Drostyd Museum), Bonteheuwel, Diepekuil, Kersefontein, Klaarefontein, Knolvlei, Koopmanskraal, and Verlorenvlei. The Klaarefontein mill has also been dismantled.¹⁹

Of these mills, Walton devotes much of his discussion to the newer mill at the Verlorenvlei settlement, which was visited and photographed during the Vernacular Architecture Society excursion in 1972,²⁰ the colour slides being filed in the Cape Archives. Walton includes in the book a series of photographs of Mr. Piet Coetzee of Verloren Vlei (WC6I) demonstrating the making of a leather 'meultou'.

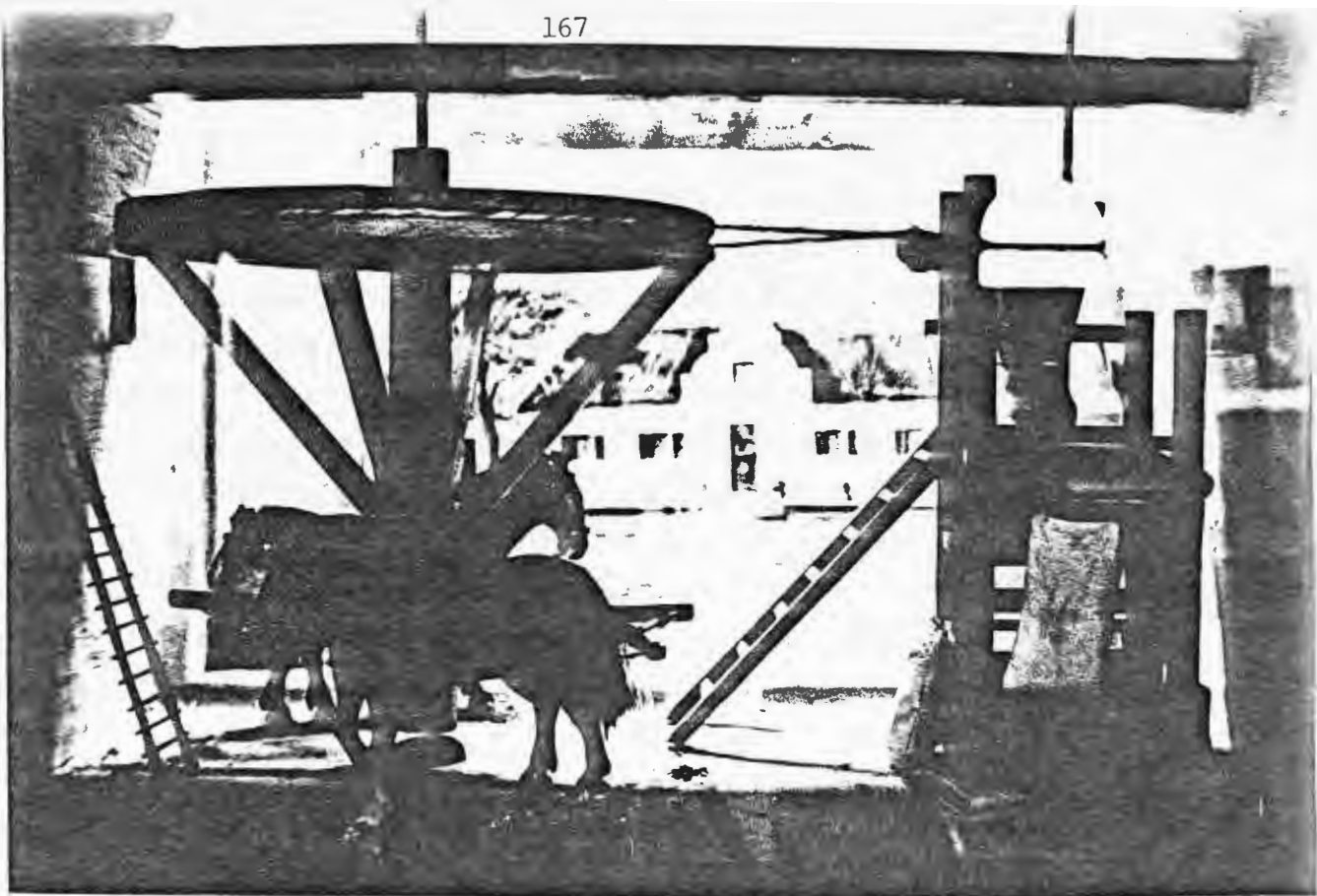


Figure 5.26

Model of Horse-mill - Moorreesburg Wheat Museum

Photograph : P. Holtrop

In 1838, according to the census statistics listed by Walton, Piquetberg had fifty horse-mills.²¹ In 1830, 1840, and 1850, Piquetberg is not listed separately.²² In the 1860 census, Piquetberg is shown as having 26 water-mills and 35 horse-mills, totalling 61 mills.²³ In the 1870 census, Piquetberg has 12 water-mills and 50 horse-mills,²⁴ indicating a dramatic shift to horse-mills in preference to water-mills. The total number of mills, however, remains almost constant, at 62. Walton also lists the 1880 census of corn-mills and farming implements, which gives some indication of the extent of grain cultivation in the Piquetberg area at the time:²⁵

Ploughs	951
Harrows	208
Reaping machines	8
Threshing machines	4
Grain-crushing machines	-
Machinery for cutting hay and straw	-
Winnowing machines	7
Maize cleaners	-
Corn-mills	115
Saw-mills	-

It is interesting to note that of all the Cape divisions, Piquetberg had the second highest number of corn-mills, exceeded only by Clanwilliam with 171, and followed by Namaqualand and Aliwal North with 104.²⁶ The lack of saw-mills in the statistics listed above also indicates the lack of timber in the Piquetberg area, and the need to import the wood for building the horse-mills, the importation probably being by buck-wagon.

On Walton's distribution map²⁷ most of the horse-mills occurring on the Cape west coast are overdrift, with one cog-and-rung drive, an example of this being in the Bokomo mill museum in Malmesbury. "The difficulty of making large cogged driving wheels must have restricted their use, and most farmers continued to use a rope-drive and employ whatever means they could to overcome their difficulties",²⁸ caused by the rope stretching and slipping. As the rope-mill did not require such precise carpentry, it is more common in the Verlorenvlei area, where limited materials and limited skill in carpentry were available. In the case of the newer mill in the Verlorenvlei settlement, the rope was crossed to ensure a better grip on the pulley.

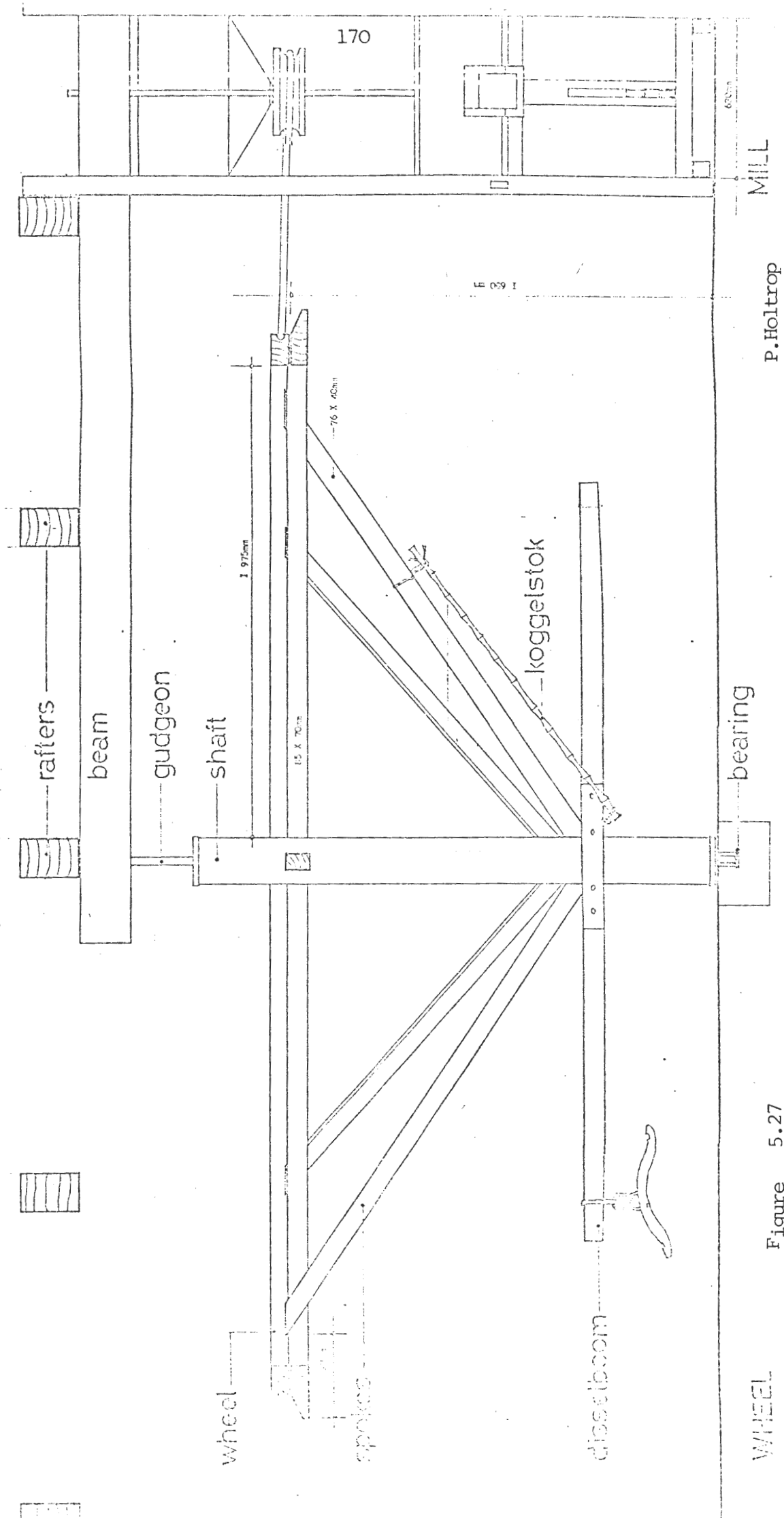
All the mills in the Verlorenvlei settlement were of the rope-and-pulley drive variety. From the diagrams of the newer mill, drawn by P. Holtrop, the method of operation can be seen (figures 5.27-29). The pulley is mounted on a quant above the runner-stone, which is then overdrift. The pulley is driven by a rope ('meultou') which is held in place by a groove around the circumference of the giant wooden wheel, 4-5 metres in diameter, and mounted on a massive upright shaft. The operation of the horse-mills is well-described by Walton (1974) in his chapter on "Horse-mills".²⁹

Walton also identifies and probable source of the millstones in the Verlorenvlei mills:

"Many of the millstones used in the Sandveld were quarried from Meulsteen Vlei, at the top of Van Rhyn's Pass between Nieuwoudtville and Calvinia. The floor of this extensive shallow vlei is made of hard, steeply-dipping sandstone beds, ... which are the thickness of mill-stones and thus provide stones with a minimum of effort."³⁰

Operational horse-mills are not such a rarity in the Piquetberg area, and are well-represented in museums such as the Bokomo mill museum at Malmesbury, the Swellendam Drostyd Museum, the Moorreesburg Wheat Museum (still to be reassembled and housed), and the Worcester Landbou Museum. However, the value of the Verlorenvlei mills, especially the one housed in W05L, is that they exist in situ, within the community to which they represented such a vital part of life, as it were, the dynamo or driving force which is now dead. They are a testimony to a way of life that is now past, together with the unused 'brandsolders,' threshing-floor ruins, empty and dilapidated horse-stalls, and unused decaying 'bakoonde'. More important, although they provide the clue to the past, and although they remain an

integral part of the settlement, they are hidden from view. Their existence remains a secret, and until they have been discovered, the force that gave the now slow-moving and quiet settlement its vitality remains a mystery. When the elderly members of the community, with their memories reaching back almost eighty years into the past, speak of at least a hundred people living in the settlement, of every house with ten or more children, of large week-long parties over Christmas and New Year, and of up to 24 loaves of bread being baked in the 'bakoonde,' such scenes seem impossible to imagine in the Verlorenvlei of today... until one has discovered the horse-mills, the threshing-floors, the 'brandsolders; and the 'bakoonde.'



P. Holtrop

Figure 5.27

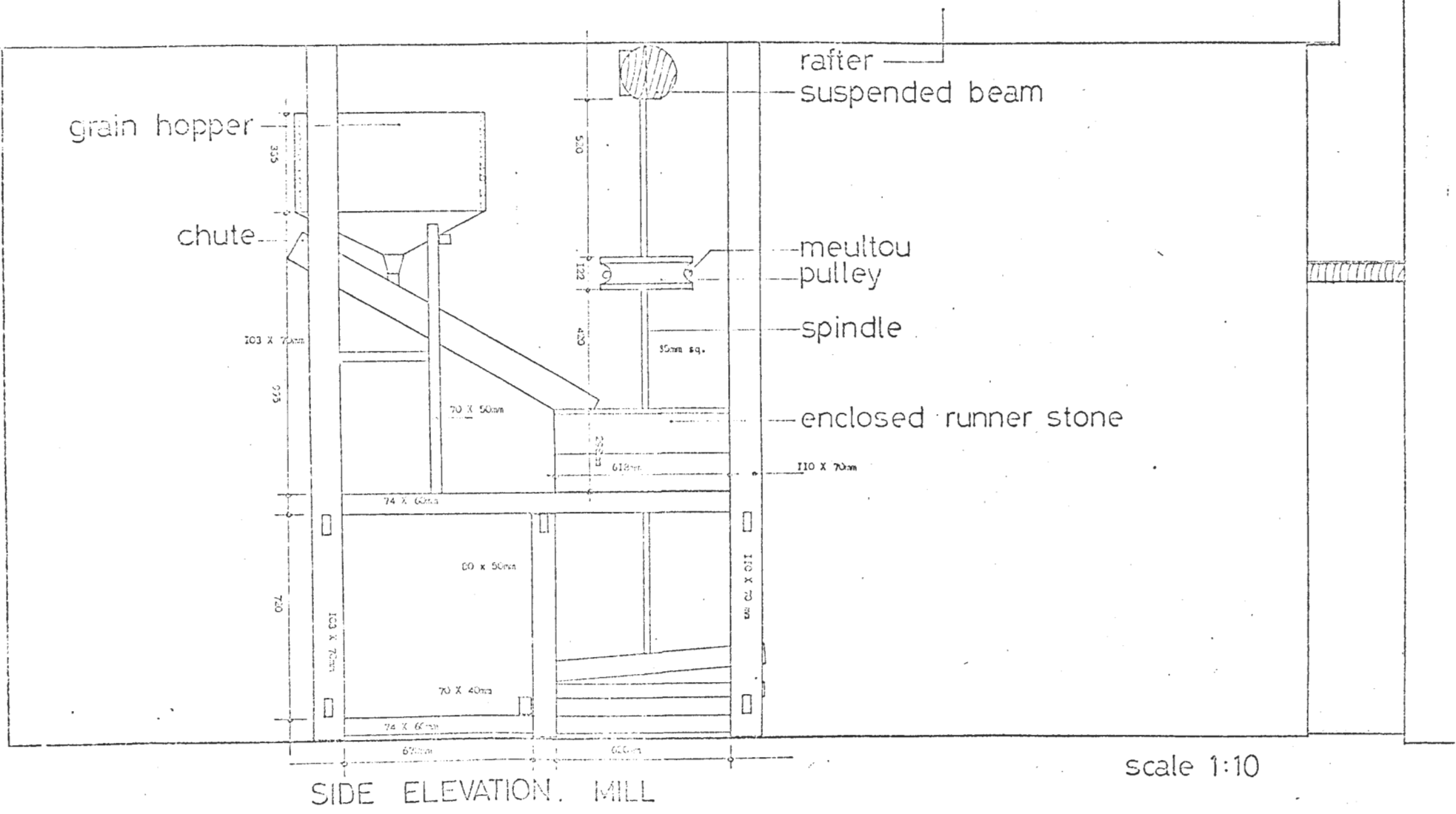


Figure 5.28

P. Holtrop

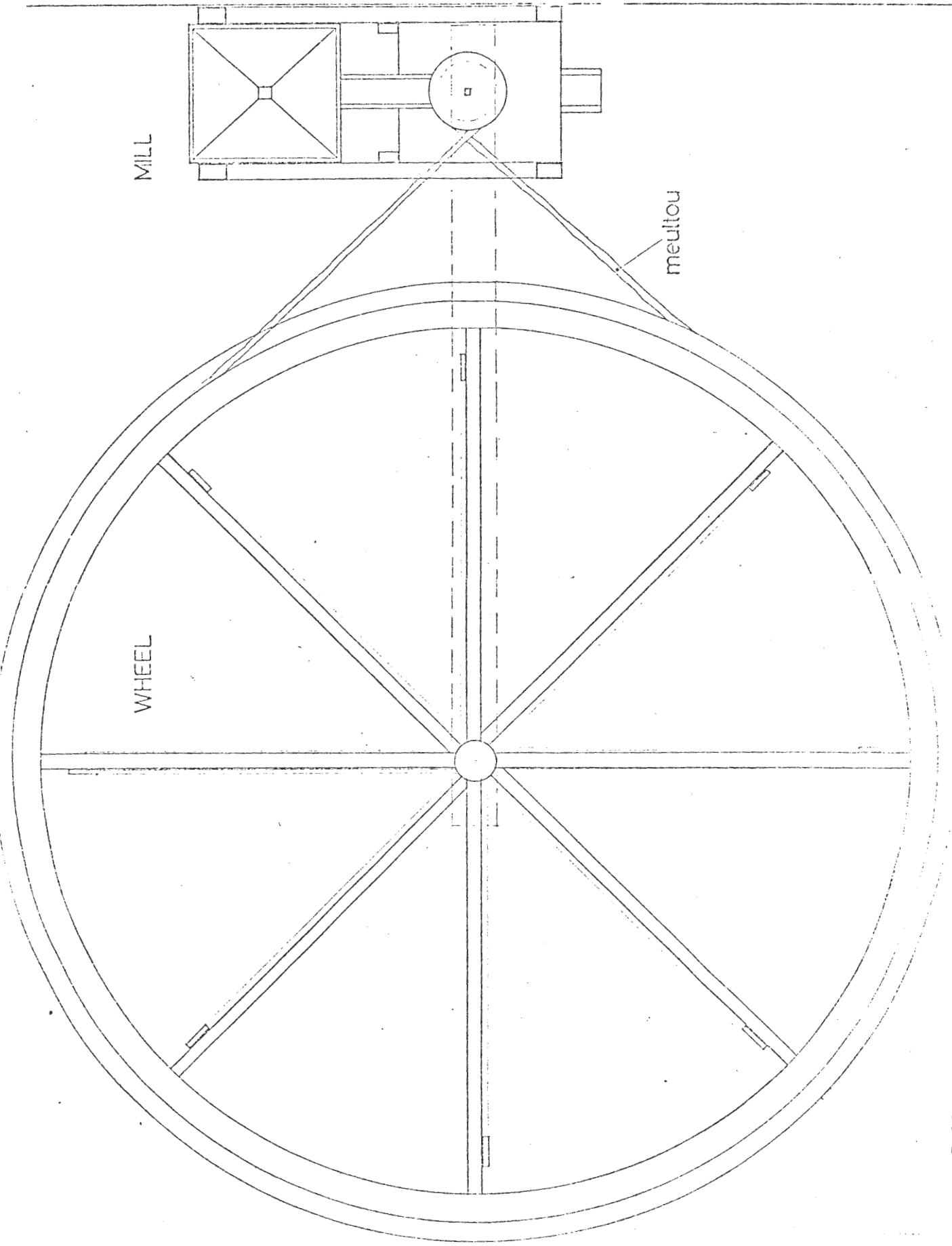


Figure 5.29

P. Holtrop

entrance

VVO5K

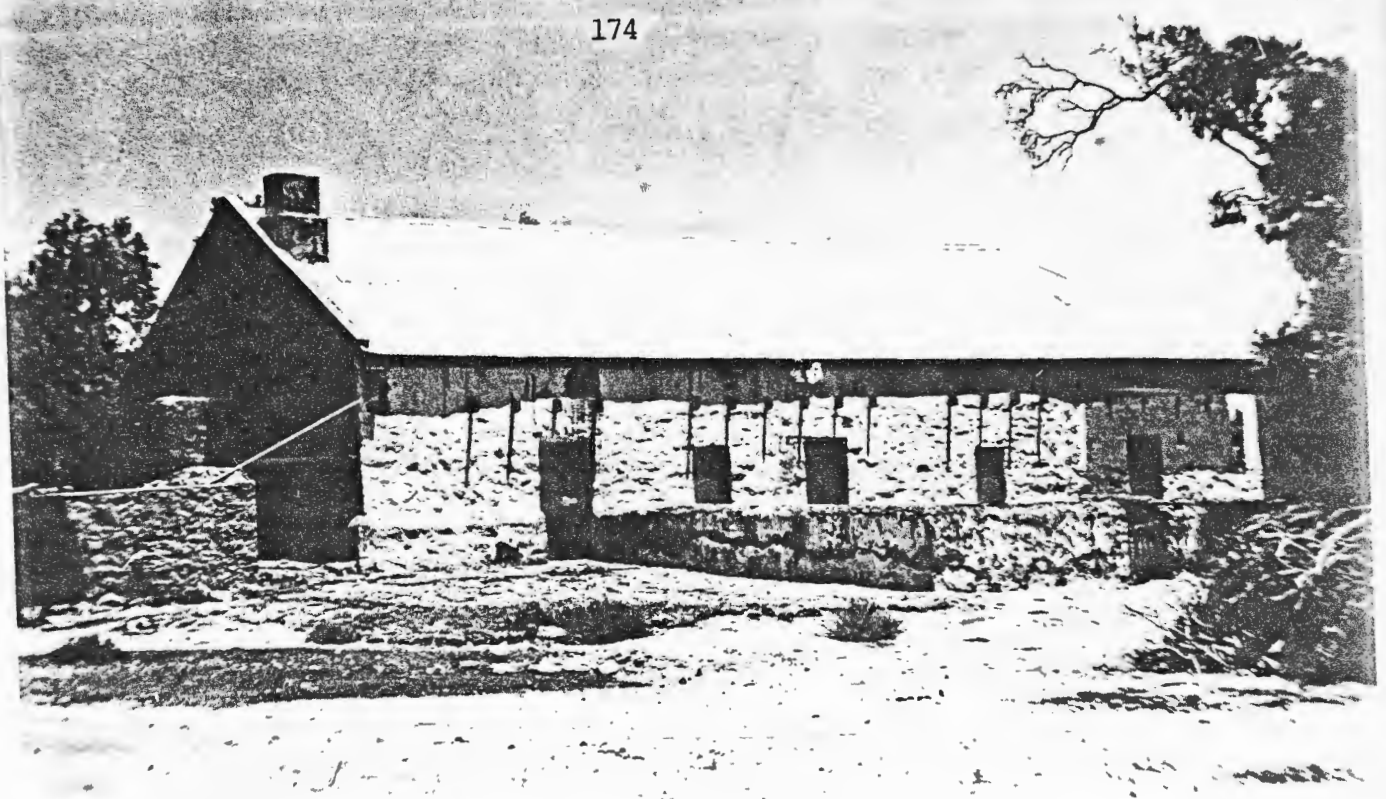


Figure 5.30
W05K - November 1979
N elevation

Photograph : S. Sinclair

Together with the trapvloer (W04D), the horse-mill and horse-stall (W05L), this house forms a wheat-processing unit, associated with the Coetzee family. The house has a large 'brandsolder', evidenced by the beams on the northern elevation, and a 'bakoond' on the eastern elevation. It is unusual in that it has a small front garden enclosed by a garden wall, rather than the less permanent fences of the other houses in the settlement.

VVO6C

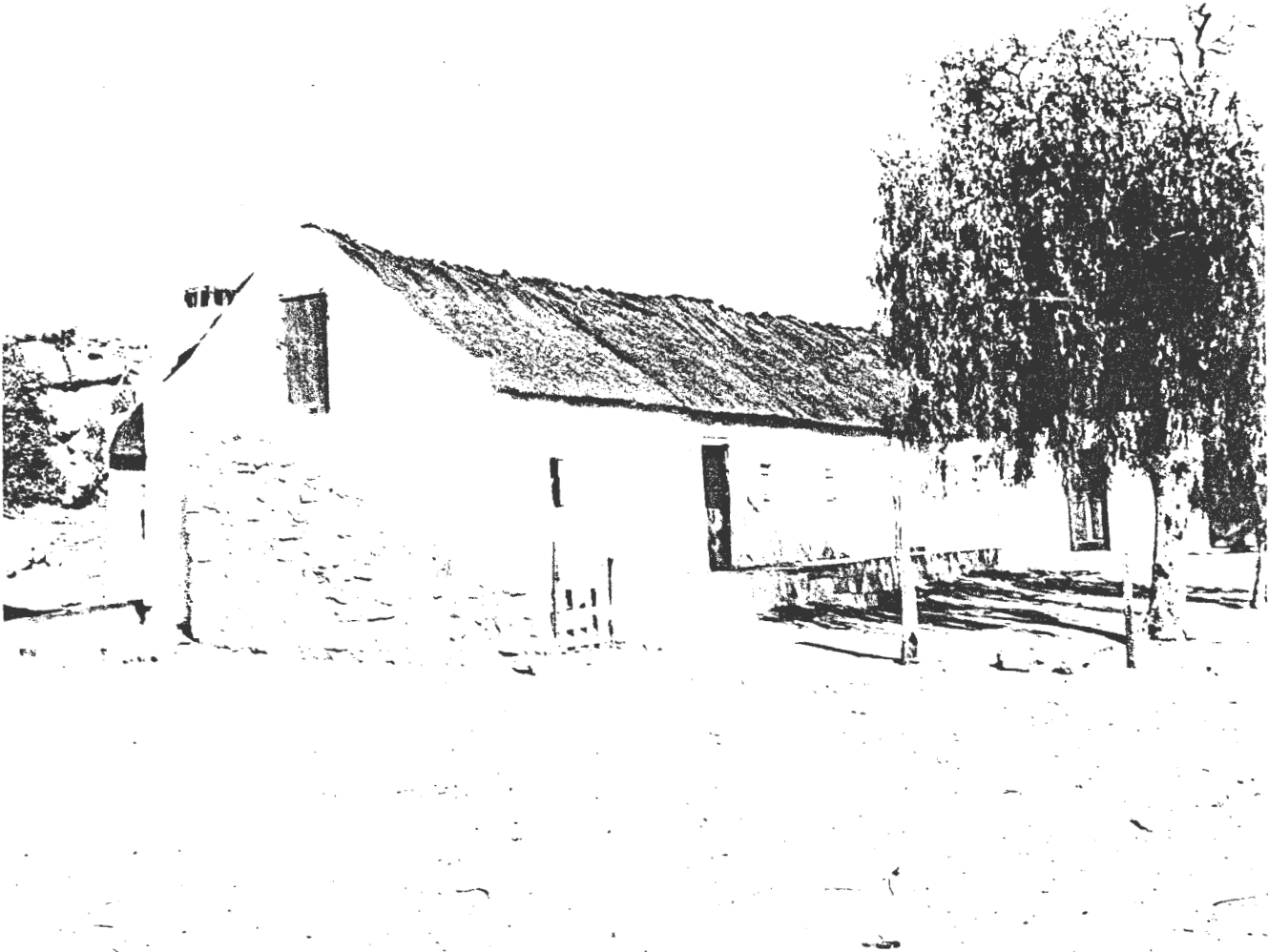
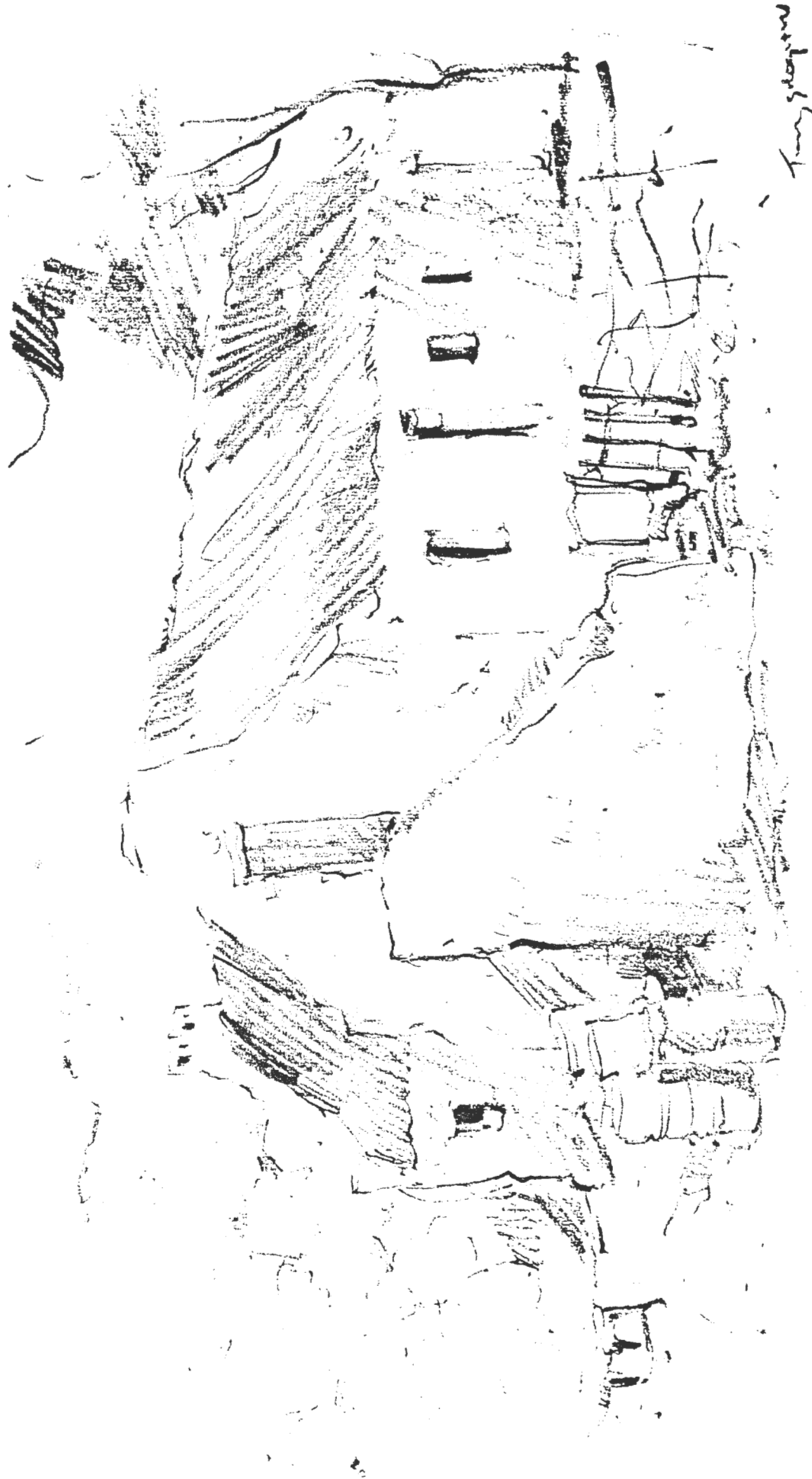


Figure 5.31
 VVO6C - 1970
 E/N elevation

Photograph : J. Walton

Also sketched by T. Grogan (1978), the sketch being included as figure 5.32 this house has been made semi-detached, housing the Mostert family in the eastern half and the Brand family in the western half. The next building to the west, VVO6G, was once a house but is now an outbuilding containing a horse-mill in one of its rooms. Together with the horse-mill (VVO6G), and probably the 'trapvloer' (VVO5F), the house with its large 'brandsolder' formed a further wheat-processing unit which was associated with the Mostert family.



T. Grojan

T. Grojan

Figure 5.32
W06C - June 1978
E/N elevation

Footnotes

1. Walton (1952)
2. Tindale (1980), pers. comm.
3. A. Smit (1980), pers. comm.
4. Burger (1975), 177
5. Burger (1975), 245
6. Kolbe (1727), 73-74
7. Mentzel (1785), 168-170
8. Walton (1972),
9. J. Smit (1980), pers. comm.
10. Cape Town Deeds Office, Deed 102, 8-10-1860
11. Cape Archives, Vernacular Architecture Society slide collection
12. Grogan (1978)
13. Smit, Carstens, Brand, Coetzee (1980), pers. comm.
14. to 30. From Walton (1974), chapter on Horse-mills, distribution maps, and tables.

CHAPTER 6

Factors which have shaped the Verlorenvlei settlement

The beginnings of the settlement

From the descriptions of the man-made features in the Verlorenvlei settlement, which are based on a detailed ground study, from discussions with members of the community and architects, and from a close examination of the aerial photographs of 1942, it has been possible to produce a map of the early settlement (figure 6.3). This map represents the settlement in 1942, although it is difficult to determine the length of the period during which the settlement grew to this stage, or the sequence of development.

The earliest date at which habitation associated with farming could be expected to be found is at the beginning of the eighteenth century, with the granting of the first loan places. An 'opstal' is mentioned in the loan place document relating to "aan de hoek van de verlore valleij" in 1750.¹ Thunberg, however, in the journal of his visit to Verlooren-valley in 1774, camped for several days in the open air along the banks of the river, down to the mouth. He mentions that no colonists dwelt there, which is borne out by the fact that he had to camp out in a colony where travellers relied heavily on the hospitality of the farmers. He also notes that there were a few places for grazing cattle, but that these were cared for by Hottentots.² Barrow, on the other hand, in describing his journey of 1797, and his visit to Verlooren-valley, says: "The margin of the lake, however, was belted with good ground, and seemed to be tolerably well inhabited."³

The earliest map which provides evidence of habitation in the position of the present Verlorenvlei settlement is the Historical Map from the Gordon Collection, (figure 2.2).⁴ According to Mossop (1947),⁵ this map can be dated at circa 1790.⁶ As the copy of the map is small, an enlargement of the Verlorenvlei section has been produced photographically. In the area called 'Verloren Valey hoek', between two shaded areas of higher ground immediately to the north of the 'Zout pan', is the symbol associated with a farm habitation elsewhere on the map. This symbol is an open circle with a miniature drawing of a house. Written immediately across from the symbol in the only open area on the map, although in a position across the lake, is the name 'vluge kraal'. No other mention of this name has been encountered in the course of this study. Mossop (1947), in outlining the life of Andries Greef, says:

"Between 1769 and 1773 Andries owned the grazing rights on three farms in the Piquetberg district as well as Oliphantskuy1 in Swartland. They were Verloren Valley, Lange Fonteyn and Driefontein⁷... Driefontein, near it (Langefontein), is shown on the map from the Gordon Collection as 'the farm of Andries Greef.'"⁸

Mossop does not identify the owner of the habitation indicated on the site of the Verlorenvlei settlement, although a member of the settlement community has reported the popular belief that Greef lived in WVO3M, regarded as the oldest house in the settlement. Paterson stayed several days at the house of Andries Gueff or Greef in the Verlorenvlei area because the river was so swollen by the rains of 1779 as to be impassable. The position of the habitation of Andries Greef indicated on the Gordon collection map (figure 2.2) is at the point where the river is shown as beginning to widen out, and probably coincides with the position of the farm, Groote Drift, which Greef held as a loan place from 1773-1778.⁹

If Greef did indeed occupy WVO3M, and if WVO3M is the oldest house, the beginnings of the settlement can be dated as being in the second half of the eighteenth century. As WVO3M formed a wheat-processing node with two threshing-floors, one probably older than the other, a horse-mill and a horse-stall, it can then be postulated that the settlement developed directly from a wheat cultivation and processing basis. Further nodes must have been added to the original during the period when cultivation was flourishing, processing was done locally with the aid of animal labour, and transport of the surplus by sea on the cutters of the Stephan brothers made wheat export economically feasible.

On the diagram (page 85) accompanying the original quitrent grant for the piece of land including the loan places 'In de Verlorene Valley' and 'Keurfontein',¹⁰ in the semi-circle indicating 'The Roode Verlooren Vally' only an 'old foundation' and a 'hut' are drawn at the intersection of roads identifying the present settlement. This diagram was drawn in 1837, but is likely to show surveying landmarks rather than all features in the area.

Archdeacon's first map, dated 1869,¹¹ shows no sign of habitation at the present site of the Verlorenvlei settlement. On the two subsequent Archdeacon maps, 1869-70 and 1971,¹² five small buildings are indicated



Figure 5.1
Theunis Erasmus Smit

Photograph : copied by S. Sinclair
from a framed photograph owned by
Mr. and Mrs. Jan Smit



Figure 6.2

Theunis Erasmus Smit & Helie Smit (first wife)

Photograph: copied by S. Sinclair
copy of framed photograph be-
longing to Mr. H. Smit

at the site, with only two at the present site of Elandsbaai, suggesting that at the time the Verlorenvlei settlement was larger than Elandsbaai. On the Divisional Map of Piquetberg of 1890,¹³ showing farm houses in the area by the symbol H, only a Hut is indicated at the road intersection where the present settlement is situated, again probably being a surveying landmark.

According to the above evidence, it would appear that the first habitation on the site of the settlement was built between 1750 and 1790, making the oldest building approximately 200 years old. By 1837 there were at least two structures, and by 1869 probably a minimum of five. This would place the major period of growth and subsequent decline of the settlement within the last hundred and twenty years or so, and would coincide with the impression of high wheat production conveyed by Burger (1975): "Die Agricultural Society rapporteer in 1860 dat R10 000 (se graan) langs die Verloren Vallei af uitgevoer is."¹⁴

At this point, such conclusions cannot be substantiated. They rely on the reported observations of early travellers who may have passed by too far from evidence of habitation to have seen it, or may have seen it but neglected to record it. They also rely on the personal interpretation and inclination of cartographers, who may have felt an early settlement to be too small to be worth recording, or who may have concentrated on features of natural topography. The buildings themselves are difficult to date, because of the persistence of the old building methods even into the present. While more substantial evidence is still required, this estimate of the major period of change in the settlement coincides with the growth period experienced by Velddrift, also sited on a farm owned by Theunis Erasmus Smit from 1839 to 1895, but associated with fishing rather than wheat farming.¹⁵ Smit (figure 6.1) began acquiring land at Verlorenvlei in 1856.¹⁶

Environmental factors determining the siting of the settlement

A determining feature of the environment has been the vlei or coastal lake. The presence of a large water body has affected the siting of 'the settlement', and provided many resources which have influenced the way of life, and the characteristics of the man-made environment. The vlei has been a food source for humans, it has provided grazing for the stock; it has been used for building materials such as mud and reeds; it has been a source of water for irrigation, domestic purposes and animal consumption; it has mitigated the climatic conditions and provided a significant aesthetic attraction. However other reasons must be sought for the siting of the settlement at its specific position on the southern bank of the vlei.

Field study has revealed a number of considerations which must have dictated the siting of the Verlorenvlei settlement. It developed on either side of what appears from all evidence to have been the alluvial fan of a stream. This stream would have provided a strong attraction to early settlers as a source of fresh water, of clay for building, and of an extent of fertile soil in which vegetables, lucerne and fruit could be planted

The settlement has been placed in a small 'amphitheatre', which affords a number of advantages. In a rough semi-circle behind the settlement are hills which act as a catchment area for the stream, allow for access from the south, and provide shelter from the southerly winds, besides the additional benefit of stone for building. During a period of hostility between and from indigenous people, the settlement would have gained some protection from the hills to the south and the water body to the north. The settlement has been built on the large area of flatter ground enclosed by the semi-circle of hills, where the slope is gradual enough to allow for construction of buildings with simple technology. While the alluvial fan is a flat area suitable for small-scale cultivation, a larger sandy area to the south of the hills enclosing the settlement has proved suitable for large-scale cultivation of crops such as wheat.

The orientation of the settlement in this site is to the north, which is the usual response to climatic conditions in the southern hemisphere. A northward orientation has provided the most pleasant aspect as it is simultaneously vlei-facing. The pattern of reed-beds in the vlei in front of the settlement is such that, while reeds are available as a resource, there

is access to the open waters of the vlei for fishing or transportation purposes. The settlement is also relatively close to the sea, with its modifying effect on the climate, its food resources, and the possibility of transportation to outside markets. To the south lies the salt pan, providing an invaluable resource in the days before refrigeration. Also to the south are additional sources of fresh water, such as Atjar's fontein.

The above considerations must all have played a part in determining the present situation of the settlement, as a conscious or unconscious response of the early settlers to environmental factors.



Figure 6.3
Aerial photograph showing threshing
floor VV02A

Photograph: S. Sinclair

Wheat-processing units or nodes.

A close study of the chronological series of aerial photographs of the settlement revealed a number of white circular features (figure 6.3) which corresponded with relic 'trapvloere' or threshing-floors identified during the course of ground study. The number of white circular features on the photographs exceeded the number of threshing-floors identified on the ground, suggesting the possibility of additional threshing-floors in a state of ruin that rendered them unnoticeable. A detailed search was made for these threshing-floors, with the aid of the aerial photographs, and a positive identification resulted in most cases, verified by discussion with members of the community.

Ten threshing-floors have been confirmed, four in the Coetzee section of the settlement, and six in the Smit section. In addition, there is a possibility of at least three more, one in the Coetzee section and two in the Smit section (figure 6.3). Slight discrepancies in the configuration of the threshing-floors in aerial photographs taken at different dates suggest that all the floors were not used simultaneously. The floors probably show up clearly on the aerial photographs because of their hardened, flat surfaces, and the wheat remnants lying on these surfaces.

In the Coetzee section, which has two horse-mills, one or two of the threshing-floors occur in conjunction with a horse-mill, a horse-stall, a wagon shed, and a house with a 'brandsolder' and 'bakoond', to form a distinct wheat-processing unit. In the Smit section, a similar wheat processing unit occurs, associated with the one horse-mill identified to date. Viewing the settlement as a whole, there appears to be approximately one threshing-floor for each of the older houses, or clusters of two to three houses, each complex being associated with a branch of the extended Smit/Coetzee family.

While the organisational principle of the wheat-processing unit is not yet entirely clear, these units have been a determining factor in the development of the Verlorenvlei settlement. The wheat-processing unit is directly related to a specific family, and becomes therefore a basic socio-economic unit. It provided the human and animal labour necessary for wheat cultivation and processing, and was in turn supported by the food and the income derived from the wheat. By virtue of their family relationship, each family branch was entitled to erect a house and set of outbuildings within the settlement, to live within the settlement as 'bywoners' and to pay rent for the use of a portion of the cultivated land. It should be possible, ultimately, to link the built environment with a large-scale family tree encompassing all members of the community from the establishment of the settlement to the present.

Major natural resources affecting rural settlement location and land-use

Certain natural resources have had a major influence on the location of rural settlement, its developmental trends, and on land-use patterns in the vicinity of the Verlorenvlei settlement.

First and foremost amongst these resources is fresh water for human consumption, domestic purposes, animal consumption, and irrigation of crops. The low rainfall, the long summer drought, the high rate of evaporation in summer, and the brackish quality of the coastal lake water, places fresh water at a premium. The utility of the water at present is being examined by Ms. H. Robertson of the School of Environmental Studies. The pressure of the need for water in the past is a subject for closer investigation.

Evidence from the records of loan place allocations suggests that scarcity of water has always been a major consideration although other evidence conveys the impression that the shortage of water may be more critical in the present than it has been in the past. The siting of the Verlorenvlei settlement appears to have been determined by the presence of a large stream running into the lake at that point. The fact that this stream no longer exists could be due to a lower rainfall possibly caused by a climatic change, or to negative effects of overutilisation of agricultural land and overgrazing in the catchment area of the stream. Water availability has been affected by stock-holding and grazing over more than two centuries. Reduction in the natural vegetation has reduced ground cover; increased runoff, erosion and removal of topsoil; reduced the organic content of the soil; and consequently affected its water catchment potential. The greater availability of fresh water in the past appears to be confirmed by the lack of evidence of major water storage facilities at a period when the houses and outbuildings were roofed with straw and would not have provided for roof drainage and tank storage as is practised widely in the settlement today. The decline of wheat production in the present, when improved methods of cultivation and easier access to markets in the south should have stimulated the economic viability of wheat production, appears to confirm that climatic factors have reduced the favourability of the area for wheat.

While the significance of fresh water availability and usage of the fluctuating water in the Verlorenvlei river in relation to human settlement and land usage cannot yet be fully outlined in historical perspective, the results of this study point to a period of greater water availability and utility which contributed to the expansion of the Verlorenvlei settlement. Conversely, the periods of static and now-declining human settlement at Verlorenvlei would appear to be linked to a decline in water availability and utility.

The second natural resource which has influenced human settlement characteristics and land-use patterns is the natural vegetation. The low grazing potential of the vegetation has contributed to the severe overgrazing to which the area has been subjected over hundreds of years, especially in periods of drought. The lack of trees has led to the planting of exotics for purposes such as shade from excessive heat, and fuel; as well as to the need to use alternative natural resources for building and to import wood needed for construction. The lack of trees has therefore considerably shaped the characteristics of the Verlorenvlei settlement, both in building materials and design, and contributed to its unique character, which has in turn influenced the way of life in the settlement. The nature of the natural vegetation as an indicator of agricultural potential tends to have been overlooked, for the arid coastal fynbos/Table Mountain Series combination does not indicate potential for wheat production in the same way as the renosterbos/Malmesbury Series combination which predominates in the Swartland. The reed vegetation associated with the coastal lake is a renewable natural resource which does not appear to have been exploited significantly in the past except to some extent in roof thatching, although it is being used at present for dune stabilisation north of Elandsbaai by the Forestry Department. The reed beds are the basis of the primary productivity in the coastal lake system which supports the waterbird and fish population, both of which were exploited as a food source in the past, before more stringent control by the Cape Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation. Water plants such as Myriophyllum spicatum supplement the terrestrial grazing available for cattle, while the 'waterblommetjies' occurring inland on the river are a natural food source for the human population. The characteristics and potential of the natural vegetation are being investigated by Ms S. Lane, Ms. S. Milton, and Mr. C. Boucher, and the results of their research will allow for an examination of natural vegetation as an influence on human settlement and land use over time.

Other natural resources available locally promoted the viability of human settlement. These include fresh water and marine fish; crayfish, mussels and other edible marine organisms; salt from the nearby salt pan which could be used for preserving meat and fish, for drying skins and hides, or for cooking; local mud, clay and limestone used for building houses and 'bak-oonde'; terrestrial birds and mammals, and water birds; and honey provided by the bees. Introduced resources included wheat, providing bread for humans and fodder for animals; vegetables, fruit and lucerne; and cattle and sheep, providing milk, leather, manure, butter and cheese, meat and wool. "These additional requirements of a settlement site merely reduce the number of choices which are open and make the balancing of economic and non-economic advantages and disadvantages necessary."¹⁷

Tree-planting

Planted trees are an important feature of the Verlorenvlei settlement, and have been indicated on the map. Meinig (1962) points out that it was a popular belief in the 1870's that: "Not only would 'the breaking up of the soil' help to 'equalize' the climate (more even distribution of rainfall through the year), but the planting of trees would certainly increase the annual rainfall."¹⁸

Such theories do not appear to have been applied to the Verlorenvlei settlement, as it is not surrounded by large-scale planting of tree stands. Instead, the practice developed early of planting small stands, or rows of three or more trees in front of the stoeps of the houses in the settlement. As the stoep is usually on the north elevation, facing the vlei, the row of trees was planted in front of the north elevation. One of the prime functions of such tree-planting would appear to be the provision of shade with its associated coolness. The row of trees would cast shade on the western and middle parts of the stoep from mid-morning to mid-day, and on the middle to eastern parts of the stoep after mid-day.

The need for shade and coolness is intensified by the treeless character of the natural environment in the Verlorenvlei area, and by the intense heat during the summer. The trees would also provide some protection from rain during the wetter winter season, (in those years when the rainfall was not low), as the rainbearing winds are from the north-west. However, the likelihood that rain is not the overriding consideration is borne out by the low rainfall figures for the area, by the lack of protective plates at the bottom of the doors, and by the fact that the doors open outwards in some cases, both being features of a drier environment.¹⁹ Other reasons for tree-planting in the settlement are the need for privacy, and various aesthetic requirements. Trees could be seen as purely decorative, as a softening influence, as objects of beauty providing a contrast with a harsh arid environment, a splash of green in a place predominantly coloured red or yellow by the all-pervasive sand, or as tall and elegant in a region of many small rounded bushes.

Three predominant species of trees have been identified in the deliberate tree-planting patterns of the Verlorenvlei settlement.²⁰ These are:

- Acacia cyclops or rooikrantz
- Eucalyptus cladocalyx or sugar gum
- Schinus molle, the Peruvian mastic tree or pepper tree.

All three trees are exotic species. Acacia cyclops, although usually regarded as an alien invader or pest, has not attained invasive proportions within the settlement, although it has done so on the northern bank

of the lake opposite the settlement, and elsewhere in the area. It is known to be well-adapted to Cape coastal conditions, including wind and salinity. Within the settlement, various factors may control its growth, such as animal and human traffic, use for firewood, and the intense heat and aridity. It is planted to provide shade near animal enclosures.

Eucalyptus cladocalyx , Schinus molle, and other eucalypts are used for shade in front of the 'langhuise' stoeps, usually parallel with the north vlei-facing elevation, and often in a row of two, three or more trees.

Eucalyptus cladocalyx or the sugar gum is native to Australia:

"Under favourable conditions it attains over 100 feet in height and 3-5 feet in diameter, but on poor soils and with low rainfall it may be only 30 feet in height and a foot in diameter... The altitudinal range is 100-2000 feet. In summer the maximum temperatures in the shade often exceed 100°F, whilst in winter 10-20 frosts occur at the higher altitudes. Snow is very rare. The annual rainfall is 15-25 inches and droughts are liable to occur... Sugar gum has been extensively planted in Australia, outside of its natural habitat, for farm timber, shelter and ornament. In plantations it develops excellent pole form. The timber is mainly used in the round for poles split for posts and in heavy construction."²¹

It occurs on skeletal or podsolic soils, frequently rather shallow, the parent material being quartzites, sedimentary and, less commonly, limestone. The subsoil is clay within 1-3 feet of the surface, with variable drainage. It is also used for shelter and ornamental purposes.²² Eucalypts do not appear to have been used for building purposes within the settlement, other woods appearing in the houses. These other woods would have had to be brought into the area by means of Cape buck wagons, which were used for transportation, and are still housed in the settlement.

The pepper tree, Schinus molle, apart from providing shade, is a very attractive tree, with its "graceful drooping"²³ branches. It therefore performs an aesthetic function, as it softens and beautifies the rather harsh natural environment. It is a native of South America, of the family Anacardiaceae, of which there are 30 species occurring from Mexico to Argentina. It is used as an ornamental street tree in South Africa, even in arid Karroo conditions, such as at Matjiesfontein, and is evergreen. Its greenness has the effect of increasing its

aesthetic appeal in an area renowned for its sandiness and barrenness at certain seasons. The small pea-like rosy red fruits are attractive to birds, and the trees provide a congenial home for weaver birds, who use the thatch from the 'langhuise' to build their nests. The weaver birds are therefore an element in the deterioration of the thatch roofs of the houses, as they pull out the thatch. If the roof is not repaired, the interior of the building is exposed to the elements, such as wind and rain, which hasten its deterioration. The dainty, yellow, star-shaped flowers of the pepper tree attract swarms of bees, especially in the hot summer mornings, and the bees also play a rôle in the deterioration of the houses by boring out holes in the exposed mudbricks.²⁴ This promotes erosion of the walls by water and wind, leading eventually to collapse. Because of the presence of the bees, however, honey is available as a local food source. In the afternoon sea-to-land breezes, which cool down the land, the branches sway, creating a fanning, circulatory effect which may lessen the heat around the houses on a microclimatic scale.

Because the planting of eucalypts and pepper trees is usually associated with the creation of shade in front of the houses in the settlement, a ruin may be identified with some degree of certainty as a previous human residence, because of the presence of trees parallel to the position where the front stoep would have been, as in the case of VV02B and VV06M. In the Verlorenvlei settlement, trees are therefore indicators of human habitation, being introduced primarily for provision of shade. In some cases, tree-planting has retarded the discovery of relic features of the built environment, as in the case of the 'trapvloer' to the west of VV05A, which was planted with trees after it fell into disuse.

Other exotic tree species have been identified in the Verlorenvlei settlement.²⁵ One of these is Eucalyptus gomphocephala or tuart, a forest tree of Australia. Tuart can attain large diameters of 3-7 feet and heights of 80-130 feet under favourable conditions, but becomes reduced if conditions are unfavourable. In Australia, it is found in a narrow belt behind the sand dunes of the south western coastal area. It is therefore well adapted for the Verlorenvlei area, which is coastal and on the south-western side of the continent within a Mediterranean climatic region. The altitudinal range of tuart is from just above sea level to 100 feet, which occurs within the Verlorenvlei settlement.

"The climate is temperate, with winters usually frost free and summers with cooling afternoon sea breezes, which temper the heat. The rainfall is 30-40 inches a year, with most of the precipitation in winter. Summer rainfall is only 0,50-1,00 inch a month.

This species grows on low lying plains. The soils are sandy loams with a high percentage of lime or calcareous sands. It is only found over limestone, which may be, however, up to 20 feet below the surface."²⁶

The presence of limestone in the area is verified by the use of local limestone in the building of the 'bakoonde' attached to many of the houses. While the timber of tuart is heavy, strong and durable (except in its resistance to termites), and has the distinctive feature of complete lack of corrosive effect on metal objects,²⁷ it does not appear to have been planted in the settlement for provision of construction timber, but rather for protection from the sun.

Among the less predominant exotic species in the Verlorenvlei settlement are Eucalyptus lehmannii or the spider gum; Acacia saligna or the Port Jackson willow; and Myoporum insulare or manitoka. All these species are from Australia, while Nicotiana glauca or wild tobacco is from South America. A thicket of large cactus plants also occurs. The occasional palm tree has been planted in the Verlorenvlei settlement, one occurring on the south elevation of W05K, and one further to the east along the southern bank of the vlei, on the property of Theunis Erasmus Smit. A number have been planted on the slope between Klaarefontein and the river on the northern bank. It is possible that branches from exotic tree species are used to form temporary cattle enclosures in the settlement - dried out branches being stacked upside down in an interlocking fashion. Indigenous vegetation is used for this purpose, as branches of a Leucadendron species have been identified. When these enclosures are dismantled, the branches are used for firewood. The use of such temporary animal enclosures in the past is evidenced by the series of aerial photographs of the settlement. A comparison between aerial photographs taken at different times reveals a constant shifting of these temporary enclosures.

Because the Department of Forestry encouraged the planting of different exotic trees at different periods in Cape history, such as eucalypts in the 1870's, it might be possible to approximately date some of the houses in the settlement by means of the trees, possibly by dendrochronology.²⁸

However, it must be borne in mind that the present trees could have replaced earlier tree-planting in front of the houses.²⁹ The age of the trees on the 'trapvloer' west of VVO5A could be used to date the decline of wheat-processing in the settlement. The question of exotic tree introduction in rural human settlement in the Cape still requires to be examined in detail in a separate study, and the Verlorenvlei settlement or the area as a whole would be an excellent site for such a study.

A model for analysis by rural settlement geographers

Rural settlement and land-use patterns at Verlorenvlei have been dictated to a large extent by the availability of arable land and grazing land, and by the distance between these lands, the settlement, and the markets for their produce. Chisholm (1962) examines the relations of a village to the resources exploited, and postulates that a new agricultural settlement in an area of country not previously inhabited has two sets of space-relationships critical to the economic needs of an agricultural community: the relationship to its lands and its links with the outside world - lines of communication and other inhabited centres.³⁰ "The choice of a situation for a settlement would therefore depend upon a balance of considerations: the ease of conducting the internal economy of the community and the ease of concluding the external transactions."³¹ While stressing the importance of distance and location in the development of rural settlement and land use patterns, Chisholm also includes in his analysis aspects which have been covered in this study.

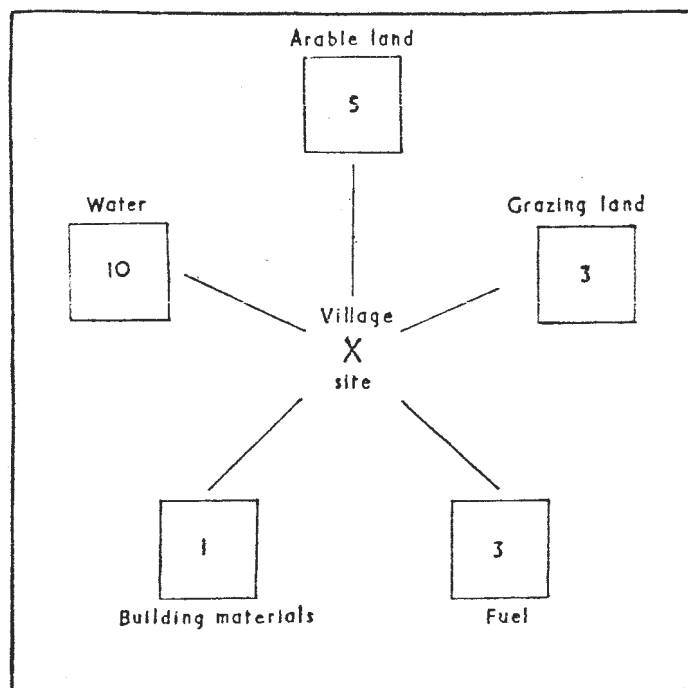
"Yet it is one thing to recognize the constraining influence of physical obstacles which cannot readily be surmounted in an age of simple techniques and quite another to suppose that the shape of settlements was always appropriate to the nature of the terrain. A geographical fatalism which rests upon the assumption that imperfect skill is consistently applied with perfect intelligence stands self-condemned. Ignorance, prejudice, 'historical' factors connected with the local circumstance of land-ownership, accidents of various kinds, and mere inertia, must all be allowed a part in determining both the form of the settlement and the direction of economic activity in individual cases."³²

In the case of the Verlorenvlei settlement, land ownership has reinforced the division of the settlement into two distinct units, 'bo-plaas' and 'onder-plaas', the one inhabited mainly by members of the Smit family, and the other by members of the Coetzee family. The pattern of settlement has been further determined by the creation of wheat-processing nodes within each settlement subdivision, each node representing a labour, family, and residential unit. Traditionally, the lands, the 'agterlande' and the 'voorlande', are ploughed alternately.

The development of the Verlorenvlei settlement can be analysed in the terms used by Chisholm (1962), focussing on the supply of water for man and beast, availability of arable and grazing lands, fuel resources and the ease of obtaining building materials:

"Water has been given a high value on account of its traditional importance: it has to be used at frequent intervals in the day and is difficult to carry and store in large quantities when only elementary implements are available, such as pitchers and gourds. Arable land is usually more greedy of labour than grassland, requiring more cultivation and more transport of goods to and fro, while in the traditional rural economy over much of Europe, grazing and fuel were closely associated, both being found on the commons. Finally, building materials have been given the least weight because though they are bulky and awkward to handle they are required only at spasmodic intervals." ³³

The model suggested by Chisholm as a basis for rural settlement analysis is shown in the following diagram.³⁴ The validity of this model could be tested by its application to the Verlorenvlei settlement as a case study, as it may require adaptation from European to South African conditions.



Chisholm (1962) points out that in addition special local considerations would have to be considered, such as defence, the need to avoid lands liable to flooding and the ravages of malaria.³⁵ The source of labour is also vitally important, in the case of Verlorenvlei being the extended family, and the local Coloured population.

Historical significance of the settlement

The historical significance of the Verlorenvlei settlement increases considerably if it is viewed in terms of historical geography. D.W. Meinig's historical geography study (1962) deals with the South Australian wheat 'boom and bust', or "a marked pulsation in the development of rural settlement."³⁶ The cause of this pulsation lay in the fact that wheat cultivation was pushed into the "marginal lands"³⁷ or areas of unreliable rainfall. Like the marginal area of South Australia, the Verlorenvlei area is characterised by a Mediterranean climate and an arid appearance, reliable streams being scarce. To the south of both areas, early efforts with agriculture had revealed the most suitable crops to be oranges, wine-grapes and wheat, with sheep and cattle becoming more significant with the increasing aridity northwards. In the case of Southern Australia, the Surveyor-General, Goyder, postulated a line of demarcation between the areas suitable for agriculture and those suitable for pastoralism. While colonisation northwards was being encouraged at the government level, "...Goyder's reconnaissances during the great drought of 1864 were still fresh in his mind and he had serious doubts about the wisdom of fostering agricultural expansion northward."³⁸ Goyder's 'Line of Rainfall', "...the line of demarcation between that portion of the country where the rainfall has extended, and that where the drought prevails",³⁹ came to be regarded as an arbitrary restriction on agricultural colonisation, when good harvests and increasing land pressure to the south in the early 1870's channelled demand for land northwards. The 'line of rainfall' was ridiculed⁴⁰ and Goyder's warnings ignored.⁴¹ "The government hastened its surveys on every front to enable the settlers to advance."⁴² Good harvests continued in 1875, and some idea of the boom proportions is given by the following statistics:

"Long lines of wagons were trailing into Port Pirie from as far away as Jamestown. As many as 150 a day unloaded at the wharves and the shipping facilities were heavily congested. During a typical week fifteen ketches (45-80 tons), one brigantine (99 tons), two barques (200-700 tons), and five ships (700-1700 tons) were loading grain. Over a million and a quarter bushels of wheat and 2,687 tons of flour were exported in that year (1876)."⁴³

As the settlers advanced onto the saltbush plains, Goyder warned that the would-be farmers, after destroying the natural pasture, might never succeed in reaping a harvest.⁴⁴ The demand for improved transportation

routes via ocean, road and rail increased, and the good harvests continued until the drought of 1881;1884. Lack of rain, hot and dry winds, red rust, and locusts affected the crops. In 1880, "along the frontier margins there was simply little or nothing to harvest."⁴⁵ "The railroad under construction..., skirting the margin of the saltbush country, offered some incentive by at least promising to reduce marketing costs - if anything could be raised to send."⁴⁶ Development of local water supplies with tanks and reservoirs, subsidisation of farmers with seed wheat, an emergency program to protect existing trees and plant more, and a more thorough and systematic method of cultivation were suggested as solutions to the declining harvests. It became obvious that there was a drought zone rather than a line: "During the very favourable seasons this kind of ground might be successfully occupied, but in unfavourable seasons it would give nothing... With this the concept of 'marginal lands' was beginning to emerge."⁴⁷

The frontier advance was almost halted. "Essentially, it marked the end of the purely agricultural advance and the beginning of the readjustment of the frontier into a broad agricultural-pastoral zone."⁴⁸ If a detailed study of the Verlorenvlei settlement confirms the evidence of a similar wheat 'boom and bust', the following can be applied equally to the South Australian and Verlorenvlei cases:

"It may now be regarded as an established fact that wheat cultivation by itself, except in very favourable seasons, is not a remunerative pursuit in the dry areas of the North... though the actual Northern frontier of production fluctuated from season to season, it did so within very narrow limits and never in any significant way advanced beyond the margin of this boom period."⁴⁹

Perhaps also, Meinig's description of an Australian stream could be applied to the river found on older maps of the Verlorenvlei settlement area:

"...swollen by the good seasons, gathering momentum as it ran swiftly among the ranges, fanning out broadly and thinly onto the saltbush plains, transforming all that it touched with an illusion of goodness and then, as the seasons changed, slowing, ebbing, dying, leaving as far as the outermost margins of its reach the scars of its momentary presence."⁵⁰

The Verlorenvlei area would appear to fall under the heading of a 'marginal land'. The Swartland is known as the wheat area, and Redelinghuis is often included within it, but not the Verlorenvlei, which appears to fall more

naturally into the Sandveld.⁵¹ This popular distinction appears to be reinforced by the natural vegetation, for renosterbos is almost invariably associated with good wheat cultivation, but the renosterbos disappears between Piquetberg and Redelinghuis. In terms of natural environmental conditions, the Verlorenvlei area would be good for wheat cultivation with optimum rainfall and might then appear to be part of the wheat area, but under the drought conditions common in an area of unreliable rainfall, it would become obviously part of the Sandveld and unsuited to wheat.

If the Verlorenvlei settlement is situated in a 'marginal land', it stands on "one of the most important and interesting kinds of geographical line... between 'the desert and the sown'... between land used by man for the grazing or hunting of animals... and land plowed and used for the growing of crops..."⁵² Meinig's editor, Clark, describes the agricultural colonisation of the nineteenth century as being of compelling geographical interest, because it involves:

"the radical replacement of one vegetative cover by another, the radical disturbance of the soil, and the alteration of a host of other less apparent but no less important ecological features. Likewise, by definition, it involves the imposition of a new plan of organisation upon the land, the creation of new resources out of nature's materials, the spread of a new volume of population unevenly over the surface the development of a new network of routeways, and the initiation of a new pulse and pattern of circulation throughout the region. In short, it necessarily results in a radically new geography."⁵³

The importance which Meinig ascribes to his South Australian study can equally be applied to the Verlorenvlei settlement:

"Though localized in space it has a wider relevance for the study of its time, for this colonization was not an isolated, unique expansion but part of a world-wide movement (western Kansas, central Dakota, Manitoba, Assiniboia, the Walla Walla, the San Joaquin, the eastern Ukraine, western Siberia, the inner Pampa, and the High Veld)... not only concordant in time but comparable in type. And though localized in time, it has a wider relevance for the study of this particular place, for the patterns established in these few years set a framework which endures in many respects to the present."⁵⁴

The results of a local study of the Verlorenvlei settlement thus have far wider implications than would first appear. The settlement itself becomes representative of a world-wide experiment with boundary wheatlands or 'marginal lands'. The results of the local experiment have profoundly influenced the present character of the settlement, and the lessons of the

experiment have implications both for the Verlorenvlei area and for development plans for the Cape west coast. The warning that is implicit in Verlorenvlei's derelict horse-dills, 'trapvloere', 'brandsolders', and 'bakoonde', must not be ignored like Geyser's 'line of rainfall' by land-use planners of the future.

Wheat cultivation in the north-western Cape during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Burger (1975) provides the following unreferenced information about the history of wheat in the north-western Cape. Fluctuations in wheat cultivation and processing in the Verlorenvlei settlement can be placed within this context and related to general trends.⁵⁵

Burger notes that in the period 1830 to 1850 there was a labour shortage in the Western Cape, and is of the opinion that this shortage alone accounted for the decline in wheat production revealed by the following statistics (units not provided):

<u>1828 - 1833</u>	<u>1834 - 1838</u>	<u>1839 - 1843</u>	<u>1844 - 1848</u>
35 000	29 000	14 000	11 000 ⁵⁶

Labour was imported to overcome the shortage, and the wages for labourers rose. In the Piquetberg area, Burger estimates the wages as one shilling and sixpence or two shillings a day during the ploughing; and from two shillings and threepence to five shillings per day during the harvest. The use of family members as a labour source may have protected the Verlorenvlei settlement to some extent from both the labour shortage and the increased cost of labour.

Burger continues:

"Nieteenstaande die vervoer- en arbeidsprobleme van die eerste dekades van die neëntiende eeu het die produksie van graan tog bestendig toegeneem. Daar was nog geen organisasie om die werksaamhede van die produsente te koördineer en hulle belange te beskerm nie."⁵⁷

This lack of organisation was recognised at the first meeting of the newly-found Divisional Council in 1858, with the decision that an agricultural society be formed to promote new agricultural methods. By 1859-1860 the society reported that there were two 'snymasjiene' and a 'dorsmasjien'.

Burger comments on the strangeness of the fact that most of the wheat originally came from the Sandveld:

"Eienaardig genoeg het die meeste graan aanvanklik uit die Sandveld gekom. Aangesien daar destyds geen brug oor die Bergrivier was nie, is die graan met bote na die mond van die Bergrivier en die Verlore Vlei vervoer. 'n Stuk of tien seilbote elk met een mas (kotters) was vir die doel in diens. Die Agricultural Society rapporteer in 1860 dat R40 000 se graan langs die Bergrivier en R10 000 s'n langs die Verloren Vallei af uitgevoer is.⁵³

The Bridge over the Berg River was completed in the early 1860's, and other bridges were built to allow for transportation of grain to the nearest railway stations. Despite improved transportation facilities and the introduction of machinery, a number of setbacks were experienced by wheat farmers in the three decades after 1860. These setbacks included drought and rust, and were compounded by a reluctance to practice better methods of agriculture, until attention was diverted by the Boer war at the turn of the century.

The war did not lead to damage of land and property in the Verlorenvlei area, but the commandeering of animals essential to labour, hampered ploughing, while labourers left the farms for military service, causing a labour shortage. Burger describes the condition of agriculture in the period between the Boer war and the first World War as follows:

"Hoewel die handel as gevolg van die militere bedrywighede in die distrik floreer het, en die koms van die spoorweg tot by Eendekuil in 1902 en tot by Graafwater in 1911 vervoergeriewe veel gunstiger gemaak het, het die landbouers nogtans gedurende die eerste twee dekades aan die landboutradisies van hulle voorouers bly vaskleef: tydrowende, ouderwetse landboupraktyke; geen noemenswaardige meganisasie; groot lappe onbewerkte aarde; swak, onsuier saad; minderwaardige groot- en kleinvee en onkunde oor bemerking. Die boere-stand was ongeorganiseerd en totaal uitgelewer aan die genade van soms gewetenlose spekulante, wat die pryse van hulle produkte beheer het en wat die grootste deel van hulle wins opgestryk het."⁵⁹

During the first World War, agriculture was affected by removal of some of the younger farmers from the land. At the close of the war, the prices of staple goods rose, such as wheat (to R10 per mud) and meat, as well as land prices. Farmers came to feel that organisations must be formed to control prices, transportation and marketing of their products. A farmers' association was established in Piquetberg in 1920, and again in 1932. In 1922, it obtained legislation relating to agricultural co-operatives, and in 1924 the Cape agricultural association was established.

The first co-operative was established in 1919 on the initiative of Solomon Machanik, grain buyer and miller at Piquetbergstation, who formed the 'Piketberg Boere Maatskappy.' Its activities were limited by the 1922 law on agricultural co-operatives. It changed hands a number of times until it was re-bought by Machanik, who sold the milling quota to Bokomo and the property to the Porterville co-operative, established in 1931. The co-operatives have since grown from strength to strength.

There was also concern over the question of the high premiums which were required by agents from external assurance companies to insure the annual wheat harvests. In 1923, the farmers of the district used the co-operative principle to form their own 'Piketberg Ko'operatiewe Graanboeren Beschemings Maatschappy Beperkt'.⁶⁰ Insurance coverage and premium income have grown steadily to the 1970's.

Agriculture was badly affected by the depression from 1926-1933, intensified by the drought of 1932-33. The situation led to the abandonment of the gold standard. After recovery in 1935, organised agriculture became stronger, leading to legislation in 1937 relating to control boards for each agricultural product, fixed prices, and subsidies. The second World War 1939-45, was the next event which would have affected agriculture at Verlorenvlei.

While the above sequence of events relates to wheat in the Piquetberg district as a whole, the Verlorenvlei area, because of its position on the boundary between the Swartland and the Sandveld, did not follow an identical pattern. Note has already been made of the significant position of wheat in the Sandveld in the 1860's but it has since been replaced by the Swartland as a major wheat area. Theunis Erasmus Smit of the Verlorenvlei farm reports that during years of good rainfall, his wheat crop is first-grade and abundant, but during years of drought, such as 1978-1979, he obtains only a little second grade wheat. As a 'marginal land', the cultivation of wheat at Verlorenvlei is therefore strongly dependent on climatic factors, and particularly on the rainfall, which affects not only the wheat but also the availability of fresh water for human consumption.

Reasons for the decline in the size of the settlement community

Various approaches have been used in the course of this study to place the settlement of Verlorenvlei within its historical context. As a result, it is now possible to suggest solutions to the enigmas surrounding the settlement.

1. Socio-economic factors

The decline in the size of the settlement community during the past century cannot be attributed to a single factor in isolation. A number of interacting factors account for the declining rural population, and some of them are not unique to the Verlorenvlei settlement but apply generally to rural settlements in countries with expanding urban centres. Such a factor is the attraction of the urban centres to the youth of a rural settlement, who find life on the settlement difficult, slow, and unstimulating, with little prospect of employment opportunities, educational advancement, land ownership, or source of income. As the younger people leave for the allure of the cities, a vicious cycle develops due to the lack of a replacement population. This trend began with the age of industrialisation and has been reinforced by the development of modern technology.

The problem of urban-drain away from the rural and agricultural way of life was complicated in the case of Verlorenvlei by the traditional South African approach to land ownership. Primogeniture was not regularly practised, but land was usually divided up between the children at the death of the parents, originally in equal shares transferred to the sons and the husbands of the daughters, often later reinforced in the form of subdivision. In the days of families with a dozen or more children, subdivision caused the agricultural unit to become perpetually reduced in size until each portion was no longer a viable economic unit. The Verlorenvlei settlement has been an interesting response to the problems caused by subdivision, for the agricultural unit has been maintained in its original size, while each family member has been entitled to build a home within the settlement, to farm a portion of the land and to process the produce within the settlement. As the size of families has tended to decrease and the young have been attracted away to the cities, both the problem of possible extensive subdivision and of population pressure within the settlement have become non-issues. Vacated buildings remain unclaimed by family members, until they are converted into storage outbuildings or deteriorate to such an extent that

they are demolished. The problems faced by those who own and farm the land have been inherited from the past and aggravated in the present, including extensive overgrazing of the vegetation and overutilization of the soil during the period when the land supported a larger settlement population. Consequently attempts by outside interests to buy the land for purposes other than agriculture are viewed as solutions, and the trend becomes a move away from agriculture to other forms of land use.

The urban-drain away from the Verlorenvlei settlement has been a 'pull-push' process. While the city has pulled, increased difficulties of life within the settlement have pushed the young away. Apart from the lack of prospect of ownership of a viable economic unit, agriculture has become increasingly less rewarding, for a combination of reasons. Past overgrazing from the early eighteenth century, and possibly earlier, when the system of loan-places encouraged exploitation and a short-term perspective on natural resource usage, became intensified by the demands of a growing community, which the natural vegetation with its low grazing potential has been unable to fulfil. Over-utilisation of the land for wheat cultivation, also practised from the eighteenth century and intensified during the nineteenth century, resulted in declining fertility, soil erosion, and reduction of the water-catchment potential at the source of the perennial stream which provided fresh water for the community. The development of co-operative facilities for wheat-processing, and the introduction of machinery for the various stages of cultivation and processing, reduced the labour requirements and hence the employment and income opportunities for 'bywoners', or members of the extended family living in the settlement. The interaction of all these factors has given considerable impetus to the move of the young away from Verlorenvlei, choosing city life in preference to the slow-moving, isolated, and at times obsolete, rural way of life.

2. Environmental factors

It seems likely that the settlement developed near a stream, which is shown on maps of c1890 as emptying into the lake at that point, but no longer exists. This stream would represent a significant source of fresh water, an essential natural resource in a relatively arid environment. There is evidence, including the existence of the stream itself, which suggests that the environment was not as arid a hundred years ago as it is today. The stream, while acting as the lifeblood of the settlement community, also indicates the higher rainfall favouring the wheat cultivation that would support the community, both in terms of local needs and income from external sources. The wheat cultivation and processing would require and support a large labour force, provided by the members of the community, while their existence as a community would be reinforced by family relationships, and land ownership by the heads of large extended families.

Explanations must be sought for the subsequent disappearance of the stream. It is possible that overgrazing and overutilisation of land in the catchment area has reduced the catchment potential for the formation of the stream. The sinking of boreholes in the area could also have reduced the possibility of stream formation. As other smaller streams indicated on maps c1890 have also disappeared, it is possible that the cause is more radical, in the sense of a climatic change. Since the 1950's the average rainfall has been 268 mm or 10,6 inches.⁶¹ In 1908/9, the average was 10,43", and the area is described as arid on a military map of that date.⁶² The marginal nature of the area suggests that a small climatic shift could considerably increase the river formation potential and the wheat cultivation potential by an increase in rainfall. The presence of yellow-woods in the vegetation supports the hypothesis of a higher rainfall over a hundred years ago.⁶³ Studies of climatic changes also bear out the possibility of higher rainfall during the warming period after the Little Ice Age:

"Even during historic times, there have been distinct climatic fluctuations although on a much lesser scale than during the Pleistocene. Colder conditions prevailed in Europe from 1300 A.D. to 1800 A.D. and this has been referred to as the 'little ice age' by some writers. Changes in temperature and rainfall affected human life in Europe and played a role in events such as the Irish potato famine which led to migration to the New World."⁶⁴

Current studies in dendrochronology in the Cedarberg mountains of the western Cape may confirm the theory of climatic change and higher rainfall in the 1800's.

If the existence of higher rainfall and a more productive wheat cultivation can be established, the settlement of Verlorenvlei stands as relic evidence of the results in human life and history of a change in rainfall. It then becomes possible to hazard reasons for the growth and subsequent decline of the settlement which are related to environmental factors. The need for local processing of wheat would be removed largely by the introduction of machinery and the development of a co-operative, which should have had the effect of reducing processing costs for the individual farmer and increasing the economic feasibility of wheat cultivation. The extension of the railway to Eendekuil in 1902 and to Graafwater in 1911,⁶⁵ together with improved road transportation, should have further increased the economic feasibility, and ensured the continued cultivation of wheat, perhaps on an even larger scale. At the same time, the co-operative would have reduced the need for a large local labour force only slightly as the processing of wheat depended largely on animal labour, and extended cultivation would soon have demanded more human labour. The introduction of machinery and of the co-operative should not alone have contributed to a decline in the settlement community. If a decreased rainfall reduced the returns from wheat cultivation, however, the economic feasibility would decrease correspondingly, the need for local labour would become reduced, and the effects of the urban drain would be more strongly felt by the younger members of the community who would begin to move away. Left behind would be a community made up chiefly of older people, surrounded by disused relics of wheat processing and decaying or derelict houses, which would in fact describe the Verlorenvlei settlement of today.

Grogan (1978) portrays the Verlorenvlei settlement and its people as follows:

"The old farm on the edge of the vlei has been in the possession of the Coetzee family for three generations.

"I was born seventy-two years ago in that old building among the trees". Mnr. Coetzee indicates a dilapidated structure with peeling walls and moss-covered thatched roof. Now he has built himself a new house with a tin roof and a huge kitchen.

"In that building we had school" - A desolate ruin with windows like empty sockets gazing bleakly across the marsh. A melancholy air of drabness and decay pervades all.

The plaintive cries of waterfowl drift in the wind.

"Ja, the vlei is alive with birds. They're protected now, but," he grins wickedly, "if they fly over the farm I bring them down with a shotgun".⁶⁶

Grogan's description conveys the fascination the settlement has inspired in artists, photographers, researchers, and casual visitors. It has considerable aesthetic appeal, as a total complex, as a settlement divided into two major family units, as a set of six or seven wheat-processing nodes, or as a collection of individual buildings, each with an appeal of its own. The settlement is testimony to a way of life that is past, but it does not readily reveal the nature of that way of life, or the reasons for its existence. The settlement has stood as a challenge to research which has led to the undertaking of the present study, an attempt to solve the mystery of the Verlorenvlei by the combined application of various appropriate research methods.

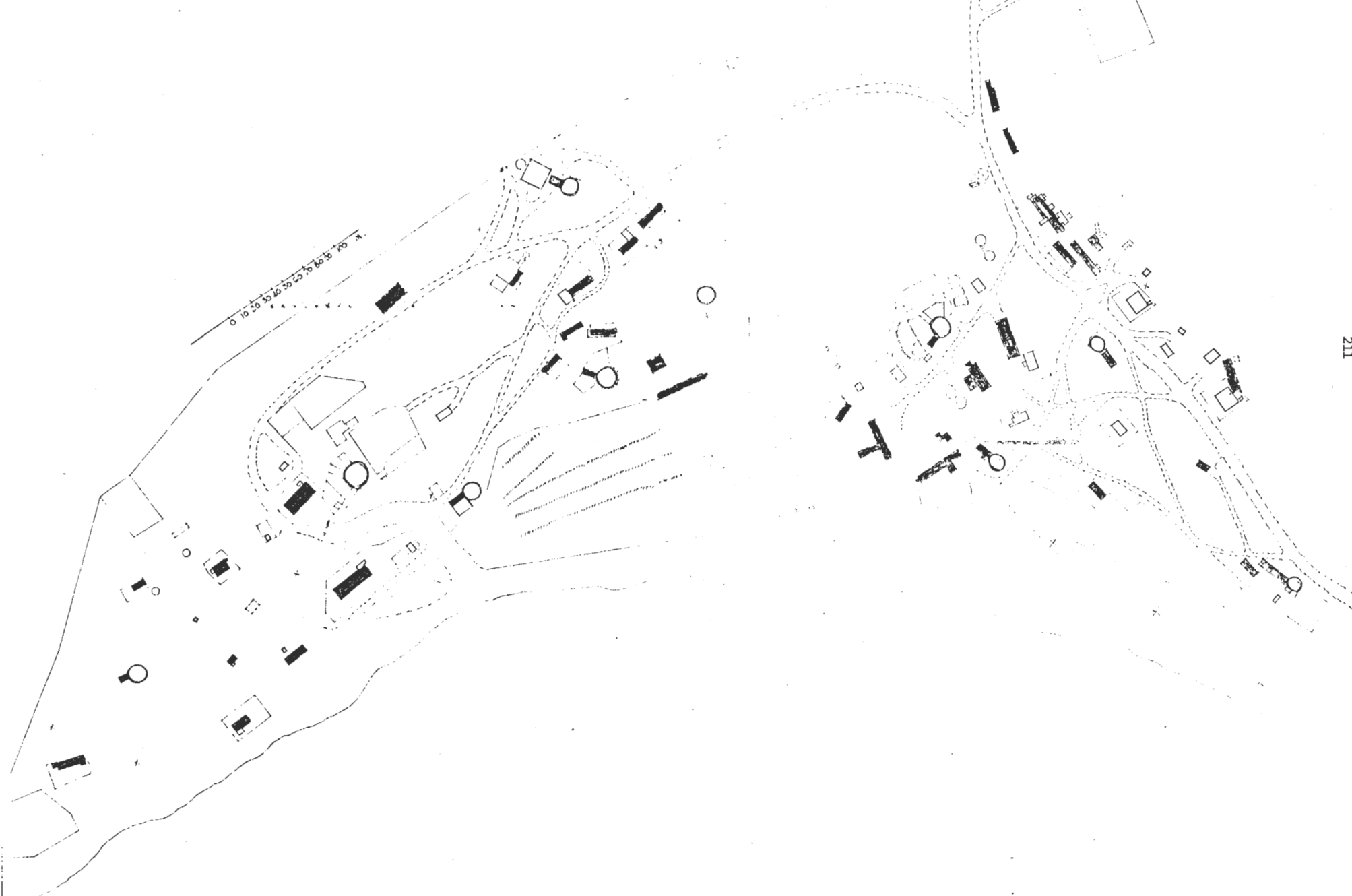


Figure 6.3
The Verlorenvlei settlement in 1942, indicating houses
(shaded) and 'trapvloere'.

FOOTNOTES

1. Cape Archives, RLR 12 : 391 (SG 611, folio 231)
2. Thunberg (1793), 143--traced by J. Parkington, M. Cottrell.
3. Barrow (1806), 325 - traced by J. Parkington, M. Cottrell
4. Mossop (1947), VRS 28, Journals of Brink and Rhenius, opp. p18.
5. Mossop (1947), vii, Introduction
6. Mossop (1947), viii
7. Mossop (1947), footnote p101
8. Mossop (1947) 101
9. Cape Archives, RLR 23/1: 11 (SG 15, folio 7)
10. Deeds Office, Cape Quitrent 8;50, f634.
11. Cape Archives map 4/162, Klippys Dam to Bottel Fontein, Archdeacon
12. Cape Archives, maps 3/561 and 3/447, Cape Colony: West Coast, Archdeacon
13. Cape Archives, map 3/1981.
14. Burger (1975), 326.
15. Cape Argus 18.7.1947, from Mrs. H. Smit
16. Deeds Office, Piketberg, Vol 1, folio 6/1.
17. Chisholm (1962), 119-120.
18. Meinig (1962), 70-71.
19. Holtrop (1979), pers. comm.
20. Shaughnessy (1980), pers. comm.
21. Australian Department of National Development, Forestry and Timber Bureau (1962), 82-83. Reference provided by G. Shaughnessy.
22. Hall (1963), 39 - reference provided by G. Shaughnessy
23. Procter (1972), 56 - 7, reference provided by G. Shaughnessy
24. WVO5L
25. Shaughnessy (1980), pers. comm.
26. Forestry and Timber Bureau (1962), 76 - provided by G. Shaughnessy
27. Forestry and Timber Bureau (1962), 76
28. Shaughnessy (1980), pers. comm.
29. Shaughnessy (1980), pers. comm.

30. Chisholm (1962), 114.
31. Chisholm (1962), 121.
32. Chisholm (1962), 117 quoting Lennard (1959).
33. Chisholm (1962), 115
34. Chisholm (1962), 115
35. Chisholm (1962), 114
36. Meinig (1962), 202
37. Meinig (1962), 90
38. Meinig (1962), 38
39. Meinig (1962), 45
40. Meinig (1962), 53
41. Meinig (1962), 55
42. Meinig (1962), 57
43. Meinig (1962), 61
44. Meinig (1962), 65
45. Meinig (1962), 79
46. Meinig (1962), 81
47. Meinig (1962), 90
48. Meinig (1962), 91
49. Meinig (1962), 92
50. Meinig (1962), 92
51. Cape archives, map 2/312, 1911 - geological map
52. Meinig (1962), editor's note
53. Meinig (1962), 2-3
54. Meinig (1962), 3.
55. Burger (1975), translated from 318 - 334
56. Burger (1975), 324
57. Burger (1975), 324
58. Burger (1975), 326
59. Burger (1975), 327 - 328
60. Burger (1975), 331
61. Robertson (1980), pers. comm.
62. War Office (1908), 20
63. Grindley (1980), pers. comm.
64. Grindley (1979), 27
65. Böeseken (1948), map 78
66. Grogan (1978), 4

CONCLUSION

Multidisciplinary research

This study has demonstrated the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach to environmental problem-solving. It is impossible to understand any environment fully without some understanding of the historical continuity or sequence of events which has led to its present state or condition. But any analysis of the historical development of a total environment, of the interplay between the human and the natural factors over time, cannot be carried out fully without recourse to methods, techniques and expertise from many other disciplines besides history. Forbes (1965) comments on the close relationship between history and geography; experience gained during the course of this study has shown that the relationship must be extended outwards to include many disciplines which are traditionally seen to be unrelated, such as sociology, architecture, land surveying, archaeology, and law. At every stage in this study, varying combinations of expertise, research techniques, and methods of analysis from the above disciplines have been essential to provide the answers to critical questions. The observation made by Forbes with regard to history and geography can therefore be applied to other disciplines as well:

"Geography and history are fields of enquiry between which in certain regions no sharp line of demarcation can usefully be drawn. Indeed their borderlands overlap, and in this shared frontier zone geographer and historian may find mutual support in their researches. Certain aspects of man's relationships to the natural environment, of vital concern to the geographer, cannot be properly comprehended without a knowledge of the cultural inheritance of the social group. Conversely, certain aspects of the history of the social group are better understood when viewed in relationship to the physical endowment of its environment. This is particularly true where man is in surroundings where he is a newcomer. In such situations the interdependence of geography and history is probably most apparent... the intimate and ordinary relationships between man and geographical environment on the frontiers of occupation."¹

While cooperation from many disciplines has been essential to advance this study to the stage it has reached, the investigation is by no means complete, and it can only be taken to more advanced stages by further interdisciplinary cooperation. Many unanswered questions regarding the settlement at Verlorenvlei can only be answered by sociologists, geographers, agriculturalists, and architects working together in a multidisciplinary team. Certain chapters in this report provide only the basis

for further full-scale investigations. In the course of this study, for example, many basic data have been collected regarding the intricate family relationships around which the community has developed, but a complete analysis of the significance of the extended familial network within the social life of the community over time, both during the period of growth of the settlement and during the period of decline, requires the attention of a sociologist. The beginnings of an analysis of the use of natural resources in the development of the settlement, and of the environmental factors which have shaped both the settlement and the way of life of the community, have been suggested, but can only be taken further by a geographer. The historical research itself has only just begun, and this study provides merely a foundation on which to build.

The Verlorenvlei area as a whole has attracted the attention of researchers from disciplines such as archaeology, botany, zoology, ecology, geology, architecture and ornithology. All researchers working in the area have been aware of the significance of the Verlorenvlei settlement, but this study is the first formal attempt to focus on the human settlement and to place it in historical perspective. It became obvious from the outset that certain requirements are essential for such a study to proceed. In the first place, considerable field research must be conducted. It is impossible to study such a settlement without coming to know it in detail, and without coming to know its people well. Both requirements can only be fulfilled slowly over time, and the time factor is increased by the distance which must be travelled to reach the settlement. The distance, although a hindrance to research, is a vital element in that it is because of the distance that the settlement has been allowed to develop its unique character in isolation, and also because of the distance away from urbanisation and modern forces of change that it has been allowed to retain that character relatively undisturbed.

Knowing the settlement in detail both requires and is aided by a mapping procedure. It is impossible to discuss the settlement meaningfully with either other researchers or the residents of the area without common points of reference. Members of the community who have known the settlement throughout their lives communicate vital information about places and persons in terms of reference that are confusing and meaningless to the newcomer, unless they can be identified by means of maps and photographs. The process of mapping has required a detailed ground study

which has considerably increased knowledge about the settlement, making any discussion or interview decidedly more fruitful. Information gleaned by other researchers in the course of their own work can be communicated more readily and accurately with the aid of the map.

Knowing the members of the community well is aided by some knowledge of Afrikaans. While it is certainly not impossible to conduct interviews and discussions without any ability to speak Afrikaans, the rate, accuracy and depth of detail of information acquired is increased significantly for a researcher whose home language is Afrikaans. This factor becomes important in view of the age of many members of the community, and the length of memory span which they are able to recall. They provide a picture of a way of life that has almost completely disappeared, leaving behind puzzling remnants that only they can explain.

An ability to read and translate written source documents in Dutch and Afrikaans would also increase the information derived from archival research.

The Verlorenvlei settlement offers unique opportunities for further research, provided that it is allowed to, and possibly encouraged to, remain undisturbed. The detailed knowledge of the settlement and the community that is essential to such studies can only be developed with time, patience and painstaking care. It is hoped that this study will provide a foundation and framework for the collection, recording, synthesis and analysis of future researchers, so that each will be able to build on what has been unearthed before. Only in this way will a complete history of the Verlorenvlei settlement become a reality, as a valuable contribution in the field of African studies, or African environmental studies.

Numerous avenues of investigation have been explored in order to place the settlement of Verlorenvlei and the area of Verlorenvlei into historical perspective. While each avenue has revealed further significant factors none has been adequate in isolation. It has been necessary to combine the facts discovered from each source in order to create an overall picture.

All known written descriptions of and comments upon the area by visitors from the mid-seventeenth century to the present (some already traced by previous researchers) have been examined, collated and analysed. These writings provide the overall context for the development of human rural settlement, some idea of the nature of the first European contact with the area, and an understanding of the beginnings of human modification of the natural environment. It becomes possible to view the present environment with some appreciation for the elements of continuity and change, to discern the relic landscape, and to value it more highly because of the link it provides with the past.

All known pictorial representations of the area and the settlement, including artists' impressions and photographs, have been identified and examined in relation to the present state of the subjects they depict. The fact that the area has proved inspiring to artists and photographers is proof of its aesthetic qualities which have endured over time, and the pictorial representations have contributed to the appreciation of continuity and change over time.

Newspaper articles and popular literature relating to the area and its people have been traced, and used to provide an idea of the social customs and way of life in the first half of the twentieth century. They have also provided valuable information with regard to people living in the area and the settlement.

The derivation and possible meanings of the names of the area and of the farm on which the settlement is situated have been investigated.

A series of maps, from early travellers' writings and archival collections, as well as the current maps used by the Surveyor-General and Trigonometrical Survey offices, has been collected and

examined. This map series has revealed interesting clues to the past nature of the area and the settlement, and will possibly reveal more as the study of the area deepens.

All archival documents relating to the allocation of loan places in the Verlorenvlei area that could be traced have been analysed and ordered to reveal the major loan places in the area, and the users of each in chronological sequence. The investigation of loan places has revealed important facts regarding land use in the eighteenth century at Verlorenvlei, the possible correlation of loan places with present farms, and the system of loan places in the Cape under Dutch control as a form of land policy.

All records of ownership and maps or diagrams filed in the Deeds Office, pertaining to the farm on which the settlement is sited, have been studied in detail. A continuous record of ownership has been developed from the 1830's, together with information on conditions of ownership which have affected land usage around the settlement. The deeds have at the same time provided details of family and community relationships within the settlement, and consequently some idea of social structure over the past century and a half.

All man-made features in the settlement have been mapped in detail, maps being produced of the settlement as a whole, of the two major subdivisions of the settlement, and of six sub-sections. These maps have been stored in a variety of forms suitable for rapid and inexpensive copying and field usage by future researchers or resource management planners.

Major man-made features in the settlement have been numbered to provide a classification system for this and future studies of the settlement. The classification system is simple to allow for future refinement according to needs, but provides a framework for the collection and organisation of data pertaining to the built environment and the people who built it, used it, and lived within it.

Every numbered feature within the settlement has been photographed simultaneous with the mapping to provide a complete record at a

specific point in time, in colour slide format, of the state of the settlement. These photographs, in conjunction with the maps, provide a valuable resource for present and future studies of the settlement, for illustrative purposes, historical and architectural analysis, conservation education and interpretation, and a possible conservation undertaking within the settlement as a complex.

Other collections of photographs of the built environment within the settlement belonging to private individuals or organisations, have been traced, the features identified and classified, and the collections recorded and dated. Selected photographs have been provided by private individuals for illustrative purposes within this report, and the assistance of these researchers and interested persons is gratefully acknowledged.

Every man-made feature within the settlement has been examined with regard to the possible dating of the original buildings extensions and modifications; building methods and technology; use of natural resources for construction purposes; and building design over time. These records form a basis for future conservation work, and allow the identification of the most important features from an architectural and historical point of view.

Various members of the community have been interviewed with regard to life in the settlement in earlier times, family relationships, occupants of the houses of the settlement in the past, and the use of various implements and buildings. Notes and recording of these interviews will provide a basis for future socio-cultural field research. Old photographs of people and buildings within the settlement have been provided by individual members of the community for illustrative purposes in this report. Family tree diagrams and copies from family bibles or 'geslagsregisters' have been used to build up the record of family relationships and community structure from as early as possible.

As the earlier life of the community in the nineteenth century is intimately associated with wheat cultivation, those man-made features in the settlement relating to wheat processing and cultivation have been studied closely, and visits made to wheat museums in the

Swartland. As an associated study, a horse-mill in the settlement has been photographed and measured, and a set of diagrams drawn, copies of which are included in this report. The study, measurement and drawing of the horse-mill is the work of P. Holtrop, architect, who has permitted inclusion of his drawings in this report. The study has been guided by the authoritative source-work on mills by J. Walton.

The way of life associated with wheat has been studied by reference to literature on wheat cultivation in South Africa and similar areas elsewhere in the world. This literature has given some idea of the past way of life in the Verlorenvlei settlement. The significance of the decline in wheat processing for the settlement and the area as a whole has been discussed and lines of future investigation suggested.

The development and character of the settlement has been described in terms of natural resources and response to environmental conditions. The development of the settlement from the mid-twentieth century to the present has been traced with the aid of a series of aerial photographs, which have been used in conjunction with the maps of the present settlement, to produce a series of maps of the settlement at various points in time. This series can be built up as more conclusive evidence about the nature and growth of the settlement is discovered.

Numerous private individuals and members of organisations who are interested in the integrated conservation potential of the Verlorenvlei area and of the settlement, have been contacted and have given invaluable assistance at various stages. Without such cooperation this study, multidisciplinary as it is would not have been possible. It is hoped that the outcome of this cooperation will be a conservation proposal for the settlement which is based on thorough research, and supported by a number of people and organisations, thereby ensuring its implementation as a conservation undertaking.

A number of future lines of research have been identified in relation to the Verlorenvlei settlement which can be undertaken by a multidisciplinary team of researchers. Once these lines have been

followed to their conclusions, it should be possible to write a true history of Verlorenvlei which will replace this initial attempt to place the settlement in its historical perspective.

Historical perspective

In the early seventeenth century, little was known about the Verlorenvlei area as it was slightly to the west of the main routes of exploration along the west coast. It was passed by many of the expeditions on both the outward- and homeward-bound journeys, it was given different names, and recorded at varying positions in journals and on maps. Some of the expeditions made detours which took them towards the coast in the vicinity of the Verlorenvlei area. Van Riebeeck's party explored and described the bay formed by Cape Deseada or Baboon Point in 1658. Thunberg explored the area more fully, describing the wealth of bird life, and something of the fauna and flora, together with the topography and climatic conditions. From Thunberg's report it would appear that no colonists had yet settled in the area, although it was being used to graze herds of cattle, supervised by Hottentots. It would also appear that indigenous people were living in the area; specifically the Bushman group under Keyser or Caesar, and that they probably used as their base the land now called Caesar's Kraal, just to the east of the Verlorenvlei settlement. The presence of Bushmen in previous centuries is evidenced by the number of sites that have been discovered by the archaeologists working in the area. Evidence has also been found of some interaction between the Hottentots and the first European colonists who began to settle in the area and to farm wheat. There were also incidents of hostility between the Bushmen living on the southern bank and the Hottentots advancing southwards from the north, suggesting the Verlorenvlei river as a frontier of contact and conflict between various groups attempting to exploit the natural resources. The Bushmen represent the earlier hunter-gatherer society, the Hottentots the pastoralists, and the European colonists the agriculturalist-pastoralists, who tended to establish themselves on the land and to take possession of it, denying to the Bushmen and Hottentots the space in which to conduct their more nomadic way of life, as well as access to the natural resources so essential to that way of life.

During the eighteenth century, the land on which the Verlorenvlei settlement is sited was subjected to usage of large areas as loan-places for grazing. As the system of loan-places did not allow for ownership of the land, holders of loan-places tended to use up the available grazing and move their herds elsewhere. With no ownership, land and resource usage was exploitative and short-sighted, leading to the onset of degradation. Wheat was also cultivated during this period, and a tenth of the harvest had to be delivered to the Dutch East India Company authorities as part

of the conditions of usage of the land. During this period, some buildings were constructed, probably of a fairly temporary nature initially, to house the Hottentots overseeing the herds and the wheat cultivation, and the occasional colonist who lived in the area. As these habitations could be sold or bequeathed, unlike the land which was only used on loan, there was a tendency to improve and extend the habitations of farmers. Farmhouses were far apart along the edge of the vlei, and there is evidence of habitation on the present site of the Verlorenvlei settlement in the 1790's.

From 1795, the record of land ownership becomes less clear, and requires further research to account for the transition to the perpetual quitrent system, which allowed for the granting of the land to individual owners in the nineteenth century. During this period, grazing of cattle and wheat cultivation were continued, and occupation of the land became more permanent, with the building of farmhouses and probably also the beginnings of the Verlorenvlei settlement.

Previously wheat was grown only for local use because of the difficulties of transport to the Cape Town market, and the fixed price, which did not allow for recovery of costs or provide incentive. With the introduction of marine transport by a cutter fleet moving along the coast, and the removal of a fixed price, incentive was provided for export of surplus wheat to Cape Town. The economic incentive, combined with favourable conditions for wheat cultivation, stimulated the growth of the Verlorenvlei settlement. Members of the families controlling ownership of the land became 'bywoners', cultivating the wheatlands, building houses and wheat-processing nodes in the settlement, and creating a small but vibrant community.

The first quitrent grant of the land on which the settlement is now sited was to Michiel Johannes de Beer in 1837. Before 1860, de Beer definitely lived on the Verlorenvlei farm in a farmhouse with a bakery attached to it, and a horse-mill and threshing-floor. It is probable that this was the complex or wheat-processing node formed by VV03K, VV03L, VV03M, and VV03N. The exportation of wheat from the Verlorenvlei area has been quoted as being of the value of R10 000, and transportation of the wheat to outside markets was by cutter along the coast. The cutters of the Stephan brothers are reported to have collected the grain from the Verlorenvlei area.² The grain was taken by the farmers to the Plank House near Baboon Point, and stored there until the

arrival of the cutters, which apparently landed for loading at a point between the present crayfishing jetties and the bar across the river.³ The presence of the horse-mill and the bakery within the settlement suggests that a small community already existed, their way of life closely associated with the cultivation and processing of wheat.

It has been possible to suggest environmental factors influencing the siting of the settlement, considerations which must have been in the minds of the first settlers as they decided where to establish their habitations. The major environmental factors must have been the presence of a stream, probably perennial, flowing into the coastal lake, and the associated alluvial fan; the large, gently-sloping, semi-circular area enclosed by a range of hills; access to a sizeable area to the south, suitable for cultivation; access to the open waters of the vlei and to the vlei resources; proximity to the sea and its resources; and the northward, vlei-facing orientation of the site. These environmental factors have combined with the natural resources afforded by the area, with constraints of land ownership and family relationships, and the requirements of wheat cultivation and processing, to create the unique characteristics of the Verlorenvlei settlement. The man-made environment is the evidence which provides the clue to the past. Patterns of development have been detected, based on wheat-processing nodes or socio-economic units arranged in two sections corresponding with land-ownership and family relationships.

Mapping, ground study, the development of a classification system, and interpretation of the relic built environment has provided many clues to the past nature of the settlement, and the way of life of the community. The site of a school has been discovered, confirming that in the past the number of children in the settlement was sufficiently high to justify its own school. This contrasts strongly with the present population structure, in which there are very few children and members of the community are predominantly 50 years of age or older, a number of residents being in their 80's.

While the mid-nineteenth century saw the boom of the wheat era in the Verlorenvlei area, certain factors contributed to its decline, probably during the early twentieth century. The introduction of machinery, such

as the 'dorsmasjien', and the growth of cooperative facilities rendered local processing by animal labour unnecessary. While machinery and improved transportation by road and rail would have given fresh impetus to the wheat industry, other stronger factors led to its decline. These have not yet been established with finality, but could have been a combination of declining soil fertility and water catchment potential due to poor farming methods, overutilisation and overgrazing, and a possible climatic change causing a reduction in rainfall.

The reduced need for local processing saw the last threshing-floors being used 35-50 years ago, in the period immediately prior to the second World War and within the childhood memories of members of the community now about 50 years old. The horse mills have deteriorated and been dismantled or stand unused and abandoned. The decreased demand for local labour and reduced employment opportunity, together with reduced capacity of the land to support a large community, has combined with the attractions of growing urban centres to lure away the young adults of the population. Left behind is a community of older people who have clung to the land and the settlement all their lives and are given security of residence by virtue of their family membership.

Many of the houses and outbuildings in the settlement are now empty and tumble-down. For those people who have remained, life is slow, relaxed and isolated from the mainstream of so-called progress and development, with little change from day to day. But the relics of the built environment and the recalled memories of the remaining members of the community hint at a past that was more vital, at a community that was more vibrant, and at a pace of life that was more active, with a sense of direction and purpose. Wheat cultivation and processing was the dynamo of the settlement. As the driving force slowed down, the settlement emptied and the hum of activity died away, testifying to the changes wrought by time, from which no human society, however isolated, can be protected.

The Verlorenvlei settlement, as a result of the various avenues explored in the records of its past, can be placed in broad historical perspective. Each form of record has revealed different facts which can now be joined and related to one another in a process of holistic integration to

hazard a chronological account of the sequence of events, which could not have been pieced together if any one of the fields of investigation had not been explored. However, much remains to be done before a history of the Verlorenvlei settlement can be written with certainty, and the above broad historical overview will be subject to much revision and refinement as the study deepens, building on the foundation provided thus far.

This study has focussed on human ecology, or on the interactions between human beings, their environment, and other organisms occupying the same habitat. These interactions are two-way, with man modifying the environment and other organisms, while his own way of life is modified by both. Man's powers of modification render futile any attempt to understand the ecological system at Verlorenvlei without taking into account the human presence. The effects of this presence have persisted over the past four centuries, as this study has shown, and for many centuries previously, as archaeological studies have shown. The Verlorenvlei settlement has been one of the larger concentrations of the human element on the banks of the coastal lake, and therefore one of the largest potential sources of environmental modification and natural resource usage. Any research into the elements of the natural system at Verlorenvlei must therefore consider the relationship between man and that system. A time perspective is necessary, as the present condition of the system is a result of its past. Future management cannot afford to ignore that past, and concentrate only on the present as the basis for management plans and land-use determinations. An historical perspective is therefore essential to human ecology, natural system ecology, land-use planning, and natural resource management in the vicinity of the rural settlement of Verlorenvlei.

Recommendations

A natural outgrowth of this study would be the formulation of a proposal for conservation of the man-made environment at Verlorenvlei to supplement the proposals already made for natural and archaeological conservation.⁴ The end-product would be a total conservation proposal backed by considerable ecological, archaeological, and historical research. If the proposals were accepted by the relevant authorities, and the conservation potential of Verlorenvlei realised, the area would be unique in South Africa as the first and only site of integrated conservation of all natural and man-made components of a coastal lake system.

As the archaeological and historical evidence indicate, man has been a part of the natural system at Verlorenvlei long enough to make it impossible to consider conservation of the area without taking into account the human elements, specifically the present rural population. The interaction between the people and their natural environment is particularly close, with man affecting the environment and the environment affecting man, to such an extent that the two are inextricable. This interrelationship, rather than reducing the nature conservation potential of the area, actually doubles its value as a site for total environmental conservation. In addition to its ecological importance, the socio-cultural significance of the area and especially of the Verlorenvlei settlement, makes it a priceless piece of Africana. Once its value has been conclusively established, every effort must be made to conserve the settlement in its entirety as a part of the national heritage.

Jakle and Janiske (1975) question the role of historical geography, and suggest that historical geographers "do little to translate knowledge of past geographical conditions into real alternatives for environmental management today."⁵ The Verlorenvlei settlement would afford an ideal opportunity for historical geographers to follow the direction suggested by these writers:

"..to further focus on the relic features of landscape as vital elements of today's and tomorrow's geographical environment. We are referring to landscape features that are in a contemporary sense anachronistic or rapidly approaching functional obsolescence. Relic landscape offers what might be termed a 'counter-environmental' quality - a distinctiveness of place and time which counters the

standardization of the emerging scene, the result of rapid and universal spatial reorganization with changing technology. It offers relief from the emerging sameness of place by providing varied environmental experiences historically derived and defined, and it serves to remind us of our environmental origins in less complicated technological times. In short, relic landscape constitutes a culturally defined recreational and educational resource with enduring, uniquely valuable qualities. Historical geographers can and should move to more clearly defined concepts of relic landscape as environmental resources to be managed toward the betterment of human life."⁶

Footnotes

1. Forbes (1965) , 3 - Introduction
2. Green (1948) , 103
3. Carstens and J. Snit (1980), Pers. comm.
4. Cape Provincial Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation
(1978)
Parkington (1976)
5. Jakle and Janiskee (1975), 194.
6. Jakle and Janiskee (1975), 194

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