

THE GUERRILLA WAR IN THE CAPE COLONY DURING THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR OF
1899-1902 : A CASE STUDY OF THE REPUBLICAN AND
REBEL COMMANDO MOVEMENT

BY

RODNEY JAMES CONSTANTINE

A dissertation submitted to the University of Cape Town in candidature for the
Degree of Master of Arts

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SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the nature and extent of armed conflict in country areas of the Cape Colony, between 1900 and 1902. The relationship between invasion and rebellion is explored, as are the tactics and strategies of the Boer commando movement. Only republican and rebel military activity is examined, not the counter-resistance of the imperial army, the colonial state, or of black agrarian communities.

A general uprising in the Cape Colony was regarded by many Boer leaders as the key to their success in the South African War. This case study reveals the reasons why this general uprising did not occur during the second Cape invasion. In 1901 a general uprising did take place in certain Cape regions (notably west of the Cape Town-Johannesburg railway) but these regions were either strategically unimportant, in which case events within them could not decisively influence the course of the war, or else they were regions such as the Midlands, where a unique combination of geographical features, Boer command problems, lack of access to the lines of communication, in combination with other factors suppressed the uprising just when it was beginning to exhibit popular and universal features.

The Cape guerrilla war was subject to moderating and **constraining influences for** much of its course, despite being characterized by rebellion and executions. Extremism and moderation were both freely exhibited by the Boers in the conflict. But ultimately it was the moderation and restraint of the senior Boer commanders in the Cape (as elsewhere in South Africa) which emerged as the defining feature of the war there. Features of total war were rarely present, and the peace treaty concluded at Vereeniging represented a defeat for the irreconcilable and extremist elements of the Boer forces.

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REBEL COMMANDO MOVEMENT

DECLARATION

This M.A. dissertation does not exceed the prescribed length of 80 000 words,
excluding footnotes, references and bibliography.

Signed by candidate

Rodney James Constantine

February, 1966

DECLARATION

No part of this dissertation has been, or is being, submitted in support of an application for another degree or diploma of any other university, or institution of higher learning.

This dissertation is the outcome of my own research, and does not include material which is the result of work undertaken in collaboration.

Signed by candidate

R.J. Constantine

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the nature and extent of armed conflict in country areas of the Cape Colony, between 1900 and 1902. The relationship between invasion and rebellion is explored, as are the tactics and strategies of the Boer commando movement. Only republican and rebel military activity is examined, not the counter-resistance of the imperial army, the colonial state, or of black agrarian communities.

A general uprising in the Cape Colony was regarded by many Boer leaders as the key to their success in the South African War. This case study reveals the reasons why this general uprising did not occur during the second Cape invasion. In 1901 a general uprising did take place in certain Cape regions (notably west of the Cape Town-Johannesburg railway) but these regions were either strategically unimportant, in which case events within them could not decisively influence the course of the war, or else they were regions such as the Midlands, where a unique combination of geographical features, Boer command problems, lack of access to the lines of communication, in combination with other factors suppressed the uprising just when it was beginning to exhibit popular and universal features.

The Cape guerrilla war was subject to moderating and **constraining influences for** much of its course, despite being characterized by rebellion and executions. Extremism and moderation were both freely exhibited by the Boers in the conflict. But ultimately it was the moderation and restraint of the senior Boer commanders in the Cape (as elsewhere in South Africa) which emerged as the defining feature of the war there. Features of total war were rarely present, and the peace treaty concluded at Vereeniging represented a defeat for the irreconcilable and extremist elements of the Boer forces.

MAPS

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GLOSSARY

agterryer	a black servant, acting as a groom and cook for his master on commando
bywoner	a white living and farming as a tenant or squatter on the farm of a white landowner
commando	equestrian Boer military unit similar to the American 'posse'
krygsraad	council-of-war
laager	a camp
landdrost	magistrate
sjambok	short whip, originally made of plaited rhinoceros skin.

ABBREVIATIONS

B.W.M.	Bloemfontein War Museum
C.A.D.	Cape Archives Depot
C.P.C.	Constantine Private Collection
J.S.G.L.	J.S. Gericke Library
N.A.D.	Natal Archives Depot
O.F.S.A.D.	Orange Free State Archives Depot
S.A.L.	South African Library
T.A.D.	Transvaal Archives Depot
U.C.T.L.	University of Cape Town Libraries

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My sincere thanks go, in the first place, to my supervisor Prof. Bill Nasson. Without his assistance this dissertation would never have appeared.

A number of research institutions have, over the past seven years, provided a warm home-away-from-home. The august institution of the South African Library springs immediately to mind, as does the Bloemfontein War Museum. My thanks go in particular, at the former **institution, to Marie Sawyer and, at the latter, to Miss Wessels.**

Finally, I would like to thank my mother, Mrs J.L. Constantine, for the many and various ways in which she has assisted me in the process of researching and writing this dissertation.

'I have been careful not to resort to theories, lest I should do violence to the facts.'

- Henri Pirene (1936)

PREFACE

This dissertation is a case study of the guerrilla war in the Cape Colony during the South African War. Its primary concern is to attempt to evaluate the nature and extent of Boer commando activity in the Cape between September 1900 and June 1902. It encompasses the entire colony and provides a regional focus. In accordance with this method, conclusions are provided at the end of each regional survey, and these conclusions are brought together in a final overview at the end of the dissertation. In addition, I have been concerned with plotting the movements of each recognizable commando and of identifying its leadership. Following the line of movement brings one into the field of geography, and in this regard the historically environmental characteristics of the dissertation will be evident. A fourth method, and a crucial one, has been a chronological approach. Many studies of the South African War do not deal with developments within the colony in any chronological way. As a result, we are in danger of forgetting that there were two separate republican invasions, and two rebellions, and that the major part of colonial territory saw no fighting between February 1900 and December 1900. The chronological approach allows one to demonstrate how the climate of rebellion and various other conditions and circumstances in the colony altered, as time wore on.

My focus is squarely on the Boer commandos throughout the dissertation. Originally, I intended to look at the impact this military movement had on various sectors and groups within Cape society, but the constraints on space imposed by the thesis medium have made that impossible. Where possible, I have thus opted to examine the internal commando dynamic - rather than any external factors - in an attempt to characterize the relations within and between the various units. I was thus able to formulate a typology dependent on whether the commando was rebel, republican, or a hybrid formation.

As with most fields of inquiry, the reading one obtains of the Cape guerrilla war depends on the sources utilized. Neville Alexander recently stated that the literature on apartheid is already too extensive for one person to read in a lifetime,¹ and that is equally true of the South African War. In the formulation of this dissertation two basic source-groups have been used. The first is the group of primary accounts, both published and unpublished, which concentrate on the Boer guerrilla war in the colony. Here, I set myself the target of reading all the major memoirs. There are approximately thirty of first-rank importance and

1. Sunday Times, 1 October 1995.

length. By-and-large this objective was achieved, but in a few instances although I knew of the existence of specific manuscripts I was unable to acquire copies of them.

The second major archive is a group of colonial newspapers, mainly English, and mainly from the eastern Cape. This body of writing, apart from being particularly informative, was useful in providing a corrective for the Boer accounts, and thus promoted a more rounded view of events. An expression of the nineteenth century (quintessentially British) civic traditions in the Cape, the large number of newspapers published during the war years made it impossible to consult all of them, but I did read over 3 500 individual copies. The only official records consulted while researching this topic were the reports and letters of the Gordonia (Upington) district magistrate. These reports confirmed the outline I had established of the war in Gordonia and the Bushmanland, but added detail. Aside from the two major source-areas, above, a variety of other publications and archival material were consulted: biographies, local histories, genealogical accounts, general histories, parish histories, theses and scores of shorter letters and memoirs written by people who had first-hand experience of the events under review. In general I have tended not to draw on familiar secondary accounts of the South African War.

In setting out some of the parameters of this study it is necessary to delineate not only what falls within its lines of demarcation, but also that which falls outside that outline. While this is obviously not a comparative study, I do however, as an exception, make occasional comparisons. Although I have avoided a detailed theoretical discussion of different guerrilla war models, it is nevertheless necessary at the outset to provide a short definition of the subject. Generally speaking a guerrilla war is waged by

- * auxiliary, non-regular forces,
- * fighting behind the front-line,
- * on familiar terrain populated by friendly civilians,
- * in which the enemy is often a foreign, occupying force.

Guerrilla campaigns are usually characterized by great mobility. Topography is of crucial importance, and should be of a rugged nature or present some other advantage to the guerrilla. Ideology is a crucial element, and to be successful the guerrilla campaign must be paralleled by a political structure. Where most of these elements are present in a particular campaign, it can safely be stated that it is a guerrilla campaign. Guerrilla warfare flourishes in a large area where, for some reason, the civilian population has not or cannot be removed.

This was the case in the Cape Colony during the South African War. The Cape thus serves as a classic example of the model of pre-mechanized, pre-revolutionary guerrilla resistance which flourished in the nineteenth century. The first aim of a guerrilla is to survive, and the second one is to wear down the enemy by a long, slow process of attrition. Where a heterogeneous and culturally diverse population exists the guerrilla must obtain, by whatever means necessary, the co-operation of the vast majority of the population. His chief military function is to attack the lines of communication in order to damage the enemy's operational capability.

The commando system in South Africa has existed since the 1670's. It quickly evolved into a militia unit, the first purely burgher commando being raised in 1715.² A great deal can be written about the commando, but it was in essence simply 'a military force of burghers, or of soldiers and burghers led by a commandant.'³ While it was primarily a military organization, the commando during the South African War also had a political function, namely the transmission of republican ideology. Often (and this was regularly commented on), it was necessary for the commando merely to present a show of force, in a particular area, for the transmission of that ideology to begin.⁴

Because of constraints on length, this dissertation does not deal in any detail with either the causes or the results of rebellion. This study is also not an economic history. The chief reason for this is that the classic methods of economic history tend to be far removed from those of social history. Economic history requires detailed research in, for instance, places such as deeds offices. In the case of the Cape, painstaking field-work and genealogical investigations would be required to make the connections between rebellion, landownership and landlessness. I chose not to travel that route.

Originally, as stated earlier, I intended examining the direct and indirect effects the commandos had on the various sectors of Cape society. This was abandoned, but the position of blacks in the colony presents a special case. My intention was to deal in full with this third belligerent element within the struggle,

2. P.E. Roux, Die Verdedigingstelsel Aan Die Kaap Onder Die Hollands-Oosindiese Kompanjie, (1652-1795) (Priv. Pub., N.p., 1925), pp. 145-6.
3. Funk and Wagnalls New Practical Standard Dictionary (Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1946), p. 272.
4. See M. Maritz, My Lewe en Strewe (Priv. Pub., Johannesburg, 1939), p. 6; Alice M. Ralls and Ruth E. Gordon, Daughter of Yesterday (Howard Timmins, Cape Town, 1975), p. 47; W.C. Scully, The Harrow (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1921), pp. 167-8.

in proportion to the extent to which they were involved. In the process of re-searching the dissertation however, I found that the Boer-black conflict occurred at the same time as the larger struggle, but in a different contextual space. This is illustrated by the fact that scholars of black participation in the war (both on a national and regional level) have chosen to develop the historiography by dealing with the black role in isolation from the larger conflict. The pioneering work of integrating the black war into a single monograph on the war as a whole remains still to be done. It is doubtful whether any account that did not, paradoxically, set out to do that as a central aim, would succeed in its objective. But despite this, I have still made 107 references to blacks in this account, often in the context of armed conflict with the Boer commandos.

Surprisingly, perhaps, the study of the guerrilla-phase during the South African war is still in its infancy. This is common to the historiography of both sides involved in the conflict, for different reasons. If anything however, studies of the Boer participation are more rare than are those of the British. Numerous individual accounts exist of the Boer guerrilla war - both biographical and autobiographical - but there is no single, satisfactory synthesis. This is in marked distinction to the first, conventional phase of the war, where well-known multi-volume accounts abound, with prominence given to the British participation. The Boer experience of the first phase has been well served by the multi-volume accounts by Penning,⁵ van Everdingen⁶ and more recently, J.H. Breytenbach.⁷ But, where the multi-volume British accounts normally devote the last volume to the guerrilla war, with the Dutch and Afrikaans accounts one has to be happy with the final chapters of the last volume, or even less. Breytenbach's authoritative five-volume account,⁸ for instance, ends in May 1900, before the guerrilla war even began.

The main reason why the Boer guerrilla war has been largely ignored by historians is that, virtually by definition, no official records exist. This makes the writing of such a history problematical. But 'official' records are merely the reports of individuals in official positions. As historians know, there is nothing guaranteeing the veracity of such reports. Non-official reports can indeed on occasion

5. L. Penning, De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika, 3 Vols (D.A. Daamen, Rotterdam, 1899-1903).

6. W. van Everdingen, De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika, 3 Vols (J. Waltman, Delft, 1911-1915).

7. J.H. Breytenbach, Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902, 5 Vols (Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1969-1983).

8. Ibid.

be more reliable than official ones. The lack of official reports therefore cannot be viewed as sufficient reason to leave the history of the Boer guerrilla war unwritten. Undoubtedly, however, this is the reason why such accounts have not yet appeared.

The most complete account utilizing Boer sources which has been published to-date is P.H.S. van Zyl's Die Helde-Album.⁹ But this account, published in 1944 during the high noon of the Afrikaner nationalist period, will hardly satisfy critical readers today. Van Zyl only looked at published memoirs, and mainly only at those about or by people in leadership positions. His sub-title, 'Account and Photos of Leaders and Heroes in our Struggle for Freedom', is self-explanatory. M.A. Gronum's trilogy of books¹⁰ published between 1971 and 1977 is useful, but Gronum stood too close to the struggle to provide a coherent critical account. In addition, as he was unable to develop a single method of analysis, the standard of his work is uneven. He deals with the war in the Cape only as a short appendix to the struggle in the republics.

There is hence still no single and reliable secondary account which can serve as a guide to the guerrilla war in the O.F.S. or the Transvaal. All the work of providing a synthesis of the campaigns in those two states still remains to be done. The Cape has been luckier. As early as 1902, A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis published Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England.¹¹ Covering both uprisings, as well as the immediate post-war period, this remains the best account. But it is a contemporary account. Next came C.J.S. Strydom's Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog,¹² published in 1937. This book was an extension of Strydom's 1932 doctoral thesis at UCT. Strydom dealt with the causes and results of the war, both uprisings, Cape politics and martial law. As a result his chapter 'The Second Invasion of the Colony', which covers the same ground as this dissertation, constitutes only 13% of his study.

9. P.H.S. van Zyl, Die Helde-Album (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944).

10. M.A. Gronum, Die Engelse Oorlog, 1899-1902 (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1971); Die Bittereinders, Junie 1901-Mei 1902 (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1974); Die Ontplooiing van die Engelse Oorlog, 1899-1900 (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1977).

11. A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, München, 1902).

12. C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1937).

J.H. Snyman followed with Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902¹³ in 1973. For this thesis he received the degree of D. Litt. at Potchefstroom University for H.C.E. Snyman was critical of the military actions of the rebels, but more sympathetic towards the political objectives of Cape Afrikaners. Overall however, he was critical of republicanism and emphasized the loyalism of significant sectors of the Afrikaner population. He was not interested in the military aspects of the war and there is thus virtually no overlap between this dissertation and his own. For Snyman, the war was fought at the level of ideology and consciousness and he situates the conflict between the vestry and the politician's office. My own dissertation, on the other hand, locates the epicentre of the conflict between the rural farmhouse and the town offices of the martial-law administrator, the commandant and the intelligence officer.

H.A. Shearing's pathfinding study, The Second Invasion of the Cape Colony 1901-1902, During the Second Anglo-Boer War,¹⁴ appeared in 1989, and was submitted as an M.A. degree at the University of Natal. With this thesis one has the first full-length account of the Cape guerrilla war. Yet Shearing followed the bias of all previous researchers in ignoring the entire North-West Cape - the crucial regions of Griqualand West, British Bechuanaland, Gordonia and the Bushmanland. These areas, on the other hand, constitute a substantive two of my nine regions. She also dealt in a very full and authoritative manner with British counter-guerrilla measures. This receives a quarter of the space in her thesis. Shearing's method is also different from mine. Where I adopt a regional approach, her study has the commando leader in central focus. Nevertheless my dissertation can plainly be viewed as having been built on the partial foundations laid by Shearing, but as having refined and extended the final form. I owe a debt of gratitude to her work which I should like to make evident here, in part also for having drawn my attention to manuscripts, notably Scheepers', which I would not otherwise have located.

An important feature of the historiography of the Cape guerrilla war is the recent emergence of studies of the black population at the time. Notable among these have been Peter Warwick's Black People and the South African War 1899-1902,¹⁵ with a chapter on the Cape, and Bill Nasson's full-length Abraham Esau's

13. J.H. Snyman, Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902, Argiefjaarboek vir S.A. Geskiedenis, 1979(2)(Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1979).
14. An unpublished thesis.
15. Peter Warwick, Black People and the South African War 1899-1902 (Cambridge, 1983).

War.¹⁶ A recent development has also been the appearance of regional studies such as A.V. Oosthuizen's Rebelle van die Stormberge.¹⁷

Finally, in terms of the formation of my sense of regional borders, these are personal, individualized geographical constructs. But in each case they conform largely to traditional, cultural or political demarcations. In addition, I have paid close attention to the pattern of guerrilla movement in determining where to include a specific district. The Richmond district, for instance, was usually the western-most point of penetration by Midlands commandos, hence it is included in that region, and not with the Karoo. Similarly, Namaqualand is germane to the Western Cape since all movement into it was on a north-south axis. The lack of water in the Bushmanland desert to the east prevented all east-west movement, just as it had prevented effective trekboer penetration during the nineteenth century.

In the light of the absence of general historical accounts of the Cape guerrilla war, and of the confused nature and methodology of some of those which do exist, I have been concerned only to establish an accurate reconstruction of events as they occurred, in the belief that other researchers will then be able to draw conclusions from a more refined data-base.

16. Bill Nasson, Abraham Esau's War (David Philip, Cape Town, 1991).

17. A.V. Oosthuizen, Rebelle van die Stormberge (J.P. van der Walt, Pretoria, 1994).

GUERRILLAS, COMMANDOS AND THE CAPE COLONY IN 1900

'Eight Boers have been executed at the Cape of Good Hope for having excited the farmers and others at Graaff-Reinet to revolt. Twenty others have been sentenced to lesser punishments for similar offences, and with conspiracy to distress the colony by withholding the necessary supplies from the markets.'

Commenting on this report the Kokstad Advertiser of 18 October 1901 stated, 'This is like history repeating itself.' But in fact the extract was from the London Times of 14 September 1801!

The first republican rebellion in South Africa took place in the Dutch colonial period between 1775-6, and was followed by a second uprising during the British period in 1799.¹ Thereafter republicanism developed slowly during the 19th century but became commingled with incipient Afrikaner nationalism and with anti-British feeling both before and after the Great Trek. Republicanism in the Cape received a significant stimulus from the creation of the trekker republics in the 1840's and 1850's; from the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877; the Transvaal War of Independence during 1880-1, and the formation of the Afrikaner Bond in 1880.²

By the 1890's republicanism was firmly established in South Africa and political traditions were beginning to build up around the ideology, though Cape Boer attitudes towards it were not unequivocal.³

During the long period of Afrikaner political gestation through the 19th century, various structural factors within the colonial state and economy contributed towards the opening up of a breach between the two main sections of white society. The most important factor was the great dominance which English enjoyed over Afrikaans for most of this century. This was reflected in the fact that there was a total embargo on the use of Dutch in both houses of the Cape Parliament until as late as 1882.⁴ Very little schooling was available in Dutch (or Afrikaans) until the last decade of the century. These circumstances led many Cape Boers to

1. See Readers Digest Illustrated History of South Africa (The Reader's Digest Association, Cape Town, 1988), pp. 70-4; A.J.H. van der Walt, J.A. Wiid and A.L. Geyer, Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika, I (Nasionale Boekhandel Beperk, Cape Town, 1955), pp. 188-98; A.J. Böeseken, Van Oorloë en Vrede (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1983), pp. 1-6.
2. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond (1880-1911), pp. 6, 9, 11, 12, 22, 25-7, 33, 34, 40, 41, 52, 59; A. de V. Minnaar, Graaff-Reinet 1786-1986 (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1987), pp. 7, 41, 42, 44.
3. See for example the pro-Imperial attitudes of C.W.H. Kohler and S.J. du Toit in Annette Joelson, Herrinneringe van Kohler van die K.W.V. (Unie-Volkspers Beperk, Cape Town, 1945), pp. 80-7. M. Melck is another example. See O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), p. 236 and O.T. de Villiers, Met de Wet en Steyn in Het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 148, 161, 187-90.
4. Davenport, op cit., p. 79.

keep their children at home, so that they received no education at all.⁵ Many of the imported D.R.C. ministers – even some of the Scots, such as Dr. William Robertson – were regarded as agents of British imperialism, determined to establish the English language and British cultural institutions among the Cape Boer population.⁶

There were economic causes of cultural alienation also. The railway boom of the last quarter of the century began to deal the death knell to transport-riding and its associated service industries, such as wagon- and harness-making. The status of the rural skilled artisan, which had been high, began to fall. Lack of fluency in English made entry into the civil service impossible. The economic boom in the last quarter resulted in the commercial values of the townsmen beginning to supplant further the agrarian values of the farmer and tradesman, so that local culture itself began to assume a commercial character. Again, English was the language of commerce. Economic marginalization occurred hand-in-hand with the application of a rigid class hierarchy, implemented by a new professional class. Most of this new class were immigrants from Europe, and in particular from Britain.⁷ The result, in the words of M.E. Rothmann, born at Swellendam in 1870, was that 'the feeling of resistance against the superior attitudes of the ruling class became stronger, until finally, when the opportunity presented, it was able to express itself'.⁸

The Jameson Raid of 1895-6 greatly stimulated the alienation of Boer society from the imperial factor, and as war began to appear inevitable in the late 1890's

5. In one of his poems the Roggeveld (Sutherland) poet D.C. Esterhuysen (1815-97), for instance, recorded that he had only attended school for 9 weeks and that, as far as he knew, not a cent had ever been spent on his education. See Karel Schoeman, Die Wêreld van die Digter (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1986), p. 115. Esterhuysen is an early example, but this tendency of Cape Boer parents (especially in the rural areas) to withdraw or withhold their children from schools was prevalent up until the 1880's. See for instance Die Huisgenoot, 20 August 1943.
6. Die Huisgenoot, op cit.
7. For background on this paragraph, consult M.E.R. (M.E. Rothmann), 'Ontwikkeling van 'n Afrikaner' in Oorlogsdagboek van 'n Transvaalse Burger te Velde 1900-1901 (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1976), pp. 1-59 and Davenport op cit., pp. 1-80. Rothmann's essay was also published in Die Huisgenoot in 1943.
8. Die Huisgenoot, 3 September 1943.

large numbers of Cape Boers - especially in the rural districts - identified themselves openly with the republics.⁹ This drift towards armed conflict (and the perceptions of inevitability which accompanied it) was dramatically and ominously reflected in the vastly increased gun sales in the Cape Colony in the final years of the 1890's.¹⁰

In 1899 on the outbreak of war all the Cape border districts were overrun by Republican forces, then 'proclaimed' as annexed to the S.A.R. and O.F.S. The S.A.R. took responsibility for districts west of its border and the O.F.S. for those south of the Orange river. Ten thousand colonial subjects rebelled during this first invasion. Most joined voluntarily but a minority were conscripted against their will. After the republican withdrawal between March and April 1900, the majority of Cape rebels remained behind on colonial territory. During the course of 1900 a series of treason trials meted out lenient sentences to these rebels.¹¹

During the course of 1900 the gulf between the pro- and anti-imperialist factions of Cape society widened appreciably, as the society as a whole underwent polarization. The Boer response was closely tied to events in the republics, and as such was a reaction to the military crisis there. As the republican armies switched over to guerrilla warfare in the spring of 1900, so the necessity for the British arose, for the removal to camps of the civilian population from the farms, each of which was a supply-depot. These removals resulted almost immediately in a rising death-rate, for the camps were overcrowded, badly constructed and supplied, and administered by inexperienced army officers.¹² It was against the background of these events that J.A. Smith, at the time a young boy living at Aberdeen, later recalled 'Older people began to talk about a campaign against the entire Afrikanerdom.'¹³

9. The example of J.C. Smuts is a pre-eminent one. See W.K. Hancock, Smuts, The Sanguine Years, 1870-1919 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1962), pp. 58-60. See also Deneys Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1929), p. 14. The example of Olive Schreiner, and her husband S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner, is also apposite. See Karel Schoeman, Only An Anguish To Live Here (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1992), pp. 36-8.
10. For these figures see the Northern Post, 19 October 1900.
11. See C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1943), pp. 36-67; J.H. Snyman, Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902, Argiefjaarboek vir S.A. Geskiedenis, 1979(2)(Pretoria, Staatsdrukker, 1979), pp. 61-80.
12. See S.B. Spies, Methods of Barbarism (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1977), pp. 90-179.
13. J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), p. 2.

Each Cape region in 1900 was unique to some extent, in terms of the reasons for the growing polarization between the two main white groups. But at the same time there were universal causes of rebellion which applied to all the regions. Certain key events in the colony in that year contributed significantly towards the polarization, while others merely reflected that gulf. The Afrikaner Bond congress at Paarl in June was one of the earliest events to reflect the growing ethnic tensions. The women's congresses at Somerset East in October and Paarl in November gave considerable stimulus to the process of disaffiliation and alienation which characterized the political development of significant sections of Cape Boer society. The second volkskongres on the 6th December 1900 at Worcester, when cannon were trained on the 10 000 delegates, placed the seal on this process.¹⁴ Tensions in the Cape had reached breaking point, and the Cape Times published an article stating 'the Colony is hurrying to the brink of an inferno.'¹⁵

The events during 1900 which enflamed Boer opinion beyond recall were the transportation of the Jagersfontein women to a concentration camp at Uitenhage, and the widespread publication of a letter dealing with farm-burnings in the O.F.S. The Jagersfontein Boer civilians (who included among their number Genl. Hertzog's mother and wife) were implicated in the Boer attack on that town on the 25th October 1900. The British authorities took the decision to transport the women and children to the coast. The passage of 'the Jagersfontein women' through the eastern Cape was followed with intense anguish by most segments of Cape Boer society.¹⁶ The removal of the civilians was of fundamental importance in opening up the large gulf which began to separate the two main white groups. A Dutch letter from the Bedford district, written on 15th November 1900, caught the militant mood in the country districts perfectly: 'As everyone knows, bitter feelings and alienation between the English and the Afrikaners are currently at boiling point, since the disgraceful behaviour of the military officers in transporting women and children, and burning down towns and houses.' 'No-one can deny it', continued the letter-writer, 'that the interference with the

14. Strydom, op cit., pp. 67-89; Snyman, op cit., pp. 32-60; J.H. Breytenbach, Gedenkalbum van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1949), pp. 389-400, 471-486.

15. As quoted in the Umtata Herald, 1 December 1900.

16. Het Oosten, 15 November 1900, 22 November 1900, 13 December 1900, 27 December 1900; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 4 January 1901; Queens-town Free Press, 9 January 1901; H. Rabie-van der Merwe, Onthou! (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), pp. 148-65; De Nieuwe Middelburger, 16 November 1900.

Afrikaner wives and children is one of the lowest rungs on the ladder of shame which a military force can make itself guilty of.¹⁷

The second landmark event in 1900 was the shock-wave which spread through Boer society on the publication of a syndicated article dealing with farm-burnings in the O.F.S. Written in the O.F.S. on the 24th September 1900, and first published in Ons Land, the letter was then re-published in Dutch newspapers all over the Cape. In concrete and dramatic fashion the letter brought home for the first time to Cape Afrikaners the horrific nature of Lord Roberts' scorched-earth policy. Its effect was equally profound.¹⁸

In 1899 a majority of Cape Afrikaners were not pro-republican, but a year later that position had changed. Many Afrikaners all over South Africa were united by ties of religion, language, culture and history. Many Boers trekked north to the republics in the 1890's, and came to identify with the republican institutions there.¹⁹ They left behind kinship ties in a pattern which united much of South African Boer society in a single network, linked by the patriarchal family and the extended clan.²⁰ This was particularly evident in the rural areas, where societal patterns had not yet been transformed by the mineral revolution. Transmission of the full effects of the war along the lines of kinship strongly reinforced the political solidarity of Boers all over South Africa. By late 1900 this process was so far advanced that political boundaries had come to appear superficial and, with this process, a second rebellion in the Cape became inevitable.

17. Het Oosten, 15 November 1900.

18. For copies of the letter see Het Oosten, 11 October 1900; De Nieuwe Middelburger, 12 October 1900. For the article's effect, see for instance Smith, op cit., p. 2; Het Oosten, 15 November 1900.

19. See for instance the experience of the later Cmdt. A.G. de Wet in G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), pp. 116-7. Generals J.C. Smuts, S.G. Maritz and W.C. Malan and Commandants E.A. Conroy, J.L. Theron, J.P. Nesor, J.C. Lötter and C.P. van Heerden all migrated from the Cape to the republics in the 1890's, for varying periods.

20. For the 1901 experiences of J.A. Smith, Capt. J.J. Smith, Cmdt. W.C. Malan and Capt. D. du P. Scheepers, see respectively Smith, op cit., p. 19; B.W.M., 4299/4, 'Dagboek van J.M. Ackerman', pp. 27-8; H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogs-avonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 163-8, 186. For more on the sociological concepts of the patriarchal family and the extended clan, with specific reference to the South African Boer, see P.W. Grobbelaar (ed.), Die Afrikaner en Sy Kultuur, I - Mens en Land (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1974), pp. 87-164; G. Cronje and J.D. Venter, Die Patriargale Familie (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1958) pp. 15-52; C.M. van den Heever and P. de V. Pienaar, Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner, I (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1945), pp. 309-45.

As early as March 1900 there had been criticism of the total withdrawal from colonial territory of the republican forces.²¹ Thereafter, it was republican policy to return to the Cape as soon as that became possible. General de Wet planned to return as early as July.²² After trekking out from the Brandwater Basin he was however driven north-west by British columns, thus being compelled to postpone by six months his re-invasion. General de la Rey's guerrilla offensive in the Western Transvaal was, by contrast, an immediate success, and this opened up Griqualand West and British Bechuanaland to republican infiltration from as early as September 1900.²³

On De Wet's return to the O.F.S. in late August 1900, he immediately began to plan a return to colonial territory. A preparatory step involved the re-activation and re-mobilization of the Boer commandos of the southern O.F.S.. This guerrilla offensive, which began in September 1900, was a precursor to the invasion of the Cape.²⁴ The Cape possessed rich agricultural land and, more importantly, the civilian population there could not be removed as most of the territory was not under martial law. Moreover, the Cape Boers of the rural areas were known to be overwhelmingly pro-republican.

De Wet, in particular, felt that the Cape held the key to the success of Boer arms in 1900. He often stated that this lay in a general Cape uprising.²⁵

It was against the background of these conditions in the Cape, and in South Africa in 1900, that low-level diffusion of commandos west across the Transvaal frontier began again in September 1900, and was followed up by the more dramatic invasions of Hertzog and Kritzinger on the 16th December.

21. R.D. McDonald, 'n Terugblik op my Oorlogsjare (Oorlogmuseum van die Boere-republieke, Bloemfontein, 1995), p. 20.
22. N.J. van der Merwe, Marthinus Thunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing, Deel II, (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1921), pp. 62, 66-7; F. Pretorius, 'Die Eerste Dryfjag op Hoofkmdt. C.R. de Wet', Christiaan De Wet-Annale, (4) (Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1976), pp. 18, 37, 97.
23. Breytenbach, op cit., pp. 166-171; L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902 (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. IV, pp. 345-60; Lionel Wulfsohn, Rustenburg at War (L.M. Wulfsohn, Rustenburg, 1992), pp. 96-109.
24. See C. de Wet, Three Years War (Constable and Co., London, 1902), pp. 158-9; C.M. van den Heever, Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog (A.P.-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), pp. 110-11; McDonald, op cit., pp. 25-8; Northern Post, 5 October 1900; 12 October 1900; A. Conan Doyle, The Great Boer War (George Bell and Sons, London, 1901), pp. 529-34.
25. De Villiers, op cit., pp. 71-2.

ON THE TRANSVAAL MARCHES : BRITISH BECHUANALAND AND GRIQUALAND WEST

Between October 1899 and February 1900 thousands of Boers rebelled and joined the republican forces in these areas. In every district, the greater part of the Afrikaner male population joined; In Hay the rebels numbered 1 000 men, in Herbert 500 and in Vryburg between 800 and 900.¹ The relief of Kimberley and Mafeking, respectively in February 1900 and May 1900, brought about a general retreat by the republican forces back across the border. Most of the British Bechuanaland rebels who chose to remain the field also fell back across the border. A party of these men who crossed the border, under Acting-Cmdt. J.A. van Zyl, joined General C. de Wet's forces.²

The Griqualand West rebels did not retreat across the border, but fell back to the Kaap plateau, near Campbell, where they entrenched themselves. They were under the command of Genl. P.J. de Villiers, Cmdt. T. Vorster and F-C P. Venter. Both Lord Roberts and Lord Milner, for military and political reasons respectively, felt it advisable to clear Griqualand West completely of enemy troops before Lt-Gen. A. Hunter advanced too far into the Transvaal. Towards the end of April Roberts accordingly ordered Lt-Gen. C. Warren to effect this.³

By the 29th May, Warren was at the farmhouse of Faber's Puts, a few miles south of Campbell. On the following day De Villiers attacked him there with 600 men, but the attack failed. The rebel officers with approximately twenty 'desperate men', were then reported as having gone away to the Transvaal or the desert, but many of the ordinary rebels surrendered.⁴

Faber's Puts marked the final and total collapse of all rebel resistance, not only in Griqualand West but in the Cape Colony as a whole.

British casualties at Faber's Puts were severe: 23 dead and 32 wounded. Among the dead was Col. Spence, the C.O. of the D.E.O.V.R. Although sufficiently successful to bring an end to the first Cape rebellion, Faber's Puts was not sufficient to decisively alter the balance of power in Griqualand West. The British casualties were too great for that and many observers viewed the retreat

1. J.H. Snyman, Die Afrikaner in Kaapland, 1899-1902, Argiefjaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis, 1979(2), (Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1979), p. 62; C.J.S. Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1943), p. 67.
2. C.R. de Wet, Three Years War (Galago, Alberton, 1986), p. 127.
3. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902 (Sampson Low, London, 1906), Vol. IV, pp. 228-230; P.H.R. Snyman, 'Ontstaan en Groei van Postmasburg', Contree, 13 January 1983, p. 11.
4. Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 29 June 1900. For descriptions of Faber's Puts, see Amery, op cit., pp. 231-235; Umtata Herald, 6 October 1900; Albert Times, 6 June 1900; Snyman, op cit., pp. 11-12.

as a tactical disengagement, some even thinking that the Boers had been the victors there.⁵ The indecisive nature of the battle was therefore a contributory factor in the events which were to follow.

Genl. de Villiers moved across the border and attached himself to Genl. J.H. de la Rey's forces in the Western Transvaal, where he was given the control of the Bloemhof commando.⁶

With both de Villiers and van Zyl and their remaining rebels across the border, Griqualand West and British Bechuanaland settled down to conditions of relative peace for the first time in 9 months.

In July 1900 de la Rey embarked on an offensive in the Western Transvaal which was immediately successful. Lord Roberts was compelled to draw in many of his isolated outposts and in August 1900 the Western Transvaal, with the exception of a few garrisoned towns, came under the control of de la Rey's commandos.⁷ These circumstances brought de la Rey's men up to the border and led them to cross over again into British Bechuanaland in late August 1900. The first indication that the Boers had returned came in a private letter written by one of the C.M.R. at Vryburg, on about the 1st September:

'There is a small commando of Dutch in laager a few miles from here', the informant wrote.⁸

September was a quiet month in British Bechuanaland. But commando activity gradually began to increase in the territory. On the 9th October Cmdt. J.F. de Beer of the Bloemhof commando was at Morokani on the Transvaal border. His large force included a civilian laager with large herds of horses, cattle and sheep. Twelve miles from Mafeking, on the 16th, the N.S.W. Bushmen clashed with republican forces, killing 4 of them. While de Beer's force held the Morokani Rand, de la Rey himself was reported to be to the north at Kraaipan and Maribogo.⁹

On the 28th October the Boers raided a farm only 4 miles from Vryburg. A column of Australians went out from the town and drove them off. They fled but fired

5. Colesberg Advertiser, 2 August 1901.

6. Amery, op cit., pp. 348, 356.

7. J.H. Breytenbach (ed.), Gedenkalbum van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1949), pp. 166-171; Amery, op cit., pp. 345-360; Lionel Wulfsohn, Rustenburg at War (L.M. Wulfsohn, Rustenburg, 1992), pp. 96-109.

8. Frontier Guardian, 14 September 1900.

9. Tarka Herald, 15 September 1900; 'Rooinek' (pseud.), 'By the Western Line to Mafeking', The United Services Magazine, May 1902, pp. 198-208; Colesberg Advertiser, 19 October 1900.

indiscriminately on unarmed Africans on the farm and on the railway, killing a number of them.¹⁰ There was panic in the African communities of the Vryburg district after this. A report from the town stated:

'Native regugees are pouring into the town. Much excitement'.¹¹ Terror tactics continued for some days, with houses being burnt down and cattle looted. The shooting of unarmed Africans could be seen from the town.¹²

In the last week of October 1900, General P. de Villiers was still serving in the north-west O.F.S., but shortly after that commando activity once again became evident against the railway line, inside the Griqualand West border. By the 25th the Kimberley town guard had been called out.¹³ The second invasion of Griqualand West was thus equally low-key, but came almost two months after that of British Bechuanaland.

In Mid-November 4 miles of the railway were destroyed between Belmont and Kimberley, the line being blown up in 20 places. The first armed clash came at the same time, when Genl. Settle engaged a Boer force. This was at Heuningneskloof, on the line between Graspan and Ritchie. The man responsible for these actions was de Villiers, who then penetrated farther to the west and raided the districts of Douglas and Campbell.¹⁴

On the 30th November J.K. Stretton, on the board of the War Losses Compensation Commission, wrote in a private letter from Kimberley:

'Things here are still very unsettled. Bands of Boers are going about the country, looting stock from farmers who had returned to their farms, thinking the war was practically over; but what makes it most disgusting is the shooting of unarmed natives by the enemy, which is constantly going on. They are simply being shot down like dogs and have no means of protecting themselves'.¹⁵

The revival of the conflict in the Western Transvaal, and the resulting invasion of British Bechuanaland and Griqualand West, led to the British applying new counter-guerilla strategies in the republics. Lord Roberts began to apply a

10. Volunteers in the British forces had behaved in an identical fashion on the Kuruman river in March, 1897. See Kevin Shillington, The Colonization of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900 (Ravan, Braamfontein, 1985), p. 238.

11. Albert Times, 31 October 1900.

12. Frontier Guardian, 2 November 1900.

13. Kokstad Advertiser, 2 November 1900; Het Oosten, 25 October 1900.

14. Het Oosten, 24 November 1900; Northern Post, 16 November 1900; Albert Times, 21 November 1900.

15. Frontier Guardian, 7 December 1900.

scorched earth policy, which was intended to deny the Boers the use of supply depots. Concentration camps were established to house the people (both black and white) who were moved from the destroyed farms and (in some cases) towns.

The Western Transvaal civilian population were all accommodated across the border in concentration camps in Mafeking (mainly) and Vryburg, while a small number were placed in the Kimberley camp, which contained the majority of the western O.F.S. refugee population.¹⁶

A new departure in the guerrilla war in British Bechuanaland was the capture by the Boers of a convoy of 25 wagons at Geluk, 30 miles west of Vryburg. This was one of the first armed encounters west of the line since May 1900, when resistance had ceased in the region.¹⁷ It was revealed early in the New Year that 'a large commando, the exact size of which is not mentioned', had invaded the colony south of Vryburg and was en-route to Kuruman. This commando was led by Cmdt. J.A. van Zyl,¹⁸ on his first major incursion into the Cape since leaving in June 1900. Van Zyl's invasion came at the same time as Cmdt. C.P.H. Myburgh's invasion into the North-East Cape, and two weeks after the much larger invasions of Hertzog and Kritzinger. Simultaneous with van Zyl's raid, Cmdt. R.J.F. Kirsten of the Marico commando undertook a raid into Griqualand West. Kirsten attacked Danielskuil, which was however protected by an intricate system of very well-constructed trenches. As a result, although he had a large commando at his disposal, the attack failed.¹⁹ Later in the month, on the 25th, a goods train was captured and burnt at Slypklip. The train contained cattle and provisions for the troops north of Kimberley. Kirsten's commando was probably responsible for this, while crossing the line heading east. A few days later a post of ten men on a culvert on the line was captured. A train was held up, but before its contents could be looted an armoured train arrived and the Boers fled.²⁰

It is not known what part Genl. P. de Villiers played in these events in Griqualand West in January 1901. But in that month he experienced great difficul-

16. Het Oosten, 22 November 1900.

17. Albert Times, 4 January 1901.

18. Colesberg Advertiser, 4 January 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 4 January 1901.

19. P.H.R. Snyman, Danielskuil : Van Griekwa-Buitepos tot Dienssentrum (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1988), pp. 53-4.

20. Kokstad Advertiser, 1 February 1901; Tarka Herald, 30 January 1901.

ties with the 280 men of the Bloemhof commando. In a memorandum to de la Rey, they requested that de Villiers be discharged as their commander.²¹ De Villiers is known to have visited de la Rey alone in January, without his commando.²²

The result of these events was that de Villiers was removed from his command and van Zyl, who had not yet returned from his expedition to Kuruman, was promoted to General and given the command of the Bloemhoffers.²³

The following month de la Rey appointed de Villiers as commander of the Stellaland, Griqualand West and Bechuanaland rebels.²⁴ De Villiers and van Zyl thus virtually swapped commands, each keeping the core of their own followers. This reorganization solved the personality problems and each of the two commanders fought out the rest of the war in the capacities assigned to them.

De Villiers remained in the Western Transvaal in February and March, serving under de la Rey's overall command.²⁵

Van Zyl's mission to Kuruman was a failure and he obtained very few recruits. By late January he was back at the line, the commando reported by Lord Methuen to be 'much dejected by their cold reception and want of success'.²⁶ Hearing of his new command, van Zyl trekked into the Transvaal, where he laaged at Paardenplaats.²⁷ In March part of van Zyl's force again went west of the line where they began to lay siege to Kuruman. In mid-March they captured a small convoy of three wagons loaded with food, travelling between Kimberley and Danielskuil. But a convoy of six wagons got through from Kimberley to Kuruman, to the great joy of the inhabitants and garrison.

The Boers were laagered in thick bush east of the Langeberg.²⁸

In early May 1901, de Villiers and Kemp received orders to trek westwards onto the line. This is one of the comparatively few occasions for which we have concrete and well-documented information about the reasons for a trek: the move was a diversionary tactic devised by de la Rey to draw the British columns be-

21. Fransjohan Pretorius, Kommandolewe Tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902 (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1991), p. 209.

22. J.F. Naudé, Vechten en Vluchten van Beyers en Kemp (Nijgh and van Ditmar, Rotterdam, n.d. (1903)), p. 271; P.S. Lombard, Uit die Dagboek van 'n Wildeboer (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, n.d.), p. 130.

23. Pretorius, op cit., p. 209.

24. Ibid.

25. Albert Times, 25 February 1901; Lombard, op cit., p. 133.

26. Kokstad Advertiser, 1 February 1901.

27. Lombard, op cit., p. 136.

28. Het Oosten, 28 March 1901.

hind them, and thereby prevent the columns continuing their destructive work in the districts of Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp. Kemp was under orders to also, if possible, capture a supply-train on the line. Trekking through the Cunana native reserve,²⁹ they struck the line between Kraaipan and Mafeking. Close to Kraaipan they broke up the line in a few places. They clashed there with a village of armed Africans. Three Boer national scouts were captured, but in the cross-fire two African women were also shot dead.³⁰ Satisfied that they had created sufficient diversion at Kraaipan, Kemp and de Villiers then trekked east once again, making contact with de la Rey at Leeuwpán, 25 kilometres from Kraaipan.³¹

In February, at a krygsraad in the Transvaal, a very ambitious and wide-ranging plan to invade the Cape Colony and Natal had been formulated by de la Rey, Beyers and General Louis Botha.³² At a follow-up krygsraad at Waterval on the 20th June, at which Steyn, Burger, de Wet, de la Rey, Viljoen and Smuts were all present, farther plans were made.³³ Genl. J.C. Smuts was deputed to lead a commando into the Cape, as a precursor to the major invasions that would follow. As a link in the rather complicated plan de la Rey then sent Genl. P. de Villiers back to Griqualand West. His mission was to keep the lines of communication open between de la Rey in the Western Transvaal and Smuts in the North-West Cape, once the latter arrived in that region.³⁴ For a few weeks prior to de Villiers' arrival Griqualand West, except for an attack on the line between Graspan and Belmont on the 27th April, when it was blown up in three places, had been very quiet.³⁵

An entirely new element was introduced into the region at the end of June with the invasion of Cmdt. E.A. Conroy from the west. After his defeat at Narogas in May, remaining in Kakamas had become untenable. Conroy accordingly trekked to Griqualand West to link up with Genl. de Villiers. He entered Griqualand just west of Witsand in late June 1901.³⁶ Crossing through the Langeberg, Conroy con-

29. A name which has since disappeared completely from use.

30. According to Reitz, accidentally. See Deneys Reitz, Commando (Faber, London, 1929), pp. 171-2.

31. For a description of this raid see J.C.G. Kemp, Vir Vryheid en Vir Reg (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), pp. 380-81; Naude, op cit., pp. 241-43; Reitz, op cit., pp. 170-72.

32. See Kemp, op cit., pp. 368-71; Naude, op cit., pp. 214-15.

33. W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. I, June 1886-May 1902 (University Press, Cambridge, 1966), p. 407.

34. Snyman, 'Postmasburg', op cit., p. 12; Lombard, op cit., p. 141.

35. Albert Times, 3 May 1901.

36. Die Brandwag, 3 October 1941; C.P.C., M. Oosthuizen, 'Gesiedenis van Kakamas, pp. 49-50; C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/4/1, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town; 27 June 1901; ibid., 5 July 1901; ibid., Eadie to O.C., N.W. District, 5 July 1901.

ducted an 'armed demonstration' in front of Griquatown, then made every determined attack on Campbell on the 5th July. He besieged the town for some days, but was then compelled to lift the siege and move off.³⁷ After this, his commando operated between Griquatown and Campbell, until making contact with Genl. P. de Villiers' forces some weeks later.³⁸

De Villiers, with 200 men and accompanied by Cmdt. K. Kruger and Cmdt. H. du Plessis, reached the line on the 20th July. By this stage the line was protected at short distances by forts and blockhouses. He decided to cross at Border Siding and attacked the fort there, giving his laager time to cross. He trekked up to Moordenaarskloof, near Postmasburg, where he laagered for a time.³⁹ He and Conroy were united there. In August de Villiers and Conroy attacked a convoy at Swartkoppies, between Schmidtsdrif and Griquatown. Their attack was only partially successful but they did succeed in killing twelve soldiers, capturing horses, saddles, cattle, ammunition and rifles.⁴⁰ Operating alone, Conroy then occupied the Postmasburg police station and post office on the 10th August.⁴¹ On the same day Cmdt. B. van Aswegen captured horses at Kareepan. Two days later Cmdt. K. Kruger attacked Griquatown, capturing 800 horses and inflicting a number of casualties.⁴² In August, after Conroy had occupied the town, de Villiers established a base at Postmasburg. Colonial newspapers reported that 'three hundred Griqualand and other rebels are entrenching themselves in the Langeberg'.⁴³

In early September a column captured Cmdt. van der Merwe's laager, including all his horses. The commando itself escaped in thick bush, and following them up the column clashed with van Zyl's men, inflicting some casualties.⁴⁴ A determined effort was made to drive van Zyl back into the Transvaal, and in late August and early September a detachment of Methuen's division was very active around Setlagoli. They were assisted, ominously for the Boers, by 60 National Scouts. These collaborator Boers were commanded by Capt. Kelly, a local man, who was himself a Boer. In early September van Zyl burnt down Kelly's farmhouse at

37. Colesberg Advertiser, 2 August 1901.

38. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 50-1; Brandwag, 3 October 1941.

39. B.W.M., 4102/3, A.E. Burger, 'n Blokhuis Bestorm'; Northern Post, 8 November 1901.

40. Die Brandwag, 10 October 1941; Oosthuizen, op cit., Lombard, op cit., p. 145; Snyman, 'Postmasburg, op cit., p. 12.

41. Snyman, 'Postmasburg', ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Albert Times, 23 August 1901.

44. Tarka Herald, 7 September 1901.

Mosita.⁴⁵ At this point the Kakamas rebel commando mutinied and refused to follow Conroy any longer. They gave him an 'honourable discharge', elected the indecisive Jan Louw as commandant, and returned to Kakamas. Left stranded, Conroy had no choice but to also return to Kakamas, to an uncertain future, with the small number of men prepared to accept his command.⁴⁶

The major developments in British Bechuanaland in the spring were the first executions of Boer prisoners under martial law. On the 29th October two brothers, F.C.H. Kuhn and J. Kuhn were hanged at Vryburg. They were members of van Zyl's rebel commando, 'well-known Boers from the Vryburg district,' and had taken part in a skirmish at Soetlief on about the 16th October.⁴⁷

Two months later, on 28 December 1901, F-C.A. Reynecke and L. Brink were also hanged at Mafeking. Their execution was a sequel to the events around Mafeking, in early 1900. Genl. J.L.P. Snyman had given his men besieging the town orders that all Africans captured between the lines without a republican pass were to be immediately shot.⁴⁸ Brink accordingly shot an African prisoner and F-C. Reynecke led an attack on an African kraal outside Kimberley, where no prisoners were taken.⁴⁹ The trials of these men were not the only noteworthy martial law trials towards the end of 1901. Imperialist policy-makers and commentators were convinced that there was a close connection between the D.R.C. and rebellion, and in a series of show-trials no fewer than three regional D.R.C. ministers were convicted of treason.⁵⁰

45. Colesberg Advertiser, 15 November 1901.

46. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 51; Die Brandwag, op cit.

47. See the Colesberg Advertiser, 15 November 1901; Ambtelijke Verslagen van Generaal J.H. de la Rey en Generaal J.C. Smuts, Alsook Andere Stukken Betreffende den Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika, Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond, No. 7 (J.H. de Bussy Amsterdam, n.d. (1902)), pp. 16-17; G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1917), p. 141.

48. See Albert Times, 28 November 1901; Umtata Herald, 1 December 1901; Somerset Budget, 20 November 1901; Frontier Guardian, 22 November 1901. For background information concerning this development, see T. Pakenham, The Boer War (Jonathen Ball, Johannesburg, 1979), pp. 396-418 and especially p. 410; also P. Warwick, Black People and the South African War, 1899-1902 (University Press, Cambridge, 1983), pp. 28-38.

49. P.H.S. van Zyl, Die Helde-Album (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), p. 133; Barkly East Reporter, 6 December 1901; O.F.S.A.D., A119.215, Renier collection, 'P.W. Nel oor Oorlogsherrinneringe van Mnr en Mev H. Bruwer', pp. 1-6; Jordaan, op cit., pp. 145-6; Frontier Guardian, op cit.

50. They were Ds. D. Wilcocks of Vryburg, Ds. P.J. Perrold of Warrenton and Ds. J.J. Ackerman of Klein Boetsap. See Ds. C.J.P. Bornman, Driekwart-Eupeesbrosjure van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Vryburg (N.G. Sendingpers, Bloemfontein, n.d.), pp. 34-39; D.W. Krüger and C.J. Beyers (eds.), Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol. III (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1977), pp. 845-6; Tarka Herald, 5 November 1901; Somerset Budget, 9 May 1900; Frontier Guardian, 13 September 1901.

In July 1901 when General de la Rey sent Smuts to the Eastern Cape and Genl. de Villiers with 200 men to operate in the region of Griquatown, he also sent Cmdt. van der Merwe to the area around Vryburg with 150 men, and Genl. van Zyl with his commando to the area west of Mafeking. In effect this concerted movement - although small and still in the nature of scouting raids - amounted to a third invasion of the Cape Colony. Of importance was the fact that this time the small offensive wave was exclusively Transvaler in origin. On the 18th October 1901, three of van Zyl's men were captured and then shot dead at Rouxkloof by a mixed column of white and coloured troops.⁵¹ Shortly after this van Zyl clashed east of Vryburg with a column under the command of Col. Murray, the Vryburg commandant.⁵²

Meanwhile, in Griqualand West in early September, de Villiers was pursued by a number of columns. These columns trekked towards Postmasburg and camped on the night of 15th September at Kalkfontein, 4 km south of the village. De Villiers attacked them there the following morning but the clash was inconclusive and the columns entered the town. They stayed there some weeks while heavy clashes occurred in the Langeberg and de Villiers was chased west of that range.⁵³

But in October de Villiers was back in Griqualand West. In mid-October he successfully raided Griquatown, and captured a great number of horses - so many, that he was able to re-equip Cmdt. van der Merwe's commando, which had lost all its horses in September.⁵⁴ October was an important month for the commandos, especially in the central part of the Hay district - the western portion of Griqualand West. In August and September most of the men around Postmasburg had joined Cmdt. K. Kruger's commando. Rebellion was so widespread in the region of this town that only 5 men in total were known never at any stage to have joined the rebels.⁵⁵ Now, in October, after de Villiers' successful attack on Griquatown, and after he had re-established himself in the Asbestos mountains west of the Langeberg, hundreds of rebels began to stream towards his laager.⁵⁶

One of de Villiers' officers, F-C. Oldewage, captured Griquatown on 29 October

51. 'Ambtelijke Verslagen', op cit., p. 19.

52. Barkly East Reporter, 29 November 1901.

53. Snyman, 'Postmasburg', op cit., p. 12.

54. H. Verloren van Themaat, Twee Jaren in den Boerenoorlog (H.D. Tjeenk Willink, Haarlem, 1903), pp. 337, 342.

55. Snyman, 'Postmasburg', op cit.

56. Ibid, Snyman, 'Danielskuil', op cit., p. 54; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., pp. 337, 340, 342-3.

1901. He released the prisoners held there and looted all the supplies he could find. Taking into account Cmdt. Kruger's enormously successful attack on the town in August, when he captured 800 horses, de Villier's almost as successful raid in October when he also captured hundreds of horses, and Oldewagen's later raid, it is obvious that Griquatown served the important function of a supply-depot to the Boers during the crucial period of de Villiers' re-entry, between July and November 1901. The weak British defences at Griquatown contrast markedly with the successful defence of Campbell against Conroy in July, and Danielskuil's successful defence against Cmdt. Kirsten in January 1901.⁵⁸

While de Villiers was reorganizing Griqualand West, van Zyl launched a successful raid on Kuruman in early December, capturing a considerable amount of supplies and equipment.⁵⁹ This was a more successful repeat of his January 1901 raid, and the third time that Kuruman had been attacked during the war.

In January 1902 de la Rey and Kemp launched another attack on the railway line and British Bechuanaland, their prime purpose being to obtain cattle for the Western Transvaal commandos. While de la Rey controlled the raid, Genl. J.G. Celliers crossed the line near Mafeking, and Kemp near Kraaipan on the 10th. A number of clashes occurred with patrols consisting of both British and African troops. Some men penetrated the Mafeking concentration camp and terrorized the 'handsuppers' there. De la Rey then withdrew his force, having captured 3 000 cattle, 3 100 sheep, 170 mules and 66 horses from the Barolong tribe. Crossing the line he attacked an armoured train and then trekked back into the Transvaal.⁶⁰

Cmdt. J.F. de Beer's entire laager was captured at Mokwani in the Christiana district, on the 14th January, by a Kimberley column under Maj. Paris. Five people were captured, in addition to over 500 cattle and 5 000 sheep.⁶¹ This blow reduced the Boers' operational capacity on the border, but not fatally so. De Beer, head of the Bloemhof commando, had as his main task the protection of the Western Transvaal women laagers. He also had to attempt to keep the line open for east-west movement, but had engaged in little offensive activity. On 7th

57. Snyman, 'Postmasburg', op cit.

58. Snyman, 'Danielskuil', op cit., p. 53.

59. Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 344.

60. Naudé, op cit., pp. 318-19; Kemp, op cit., p. 443; Lombard, op cit., pp. 148-9; Warwick, op cit., p. 50; Tarka Herald, 18 January 1902.

61. Northern Post, 17 January 1902.

February, probably in an attempt to capture horses, de Beer attacked a police post near Taungs. Reinforcements under Major Berrange were sent by rail from Vryburg and the Boers were driven off.⁶²

This incident was one of the last recorded engagements in British Bechuanaland. By March Genl. van Zyl was back in the Transvaal. Hostilities gradually ceased in the area in 1902. The loss of Cmdt. J. de Beer's laager in mid-January marked the start of the decline.

By contrast, the war escalated tremendously in Griqualand West in 1902. There was an upsurge in fighting as de Villiers attempted to bring his large force into play, and the columns made determined efforts to expel him. De Villiers' chief activity consisted of attacks on the many convoys which moved between the various towns in the western part of Griqualand West. In December he fought at Beadlespost, where a coloured wagon-driver was captured and shot dead.⁶³ Convoys between Griquatown and Danielskuil were attacked and in January he fought again at Doornfontein and Dirkspan,⁶⁴ and in April at Grootvlei.

Due to various factors one of them being geography, the guerrilla war in British Bechuanaland was an extension of the larger campaign in the Western Transvaal. This pattern continued when de la Rey defeated and captured Lord Methuen at Tweebosch on the 7th March, seriously wounding him in the process. Genl. J.A. van Zyl was present at this battle and took a prominent part in it.⁶⁵ The Boer victory at Tweebosch changed the entire situation in the Western Transvaal and in British Bechuanaland. But only for a very brief period. Before the influence of the victory could be felt or the Boers could take the initiative, Lord Kitchener jumped quickly into the breach and organized another drive from Klerksdorp to Vryburg. Methuen's place was taken by General Ian Hamilton who enjoyed a spectacular success.

Unused to such an elaborately planned drive, van Zyl was taken by surprise, and just as had occurred 4 months earlier to Cmdt. de Beer, his whole laager was captured near the Transvaal border. Van Zyl and de Beer both managed to escape but in all Hamilton took 366 prisoners in this drive, including 66 rebels.⁶⁶ After Tweebosch the advantage in the region passed briefly into Boer hands but with Hamilton's drive it passed back into British hands. With the loss of his

62. Ibid., 14 February 1902.

63. Snyman, 'Danielskuil', op cit., p. 54.

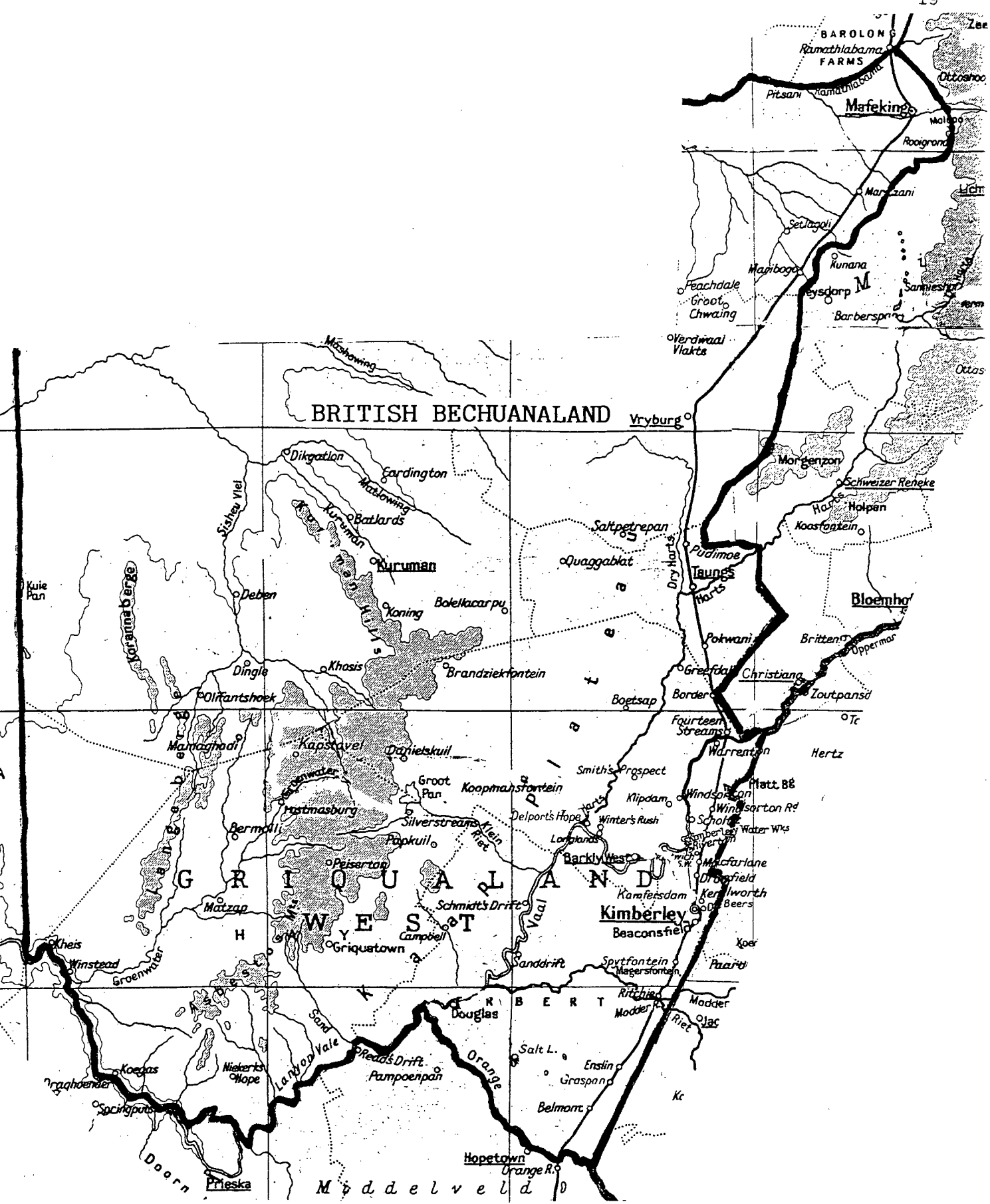
64. Ibid., 'Postmasburg', op cit.

65. Naudé, op cit., p. 328; Lombard, op cit., pp. 151-54; Kemp, op cit., pp. 448-53; Van Zyl, op cit., pp. 399-400; Frontier Guardian, 20 March 1902.

66. Tarka Herald, 31 May 1902.

laager - wagons, teams, carts, some men and a lot of ammunition and rifles - van Zyl's operational capacity was greatly reduced and it is doubtful whether he could have recovered from such a severe blow, coming as it did at the end of a long period of gradual decline. The rebel campaign then, unlike in Griqualand West where de Villiers remained a strong force right up until the end of the war, came to an end in British Bechuanaland with this decisive defeat for van Zyl's volunteers.

As Cape rebels, both van Zyl and de Villiers were excluded from the peace negotiations preceding the treaty of Vereeniging. The only men who took part who had first-hand knowledge of conditions in British Bechuanaland and Griqualand West were Generals de la Rey, Kemp and Celliers, and Cmt. de Beer of Bloemhof. These men, except for Kemp, voted for peace. It is doubtful however, whether a better knowledge of conditions in those two regions would have affected their decision. While developments in Griqualand West were encouraging, those in British Bechuanaland were not, so the two regions cancelled each other out.



BRITISH BECHUANALAND AND GRIQUALAND WEST

DE WET'S GREAT FAILURE : THE NORTHERN CAPE

The Northern Cape was, surprisingly for a border region, not very heavily affected by the first invasion. There were two exceptions to this general rule. One was at its eastern edge, where the Boers opened up a front at Colesberg. That town and district were occupied, and 'proclaimed' as annexed to the O.F.S. The other exception was in the west where, during the Prieska Expedition, a flying commando moved briefly through the districts of Prieska and Britstown, proclaiming the first-named town. But the districts of Hanover, Philipstown, Hopetown and De Aar were completely untouched, except for being occupied by in some cases large British garrisons.

In 1899 a large rebel commando was raised in Colesberg by Cmdt. H.W. Lategan. Middle-aged and widely respected, he was a wealthy farmer in the district. Unlike many of the other rebel commandos raised during the first invasion, Lategan's did not surrender when the republican forces withdrew from the colony. Falling back through the O.F.S. to the Mozambique border, the local rebel commando returned to operate in the Northern Cape in 1901, and its continued existence and return was an important feature of the guerrilla war in this region.¹

From March 1900 peace returned to the Northern Cape. With hostilities continuing in the republics, it was naturally a special kind of peace. Tensions remained high between the two main sections of white society, and this was reflected in attacks on the Bond, loyalist mass-meetings, the arrest of rebels and treason trials.² In February there was a large-scale disarming of Boer farmers at Philipstown, which the Bond protested against.³ In July the local newspaper asked contemptuously why the 'Poor Whites School' had not reopened. The result was that only days later an Afrikaans school opened up in Colesberg, in opposition to the Public School. It was known by the English as 'the rebel school'.⁴ Pro-republican elements were still clearly working away below the surface, but they had no mouth-piece and no visible presence. The incident which most graphically illustrates the continuing tensions was the differing response to the Relief of Mafeking on 21st May 1900. That day the D.R.C. minister, Ds. G.A. Scholtz, refused to ring the church bell, giving as his reason 'the rickety state of the woodwork on which

1. See A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns, Munich, 1902), pp. 57-62, 127-139; O.T. de Villiers, Met de Wet en Steyn in Het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 24-6, 37-9, 40, 45, 48.
2. Colesberg Advertiser, 20 March 1900, 22 June 1900.
3. Somerset Budget, 14 February 1900.
4. Colesberg Advertiser, 27 July 1900; Frontier Guardian, 3 August 1900.

the bell hangs.' Many Boer townspeople, in contradistinction to loyalists, either blackened their houses or closed their shutters, refusing to join in the display of 'brilliant lights and beautiful illuminations.'⁵ These acts of muted protest, and the howls of indignation they evoked from jingos, were a clear indication that the schism in white society remained acute, and that divisions were if anything deepening.

Nevertheless, the continuing improvement in the security situation in the region led to the repeal of martial law in the Britstown district in October.⁶ But ironically, in the same month the improvement in the situation came to an abrupt end with the Boer offensive in the southern O.F.S. As a result a Town Guard was raised in Colesberg in October, and 500 men enlisted.⁷ This event marked the beginning of the build-up to a new phase of conflict in the Northern Cape. The raising of the Town Guard was also a direct consequence of the Republican armed-protest in Ventersburg in mid-October, the first overt republican presence south of the river in over 7 months.⁸

October also marked the start of agitation around the issue of civilians in the republics, which was to reach its peak later in the year when a number of southwest O.F.S. women were exiled to Port Elizabeth. Pro-republican foment continued in the region, and, also in October, M.W. Venter, former M.L.A. for Colesberg, was arrested at Philipstown on a charge of high treason.⁹

Philippolis, Colesberg's sister village in the O.F.S., was besieged by Boer forces during the last week of October. There was some heavy fighting and a part of the village was captured. However, after capturing a small relieving column the Boers lifted the siege and trekked away after some days.¹⁰ At the end of October came the electrifying news that a small republican force had been commandeering horses, saddles and bridles south of the Orange river, not far from Orange River Station. They shot an African boy, spreading terror amongst the blacks and making it difficult for farmers to keep servants on their farms.¹¹

5. Colesberg Advertiser, 1 June 1900; C.P.C., N.A.J. van Rensburg, 'Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in en om Colesberg', pp. 12-16, 25.

6. Frontier Guardian, 12 October 1900.

7. C.R. de Wet, Three Years War (Constable, London, 1902), pp. 158-9; A. Conan Doyle, The Great Boer War (George Bell, London, 1901), pp. 529-532.

8. Het Oosten, 25 October 1900.

9. Colesberg Advertiser, 19 October 1900; Somerset Budget, 17 October 1900.

10. Albert Times, 31 October 1900; Colesberg Advertiser, 19 October 1900, 26 October 1900, 2 November 1900, 9 November 1900; Kokstad Advertiser, 16 November 1900.

11. Albert Times, 31 October 1900.

This second breach of the river frontier in one month signalled that the Northern Cape could not remain immune from the conflict for much longer, and that if the southern O.F.S. was controlled by Boer forces the border would not be respected. The shooting of a black labourer served as a warning that the commando's intention was to disrupt the rural economy, and perhaps that blacks in the Cape who could not rely on Imperial protection or would not remain neutral as non-belligerents outside the conflict, would face an orchestrated campaign of terror in an attempt to inhibit and restrict their effectiveness as imperial collaborators.

On 25th October the Jagersfontein Boer women and children passed Colesberg Junction by rail. This was one of those watershed events which was a primary cause of the second Boer uprising in the Cape. On the same day strong imperial reinforcements arrived in Colesberg,¹² demonstrating the effectiveness of the Boer's guerrilla tactics in the O.F.S. In early November rumours continued to abound of a Boer move across the river. On the 7th a statement was made from Colesberg, denying that there had been an incursion in the neighbourhood of Petrusville: 'All is quiet in Colonial territory' it stated, in unconscious irony.¹³

Patrols went up to the river bank daily, and confidence was expressed in the defence fortifications. Nevertheless, alarm began to spread all over the region. The Hopetown garrison (keeping in mind the October incursion south of Orange River Station) was very active throwing up earthworks, reinforced by artillery.¹⁴ The relation the Northern Cape had with the south-western O.F.S. was illustrated by the relief felt in Colesberg on the 15th November at the safe arrival of two strongly-escorted convoys travelling from there to Philippolis. By this date the region had already been drawn into the orbit of the resurgent campaign in the south-western O.F.S.¹⁵ On the 27th November the long-awaited preliminary blow fell, when a commando approached the bank of the Orange opposite an armed camp at Sanddrift near Petrusville, and fired a volley into the camp. One Grenadier Guardsman was killed and two of Nesbitt's Horse slightly wounded.¹⁶

12. Somerset Budget, 17 November 1900; Northern Post, 26 October 1900.

13. Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 9 November 1900.

14. Somerset Budget, 10 November 1900, 14 November 1900.

15. Somerset Budget, 10 November 1900.

16. Umtata Herald, 1 December 1900; Somerset Budget, 5 December 1900; Tarka Herald, 1 December 1900; Albert Times, 5 December 1900; Northern Post, 30 November 1900.

On the 16th December 1901 Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog's force entered the Cape Colony at Sanddrift, 20 km east of Philippolis. Genl. P.H. Kritzinger entered simultaneously farther east. Although unexpected,¹⁷ this attack, a crucial development in the second invasion of the Cape Colony, had been nevertheless feared for some months. The two commando invasions of the 16th December were sensational events, sending shock-waves throughout the colony and even farther afield,¹⁸ and marked the culmination of the Boers' efforts during the second half of 1900 to re-activate their forces and escalate and expand the area of military conflict.

Hertzog's force numbered 350 men,¹⁹ all volunteers, organized into 5 separate commandos. This represented one-quarter of the total strength of the southwestern O.F.S. forces.²⁰ The Fauresmith commando was under Cmdt. T.K. Nieuwoudt. The other commandants were G.A. Brand (Petrusburg), M. Hertzog (Philippolis, a brother), H. Theunissen (part of Boshof) and H. Pretorius (Jacobsdal).²¹

The average size of the commandos was thus 70 men. The force was very poorly equipped. There were only 137 rifles in total, many of these having been dived out of the Modder river, where Cronje's men had thrown them before surrendering in February. Each man had only 11 rounds, and there was an acute shortage of horses due to the severe horse-sickness that year. According to one source, most of the men had to walk long distances until sufficient horses had been commandeered. Hertzog himself walked a long way beside his horse during the early stages of the invasion.²² Hertzog had not had an auspicious start to his invasion. Before even leaving the O.F.S. controversy had erupted between him and the Boshof commando, due to his appointment of H. Theunissen to lead this unit over Cmdt. C.C.J. Badenhorst. Most of the Boshof commando had supported Badenhorst, who accordingly detached himself from Hertzog's command and the invasion, 'in the interests of our cause', and 'decided to operate independently, and make my

17. See Somerset Budget, 17 November 1900.

18. See for instance Thomas Pakenham, The Boer War (Futura, London, 1982), pp. 485-6; L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, London, 1907), Vol. V, p. 127.

19. The figure is apparently Hertzog's own. See C.M. van den Heever, Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog (A.P.-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), p. 115; Oswald Pirow, James Barry Munnik Hertzog (Howard Timmins, Cape Town, n.d.), p. 32; also O.F.S.A.D., A 119, Renier collection, 190, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van Jannie van der Walt', p.1.

20. C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 159.

21. O.F.S.A.D., A 419, 'Herinneringe van Die Anglo-Boere Oorlog van 1899-1902, Deur Willem Hendrik Muller', p. 99.

22. Van den Heever, op cit., p. 115; O.F.S.A.D., A 289, Renier collection, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van Pieter Jan Andries Spies', p. 4.

commando arrangements on my own', since he 'feared fatal occurrences'.²³ Hertzog's short career as a soldier had indeed been dogged by controversy since July 1900, when his appointment of an unpopular officer had almost torn the O.F.S. artillery apart.²⁴ On the 5th December a Reuter's report issued at Bloemfontein stated that he 'was anxious to surrender, but his men would not allow him to do so, threatening to shoot him'.²⁵ His command had therefore not gone undisputed in the period prior to his invasion of the Cape, and there were accordingly doubts whether he could maintain the unity of his force and fulfil its offensive potential.

Obtaining local intelligence that the town of Petrusville was too heavily garrisoned to attack, Hertzog's advanced patrols, under Nieuwoudt, trekked south of that town and attacked the outpost of Hamelfontein. There was a large store of supplies at this post, but the attack failed.²⁶ On the 18th Hertzog occupied the undefended Philipstown, immediately cutting the telegraph line to Houtkraal station. On the next day widespread commandeering began. Horses were collected on the commonage, and those in the pound also taken. Receipts were issued for everything. The local school principal, D.M. Bresler, who had 'invited' the Boers to occupy the town, closed his school and joined their forces.²⁷ However, no 'proclaiming', or annexing of the town to the O.F.S. occurred, as it had elsewhere during the first invasion.²⁸

The Boer population of Philipstown received the republican force with undisguised enthusiasm, and the town quickly assumed the atmosphere of a volksfeest: 'In a short space of time every man of the commando was walking around in an excited state of mind, in a new suit of clothes, a new hat, boots, shirt, tie etc., etc..

23. C.C.J. Badenhorst, Uit den Boeren-Oorlog, 1899-1902 (Höveker and Wormser, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 86-7. See also O.F.S.A.D., A 247, 'Oorlogs-geskiedenis van Komdt. J.P. Brits', p. 5.
24. J.J. Oberholster (ed.), 'Dagboek van Oskar Hintrager - Saam met Christiaan de Wet, Mei tot September 1900', in Christiaan De Wet - Annale, 1973, pp. 63-66.
25. Kokstad Advertiser, 21 December 1900.
26. A. Conan Doyle, The Great Boer War (George Bell and Sons, London, 1901), p. 566; Dr. A. Wessels (ed.), 'Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Nesper', in Christiaan De Wet - Annale, (7), 1988, p. 56; Van der Walt, op cit., B.W.M., 2005, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van P.J. Horak', pp.4-5.
27. De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 87. He was the first rebel to join Hertzog's invasion force.
28. Colesberg Advertiser, 28 December 1900.

One could see them in their dozens sitting on the stoeps, speaking to the young ladies and with the old ones too. They appeared to find much pleasure in this. Some played on concertinas, others on harmoniums, where these were to be found. One would have thought they were out on a picnic.²⁹

That evening the officers were entertained to a concert.³⁰

Hertzog's strategic objective at this stage was to trek as far as possible into the colony, in order to demonstrate to the international community that the Boers were not a spent force 'as at that time the newspapers were full of reports that there were only small groups of brigands moving about and that the war could be considered to be over.'³¹ One of the first imperial responses to the invasions of the 16th December was the declaration of martial law in twelve Cape districts. This occurred on the 20th December. In the Northern Cape, Britstown and Hanover were the only two districts immediately proclaimed.³² Lord Kitchener also ordered Genl. H.H. Settle to take command of and safeguard the lines of communication between De Aar and Naaupoort. His most important task was to prevent Hertzog's force from breaking east across the railway line into the Midlands. By the 20th December the columns of Col. E.C. Bethune and Col. H. de B. de Lisle, each about 800 strong, were at Hanover Road. These columns were exclusively composed of mounted men. Col. A. Henniker was at De Aar.³³

While at Philipstown Hertzog was in the centre of a square bounded on three sides by railway lines and on the other by the Orange river. This was potentially a very dangerous position as troops could be marshalled around him and cut off his line of march.

Initially however, Kitchener assumed a static defensive posture, since with the troops at his disposal he was primarily concerned to prevent a break-through to the south.

Hertzog also moved relatively quickly to place himself outside the square. Already by late on the 17th December his advanced patrols had reached the line at Houtkraal.³⁴

29. Het Oosten, 10 January 1901.

30. De Wet, et al., op cit.

31. Wessels, op cit., p. 57.

32. Amery, op cit., Vol. VI, p. 556.

33. Amery, op cit., Vol V, p. 127.

34. Horak, op cit., p. 5.

At sunrise on the 18th Nieuwoudt arrested the station-master at Houtkraal. Before the telegraph instrument was destroyed however he had already reported the presence of the Boers to De Aar. While the main force was crossing, Nieuwoudt took up a position in some low ridges adjacent to the station. The main force was struggling through a swamp just west of the line³⁵ when an armoured train arrived and opened fire on them with maxims. Nieuwoudt's force was only 100 m from the train and poured a heavy fire into it, whereupon it steamed out of the station.

The line was then blown up on both sides of the station.³⁶

From Houtkraal Hertzog turned south-west, occupying Britstown on the 22nd December. The town was undefended and Hertzog arrested and imprisoned the magistrate. By this stage the invasion force was only short of boots and shoes, and here two carloads of clothing and footwear fell into their hands.³⁷ In Britstown the invasion force ran up the vierkleur and sang a republican anthem making explicit their identification as the spearhead of Afrikaner republicanism. Although the town was not proclaimed, the republican parallels with the Prieska expedition of a year earlier were already clearly apparent. Altogether at least £1,000 of goods was commandeered from the various stores.

As at Philipstown, the commando received an enthusiastic welcome and 6 men joined the force. One of them was the twenty-two year old E.A. Conroy, who in 1902 pursued a very bloody guerrilla career in the Prieska district of the Northern Cape.³⁸

After the 20th December Colonels Thorneycroft and De Lisle were sent in pursuit of Hertzog, and were followed by Col. Parke. On the 24th December, on hearing the news that the British columns were approaching, Hertzog's entire force abandoned Britstown and trekked to Houwater. Nieuwoudt had gone there some days earlier and Hertzog met him there on the 24th. The columns trekked into Britstown unopposed. At Houwater Hertzog captured two heavily-laden wagons with supplies for the troops. There was a great deal of liquor in the wagons and when the

35. Wessels, op cit. This was the same swamp where Genl. de Wet's invasion became bogged down in February, 1901.

36. Muller, op cit., p. 103; Horak, op cit.; Colesberg Advertiser, 28 December 1900; Wessels, op cit.; F.A. Steytler, 'Genl. Hertzog as Krygsman', in P.J. Nienaber (ed.), Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1965), p. 85.

37. De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 87-8; Queenstown Free Press, 4 January 1901; Die Brandwag, 11 June 1941.

38. Ibid.

columns attacked at Houwater on the 26th December Hertzog's men were in no state to resist effectively.³⁹

On the 26th Hertzog managed to disengage his forces successfully from the clash at Houwater and trekked south-west towards Vosburg. He left one wounded man behind on the field, and his ambulance under Dr. A.E.W. Ramsbottom returned to treat the man. The British force detained Dr. Ramsbottom and transported him to Bloemfontein, where he remained for the duration of the war.⁴⁰

The Boers left Dr. A.F. Smartt's farm at Houwater virtually destroyed: Five hundred acres of ripe wheat had been trodden down by the horses, the wool stores or granaries were burnt or destroyed, and the fencing cut so that hundreds of ostriches in full plumage roamed about the veld. Smartt was commissioner of Public Works in the colonial government.⁴¹

Going from Houwater to Vosburg, Hertzog left the Britstown district and entered that of Victoria West, and in so doing he crossed from the Northern Cape into the Karoo.

After his failed attempt at entering the Cape Colony in December 1900, De Wet made a second attempt in February 1901. He had received positive reports from both Hertzog and Kritzinger in January.⁴² Descending through the south-east O.F.S., which was virtually undefended since Hertzog and Kritzinger had drawn many columns away far to the south, De Wet then suddenly crossed the line westwards into the south-western O.F.S. and arrived at Sanddrift on the 10th February. His adroit manoeuvre in crossing the line caught the few columns in the southern O.F.S. on the wrong foot, and there were no troops at all at the drifts west of Norval's Pont.⁴³

This trek through the southern O.F.S. placed in context De Wet's remobilization of the area in the previous year. Already by the time he got to Sanddrift the heavy rains which characterized this invasion had begun to fall. In addition, locusts had destroyed the grazing in the south-west O.F.S.⁴⁴ Although 3 000 men,

39. Amery, op cit., pp. 129-30; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 101; Spies, op cit., p.5; Brandwag, op cit.; P.H.S. van Zyl, Die Helde-Album (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), p. 211.

40. Wessels, op cit.; De Wet, et al., op cit.; Muller, op cit., pp. 101-02; Van den Heever, op cit.; Steytler, op cit., p. 86.

41. Frontier Guardian, 11 January 1901; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 11 January 1901.

42. C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 193-4; Amery, op cit., Vol. V., p. 131.

43. Ibid., pp. 200-201, 135-6.

44. C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 197, 202; N.A.J. van Rensburg, op cit., p. 20.

with guns and a convoy, had left from Doornberg on the 27th January to mount the invasion, only half of these were committed fighting men. The other half were latent 'handsuppers' who regarded commando service as merely the lesser of two evils, the other being surrender.⁴⁵ This was made obvious at Sanddrift by the fact that three of De Wet's N.O.F.S. commandos refused to cross the frontier, and returned to their own districts.⁴⁶ Half of Genl. P.J. Fourie's 800 men also deserted before crossing the river. These and other desertions meant that De Wet started his raid at Sanddrift with only 1 400 of his 3 000 men left.⁴⁷ After completing his crossing on the 10th February, de Wet marched the 8 miles to Holvaart to await the arrival of Genl. Fourie's men. Fourie formed the rearguard in the trek through the O.F.S. and in addition his men had been creating a diversion in the south-eastern O.F.S.⁴⁸

Fourie arrived at Sanddrift on the 11th, with a pursuing English column 6 hours behind him. However, his crossing was safely completed by sunset, and he joined de Wet at Holvaart. Hamilton and Knox were ordered to march on Sanddrift on the 9th. They only reached it at sunset on the 12th however. The river was flooding between the 10th and the 12th and it was only on the 14th that all the troops and baggage of these columns was across the river. By then De Wet was within striking distance of the railway line at HouTkraal.⁴⁹ As a result of waiting for Fourie, it was only on the 12th that de Wet started his trek, going south-west towards Philipstown. The horses were already in poor condition due to the bad state of the veld, a result of scorching winds and lack of rain earlier in this region.⁵⁰

Genl. N.G. Lyttelton had been transferred from the E-Tvl. to Naauwpoort, to take command of the whole operation against De Wet. A heliograph on a koppie near Hamelfontein farmhouse had been working from the 11th, and on the 12th Lyttelton

45. See detailed statement by a commando deserter in Somerset Budget, 13 February 1902; also O.T. de Villiers, op cit., pp. 71-2.

46. These were 300 men of the Bethlehem commando under Cmdt. A.M. Prinsloo, 200 of Kroonstad under Cmdt. P. de Vos and 1 000 of Heilbron under Cmdt. van Tonder. Prinsloo alone had the permission of de Wet to return.

47. O.F.S.A.D., A 119, Renier collection, 193, 'Generaal de Wet se Inval in die Kaapkolonie in 1901, deur Senator J.J. van Rensburg', p. 1; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 100; C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 204; H. Verloren van Themaat, Twee Jaren in den Boerenoorlog (H.D. Tjeenk Willink, Haarlem, 1903), p. 274.

48. It was this successful diversion that drew all the British troops east of Norval's Pont.

49. Amery, op cit., Vol. V., p. 136; P.H. Kritzinger and R.D. McDonald, In The Shadow of Death (William Clowes, London, 1904), pp. 60-61; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 100-101; C. de Wet, op cit., p. 202; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 26.

50. Victor Pohl, Adventures of a Boer family (Faber, London, 1944), p. 89.

sent two strong columns out from Colesberg after De Wet. One, under Col. H.C.O. Plumer, clashed with the invasion force on the same day, near Hamelfontein. With forces in his rear and his passage towards the east and south blocked, De Wet swerved north-west. Closely followed by Colonels Jeffreys and Cradock, his rearguard kept them at bay and he trekked in the direction of Strydenburg, camping for the night at the Hondeblafs river.⁵¹

At this stage it is necessary to examine De Wet's strategic objectives for the raid. What did he hope to achieve? From the available evidence it is clear that De Wet saw his role as still conforming to the general Cape invasion plans decided on by Hertzog, Kritzinger and himself at Goede Hoop farm in early December.⁵² In terms of this invasion plan De Wet would form the centre-piece - the head of the bull - of a three-pointed invasion south of the river. A krygsraad in the Transvaal in February had integrated this plan into the total republican war strategy.⁵⁴ Even before these plans had been formulated however, De Wet had envisaged a return to colonial territory. His general thinking reflected the idea, held by only a few others, that the republicans should never have left that territory in their entirety. As early as July 1900, after trekking out from the Brandwater Basin, he had planned to re-invade the Cape, but had instead been driven into the Transvaal.⁵⁵ In February 1901 De Wet was at the height of both his ability and his fame. His invasion that month was designed to bring about a general Cape uprising, with him trading heavily on his already legendary stature. There can be little doubt that both De Wet and the foremost Transvaal generals⁵⁶ saw this raid as the central event which would determine the course of the war not only in the Cape Colony, but in South Africa as a whole. There can similarly be little doubt that their identification of the central importance of the invasion was an accurate assessment of the military situation in South African in early February 1901.

51. C. de Wet, op cit., pp. 202-204; Amery, op cit., pp. 137-8; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., pp. 267, 271.
52. See Steytler, op cit., p. 85; Van der Heever, op cit., pp. 113-4.
53. Steytler, op cit., p. 84.
54. J.C.G. Kemp, Vir Vryheid en vir Reg (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 368-71; J.F. Naude, Vechten en Vluchten van Beyers en Kemp 'Bôkant' de Wet (Nijgh and Van Ditmar, Rotterdam, 1903), pp. 214-5.
55. N.J. van der Merwe, Marthinus Theunis Steyn (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1921), Vol II, p. 66; M.C.E. van Schoor (ed.), 'The Diaries and Recollections of Jacob Abraham Jeremias de Villiers', in De Wet - Annale, 8, 1990, p. 38.
56. See for instance Kemp, op cit.; Naudé, op cit., pp. 214-215.

De Wet's north-west trek from Holvaart (8 miles west of Sanddrift) on the 12th was thus already a deviation from the plan which stipulated that he should descend south to the region of Graaff-Reinet, while Hertzog and Kritzinger operated on his eastern and western flanks as his 'horns'. For delaying at Holvaart and not putting as much distance between himself and the frontier as possible, De Wet was severely criticized by his own men.⁵⁷ In addition, from the 10th February on, for some days, De Wet followed the virtually identical route that Hertzog had two months before.⁵⁸ Some of these farmers on his route had been prosecuted for assisting Hertzog, and were thoroughly intimidated by martial law. The result was that there was little assistance for his invasion force, and no recruits at all.

After spending the night of the 12th at the Hondeblafs river, De Wet found on the following morning (th 13th) that the grazing there had all been destroyed by locusts. The real deterioration of his horses began at this point. While he was striving, incomprehensibly, to maintain the central cohesion of his large force, men were already beginning to flit away by the 12th, and the first pedestrians appeared. His position began to appear serious, especially since the line lay ahead and still had to be crossed.⁵⁹

It began to rain on the 13th and the pursuing columns lost the trail for a while before Col. Plumer found it. Two hundred horses were abandoned before De Wet halted for the night at the Wolwekuil koppies. This was 6 miles east of Houtkraal station, while the pursuing columns halted only 4 miles east of De Wet. The number of pedestrians had increased, and in the morning of the 14th Generals Fourie and Froneman were ordered to mount a rearguard action to give the convoy and the pedestrians time to cross the line.⁶⁰ Plumer attacked the Wolwekuil koppies at 8.45 a.m. on the 15th and by 11 a.m. he and Cradock had forced the rearguard into retreat. The pursuit continued amid violent thunderstorms, and De Wet's force struggled through two swamps, becoming bogged down in the second one. This was the Durans Vlei, just east of the line. The convoy consisted of a number of small cannon, and wagons with rifles, shells and ammunition for the many rebels

57. See Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 270.

58. He had crossed at the same drift as Hertzog had.

59. C.R. de Wet, op cit.; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 274.

60. Amery, op cit., p. 138; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., p. 63; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 101.

who were expected to join the invasion force. Right through the night of the 14th/15th De Wet struggled to free his guns, and during this night the chain of command snapped in the commando. Men deserted in droves.⁶¹

On the night of the 14th, scouts had gone forward and blown up the line at a point 7 miles either side of Bartmann's Siding, near Houtkraal. But it took 12 hours to cross the Durans Vlei, and it was only after dawn that the force crossed the line. The guns were saved, but all the wagons, 20, were abandoned in the swamp. Genl. P.J. Fourie's force was also cut off in the Wolwekuil koppies. This meant that De Wet lost his entire rearguard, with all the best horses, for Fourie only managed to rejoin him on the last day of the invasion.⁶²

It is instructive to note that De Wet only completed his crossing of the line 4½ days after his main force completed the crossing at Sanddrift. Hertzog by contrast (and the two had followed the same route) had completed the same journey in 2½ days, and De Wet had spent the entire period of that fatal delay inside the lethal square bounded on three sides by railway lines. From the vicinity of Houtkraal, De Wet moved west to De Put,⁶³ where there was pasture for the horses and sheep for the men to eat. He was closely followed by Crabbe and, farther back, Plumer. This was normally a horse-rich area through which he was now moving, but everything had been commandeered and removed under martial law. At De Aar alone there were said to be between ten and twelve thousand horses.⁶⁴ From De Put he continued north-west on the 16th, in the direction of Prieska. He had sent to Hertzog to meet him there with horses. But at this stage the raid had all but collapsed. He needed Hertzog's help now, to try and get back to the O.F.S.⁶⁵

61. Amery, op cit.; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., p. 63; C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 204; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., 101-102.

62. C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 206; O.F.S.A.D., A 119, Renier collection, 191, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van J.L.J. van Rensburg', pp. 5-7; J.J. van Rensburg, 'Inval in Kaap Kolonie', op cit., p. 1; Amery, op cit., p. 139.

63. Also called Pienaar's Pan.

64. Somerset Budget, 27 February 1901; C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 207-9; G. Boldingh, Een Hollandsch Officier in Zuid-Afrika : Nagelaten Geschriften van Luitenant Gerrit Boldingh (B. van de Watering, Rotterdam, 1903), pp. 106-8; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 27.

65. Somerset Budget, op cit.; Amery, op cit., pp. 139-41; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 278.

The pursuing columns had been held up in the Durans Vlei on the 15th and this had given De Wet a valuable opportunity for a rest, but early on the 16th Plumer started in pursuit, also Crabbe and Henniker. On the 16th Lord Kitchener arrived at De Aar to direct the pursuit. His first priority was to prevent De Wet breaking south into the Boland, and to this end 12 columns were concentrated at short intervals along the western railway. These columns were positioned so that they were able to successively push out to the west, should De Wet turn south and try to break across the railway.⁶⁶ With Fourie's departure the all-important rearguard responsibility was taken over by Cmdt. S.F. Hasebroek, and on the 16th Hasebroek fought for most of the day, the invasion force arriving in the region of Winterhoek in the evening, a point 10 miles north-west of Strydenburg. The veld was good there so the remaining horses were able to rejuvenate a little.

On the 17th however Plumer shattered Hasebroek's rearguard and by midday he was able to throw shells into the main body of De Wet's commando. By this time De Wet had lost all influence and most of his men simply ignored his commands.⁶⁷

At Gelukspoort a large body of pedestrians split off from the main body and headed north for the river, to attempt to get back to the O.F.S. On the 17th De Wet halted for the night at Gras Vlakte.

On the 18th Plumer had, after 9 consecutive days, marched himself to a standstill. Without food for either his horses or his men, he was forced to fall back for supplies. De Wet thus enjoyed a quiet day, finding also many fresh horses on farms in the area, which the authorities had negligently failed to remove.

By nightfall De Wet was nearing the angle of the river formed by the confluence of the Brak and the Orange, and camped at Vrouw Pan, 15 miles ahead of Plumer.⁶⁸

Late on the afternoon of the 20th, De Wet arrived at the Brak river. The catchment area of the Brak is in the arid northern Cape and Karoo and he had every expectation of finding this seasonal river low or even dry. But it was flooding heavily and completely unfordable. De Wet was then at a point 10 miles south-east of the confluence of the two rivers, about 12 miles from Prieska. Eight miles behind him the pursuing columns fanned out in a crescent shape blocking his

66. C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 209; Amery, op cit., p. 140-1.

67. C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 209-210; Verloren van Themaat, op cit., pp. 279, 282; Amery, op cit., p. 141.

68. Verloren van Themaat, op cit., p. 282; Amery, op cit., pp. 141-2.

retreat. He was thus in a very similar position to the one had been in in the south-east O.F.S. in early December, when he had been trapped between the flooding Orange and Caledon, for now flooding rivers lay both to the west and north.⁶⁹ After he had turned north-west from Philipstown, and thus abandoned plans to invade the Midlands, De Wet had substituted Prieska as his destination. In this horse-rich district he hoped to obtain remounts and to make contact with Hertzog, who was also instructed to bring as many remounts as possible. He had already some days previously sent despatch-riders to Hertzog to warn him of his change of plans and to instruct him to move north-east to make contact. But now, on the 20th February, at a point 10 miles south-east of the confluence of the Brak and the Orange, De Wet made the momentous decision to abandon the desperate pretence which his invasion had degenerated into, and return as quickly as possible to the O.F.S. He again sent despatch-riders to Hertzog to warn him accordingly.⁷⁰

Having taken the decision to return, De Wet jettisoned all his pedestrians and, when night fell, trekked in behind a ridge which he had seen running parallel to the Orange river. In one of those brilliant manoeuvres which helped to create the De Wet legend, he then doubled back and trekked past the right flank of the pursuing columns. Keeping to the river bank he trekked eastwards right through the night, trying every drift he encountered. This was the first night-march he had engaged in since the night of the 14th, when he had trekked through the Durans Vlei onto the railway line and, as always during the guerrilla war, this night march was the result of an intense and dangerous pursuit necessitating extraordinary measures of response.⁷¹ De Wet's manoeuvre was so successful that Genl. W.G. Knox, thinking that De Wet had crossed the Brak, moved his entire force across that river on the night of the 20th. On the 21st, but now right out of the pursuit, ~~Knox~~⁷² continued on to Prieska.

De Wet's pedestrians hid themselves in thick bush along the Orange and most later returned to the O.F.S.⁷³

After trekking through the night De Wet continued on through the 21st, only halting late in that day at Saxon drift, halfway between Prieska and Douglas. Although this trek had brought him out of the area of immediate danger, he moved on again

69. C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 211.

70. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 104-105.

71. C.R. de Wet, op cit., p. 211.

72. Amery, op cit., p. 143.

73. Pohl, op cit., p. 90.

that night and halted finally only at Blaauw Kop.⁷⁴ From the 22nd De Wet continued trekking south-east along the Orange. At Makou drift 300 of his men crossed in a small boat, but on the morning of the 23rd Plumer's advanced guard made contact with his forces once again, and the retreat continued. De Wet's last gun was abandoned on this day, since the oxen were too exhausted to pull it any longer. Shortly after midnight on the morning of the 24th De Wet crossed the railway unopposed 8 miles south of Orange River Station.⁷⁵ Before doing so he had once again been compelled to abandon all his new pedestrians.⁷⁶

On the 24th De Wet's force occupied Petrusville, tearing down the **Union Jack**, smashing the telegraph instrument, and taking all the cash in the post office. His men then commandeered freely, satisfying all their requirements from the shops.⁷⁷ The following day it was Hertzog and Brand's turn to do the same in the town, for unknown to De Wet they were on his trail and trying to make contact with him. In the early hours of the 27th February, at a point approximately 8 miles above Sanddrift, General Hertzog was finally united with De Wet.⁷⁸ Since Fourie was with Hertzog, De Wet, Steyn, Hertzog, Fourie, Nieuwoudt and Brand were all together on this day. On the 28th February this combined force crossed back into the O.F.S. at a series of unnamed drifts between the farms Leliefontein, Colesberg district, and Poortjie, Philippolis district.⁷⁹

One of the immediate results of De Wet's invasion was the installation of Lieut. W.C. Malan's small scouts corps as an independent commando in the Cape. Most of the large invasions into the Cape resulted in the proliferation of small commandos which hived off from the main body (especially Kritzinger's) but Malan's was one of the very few to result directly from De Wet's invasion. Cut off at Philips-town on the 12th February, when De Wet turned north-west, Malan made an indepen-

74. Amery, op cit.

75. B.W.M., 6025/1, 'Herinneringe Uit die Boere Oorlog, 1899-1902, Deur C.A. Vieweg, Sekretaris van die Jacobsdal-Kommando', p. 33; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., pp. 67-8; C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 213-6; Amery, op cit., pp. 144-5; J.L.J. van Rensburg, op cit., p. 4.

76. Amery, op cit., p. 145; C.R. de Wet, op cit., pp. 213-5; Pohl, op cit., pp. 90-7.

77. Colesberg Advertiser, 15 March 1901; N.A.J. van Rensburg, op cit., p. 21.

78. J.J. van Rensburg, op cit., p. 4; Amery, op cit., p. 150.

79. N.A.J. van Rensburg, op cit., p. 22.

dent decision to penetrate farther into the Cape.⁸⁰ Although his corps consisted of only 25 men they were of an extremely high calibre, and had an impact completely out of proportion to their numbers on the Cape guerrilla war. These 25 men supplied many of the officers who served to drive the rebellion in the Midlands and the Western Cape. One of them, Cpl. S.G. Maritz, later led the very successful guerrilla campaign in the Western Cape.

Malan occupied Philipstown on the same day and was very well received by the Boer civilians there. Trekking south from there towards Hanover, he encountered another of De Wet's patrols, 18 men under F-C. Raath, and the two forces merged. A handful of rebels also joined his commando, but the first recruits were two African wagon-drivers, captured with a British force, who asked to be allowed to join as agterryers.⁸¹ On the night of the 18th February, while crossing the line between De Aar and Hanover Road, Malan wrecked and burnt a train at Taaibos. About ten men on the train were killed in the attack. This attack was very successful because it held up movement on the line for about a week. It was a result of orders Malan had received to break up the line and prevent reinforcements being brought up against De Wet.⁸² The incident had a sequel however, when five Cape Boer wagon-drivers at a nearby farm, in the service of the British, were charged with complicity. They were found guilty by a martial law court and three were executed at De Aar on 19th March.⁸³

After the war - with the intercession of Malan, Olive Schreiner and her husband, S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner - a commission of inquiry was constituted under the chairmanship of John X. Merriman, to determine whether the widows of the executed men were entitled to government pensions. This rested on whether they had been rebels or not.⁸⁴ The finding of the commission (by implication) was that they had not been, and so the widows received official assistance.⁸⁵

80. H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), p. 138; R. de Kersauson de Pennendreff, Ek en Die Vierkleur (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 19-24; M. Maritz, My Lewe en Strewe (Priv. Pub., Johannesburg, 1939), p. 27.

81. Ibid.

82. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., p. 27.

83. G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1917), pp. 16-31.

84. The men themselves at their trial, and Malan and other commando members after the war, all denied that they had taken part in the attack on the train.

85. Pieterse, op cit., p. 142; Karel Schoeman, Only an Anguish to Live Here : Olive Schreiner and the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1992), pp. 143-4. For some background see the same study, pp. 108, 172, 207; also S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner (ed.), The Letters of Olive Schreiner 1876-1920 (T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1924), pp. 234, 236, 318; Johannes Meintjies, Olive Schreiner : Portrait of a South African Woman (Hugh Keartland, Johannesburg, 1965), p. 153.

The evidence of a number of Africans, who had been on the wrecked train, that they had seen the five men among Malan's commando, was instrumental in obtaining their conviction.⁸⁶ The real significance of the Taaibos incident for the Cape Guerrilla war lay in the executions and in the above evidence, as one of the important events determining Boer-black relations in the colony for the immediate future. It was indeed a crucial determining event in that drift towards bitter conflict which came to characterize those relations in the Cape, for the false evidence of Africans which led directly to the execution of Cape Boer civilians evoked a savage and extremist response from the invading republicans.

Leaving Taaibos, Malan's commando inflicted another defeat on a British detachment at the farm of Wortelfontein. On about the 24th February the commando crossed from the Hanover into the Richmond district, thus exiting from the Northern Cape and entering the Midlands.

Isolated bands of men continued to move about the Northern Cape in March, attempting to return to the O.F.S. A number of small rebel commandos in the south-west O.F.S. also however made plans to return permanently to the colony in that month. Some of these groups merely used the Northern Cape as a revolving door into the west or north-west, but one that returned specifically to the North to operate there permanently, in their home districts, was the Colesberg rebel commando of Cmdt. H.W. Lategan.

Lategan entered the region with 100 very poorly-equipped men on the 6th April 1901, at Sanddrift. On entering he captured a post of 100 men at the Zeekoe river. Other ambushes of patrols and captures of horses and rifles quickly followed. The news of Lategan's re-entry into the region⁸⁷ was brought into town by his cousin, on whose farm he had been, prompting the local newspaper editor to comment as follows: 'Nowadays it is the easiest thing possible to establish communications between a Commando in the district and the rebels in the town'.⁸⁸ Lategan was on his own farm, Driefontein, on the 8th May. On the 12th, in a clash at Tweefontein, a bordering farm, F-C.R. Lategan - 'one of the notorious rebel sons of Mr. Jan Lategan'⁸⁹ - was wounded and captured.⁹⁰ Also wounded and

86. Ibid.

87. He had raised a rebel commando of 400 men at Colesberg during the first rebellion.

88. Colesberg Advertiser, 10 May 1901. See also Albert Times, 12 April 1901.

89. Colesberg Advertiser, 17 May 1901.

90. Ibid.; H. Reitz and H. Oost (eds.), Die Nasionale Boek (Nasboek, Johannesburg, 1931), pp. 525-6; Wessels, op cit., p. 62.

captured was J. van der Walt, son of the Colesberg Bond M.P. Van der Walt sen. had rebelled in 1899 and thus forfeited his seat in the legislature. He fled from the colony when the first rebellion collapsed.⁹¹

After Tweefontein Lategan moved east into the Zuurberg.⁹² There he linked up with Cmdts. C.J. Lotter, G.H.P. van Reenen and C.P.H. Myburgh. On the 24th May Lategan ambushed a small C.M.R. column at Pop Kloof near Bangor siding, and captured over 200 horses.⁹³

On the day before there had been an important krygsraad at Doornhoek, where plans were formulated and Kritzinger made his decision to invade the North-East Cape.⁹⁴

After Pop Kloof Lategan continued to attack the lines of communication in Venterstad district. In the second week of June he trekked east, back into the Northern Cape. He sabotaged the railway line, and a train on it, between Rensburg Halt and Arundel. During the second half of June Lategan's guerrillas exercised control over both the Colesberg and Philipstown districts. This period was the highwater mark of his activities in the colony. On 30th June he derailed and smashed-up, at Riet station, the mail-train travelling between De Aar and Hanover Road. The following day two more trains were derailed there.⁹⁵

In early July Lategan trekked south into the Midlands and suffered a severe defeat at Tweefontein, losing most of his horses. At the end of July he was back in the Philipstown district however, his horses replaced and once more exercising control over this district. His commando had however been weakened, and was depleted in numbers.⁹⁶

91. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond (1880-1911) (O.U.P., Cape Town, 1966), pp. 212, 222, 234.
92. The Zuurberg, a noted area of guerrilla activity, straddles the regions of the Northern Cape, North-East Cape and Midlands. To maintain the focus and the sense of continuity, Lategan's activities there have all been grouped within the Northern Cape region.
93. Somerset Budget, 29 May 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 31 May 1901; Wessels, op cit., pp. 63-4; A.E. Lorch, A Story of the Cape Mounted Riflemen, 1st August, 1878-31st March 1913 (Priv. pub., Pretoria, n.d.), pp. 76-7.
94. P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), p. 37.
95. C.C. Snyman, Avonture uit die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (N.P.B., Bloemfontein, n.d.), pp. 15-16; Barkly East Reporter, 7 June 1901; Albert Times, 7 June 1901; Somerset Budget, 8 June 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 14 June 1901; Wessels, op cit., p. 63; N.A.J. van Rensburg, op cit., pp. 19-22; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 128-9.
96. Wessels, op cit., pp. 64-68; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 128-9; Northern Post, 26 July 1901, 9 August 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 2 August 1901; Albert Times, 2 August 1901.

For much of August, Lategan was located in the western part of the Colesberg district. At the end of the month C.E. Le Gros, the Colesberg intelligence officer, visited him there to hand over a number of proclamations. Lategan took advantage of the visit to protest against the use of black troops: 'This is a white man's war', he said, 'and no natives should be allowed to take part in it, except as servants.' He also addressed political issues and advocated a negotiated peace-treaty with favourable terms for the Boers.⁹⁷

In late August 1901 Lategan operated between the Zeekoe river valley and the Hondeblafs river, farther to the west in the Philipstown district. The dangers of operating in this rectangle of 1 500 km² had been graphically illustrated by De Wet's experience earlier in the year. This was again illustrated in early September, when Hunter and Warren launched a drive against Lategan, forcing him into the O.F.S.⁹⁸

But on the 16th September he returned to the Cape, having split his small commando up into a number of smaller patrols. Lategan himself trekked through once again to the Midlands, but one of the smaller patrols, under F-C. W.H. Louw, was captured. Louw was tried under martial law and hanged at Colesberg on the 23rd November 1901.⁹⁹

Although Lategan's was the most important guerrilla presence in the Northern Cape in 1901, other small commandos also operated in the area for short periods. F-C. J.H. Pypers of the Philippolis commando entered on the 4th June 1901. He served mainly under Kritzinger's command in the North-East Cape, but on the 4th August he encountered Cmdt. G.H.P. van Reenen on the Zuurberg, and together they decided to vacate the Eastern Cape. By this time Pypers had formed a small commando of his own. The following day they trekked into the O.F.S. at Kransfontein, but on 14th August they again entered the Northern Cape, en route to the North-West.¹⁰⁰ Van Reenen and Pypers crossed the line near Kraankuil on the 19th August. On the 22nd they killed two African prisoners at Snymansdam. The undefended Strydenburg was occupied by them, to the delight of the Boer inhabitants, and they then

97. Colesberg Advertiser, 30 August 1901.

98. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 130-1; G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), pp. 141-2.

99. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 132; Preller, op cit., p. 143; Colesberg Advertiser, 11 October 1901; Jordaan, op cit., pp. 133-9.

100. Snyman, op cit., pp. 12-13, 16, 22, 29-30; Colesberg Advertiser, 16 August 1901.

occupied Omdraaisvlei, smashing the telegraph instrument. This combined commando had an easy trek of just under a month through the Northern Cape, and in early September they entered the Karoo. During their trek there had been very little evidence of British troop concentrations in the North.¹⁰¹

Pypers and van Reenen were followed by a commando of 73 men under Cmdt. J.F. Naudé. These were the remnants of one of Smuts' commandos, led then by T.F.J. Dreyer, which had been cut off in the O.F.S. in August 1901.

Naudé's force crossed the Orange river near Sanddrift on the 22nd November, 1901. They found the Northern Cape to be a different region to the one van Reenen and Pypers had experienced just 3 months previously. From the start there were heavy clashes with British patrols, and this was to continue until they crossed the line. Forced to trek at night, they experienced great difficulty in crossing the line, especially since blockhouses were being constructed between De Aar and Hopetown. They succeeded however in crossing at Elandskloofberg, between Houtkraal and Potfontein.¹⁰²

Naudé's commando was ordered while still in the O.F.S. (probably by Smuts) not to execute blacks captured under arms, and they were one of the first Cape commandos to apply this new edict.¹⁰³ West of the line the situation improved markedly for Naudé's commando, and they encountered only isolated British patrols. The lack of grazing made the trek difficult, but they continued to attack the lines of communication.¹⁰⁴

On the night of the 15th December 1901 Genl. P.H. Kritzinger finally re-entered the colony, after an absence of four months. Crossing the frontier at Sanddrift he trekked south-west with a small commando of 70 men. He had been tracked for some days in the O.F.S., and British columns began to shepherd him towards the heavily-blockhoused De Aar-Noupoort line. Kritzinger galloped through the night and the

101. Snyman, op cit., pp. 31-40; Tarka Herald, 4 September 1901, 7 September 1901; Albert Times, 6 September 1901; Somerset Budget, 11 September 1901, De Afrikaner Vriend, 7 March 1901.

102. T.A., A 787, Preller collection, Vol. 79, F-C.J.S. van der Merwe, 'Herinneringe uit die Opstand in Kaapland', pp. 81-85; W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. 1, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 409-10, 431; O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), p. 145; J.D. Kestell, Abraham Paul Kriel : Sy Lewe en Werk (Die Abraham Kriel-Kinderhuis, Langlaagte, 1932), pp. 106-111; O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van Gert Hendrik Jansen van Vuuren, soos vertel aan H.N. Conradie', pp. 9-15.

103. Kestell, op cit., p. 109; De Afrikaner Vriend, 7 March 1902.

104. J.S. van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 86-90.

following day, and by late on the afternoon of the 16th he reached the line between Hanover Road and Taaibos. Crossing at Fransmanskop, 70 km south-west of Sanddrift, the commando came under heavy fire and Kritzinger was seriously wounded and captured on the line. Lieut. G. Boldinger was mortally wounded there and another four men captured. The commando also lost approximately 70 horses during the crossing. Cmdt. L.B. Wessels then assumed command and led the unit south into the Midlands.¹⁰⁵

In April 1901, Cmdt. A. Louw had trekked through the Northern Cape with about 40 Calvinia rebels, en route to the west.¹⁰⁶ Cmdt. E.A. Conroy also entered at that time. He had only 6 rebels with him and occupied Petrusville very briefly, but was betrayed and ambushed there. He crossed the line at Potfontein, where he fired on a train. At Omdraaisvlei he cut the telegraph line and then went on to Brandvlei in the Western Cape, closely pursued by a British patrol.¹⁰⁷ Between April and November Conroy operated in the North-West Cape and Griqualand West, but in early December 1901 he returned to the Northern Cape with a small commando of 40 men. Conroy had moved east from Kakamas that month, to operate on his own, and it appears that he was looking for an area that he knew well and where he could operate without any supervision or control.¹⁰⁸ An officer of Naudé's commando who encountered Conroy in the north-eastern reaches of the Karreeberg in December 1901 wrote as follows: 'Often one found such semi-commandos which did not stand under the command of any senior officer, and they simply went their own way and never fought.'¹⁰⁹

Despite this dismissive comment, Conroy had come to the Northern Cape with definite guerrilla strategies in mind and, as had happened in Griqualand West, his entry into the region brought an extreme and bloody dimension to the struggle there. To achieve control of the region Conroy instituted a campaign of terror against loyalist farmers and blacks in general, but particularly armed blacks in

105. Northern Post, 6 December 1901, 20 December 1901; Tarka Herald, 4 December 1901, 18 December 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 17 January 1902; Somerset Budget, 18 December 1901, 25 December 1901; P.H. Kritzinger and R.D. McDonald, In the Shadow of Death (William Clowes, London, 1905), pp. 72-80; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 116-26, 139-40.

106. Wessels, op cit., pp. 61-2.

107. Die Brandwag, 1 August 1941, 8 August 1941, 15 August 1941.

108. W.J. de Kock and D.W. Kruger (eds.), Dictionary of South African Biography (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1983), Vol. II, pp. 141-2; Die Brandwag, 15 August 1941.

109. J.S. van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 90-1.

British service. While he flogged white farmers who would not support the rebels, he shot captured black soldiers out of hand. His attitude towards the former was the same as that of Cmdt. C.P. van Heerden in the Midlands: he wanted to provoke a general uprising in the Cape by causing farmers to be the victims of harshly repressive measures which would alienate them from the state and propel them into rebellion.¹¹⁰

His extreme attitude towards black troops was partly a result of the killing of Boer wounded at Narogas in April 1901, but chiefly because he regarded blacks in the region as, in the first place, the eyes and ears of the British forces and, in the second place, illegal belligerents.¹¹¹ By war's end there were no fewer than 71 murder charges pending against Conroy for the shooting of black prisoners.¹¹² He was also one of the handful of Boer officers specifically excluded by Lord Kitchener from the Vereeniging clause which stated that no rebels would be executed for war crimes.¹¹³

Conroy's first base in the Northern Cape was at Kiekamspoor near Prieska. Within a month of arriving in the region his commando had grown to 300 but many of these were unreliable, being a low calibre recruit. There was also a problem with regard to horses and rifles, but in early January 1902 he launched a successful attack on the horse camp at Karabee, less than 20 km south-east of Prieska, and captured a large number of horses.¹¹⁴

In March, perhaps in response to Genl. Lategan's communications to him, Conroy began to concentrate on linking up with the commandos around him. Early in that month Cmdts. C.J.F. Botha and J.R.F. Kirsten joined him at his new base at Keukendraai. He was then also negotiating with Cmdt. J. Pienaar, who was north of the Orange with a small Transvaal commando, to come south and assist him in

110. Brandwag, 17 October 1941, 24 October 1941.

111. For discussion of a Conroy proclamation and a letter to the Prieska commandant, both bearing directly on this issue, see Bill Nasson, Abraham Esau's War : A Black South African War in the Cape, 1899-1902 (David Philip, Cape Town, 1991), pp. 93, 98, 107, 153.

112. P.H.S. van Zyl, op cit., p. 369; Die Brandwag, 28 November 1941.

113. H.J. Jooste, 'Veldkornet Salmon van As', in Christiaan De Wet - Annale, (6), 1984, p. 7. See also J.D. Kestell and D.E. van Velden, Die Vredesonderhandeling (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1982), p. 124.

114. Die Brandwag, 24 October 1941; Northern Post, 10 January 1902.

an attack on a convoy.¹¹⁵ Kirsten and Botha do not appear to have remained long in Conroy's area, but Pienaar did come south of the river in March and his was the last republican invasion of the colony.¹¹⁶

Already in early January Conroy had launched an attack on a convoy near Prieska,¹¹⁷ and on the 1st April he launched a determined attack on a huge convoy going between Vosburg and Prieska. The attack was made at Poortjie, 25 miles south-west of Omdraaisvlei. Although Col. E.C. Bethune and most of the convoy escort escaped, Conroy captured 48 of the 90 loaded wagons, 200 mules, 200 horses, huge supplies of guns and ammunition, and took 250 men prisoner.

In March Conroy had heard that Genl. Lategan and the two Pypers brothers were operating in the Britstown district. After the attack on the convoy he decided to move into that district and make contact with Lategan, in particular since he had heard about the peace negotiations taking place in the Transvaal. He made contact successfully and in March and April was at the centre of efforts to get the Cape rebels representation at the negotiations. At a krygsraad in Houwater in April, Lategan, Conroy, the two Pypers brothers, Botha and van Reenen decided unanimously that Smuts' voice was not sufficient to represent the rebels at Ver-eeniging and that he, moreover, was unaware of the feelings of the Northern Cape Commandants.¹¹⁸

The efforts of all these men were in vain however, and Smuts remained the only Cape representative for the entire duration of the negotiations. Conroy returned to the offensive and fought in the Vanwyksvlei and Hopetown districts right up to the declaration of peace.¹¹⁹

Because the Northern Cape was a border region it was exposed to a great deal of movement into and through its territory, by commandos and other detachments trekking between the O.F.S. and the Cape hinterland. The main theme of the region was the interplay between geographical and climatological factors, and the

115. T.A.D., A 1569, 'Letter from Commandant Conroy to Commandant Pienaar on the Battlefield'.

116. See Great Britain War Office : Intelligence Division. Boer Army List Cape Colony District, March 31st 1902 (N.p., n.d.); Tarka Herald, 21 May 1902.

117. Tarka Herald, 8 January 1902.

118. Die Brandwag, 7 November 1941, 14 November 1941, 21 November 1941.

119. C.C. Snyman, op cit., p. 75.

strategic options made possible by the lines of communication, in particular the railways.

While the eastern half was criss-crossed by three different lines, the western half of the North had no railway-lines at all. The west was also more arid than the east. This meant that the character of the guerrilla campaigns waged in the two halves of the region was substantially different. In the North Hertzog's raid was no more than a brief passage through the region so that, although dramatic enough, it left no important legacy. De Wet's raid was entirely different, for it was located entirely within the North for its short duration. It was the central event not only of the guerrilla war in the Cape, but possibly also of the guerrilla phase for the entire country. The failure of De Wet's raid led to the temporary abandonment and final scaling-down of the ambitious large-scale invasions into the Cape planned in the Transvaal.¹²⁰ De Wet's failure also resulted in a change to true guerrilla tactics from March 1901. These changed tactics were partially successful in the short-term, and led to the prolongation of the war in the Cape.

Lategan's commando was the first in the North to apply classic guerrilla tactics of attacks on the lines of communication while based within a single geographic zone. Locating himself in the east, he was for most of his five-month sojourn within easy striking distance of the railways. Perhaps due to a shortage of dynamite, there was however no concerted campaign of sabotage directed against the railway-line. His location in the east also made him vulnerable to an orchestrated drive utilizing the railways, and in September he was forced out of the Northern Cape into the O.F.S. His long stay in the north meant however that the republican cause there accumulated a considerable degree of political capital which became manifested in the post-war years. Cmdt. Conroy attempted to control the western half of the Northern Cape between December 1901 and May 1902. In the absence of railways this was strategically a much less important region than the east, and correspondingly easier to survive within. Being more arid, there was a lower population and with its limited resources it was also not able to sustain a large commando.

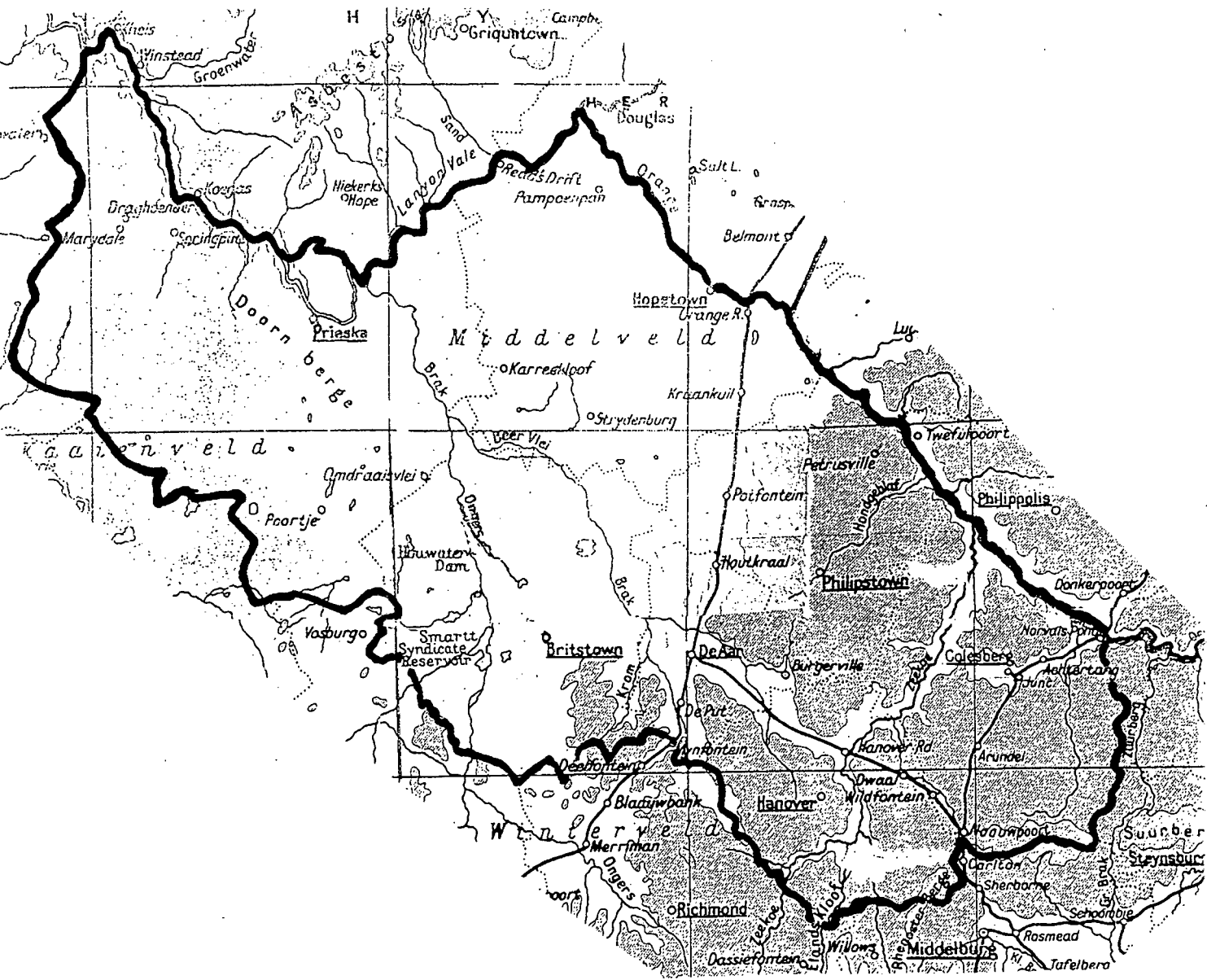
With the differences in the west, Conroy's tactics were also different. These

120. See Kemp, op cit., pp. 368-9.

rested mainly on attacks on the wagon convoys moving between the various towns, and the political control of the civilian population - both the white landowning class and the black population. His tactics in the case of the former were not generally successful, due mainly to the inexperience and low calibre of his recruits. In the case of the latter he was more successful, at a price, for he brought extremist elements of terror to bear on the black population in order to coerce them into a neutral stance, and it is likely that the long-term results of this policy were counter-productive to the republican cause.

The North was one of the few Cape regions to make determined efforts to gain representation at the peace negotiations. The assertion from this region that Smuts' voice was neither sufficient, nor an entirely qualified one, to represent the interest of the Northern Cape commandos is a very important one. It casts Smuts' contributions at the negotiations in a different light, one which demands a more searching examination of the role he played there.

The guerrilla war in the Northern Cape had, then, only a very limited, short-term success. The main reasons for this were the low numbers of rebel recruits, De Wet's spectacular failure, and the absence of a concerted campaign of sabotage against the railways. The relative degree of short-term success - notably with regard to Lategan - also, on the other hand, meant that after the war certain political objectives could be met, since the commando movement worked hand-in-hand with the republican political program.



THE NORTHERN CAPE

FOUCHÉ'S CAMPAIGN IN THE STORMBERG AND DRAKENSBERG : THE NORTH-EAST CAPE

The North-East Cape was, south of the Orange river, the border region most affected by the first republican invasion and resultant rebellion. All the towns of this region, with the single exception of Molteno, were occupied and 'proclaimed.' After the surrender of Cronje's forces at Paardeberg, the republican forces here also received orders to retreat into the O.F.S. The decisive battle for mastery of the region was fought at Labuschagne's Nek on the 4th March 1900. The imperial troops there were guided by a Dordrecht farmer, W. Clarke, and the republican defeat was a tremendous psychological blow to the Boer population of the region.¹

From March 1900 republican influence in the region persisted, but went underground. This was well documented by the many loyalist newspapers which served the region. For among all the border regions, the North-East Cape was unique in having a large English farming population. Most of these farmers were concentrated on the Stormberg plateau.² The presence of a large English community here was very important: This community was large enough to contribute substantially to district defence, hence it was hardly necessary - with the exception of Lady Grey - to resort to the politically risky course of arming blacks for local defence. The anomalous position therefore existed of a region which was bounded on three sides by large African reserves, but within which black troops played an insignificant part in the war.

Most of the Boer men in the North-East Cape rebelled during the first invasion. In the Barkly East district, for instance, 520 of the 852 registered voters went into rebellion.³ Incidences of rebellion in this region were not significantly greater than in British Bechuanaland or Griqualand West, among other regions. They were simply far more visible. The presence of a large, loyal English population, backed by district newspapers, ensured this.

Because of the connection between the D.R.C. and rebellion, Burghersdorp was regarded as a noted Boer centre of disaffection. As early as May 1900, articles in the loyalist press regularly referred to 'rebel Burghersdorp'.⁴ In the same month Jamestown was described as a place 'which is known without a doubt to be

1. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902 (Sampson Low, London, 1905), Vol. III, pp. 490-1.
2. See A.V. Oosthuizen, Rebelle van die Stormberge (J.P. van der Walt, Pretoria, 1994), pp. 87, 100-101.
3. Frontier Guardian, 16 November 1900; Somerset Budget, 21 November 1900.
4. Colesberg Advertiser, 11 May 1900.

a rebel hot-bed for everything connected with treason and rebellion.'⁵ Hidden arms were discovered at Cloebert, Lady Grey, and the two sons of John de Wet, aged 17 and 19, were charged for this and fined.⁶

Martial law in the Molteno district was repealed in August⁷ but later events showed this to be premature. With a banner headline in early October entitled 'The Scare', the Aliwal North newspaper reported the beginning of the Boer re-mobilization campaign in the southern O.F.S., and the capture of Rouxville.⁸ October was a very important month in the drift towards the second rebellion in the colony, of the syndicated letter on farmburnings in the O.F.S., as well as the transportation of the Jagersfontein women through the colony to a camp at Port Elizabeth. Both these events were key causes of the second rebellion. A third cause, particularly in the border regions, was the re-occupation of the southern O.F.S. This meant that the North-East Cape now had a common frontier with the war-zone in the O.F.S. As a result, a dramatic increase in underground activity was at once apparent.

At Lady Grey in particular, Cmdt. C.P.H. Myburgh, a prominent rebel from the first invasion, was very active. A patrol of the Lady Grey T.G. found several 'alleged rebels' away from their farms without permission. When one of them, Nicolaas Myburgh, became aware of his impending arrest, he mounted his horse and galloped furiously towards Dordrecht, in a rather dramatic illustration of the tensions which were building. Overtaken by the T.G. patrol and arrested, Myburgh was brought back past his own farm, whereupon a woman shouted in Afrikaans, 'Keep your courage up Nicolaas, the burghers are on their way.'⁹

Also at Lady Grey, a farmer and his two sons were fined for harbouring an O.F.S. burgher on their farm, between March and October 1900.¹⁰ By the second week of December the situation in Lady Grey was alarming, and a great deal of rebel and underground activity was occurring.¹¹

5. Northern Post, 18 May 1900.

6. Ibid., 29 June 1900, 24 August 1900.

7. Ibid., 17 August 1900.

8. Ibid., 5 October 1900.

9. Ibid., 19 October 1900. See also ibid., 14 December 1900; Albert Times, 28 January 1901; Frontier Guardian, 15 January 1901.

10. Northern Post, 14 December 1900.

11. Ibid., 14 December 1900.

There was a similar situation in the neighbouring village of Rhodes. In early October all the troops stationed there were hurriedly transferred to the O.F.S.: 'This left the few loyalists without any protection, and they were subjected to insults by the Boer population, who came out of their homes smiling and grinning. The volkslied was not sung but was whistled.'¹² Another hysterical report from Rhodes stated that in 'the most traitorous corner in the most traitorous and seditious part of the whole Cape Colony,' 'English people including ladies are now sworn at and insulted by Boer children.' Huge amount of arms and ammunition had been hidden in the district and rebellion was imminent, concluded the Rhodes correspondent: 'Sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion are stalking in our midst.'¹³

On about the 10th October a small party of republicans crossed the Orange at night and rode through the deserted streets of Venterstad. They fired rifles off into the air, 'taunting the loyal citizens with the most insulting and provocative shouts possible.'¹⁴ This was the first instance of the Boers coming south of the river after March 1900.

There were a series of brief armed clashes shortly after this, on the last two days of October, when two opposing forces fired across the river at each other. This occurred at Odendaalstroom and Palmietspruit¹⁵ and was the first recorded armed clash in the North-East Cape in the build-up to the second invasion.

In October a force under Major H.S. Jeurdine, the Aliwal commandant, attempted to re-occupy Rouxville. The expedition was a fiasco however, since, repulsed by the Boers, the force fled in the greatest disorder into the Orange river. Most local reports of this little-known clash were censored, but one mutilated newspaper account still had this to say about it: 'The whole affair is one of the most wretched fiascos that has occurred during the war, and reflects upon commandant, officers and men. It was badly conceived and worse carried out. The moral effect upon natives in Herschel, Dutch in Aliwal, and Dutch in Rouxville is appalling. Boers in Rouxville and Zastron are rejoining and taking up their buried mausers. A large force will now be required.....and the part of the pacification of the Free State, which has been accomplished in these districts

12. Queenstown Free Press, 8 October 1900.

13. Northern Post, 16 November 1900.

14. Het Oosten, 25 October 1900.

15. Northern Post, 2 November 1900.

will have to be done all over again.'¹⁶

On the 16th December 1900, in the early hours of Dingaan's Day, Genl. P.H. Kritzinger entered the Cape Colony at Odendaalstroom, a drift 25 km west of Aliwal North. Kritzinger had in the region of 250 men, thus considerably less than Hertzog. His force was however much better equipped and its composition differed markedly from that of Hertzog's. Kritzinger was commandant of the Rouxville commando,¹⁷ and the invasion force consisted basically of the Rouxville commando, plus three small scouting corps commanded by Captains G.J. Scheepers, W.D. Fouché and J.J. Smith. These four basic units had operated together in the south-east O.F.S. for three months already, so to a certain extent were welded together as one unit. Two of the scout officers (Scheepers and Smith) had been career soldiers in the O.F.S. artillery. And lastly, the preponderance of scout corps in the commando meant that it was not characterized by the parochial elements which tended to nullify Hertzog's effectiveness, since the scout corps were 'flying columns' not confined to any particular area or connected to a particular district. For all these reasons, Kritzinger's invasion was, from the start, far more effective than that of Hertzog.

On the 16th Kritzinger's force crossed the line just south of Knapdaar, not damaging the rails. He obtained immediate assistance from the Boer farming population. Already on the 17th Kritzinger clashed with, and was pursued by, a small column. He divided his force and while Scheepers went on to attack Venterstad, Kritzinger went to establish a temporary base on the Broekspruit between Venterstad and Burghersdorp. Venterstad quickly capitulated on the morning of the 18th to Scheepers, since he had sent local spies the night before to study the defences. Kritzinger joined Scheepers there, shortly after the town had fallen.¹⁸

'The welcome,' stated one correspondent, 'was not so undisguised as on the first occupation.' But the 'Volkslied' was sung in one house and 'the women of the town' provided a large meal in the Town Hall.¹⁹ The telegraph instrument was destroyed and the letters in the Post Office burnt. But generally, stated the Cape

16. Barkly East Reporter, 26 October 1900. See also Northern Post, 5 October 1900.

17. He had been promoted to lead this commando in August 1900. See P.H. Kritzinger and R.D. McDonald, In the Shadow of Death (William Clowes, London, 1904), p. 4; C.R. de Wet, Three Years War (Galago, Alberton, 1986), p. 158.

18. C.P.C., 'Oorloosgherinneringe van Frikkie Botha van Kroonstad', (copy), p. 20; B.W.M., 4299/4, 'Dagboek van J.M. Ackerman', p. 19.

19. Somerset Budget, 28 December 1900.

Times, 'they were a group who behaved wonderfully well.'²⁰

On the afternoon of the 18th the dust of an approaching English column was seen and the Boers abandoned Venterstad and trekked south on the road to Steynsburg. They intended to attack the town but it was already garrisoned. To a significant extent Kritzinger was already stymied at this point, since not only Burghersdorp and Steynsburg, but also the vital railway junctions of Stormberg, Rosmead and Noupoort were quickly garrisoned by troops adequate for their protection. The British defence of the North-East was conducted by Genl. H.A. MacDonald from Burghersdorp. A British force marched out from Steynsburg to attack Kritzinger's force. A clash occurred on the morning of the 19th, which ended inconclusively. Both the forces concerned fell back on their bases, Kritzinger retreating to Koppiesfontein, 20 km south-east of Venterstad.²¹ His advance on Steynsburg had a sequel when, on the 18th, a body of colonial Boers - all local farmers - rode into that town to welcome the invading commando, but found instead a British column, which confiscated their horses.²²

On the 20th December, martial law was declared in 12 Cape districts, as a result of Kritzinger and Hertzog's invasions. Only one of the proclaimed districts - Steynsburg - fell within the North-East Cape,²³ but the proclamation was immediately successful. Boer farmers in the region would invariably give covert support, but they also felt compelled to report the presence of Kritzinger's commando.²⁴ As a result of this Kritzinger trekked north-east from Koppiesfontein to the site of his earlier laager on the Burghersdorp-Venterstad road, in the vicinity of Rooipoort, Janspoort, Rhenosterkop and Kruisrivier. He remained in this vicinity until the 24th, sending out regular patrols.²⁵ At this stage of his invasion Kritzinger's primary aim was to attempt to establish himself for a limited period in the region, until such time as he was driven out by superior force of numbers.

20. Ibid.; Albert Times, 7 January 1901; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901. The last-named newspaper took over the Cape Times report.

21. Colesberg Advertiser, 28 December 1900; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; Amery, op cit., Vol. V, p. 129; Ackerman, op cit., pp. 19-20; Botha, op cit., pp. 20-1.

22. Tarka Herald, 12 January 1901.

23. See Amery, op cit., Vol. VI, pp. 556-7.

24. See Botha, op cit., p. 22.

25. Ackerman, op cit., pp. 19-20; Botha, op cit., pp. 20-1.

His chief tasks were mobilization, destabilization and the promotion of rebellion.²⁶

On both the 23rd and the 24th, he was attacked in the vicinity of Rooipoort, Kruis Rivier, Janspoort, Plaisterheuwel and Gelegenfontein. By the 24th there were 5 British columns operating against Kritzinger. Dislodged from his base, he trekked about in the south of the Albert district for a few days, east of the line. On the 27th he started to move west, crossed the line and went into the Zuurberg. That night the commando, undertaking a night-trek, vacated the North-East Cape and moved into the Northern Cape. It only remained two days there however, before turning south into the Midlands, where Kritzinger destroyed a train at Sherborne, between Rosmead and Noupoot junctions.²⁷

A few days after Kritzinger had moved west, Cmdt. C.P.H. Myburgh invaded the region with a small commando of 42 men. He crossed the river at Sandspruit, north of Burghersdorp, on about New Year's day 1901. Myburgh was a committed republican and outspoken Afrikaner nationalist. During the first rebellion he had remarked to the local rebel M.L.A., P.J. 'Ponie' de Wet: 'We are going to Table Bay.'²⁸ He was a prominent Lady Grey farmer and before the war had been Field-Cornet of Ward 6, New England. This gave him considerable influence in the local Boer community.²⁹

Myburgh proceeded immediately to his farm at Karnmelkspruit, which is 12 km south-east of Lady Grey. On the 6th January a few small local forces, responding to a telegraphic order from Genl. MacDonald, attacked Myburgh there. Myburgh fled 20 km to the south-west to King's Crown, where these and other small local volunteer forces attacked him again, killing 30 of his horses. From there Myburgh again trekked south-west to the Holspruit, threatening Jamestown, then galloped north-west over the flats towards the Kramberg. Despite having lost 30 horses, he still had a large number of spare horses, and on the 15th he crossed back into

26. These aspects of guerrilla warfare were in all likelihood discussed at the krygsraad De Wet, Hertzog and Kritzinger held at Goede Hoop farm on the 2nd December 1900. See De Wet, op cit., pp. 181-2.

27. Albert Times, 4 January 1901, 21 January 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 4 January 1901; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; Northern Post, 28 December 1901; Umtata Herald, 5 January 1901; Botha, op cit., pp. 22-3; Ackerman, op cit., p. 20.

28. Frontier Guardian, 2 May 1902, 9 May 1902.

29. Ibid.; Northern Post, 3 January 1902, 4 July 1902.

the O.F.S. having spent only two weeks in the Cape.³⁰

With the departure of Kritzinger and Myburgh from the North-East, the area remained free of any large-scale commando activity for some months. On 17th January martial law was extended to all the districts of the region with the exception of Elliot, Maclear and Herschel.³¹

Through the first quarter of 1901 the area was increasingly threatened by the encroaching guerrilla war. All along its river frontier from Norval's Pont to Herschel, guerrillas in the south-east O.F.S. continued to exert pressure on the region's northern border. To the south-west Kritzinger, Scheepers, Fouché, Malan and Lötter were operating with considerable success in the Midlands. Immediately to the west van Reenen had established himself in the north-west foothills of the Zuurberg, and occasionally his patrols entered the North-East Cape.

The region was therefore threatened from three sides. In April this period of false calm ended abruptly, and permanently, with Capt. D.C. Breedt's raid. The decision for this raid was taken at a krygsraad at Van Vuurenshoek in the Tarkastad district, on the 17th April.³² Breedt's raid was followed with invasions by Kritzinger, Lötter, Fouché and Myburgh and these incursions completely altered conditions in the North-East.

On the 18th April Kritzinger was at Doornhoek Nek in the Bomboesberg. Breedt had already separated from him, and on the same day captured and destroyed a train at Twistniet.³³ Breedt's overt orders were apparently to rescue the first-class rebels being tried at Barkly East.³⁴ But more realistic objectives were the capture of horses especially; rebel recruitment; general destabilization and to test the waters for the invasions to follow.

Breedt trekked north-east through Buffelsfontein and Roodenek and on the 23rd

30. Frontier Guardian, 11 January 1901, 18 January 1901, 25 January 1901; Northern Post, 18 January 1901, 25 January 1901; Albert Times, 28 January 1901; Somerset Budget, 16 January 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 11 January 1901, 18 January 1901, 1 February 1901; Tarka Herald, 19 January 1901.

31. Amery, op cit.

32. Ackerman, op cit., p. 34.

33. This small halt, 20 km north-east of Doornhoek Nek, is a few kilometres east of Stormberg Station, and between Molteno and Stormberg.

34. Frontier Guardian, 26 April 1901; Northern Post, 17 May 1901; Albert Times, 22 April 1901; H. Reitz and H. Oost (eds.), Die Nasionale Boek (Nasboek, Johannesburg, 1931), pp. 673-4.

April he was at Heuningneskloof. Between Jamestown and Dordrecht he had intercepted a thousand horses on their way to the remount camp at Dordrecht, and picked out a few hundred of the best. In Heuningneskloof on the 23rd he was ambushed by two of the small local units which had expelled Myburgh. He suffered some casualties and lost 50 horses there; this ended his brief raid into the region.³⁵ He rejoined Kritzinger to the west. This brief clash established Heuningneskloof - between Barkly East and Dordrecht - as one of the centres of the guerrilla war in the North-East, a position it was to maintain for the next year.

Capt. W.D. Fouché re-entered the N.E.C. from the Midlands on the 2nd May, at the head of an independent commando. From a point south of Burghersdorp he trekked to the line, where on the 5th he captured and destroyed a train at Rayner Siding.³⁶ From there he went north-east into the Stormberg. The great increase in attacks on the railways at this time was obviously a result of a decision taken at the krygsraad at Van Vuurenshoek, which Kritzinger had chaired. On the 7th May Fouché went north-east into the Aliwal North district, clashed with a British column, returned south to the Stormberg, and continued trekking until he reached the farm Broughton. On all sides and at every turn he was attacked by small columns, which he skilfully evaded. At Fossatis he shot dead a black scout, who had been wounded and captured. This shooting marked a new stage in the escalation of the war in the north-east.³⁷

On the 15th May Fouché left Broughton and trekked back into the Stormberg, crossed the line the next day at Rayner Siding, then went south-west towards the Zuurberg to link up **with Kritzinger**³⁸ This was achieved on the 22nd May at Gedulskraal in the Steynsburg district. Kritzinger had only returned from the O.F.S. three days previously. A krygsraad was held at Leeuwfontein³⁹ the next day where instructions were given to the various commandos to continue their work of destabilization, and to expand the theatre of operations throughout the colony.

35. Frontier Guardian, 26 April 1901, 3 May 1901; Northern Post, 17 May 1901; Tarka Herald, 24 April 1901, 29 April 1901; Reitz and Oost, op cit..
36. Midway between Stormberg Junction and Burghersdorp, between the present-day Lushof and Lower Adamson Sidings.
37. Ackerman, op cit., pp. 36-8; P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), pp. 37-8; Northern Post, 10 May 1901; Somerset Budget, 8 May 1901; Albert Times, 24 May 1901.
38. Albert Times, 20 May 1901; Ackerman, op cit., p. 37.
39. According to one source, the krygsraad was held at Doornhoek. See Du Plessis, op cit., p. 37.

Kritzinger, Myburgh, Lötter, van Reenen, Fouché and Smith were all at this krygsraad. Lötter was promoted to commandant there, and probably the last-named three also.⁴⁰ On the 24th the commandos broke southward, Lötter going to Tarkastad, and Smith to Maraisburg. Smith separated permanently from Kritzinger at this point and pursued an independent career in the Midlands and Karoo. Kritzinger, Fouché Myburgh and van Reenen entered the North-East Cape on the 25th, in the district of Molteno. Van Reenen remained behind there, while the other three continued westwards, crossing the line a few kilometres south of the Cyphergat coal mine.⁴¹

By the 29th Kritzinger was at Buffelsfontein, midway between Molteno and Dordrecht. He captured the Wodehouse Yeomanry of Capt. W.T. Clarke there, after a short clash.⁴² Cmdt. C.J. Lötter rejoined Kritzinger at Leeuwekraal on the 31st May. These two men operated together until August 1901. After the capture of the Yeomanry Fouché trekked on on his own, but Kritzinger, Lötter and Myburgh held another krygsraad on the 31st, at which a decision was made to attack the village of Jamestown. Kritzinger's command was in a bad state at this time. The horses were in very poor condition, and ammunition was so low that there was only an average of 5 rounds per man in the combined force. All these rounds were collected and handed out to 50 hand-picked men who mounted the attack. The attack on the 2nd June was successful and was followed by wholesale looting and drunkenness. During the night a second small commando arrived in the town, began to smash up property, and attempted to set fire to some buildings. This incident marked the advent of Lieut. P. Bester.⁴³

Fouché was not present at the attack on Jamestown. He arrived there only on the afternoon of the 2nd, appalled at the drunkenness. The following morning many of the men were still drunk and no guards had been posted. The result was that a

40. Albert Times, 24 May 1901, 14 June 1901; Somerset Budget, 22 May 1901; Ackerman, op cit., p. 38; A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (A. Schowalter, Munich, 1902), p. 108; Colesberg Advertiser, 24 May 1901.
41. Ackerman, op cit., p. 38; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 108; Colesberg Advertiser, 31 May 1901; Albert Times, 31 May 1901; Frontier Guardian, 31 May 1901.
42. Many accounts of this clash exist. See, for instance, Ackerman, op cit., p. 38; T.A.D., A. 787, Preller collection, Vol. 75, 'Ondervindinge van P.D. Roux', p. 501; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 41; Colesberg Advertiser, 14 June 1901; Somerset Budget, 8 June 1901; Frontier Guardian, 7 June 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 7 June 1901.
43. Somerset Budget, 26 May 1962; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., p. 36; Frontier Guardian, 7 June 1901, 14 June 1901; T.A.D., A 1471, 'W.J. Barker's account of the fight at Jamestown', pp. 1-4; Ackerman, op cit., p. 39; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 42; O.F.S.A.D., A 415, 'Offers op die Vryheidsaltaar', persoonlike herinneringe aan Anglo-Boereoorlog vertel deur P.J. Kruger', pp. 67-70; E. Wagenaar, Jamestown 1874-1974 (priv. pub., Jamestown, 1974), p. 67.

British column was able to make a surprise attack on the 3rd, capturing all 80 of the horses which had been commandeered the previous day, in addition to a number of other horses. Much of the other loot was also abandoned.⁴⁴ The capture of Jamestown was a great shock to loyalist opinion. By June 1901 the military situation in the Cape had reached its nadir, from the British point of view. Colonial morale had begun to falter and there were impassioned calls for changes to the senior command structure. 'This task', wrote one newspaper, 'is not below even the genius of Lord Kitchener.'⁴⁵ 'Disaffection in Cape Colony was like a running sore, promising no mortal hurt if due precautions were observed, but, with the least neglect, threatening to infect the whole body,'⁴⁶ wrote the Times History of this period. To remedy the serious situation, Kitchener appointed Genl. J. French to replace Genl. E.Y. Brabant as commander-in-chief in the colony.⁴⁷

After fleeing from Jamestown on the 3rd, Kritzinger, Fouché and Myburgh moved separately in a north-east direction. Lötter remained with Kritzinger. They arrived at Wildefontein⁴⁸ on the 3rd. The owner of the farm had already gone to report their presence. By the 6th they were still on the farm, where there was a big supply of forage, and had committed the cardinal guerrilla blunder of remaining too long in one place. At dawn on the 6th a detachment of Col. H.J. Scobell's column, led by Col. H.T. Lukin of the C.M.R., overwhelmed Kritzinger's force at Wildefontein, capturing 17 men and well over 100 horses. The bulk of the commando managed to escape.⁴⁹

44. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 42, 61; Kruger, op cit., p. 70; Somerset Budget, op cit.
45. Frontier Guardian, 7 June 1901.
46. Amery, op cit., p. 311.
47. Ibid.
48. This farm is just north of King's Crown on the Kraai river, and 25 km south of Lady Grey.
49. This clash is described by many sources, including the following: S.A.L., MSC 44, no. 22, 'With the Cape Mounted Riflemen and Some Others, by C. Judd', p. 39; R.E. Johnston, Ulundi to Delville Wood (Maskew Miller, Cape Town, n.d.), pp. 92-3; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., pp. 44-5; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 108; A.E. Lorch, A Story of the Cape Mounted Riflemen, 1st August 1878-31st March 1913 (Priv. pub., Pretoria, n.d.), pp. 77-8; Somerset Budget, 6 July 1901, 26 May 1962; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 150-1; Frontier Guardian, 14 June 1901, 28 June 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 12 July 1901.

Fouché trekked from Jamestown via Clanville to Orpendale, and on the 6th he received a report that Kritzinger's force had been scattered by a surprise attack. He trekked to Wildefontein but was unable to locate Kritzinger. For some days he was repeatedly attacked by columns in the Barkly East district, so trekked west into the Stormberg, throwing off his pursuit. Between the 11th and the 18th June he saw nothing of any British column.⁵⁰

After the reverse at Wildefontein Kritzinger decided to return to the Midlands. He had 46 men on foot but began to trek in a south-westerly direction.

From Jamestown Myburgh had trekked close to Kritzinger and had been laagered only 6 km away from Wildefontein when it was attacked. Between Aliwal North and Jamestown he re-made contact with Kritzinger, being able to assist him with horses even though he had lost some of his own commando horses at Jamestown.

On about the 10th a captured African policeman was shot dead at Wolvefontein in the Dordrecht district, and Kritzinger's commando may have been responsible.⁵¹

Kritzinger now began to address some of the aspects of the republican political program, which ran parallel with the military campaign. He issued a proclamation at Stormberg in the Burghersdorp district, which stated that the Cape districts annexed in 1899 were still O.F.S. territory and that farmers removing or destroying forage and food supplies would be severely punished. This also applied to farmers reporting the presence of Boer commandos. Finally, Africans who on their own initiative reported commando movements to the British would be shot.⁵²

The main aim of this proclamation was to lend official legitimacy to Boer actions and to intimidate the civilian population so that martial law could not be effectively applied.

The proclamation was followed up by a krygsraad at Burnley, near Cyphergat, on the 14th June, at which Kritzinger, Lötter, Myburgh and Cmdt. J.L.P. Erasmus were all present. Erasmus, a Johannesburg lawyer before the war, performed the role of political commissar in the Kritzinger commandos, and he spoke at length at this krygsraad.⁵³

50. Ackerman, op cit., p. 41.

51. Frontier Guardian, 14 June 1901.

52. For a translation of this proclamation, see Albert Times, 21 June 1901.

53. For a very rare verbatim account of this krygsraad, see Kokstad Advertiser, 19 July 1901.

The combined force on this day was described as '276 Boers with 10 armed natives, 18 armed Hottentots,⁵⁴ 40 are riding without saddles and the horses are in poor condition, many not over 18 months old.'⁵⁵

After less than three very eventful weeks in the North-East Cape, it was evident that most of Kritzinger's objectives had been met. His strategy of extending the theatre of operations into the region had been a notable success, and from Cyphergat on about the 15th June he trekked south into the Bamboesberg, thus entering the Eastern Cape. The very capable Fouché and the less capable but nevertheless still effective Myburgh remained to continue the campaign in the region.

A contributory reason for Kritzinger's departure may have been that he and Fouché had fallen out, for Fouché had vowed never to work with him again.⁵⁶ The likely reasons for this were Kritzinger's inability to maintain order at Jamestown, and his lapse in remaining far too long at Wildefontein. Fouché felt strongly about breaches of military discipline and in June had flogged Lieut. P. Bester, one of Myburgh's officers, and the man most responsible for the 'outrages' at Jamestown.⁵⁷ Fouché's dislike of Kritzinger's leadership abilities were later shared even more strongly by Scheepers, and these leadership tensions had important ramifications for the guerrilla struggle in large parts of the Cape (including the North-East) since it was precisely Kritzinger's duty to formulate a unified strategy.

On the 18th June Fouché moved north-east from the Stormberg. He crossed from the Aliwal North into the Lady Grey district on the 20th, and camped the following day at Myburgh's farm, Karnmelkspruit. There were repeated clashes from then on with the small local volunteer corps, a local newspaper commenting 'The latest incursion into this district will, so far, be ranked as the most determined since the British re-occupation in March 1900.'⁵⁸

Fouché was reinforced on the 22nd by 200 men under Myburgh and F-C.J.H. Pypers. As he advanced, Fouché cut the telegraph line between Barkly East and Maclear, and it was a full year before telegraphic communication was restored. Rhodes was occupied on the 24th, the Boers being very enthusiastically received there.⁵⁹

54. These 'armed blacks' in the commando were all non-combatants (grooms and cooks), carrying the spare rifles and bandoliers.

55. Tarka Herald, 22 June 1901.

56. Farmer's Chronicle, 28 June 1901.

57. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 42, 61.

58. Barkly East Reporter, 28 June 1901.

59. Ibid.; Snyman, op cit., pp. 13-30; Frontier Guardian, 28 June 1901; Ackerman, op cit., p. 41; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 44.

Fouché's destination was the Transkei and on the 26th he descended the Tsitsa Pass into the Maclear district. He remained in this district for a few days, capturing an ammunition wagon and some local troops sent out against him, and inflicting a few casualties. By the 28th June Maclear was left defenceless, but Fouché did not occupy the town, since he was fully supplied with rifles and ammunition, and the occupation of Rhodes had supplied all his clothing needs. The main purpose of the raid was to obtain horses and recruits, and when Fouché ascended the Drakensberg again on the 29th, he had gained 20 rebel recruits, 200 outstanding horses and a great deal of ammunition.⁶⁰

Although the magisterial district of Maclear (which included Elliot) formed part of East Griqualand⁶¹ and was one of the Native Territories, it was inhabited mainly by white farmers, unlike, for instance, its neighbouring districts to the south of Xalanga and St. Marks. Nevertheless, the fact that the Boers had been able to raid into the Transkeian Territories outraged the Imperial authorities, and caused a diplomatic incident in Cape Town where Milner and Hely-Hutchinson were hypersensitive about the destabilization of the African communities there.⁶²

While Fouché was in the Transkei, Myburgh trekked into the Stormberg and began to mobilize recruits. There was a flood of these and in a matter of days Cpl. P. Kruger (who had only rebelled - for the second time - on the 1st June) had 18 new recruits under him. Most of these rebels came from Burghersdorp (his own home district), with others from Jamestown and Dordrecht and a sprinkling from towns farther afield.⁶³

By the 8th July Fouché was reunited with Myburgh's expanded force, after a peaceful trek westwards from Maclear.⁶⁴ After moving through the Dordrecht and Jamestown districts, Fouché attacked a convoy at Zuurvlaakte on the 15th. Although the convoy was not captured, 7 men of the Connaught Rangers died in the attack, and

60. Kokstad Advertiser, 28 June 1901, 5 July 1901, 12 July 1901, 19 July 1901, 26 July 1901, 18 October 1901; J.W. MacQuarrie (ed.), The Reminiscences of Sir Walter Stanford (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1962), Vol. II, pp. 208, 221-6; Umtata Herald, 6 July 1901, 13 July 1901, 20 July 1901; Ackerman, op cit., p. 41; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 44-5; Somerset Budget, 6 July 1901; U.C.T., BC 293, Stanford Papers, A 38, diary entries for 28 February 1902, 10 March 1901.

61. For a list of the E.G. magistracies in 1901, see P.E. Raper, Streekname in Suid-Afrika en Suidwes (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1972), p. 78.

62. Amery, op cit., Vol V, pp. 313-4; Macquarrie, op cit., pp. 204-6, 222; Albert Times, 15 July 1901; Umtata Herald, 13 July 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 28 June 1901.

63. Kruger, op cit., pp. 86-96.

64. Somerset Budget, 10 July 1901; Albert Times, 12 July 1901; Tarka Herald, 13 July 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 12 July 1901; Ackerman, op cit., pp. 41-3; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 45-8.

a great deal of ammunition was taken. Zuurvlake represented Fouché's biggest victory in the Stormberg to-date, and continued on an unbroken run of success for him since entering the North-East Cape. The attack on this convoy between Jamestown and Aliwal North was part of his strategy to attempt to maintain a blockade of Jamestown. This semi-blockade was in force for some months and was chiefly maintained by Lieut. P. Bester north of the town.⁶⁵ Shortly before Zuurvlake, at Roodenek on the 9th and 10th, a number of African spies and scouts⁶⁶ had been flogged and shot dead by Myburgh's commando. One of Myburgh's men who was responsible wrote later: 'To shoot a spy or a traitor dead was a joke for us.'⁶⁷ Fouché and Myburgh separated after Zuurvlake. Fouché remained in the Stormberg and on the 20th July the commando received the news of the execution of P.W. Kloppert at Burghersdorp. He was hanged for rebelling a second time, and was the first rebel to be executed in the N.E.C. He was one of van Reenen's men and had been captured at Ruigtevlei earlier in the month.⁶⁸ After this, Fouché decided to return to the O.F.S., to escape the severe cold on the Stormberg Plateau and obtain food for their horses, since fodder was becoming scarce. En route he attacked a convoy at Zuurvlake on both the 25th and the 26th. On the 28th he raided the concentration camp at Aliwal North, having heard that former O.F.S. officials there were mistreating Boer women. Taking five prisoners from among the officials, he left for the O.F.S., shooting one at the Orange river and depositing the others in the jail at Wepener.⁶⁹ After separating from Fouché after Zuurvlake, Myburgh trekked east and spent most of July on his farm, continuing with his farming operations. 'While he is in the field looting, etc., his cultivated lands are thriving,' wrote a correspondent, 'and his wife has just presented him with a son.'⁷⁰

65. Ackerman, op cit., p. 43; Farmer's Chronicle, 21 June 1901; Kruger, op cit., pp. 123-33; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 48-50; Snyman, op cit., p. 22; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 175-6; Amery, op cit., p. 314; Northern Post, 19 July 1901; Albert Times, 29 July 1901.

66. The Afrikaans word 'spioen' was the same for both of these guerrilla categories.

67. B.W.M., 6348/1, 'Herinneringe van Richard Wheeler', p. 12.

68. See 'Buurman' (M.J. Bornman), Oorlogswolke oor die Republieke (Voortrekkerpers, Johannesburg, 1944), pp. 200-1; Ackerman, op cit., p. 44; Northern Post, 19 July 1901, 26 July 1901; Tarka Herald, 24 July 1901; G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1917), pp. 43-51.

69. His wife was also housed in the camp. For descriptions of the raid and the conditions that gave rise to it, see Colesberg Advertiser, 14 June 1901; Northern Post, 2 August 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 23 August 1901; Frontier Guardian, 2 August 1901; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 51-4; Ackerman, op cit., p. 45; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 177-8; Somerset Budget, 5 October 1901.

70. Kokstad Advertiser, 14 October 1901. See also Kruger, op cit., pp. 119-20.

Fouché returned to the region on the 27th August, crossing the Orange river at Sanddrift. Myburgh had trekked west to meet him and on the 29th they launched a combined attack on Col. Monro's convoy at Wolwekloof.⁷¹ Myburgh then immediately trekked east and two weeks later made every half-hearted attack on the village of Lady Grey.⁷²

Fouché attempted to remain in the vicinity of the Stormberg and Zuurvlakte in the Aliwal North district. But the North-East Cape that he had returned to coming up to the last quarter of 1901 was very different to the place it had been earlier in the year. The guerrilla tactic of drawing troops away from areas where they were heavily concentrated had worked only too well and the towns were all heavily garrisoned, columns also having been strengthened. From the Orange river down to Sterkstroom and from there to Dordrecht there was a line of blockhouses which completely altered the fluid nature of the war in the region. Huge horse-camps had been established outside every town, and horses became increasingly unavailable.⁷³

At the start of September a big drive against Fouché forced him east, and he linked up again with Myburgh. During August Myburgh had again successfully raided the Transkei, below Barkly Pass,⁷⁴ and Fouché now planned a more comprehensive raid into that region. He had had to divide his forces for the first time, but now he combined them and on the 23rd September descended from the Drakensberg into the Transkei. This well-planned, concerted invasion went much farther than the previous two incursions. It took place along a front of 100 kilometres and was combined with simultaneous attacks on the New England plateau above the Drakensberg passes. Fouché and his lieutenants (Wessels and Odendaal) were responsible for invading the western part (Cala, Indwe and Elliot), while parts of Myburgh's commando raided the east (Maclear and Ugie). Myburgh himself was responsible for the attacks on the tableland.

On the 23rd Fouché reached Lutha, near Cala, right on the Xalanga border. Farther to the east another commando came down Barkly, Fetcani and Tembu Passes and reached Gubenxa, also on the Xalanga border. Gubenxa and Lutha are 55 kilometres apart,

71. This farm is immediately south of the present-day Rossouw and on the main Dordrecht-Barkly East road. The clash is also reported as having occurred at Wasbanksport.

72. Frontier Guardian, 6 September 1901; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 58-9; Kruger, op cit., pp. 112, 119-20; Northern Post, 13 September 1901.

73. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 58-9.

74. See Kokstad Advertiser, 4 October 1901; Kruger, op cit., pp. 108-111; Northern Post, 6 September 1901; Albert Times, 6 September 1901.

and this penetration, the deepest yet in the war, brought the commandos to the very brink of the Transkei proper.

Meanwhile, at Laurinston,⁷⁵ also on the 23rd, one of Myburgh's Field-Cornets captured the 27 men of the NEMR. This small local corps was a very effective unit which had successfully trailed Myburgh during his brief incursion into the Transkei in August. Much looting and commandeering of horses took place during this invasion. One report also stated that 'Most of the Boers in the Elliot and Xalanga Districts are said to have joined the enemy.' Col. E.H. Dalgety was rushed up with a column, but by then Fouché had begun to move back to the passes. Fouché's last act was a half-hearted attack on the town of Indwe.⁷⁶ While part of Myburgh's force was operating between Xuka Drift and Ugie a small patrol under Cpl. H. Watson, a prominent Maclear rebel, entered the Post River Valley north-east of Maclear. Watson launched his raid on the 26th September. He was quickly ejected however and pursued up Foxley Pass, where he killed an African prisoner.⁷⁷ After this offensive, Myburgh was pursued north by a number of columns, as far as the Herschel border, and pinned down in the snow for two weeks. Under repeated assaults his commando began to fragment here and suffered a fatal blow. Colonels S.C.H. Monro and A.W. Thorneycroft, in just two reports at this time, listed 20 of Myburgh's men captured, 6 killed, perhaps 15 wounded, 150 horses and 20 000 rounds of ammunition captured.⁷⁸

The North-East Cape had, in the meantime, been invaded by Genl. J.C. Smuts' Transvaal commando. They entered via Khiba drift into the Herschel reserve, on the 3rd September. The H.N.C. had been mobilized for just such an eventuality as this and attacked the commando, killing three of Smuts' men. This was the only armed clash that occurred in Herschel during the war. Smuts' commando was very short of ammunition. He was guided by Cmdt. L. Wessels of Kritzinger's commando. Trekking very fast, Smuts went into the Stormberg then turned south-east. On

75. The Boers knew Laurinston as Wintershoek.

76. Frontier Guardian, 27 September 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 27 September 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 18 October 1901; Kruger, op cit., pp. 96-7.

77. Kokstad Advertiser, 18 October 1901.

78. Colesberg Advertiser, 27 September 1901, 4 October 1901. See also Wheeler, op cit., p. 12; Somerset Budget, 12 October 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 1 November 1901; Northern Post, 18 November 1901.

the 7th September a small patrol Smuts himself was leading was ambushed in Moordenaarspoort, north of Indwe, and two of L. Wessels' officers and Smuts' adjutant were either killed or mortally wounded. Shortly after this, on the 11th, Wessels left Smuts to return to the O.F.S.⁷⁹ To the great surprise of the commando they found no rebel recruits at all, one man commenting that they realized 'that the colonials would go no farther than words.'⁸⁰ They were however assisted by a series of local guides, who gave very valuable service to Smuts. Smuts crossed the Sterkstroom-Indwe branch-line on the 11th September, and on the following day crossed from the N.E.C. into the Eastern Cape, after having been only 9 days in the region.⁸¹

After returning from the Transkei Fouché rejoined Myburgh and Wessels between Barkly East and Rhodes, then trekked west into the Aliwal North and Jamestown districts. A blockade of Rhodes which Myburgh and Wessels had been applying very successfully was temporarily broken by the arrival there in late September, while the commandos were operating in the Transkei, of Col. Monro with a column. This was the first British column to enter Rhodes during the war.⁸²

By mid-October Myburgh had escaped the trap on the Herschel border and with a much-depleted commando returned to his farm and the precincts of Holspruit and the Barkly East district. He appointed a landdrost at Rhodes, who levied fines against loyalists for misdemeanours. He and Cmdt. P. Wessels continued the blockade not only of Rhodes, but of Barkly East also.⁸³ The most important result of Fouché's September raid into the Transkei was that martial law was extended to the sea-ports and to parts of East Griqualand. On the 10th October an extraordinary Government Gazette proclaimed martial law in the districts of Cape Town, Wynberg, Simonstown, Port Elizabeth and East London.⁸⁴ Shortly afterward martial

79. Frontier Guardian, 13 September 1901, 4 October 1901; W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. 1, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 410, 416-17, 431-2, 515; J. H. Meyer, Kommando-Jare (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1971), pp. 208-222; P.J. le Riche, Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), pp. 148-53; C. Bosman, Slaan en Vlug (A.P.B., Johannesburg, 1956), pp. 220-6.

80. Bosman, op cit., pp. 225-6.

81. Meyer, op cit., p. 223; Reitz, op cit., pp. 212-3; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., p. 432.

82. Frontier Guardian, 4 October 1901. See also Albert Times, 25 October 1901, 15 November 1901; Northern Post, 11 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 16 October 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 22 November 1901.

83. Colesberg Advertiser, 25 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 23 October 1901; Wheeler, op cit., pp. 8-9. For the blockade see Barkly East Reporter, 2 August 1901, 22 November 1901.

84. Northern Post, 11 October 1901.

law was extended to parts of East Griqualand, and in particular the districts of Elliot, Xalanga, Maclear, Mt. Fletcher and Matatiele.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, in the centre part of the region, Lieut. P. Bester maintained a blockade north of Jamestown. By the 20th September, the mail-cart had not reached that village in over two months, and, despite being repeatedly looted, no supplies had reached the village in an incredible four months - since before its capture on the 2nd June 1901. In this time (June to September) Bester also severely restricted the flow of foodstuffs into Aliwal North. 'We have had anxious and serious times,' a private letter from Jamestown stated, dated 20th September: 'Only those who have lived in Jamestown can feel what we have gone through since 2nd June last.'⁸⁶ As a result of Fouché's raid into the Transkei, the colony's crack column, commanded by Col. H.J. Scobell, was transferred to the region in November, and Genl. French began to organize a concerted drive against Fouché. Scobell arrived at Stormberg on the 8th November, and included in his column was a large C.M.R. contingent. This drive marked a new stage in the guerrilla war in the North-East.⁸⁷

Scobell first moved against Bester, smashing his small commando at King's Crown on about the 16th November. Bester and 20 of his men were captured, in addition to a large number of horses. Bester was executed in the veld a day later, near Mars Hill in the Dordrecht district.⁸⁸

Fouché was then driven east, past Clanville into the Vaalhoeke.⁸⁹ Myburgh's retreat began from Telemachus Kop and ended at Rhodes. On the 22nd Col. Monro shelled Myburgh at Blarney on the Sterkspruit, inflicting a number of casualties and capturing about 50 horses. This increasingly demoralized a commando which had begun to implode in as early as mid-October.⁹⁰

85. Kokstad Advertiser, 18 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 12 October 1901.

86. Frontier Guardian, 4 October 1901; H.A. Shearing, The Second Invasion of the Cape Colony During the Second Anglo-Boer War, 1901-1902 (M.A. Thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg 1989), pp. 116-7; Frontier Guardian, 2 August 1901, 1 November 1901; Albert Times, 2 August 1901.

87. Amery, op cit., pp. 544-5; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 61, 89; Lorch, op cit., p. 84; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 201; S. Buys, W.J. Roux and J.D. de Klerk, Bergskot Speul ('Aliwal Nieuws'-Drukkerij, Aliwal North, 1918), p. 1.

88. Somerset Budget, 30 November 1901; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 160-1; Kruger, op cit., pp. 142-5; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 61; Albert Times, 6 December 1901; Jordaan, op cit., p. 143.

89. Part of the southern Drakensberg, south of Barkly East.

90. Farmer's Chronicle, 25 October 1901; Albert Times, 25 October 1901; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 70-1; Kruger, op cit., p. 133; Barkly East Reporter, 13 December 1901.

While these events were occurring, F-C.J. Bezuidenhout invaded East Griqualand with a small commando of 53 men, on the 19th November. His primary aim was to acquire horses. This time however a force of African auxiliaries, under Capt. H.D. Elliot, was ordered forward and repulsed Bezuidenhout's force at Gatberg Nek, killing three men.⁹¹ This was the fourth and last invasion of the Transkei. Myburgh fled from the Sterkspruit to Motkop and Hollywood, just a few kilometres from his farm. Here he was surrounded by Monro on the 29th and shelled while out in the open. His commando disintegrated completely and ceased to exist. Small groups broke out through the cordon and later attached themselves to Fouché. Myburgh also broke out with just ten followers.⁹²

At Saalboomsnek Fouché sub-divided his own force, for the third time. One group, under Odendaal, gradually worked their way back to the Stormberg. Fouché trekked into the Drakensberg and on the 8th December he was compelled to abandon fifty-two of his best men as their horses could no longer continue. These men were ordered to 'bergskot speel'⁹³ - i.e., hide out in the mountains until horses could be brought to them. Fouché was pinned against the extreme north-east border at Scobell's Kop, but managed to break through the cordon and gradually work his way south-west towards the Stormberg.⁹⁴ By the end of December both Myburgh and Fouché's commandos had apparently been shattered, and Scobell was recalled.⁹⁵ Fouché had only sub-divided his commando as a tactical move, but only a core of about 200 mounted guerrillas remained in the whole of the region.⁹⁶

In early January Fouché's commandos began to re-concentrate in the Stormberg, west of Dordrecht. From there he moved north on the 10th, to Jamestown. At the same time Cmdt. P. Wessels separated from Fouché near Mooihoek and trekked south-

91. MacQuarrie, op cit., pp. 224-7; Kokstad Advertiser, 22 November 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 13 December 1901.
92. Kruger, op cit., pp. 137-40; Wheeler, op cit., p. 13; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 203; Buys, et al., op cit., pp. 1, 23; Northern Post, 6 December 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 13 December 1901.
93. This translates literally as 'play Highlander.'
94. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 70-84; Kruger, op cit., pp. 143-6, 153-9, 165; Buys, et al., op cit., pp. 9-10, 23, 28; Frontier Guardian, 6 December 1901; Northern Post, 27 December 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 3 January 1902; P.D. Roux, op cit., p. 497; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 206-9; Amery, op cit., p. 545; W.H. Ackerman, Opsaal. Herinneringe aan die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg, 1969), p. 136.
95. Amery, op cit.
96. F.L. Coleman, The Kaffrarian Rifles, 1876-1986 (Kaffrarian Rifles Association, East London, 1988), p. 93.

west towards the line. He eluded Col. Price's column and on about the 15th crossed the line at Cyphergat and went into the Bamboesberg. From there Wessels turned north-east, again eluded Price and re-crossed the line on the 30th January, linking up with Fouché again on the 17th February.⁹⁷ Wessels' trek was either to create a diversion for Fouché's push north, or to scout out conditions on the Midlands - Eastern Cape border, or both.

The attrition rate continued steadily, but the editor of the Frontier Guardian V.W. O'Brien - a liberal imperialist - encountered Fouché's commando at the farm Milner, on the Holspruit on the 11th, and described them as very well mounted, well-clothed and well-supplied with ammunition. Moreover, morale was very high. He estimated the commando at approximately 160 men, and since nearly every man had a spare horse, there were over 300 horses. In addition, Fouché was commandeering supplies only from the British-owned farms, so that his relationship with the Boer farmers in the region remained excellent.⁹⁸

In January Fouché trekked north-east into the Drakensberg, for the last time. On the 5th February he was seriously wounded in the Bonthoeke south of Clifford. Local farmers sheltered him for some weeks, however, at the farm of Smoorfontein.⁹⁹ Cmdt. Wessels linked up again with Fouché on the 17th February, and at a krygsraad later in the month his junior officers insisted that they cross the line and vacate the N.E.C., which had become saturated by British columns. Fouché's last act in the region was to obtain horses for some of the dismounted men, but since these were in poor condition most of the 'bergskotte' preferred to remain behind on foot.¹⁰⁰ On the 28th February Fouché crossed the line eight kilometres north of Molteno. Following Wessels' January route, he went straight into the Bamboesberg and then trekked south-west between Steynsburg and Maraisburg. Once he entered the Maraisburg district, he had crossed from the North-East Cape into the Midlands.¹⁰¹

In a clash in the Midlands Cmdt. Odendaal and Cmdt. van der Walt (Myburgh's

97. Frontier Guardian, 15 January 1902, 13 February, 1902.

98. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 88-97; Barkly East Reporter, 31 January 1902, 28 February 1902; Somerset Budget, 9 June 1962; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 212; Kruger, op cit., 181, 184, 188-99, 203; Farmer's Chronicle, 21 February 1902; Frontier Guardian, 20 February 1902; Northern Post, 14 February 1902; Albert Times, 21 February 1902.

99. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 93, 97; Buys, et al., op cit., p. 40; Somerset Budget, 9 June 1962, 13 June 1962.

100. Northern Post, 4 July 1902; Albert Times, 7 March 1902; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 98.

101. This occurred at Buffelshoek, north-east of Pearston, on the 10th March.

successor) were both killed¹⁰² and Odendaal's brother, Cmdt. G.J. Odendaal, decided to return to the North-East Cape, even though few of his men were prepared to follow him there.¹⁰³

All resistance did not cease in the N.E.C. after Fouché's departure, but it remained at a very low level. Although the topography was ideal for guerrilla war, the quality of leadership was very low and Odendaal and the other commando leader, J.A.J. Bezuidenhout, were never able to cultivate an offensive spirit. The shortage of horses and rifles remained endemic, and morale was very low among the 'bergskotte'.¹⁰⁴

On 8th June the commandos of Bezuidenhout and Odendaal surrendered at Aliwal North. Of the 132 men, 19% were republicans and the rest all Cape rebels. The republican-rebel ratio was thus 5:1. This compares favourably with other known ratios in June 1902. Fouché's commando at Cradock had a ratio of 6:1¹⁰⁵ while that of 5 commandos surrendering at Hopetown was 7:1.¹⁰⁶

All the officers at Aliwal North were republicans, but rebel officers everywhere obscured their rank because of the Vereeniging stipulation that they would not be exempt from prosecution. Another important statistic of the Aliwal North commandos is that 95% of the 132 lived on farms, only 5% being townsmen.

Bezuidenhout and Odendaal surrendered with 137 horses, 91 rifles and 5, 100 rounds of ammunition.¹⁰⁷ There were thus 56 rounds for each rifle and this fact alone indicates that these two commandos had had the means to mount a far more effective guerrilla campaign than they had done between February and May.

As a key aspect of the Boer guerrilla strategy, the expansion of the war into the North-East Cape was a notable success. This was in fulfillment of a strategy formulated at the national level by De Wet (especially), Steyn, Botha and Hertzog. The practical application of the strategy was dependent upon how it devolved along the line of command. In this respect Kritzinger was a generally successful commander, although his effectiveness was occasionally marred by an inability to forge sound co-operation between the different regions. In Fouché the North-East Cape produced one of the outstanding guerrilla commanders of the war and it was chiefly as a result of his efforts that rebellion recurred a second time on such a large scale.

102. Frontier Guardian, 20 March 1902; Barkly East Reporter, 18 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 15 March 1902.

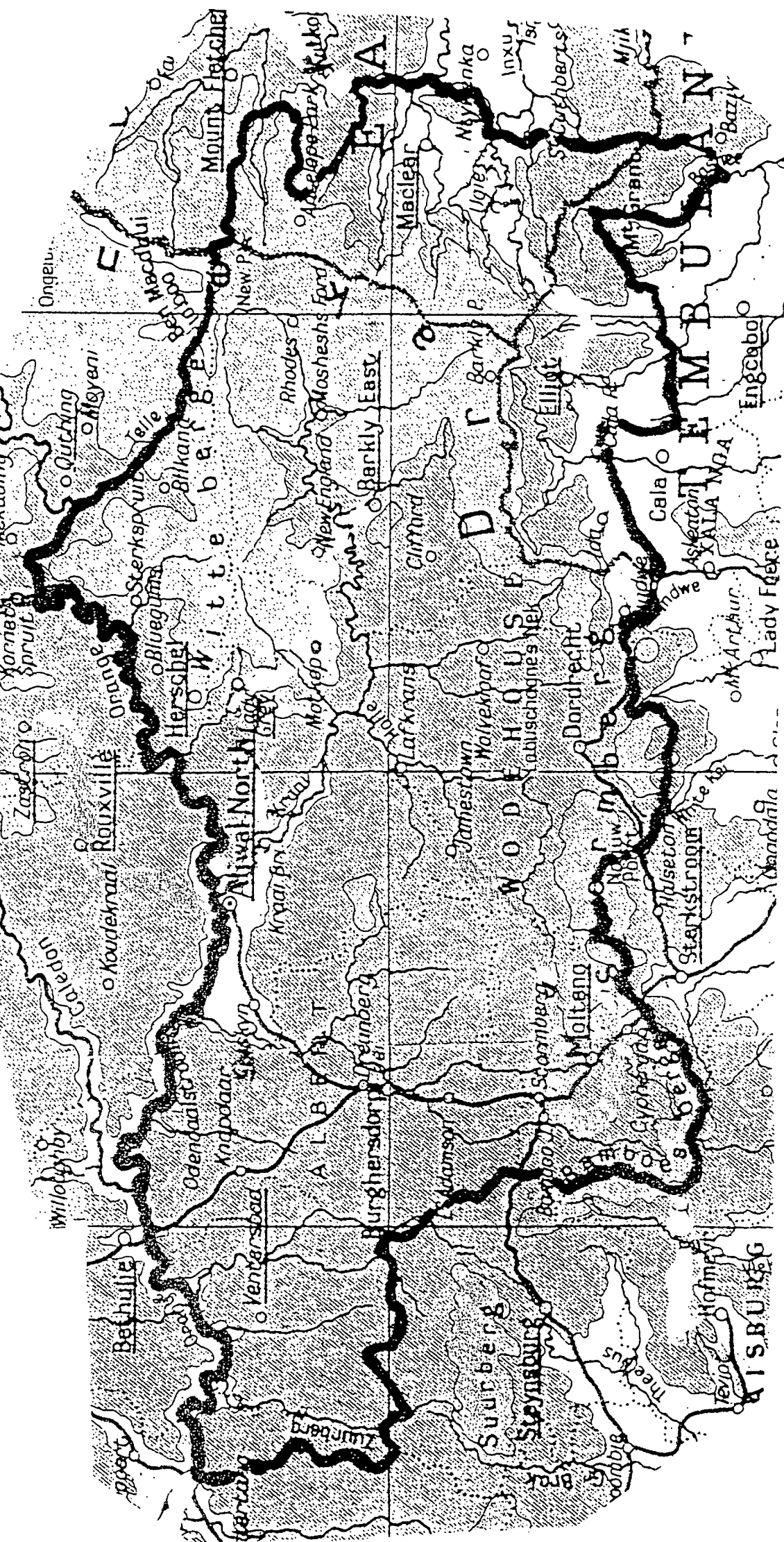
103. See Buys, et al., op cit., pp. 40-44; Stanford Diary, op cit., entry for 10 March 1902; Northern Post, 14 March 1902, 18 April 1902, 25 April 1902.

104. Northern Post, 6 June 1902.

105. Ibid., 20 June 1902.

106. Northern Post, 13 June 1902.

107. Ibid.



THE NORTH-EAST CAPE

THE SEAT OF THE REBELLION : THE MIDLANDS

The Midlands was untouched by the first Boer invasion of the Cape in 1899. There was however, throughout the region, considerable support for the invading forces. This support was most evident in Graaff-Reinet, the chief town of the region and also a noted centre of Cape republicanism.¹ Levels of republican support there were graphically illustrated by an incident which occurred even before the Boer forces had withdrawn north of the Orange river. On the 2nd March 1900, 'loyalists celebrating the relief of Ladysmith were savagely attacked by a mob of pro-Boers, armed with sticks and stones.' Three loyalists were reported stabbed and several seriously injured.² After the Boer withdrawal from the Cape a second invasion continued to feature very prominently in republican plans. Graaff-Reinet formed the centre-piece of these plans.³

During 1900 republican agents operated undercover in the chief town and throughout the Midlands region, their primary function being to promote sedition in advance of the arrival of the Boer commandos.⁴ The town was strongly garrisoned by Imperial troops however and this effectively contained the spread of rebellion. Nevertheless, the Midlands was central in that cumulative drift towards rebellion which characterized all the Cape regions during 1900. By December political tensions in the region had reached breaking-point. One particular event exemplified this tension: In early December Dr. T.N.G. Te Water, Bond M.L.A. for Graaff-Reinet, gave a radical and emotional pro-Boer speech at Aberdeen.⁵ Te Water's speech had important and immediate repercussions, being widely printed in the Midlands media. In Aberdeen it had the effect of acting as a final catalyst pushing a number of men into rebellion, their numbers including

1. See for instance T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond (1880-1911), (Oxford University Press, London, 1966), pp. 15, 23; Dr. A. Wessels, 'Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Naser', Christiaan De Wet-Annale, (7)(Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1988), pp. 40-42; Wilfred H. Harrison, Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa, 1903-1947 (Priv. Pub., Cape Town, n.d.), pp. 134-141.
2. Frontier Guardian, 9 March 1900.
3. See F.A. Steytler, 'Genl. Hertzog as Krygsman', in Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekandel, Johannesburg, 1965), p. 84; N.J. van der Merwe, Marthinus Theunis Steyn (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1921), Part II, pp. 62, 66-7; O.T. de Villiers, Met de Wet en Steyn in Het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), intro. page, pp. 71, 90; M.C.E. van Schoor (ed.), 'The Diaries and Recollections of Jacob Abraham Jeremias de Villiers', Christiaan de Wet-Annale, (8), (Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1990), p. 38.
4. See for instance Wessels, op cit., pp. 36-56; also 'Buurman' (M.J. Bornman), Oorlogswolke oor die Republieke (Voortrekkerpers, Johannesburg, 1944), pp. 101-30.
5. Het Oosten, 20 December 1900; Colesberg Advertiser, 4 October 1900.

P.J. Wolfaardt⁶ and, quite probably, C.P. van Heerden. Imperial commentators also viewed Te Water's speech as having lit the fuse of rebellion in the Midlands. In early December, under the heading 'Graaff-Reinet and Sedition', the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser wrote as follows: 'Here in Graaff-Reinet and the district, most virulent lying regarding the barbarity of our troops precludes all possibility of the truth being heard, and the minds of the Dutch are being excited to such an extent that the situation is being rendered positively dangerous.....Sedition is openly spoken everywhere (in the up-country districts) and threats are made that the flame will yet burst forth in this colony.'⁷

Following on the invasions of Kritzinger and Hertzog in December 1900, martial law was declared in 14 Cape districts on the 20th of that month. The Midlands districts included were those of Steynsburg, Middelburg, Graaff-Reinet, Richmond, Aberdeen and Cradock.⁸ Genl. P.H. Kritzinger entered the Midlands on the 27th December, his commando being the first Boer Force to operate in that region. From the Zuurberg four British columns were deployed in a 75 km arc from Sherborne to Steynsburg, preventing penetration to the south. At the farm of Poortjie Kritzinger captured 14 men of Nesbitt's Horse, then crossed the Middelburg-Noupoort line on the 30th December between Sherborne and Carlton stations, at the same time capturing and destroying a train.⁹ This attack halted all rail traffic in the area for more than a week.¹⁰ From Hell's Gate the Kritzinger commandos trekked south-west along the eastern foothills of the Agter-Renosterberg. Elements of Kritzinger's force occupied Nieu-Bethesda on the 3rd. They destroyed the telegraph instrument, commandeering horses, fodder, vehicles and all kinds of shop goods.¹¹

6. In September 1901 Wolfaardt, one of Cmdt. J.L. Lötter's Officer's, testified at his own trial that he had been motivated to rebel by the text of Te Water's speech, as published in Onze Courant. This allegation was pounced upon by the jingo and loyalist media, which converted Te Water - 'The South African Machiavilli' - into easily the most hated man in the colony after Kruger. See Colesberg Advertiser, 4 October 1901; also Somerset Budget, 19 January 1901.
7. As quoted in the Somerset Budget, 5 December 1900.
8. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, London, 1906), Vol. V, pp. 127-8; Vol. VI, pp. 556-7.
9. Amery, op cit., Vol. V, p. 129; B.W.M., 4299/4, 'Dagboek van J.M. Ackerman', p. 19; Colesberg Advertiser, 4 January 1901; Frontier Guardian, 4 January 1901, 25 January 1901; Albert Times, 7 January 1901.
10. Het Oosten, 10 January 1901.
11. Ackerman, op cit., p. 21; Albert Times, 7 January 1901; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; 24 January 1901; Northern Post, 4 January 1901.

Kritzinger himself arrived at Nieu-Bethesda on the 4th with his main force, but left on the same day trekking west into the southern and western extensions of the Sneeuberg range. He began to attract large numbers of rebels. Since entering the Cape the small scouting corps of Captains Scheepers and Fouché had constituted Kritzinger's advanced guard, and at Waterkrans more than 20 Sneeuberg youths attached themselves to these commandos.¹² Scheepers led a patrol north towards Richmond on the 8th. In a clash near that town with the Brabant's Horse two of Scheepers' men were killed. This incident ended the probe northwards and as a result Kritzinger's entire force turned south-west and trekked into the mountains just west and north-west of Murraysburg.¹³ Kritzinger had received despatches from Genl. Hertzog at Roodezandheuvell in the Richmond district, indicating that the two invasion forces were in loose contact with each other.¹⁴ The commando ambushed a S.A.L.H. column on the 11th at Waterval,¹⁵ killing at least 10 men and capturing 23.¹⁶ At Waterval the next day an African prisoner was shot dead. This was the first prisoner to be killed by Kritzinger's commando in the Cape. At his trial at Graaff-Reinet in December 1901, Cmdt. G.J. Scheepers was held responsible for this shooting, found guilty of it, and duly executed.¹⁷ Fouché and Scheepers parted from Kritzinger at Sekretariskraal on the 12th, and went south-east towards Aberdeen. On the 15th a composite force of 30 men, commanded by Fouché and drawn equally from the two commandos, captured that undefended village. Fouché captured 80 horses in the town, requisitioned freely from the banks and shops, and threw open the jail, releasing the 'undesirables' imprisoned there. Thirty-six men rebelled in Aberdeen, including C.P. van Heerden, and most of these ended up in Scheeper's commando.¹⁸ Kritzin-

12. P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), pp. 5-9. See also Ackerman, op cit., pp. 21-2.

13. Du Plessis, op cit., p. 22; Tarka Herald, 12 January 1901.

14. Ackerman, op cit., p. 22.

15. A farm 15 km from Murraysburg.

16. Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 16-18; Ackerman, op cit., p. 22; Somerset Budget, 19 January 1901.

17. See C.P.C., C. Sandford, 'The Trial of Scheepers', pp. 5, 7, 28.

18. For the occupation of Aberdeen see J.S.G.L., 23, John Fourie, 'Gebeurtenisse te Aberdeen en Omgewing Gedurende de Oorlog Operaties', pp. 3-7; Ackerman, op cit., p. 22; J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), pp. 3-4; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 19; Colesberg Advertiser, 1 February 1901; Het Oosten, 24 January 1901.

ger, Scheepers and Fouché were reunited at Bakoven near the Beaufort West-Aberdeen road on the 16th. Galloping south over Hoekdoorn and Miller, Kritzinger arrived on the 17th at Volstruisleegte, 20 km north of Willowmore, having crossed from the Midlands into the Southern Cape.¹⁹

On the 14th January 1901 President Steyn and General de Wet issued a proclamation in the O.F.S. which was closely linked to the expansion of the war into the Cape: 'A portion of our burghers have again been sent into the Cape Colony, not only to wage war there, but also to be in a position, when necessary, to take reprisals, as we have done in the case of ambulances. We, therefore, warn the officers of Her Majesty's troops, as we have already done, that unless they cease this destruction of property in the Republics we shall wreak our vengeance by destroying the property of Her Majesty's subjects who are not kindly disposed towards us.'²⁰ On the subject of a general Cape uprising, De Wet and Steyn were less precise, even though their meaning was still clear: 'We do not request anything from our brothers in the Colony, but we simply call on them, as well as on the civilized world, to assist on behalf of our joint civilization and Christianity in putting an end to the barbarous manner of warfare of our enemy.'²¹ This proclamation was taken seriously, and literally, by some Cape commanders, notably Scheepers.

Kritzinger's departure from the Midlands left the region in a very turbulent state, full of small-scale, isolated and localized rebellions and guerrilla activity.²² In the general confusion in the Midlands in January and February 1901, it went unnoticed for a while that a small commando had established itself at Spitskop, 50 km south of Middelburg. This was the local rebel commando of Cmdt. C.J. Lötter. Lötter, a Noupoort rebel, was a scout, despatch-rider and spy. As early as June 1900 he had drawn up a plan to enlist a small commando from the south-western O.F.S. districts and return to the Cape to wage guerrilla war. President Steyn approved Lötter's plan.²³ At some stage Lötter had linked up with H. Brazelle, another prominent scout and spy who in 1900, with J.P. Nesor, had obtained permission from Genl. Hertzog to enter the Cape on a spying mission.²⁴

19. Ackerman, op cit., p. 23.

20. For a translated copy of this proclamation, see the Colesberg Advertiser, 8 March 1901.

21. Ibid.

22. For a description of some of this activity see the Somerset Budget, 19 January 1901; Albert Times, 23 January 1901; Het Oosten, 17 January 1901, 24 January 1901; Tarka Herald, 23 January 1901; 6 March 1901.

23. B.W.M., 6025/1, 'Herinneringe uit die Boere Oorlog, 1899-1901', deur C.A. Vieweg, sekretaris van die Jacobsdal-kommando', p. 16.

24. Wessels, op cit., p. 36.

The circumstances of Lötter's mission to the Cape have always been obscure because it was generally assumed that he was a part of Kritzinger's invasion. This is incorrect, he was in fact a part of Hertzog's invasion force. Referring to a Cape rebel captured during De Wet's invasion in February 1901, a British intelligence officer wrote as follows: 'He was one of fifteen scouts sent by Hertzog, under a commandant called Lötter, to pick up the Richmond rebels and take them down to Graaff-Reinet, where De Wet's invaders had orders to concentrate, before undertaking the more desperate venture of the invasion,'²⁵ Lötter therefore, in February, had the crucial role of providing a communications link between Hertzog and De Wet's forces, and possibly also Kritzinger's.²⁶

In early February Lötter stepped up his activities, raiding for horses and enlisting recruits. The horses were mainly to be held in readiness for De Wet's invasion force. He also raided country stores and isolated police posts, and captured the post cart between Middelburg and Cradock.²⁷ Expanding his operations as early as the first week of February, Lötter sent Lieut. C. Lion-Cachet west of the line with 25 men.²⁸ This patrol encountered Kritzinger's commando on the 9th, between Bakoven and the Kariega river.²⁹ Lötter himself was near Nieu-Bethesda on the 9th February, before returning to Spitskop for more horses. In the Britstown district, on about the 20th February, he clashed a number of times with British columns.³⁰ His commando consisted then of approximately 90 men.³¹

A Midlands rebel commando whose formation preceded that of Lötter's was the one near Maraisburg which developed around F-C.C.J.F. Botha and F-C.M.J. Bornman. The activities of this group were so successful that the Maraisburg district was one of the Midlands districts in which martial law was declared on the 20th December 1900. The first offensive action by a purely rebel commando took place in this district.³² Late in 1900, from the eastern flank of the Bamboesberg, this commando began to fire on trains travelling on the East London-

25. 'The Intelligence Officer' (Lionel James), On the Heels of De Wet (Blackwood, London, 1903), p. 70.

26. Wessels, op cit., p. 62.

27. Somerset Budget, 20 February 1901; 15 March 1901; Albert Times, 18 February 1901; 22 February 1901; 1 March 1901.

28. Somerset Budget, 7 February 1901; 23 February 1901.

29. Ackerman, op cit., p. 26.

30. Ibid.; 'Intelligence Officer', op cit., pp. 67, 70-3, 88, 92, 107, 110.

31. Ackerman, op cit.

32. 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 118-34.

Aliwal North line.³³ When news of the second invasion reached the eastern Cape in December 1900, Bornman and Botha immediately embarked on a recruitment drive. A number of seditious political meetings were held on farms to the east of Maraisburg, in the foothills of the Bamboesberg and south-west of the town on the road to Cradock.³⁴ These meetings were similar to those J.P. Nesor had held at Graaff-Reinet earlier in the year.³⁵ This recruitment drive was at least partially successful, for Botha's rebel commando quickly grew to about 40 men. The decision was then made to trek north in an attempt to link up with Kritzing-ger. In the Zuurberg Botha encountered not Kritzing-ger, but Cmdt. G.H.P. van Reenen.³⁶

Van Reenen - like Lötter, Froneman, Nesor and Brazelle - was an agent of Hertzog's, commissioned to enter the Cape and foment rebellion there. Since he was a Steyns- burg rebel,³⁷ van Reenen established himself in the areas he knew best - the Steynsburg and Maraisburg districts, and the Zuurberg. His first base in December 1900 was in the Hantam,³⁸ 25 miles south-east of Colesberg. On the 11th January 1901 the first clash of van Reenen's combined commando occurred at Jagersfontein - his parent's farm - where he captured a patrol of the P.A.G., along with horses, rifles and ammunition.³⁹ Botha returned briefly to Maraisburg in an attempt to capture rifles. He succeeded in capturing 25 Cape Policemen, then returned to link up with van Reenen.⁴⁰ Van Reenen's patrols were very active in the Colesberg district in particular. Throughout January and February, using the Zuurberg and Hantam as bases, his patrols went in all directions except the south-west,⁴¹ commandeering cattle and horses, enlisting recruits and disarming British patrols.⁴²

33. F.C. Slater, Settler's Heritage (The Lovedale Press, Lovedale, 1954), p. 148.

34. 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 134-7.

35. Wessels, op cit., pp. 43-8.

36. 'Buurman', op cit., p. 144.

37. Dr. Hjalmar Reitz and I.M. Goodman (eds.), Die Nasionale Boek (Priv. pub., Johannesburg, 1931), p. 643.

38. The Hantam, since it is part of the Colesberg district, falls within my Northern Cape region. I have however chosen to include van Reenen's activities there in this Midlands chapter, since although the Hantam was his base, most of his activities in the first quarter of 1901 took place to the east and south-east, in the districts of Steynsburg and Maraisburg.

39. Het Oosten, 24 January 1901; 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 156-9.

40. Northern Post, 25 January 1901; 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 148-51.

41. Lötter operated in that direction.

42. Albert Times, 28 January 1901; 22 February 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 18 January 1901; 8 February 1901; 8 February 1901; Het Oosten, 24 January 1901; 'Buurman', op cit., p. 153.

The commandeering of cattle was done on a selective basis. The neutrality of certain stock-owners was accepted, while others were regarded as belligerents.⁴³ On the 8th February Kritzinger arrived back in the Midlands from the Southern Cape. After the 8th from Bakoven, he was guided by Lieut. C. Lion-Cachet, of Lötter's commando. From all sides there was a flood of young men to the various detachments of his forces.⁴⁴ Despatches from De Wet and General P. Fourie reached Kritzinger on the 10th. On the 12th he crossed over the Camdeboo mountains and trekked north-west towards Nieu-Bethesda, heading deeper into the mountainous country of the central Midlands.⁴⁵ At Poortjie-Oos, on the 15th, another two black prisoners were shot dead by Kritzinger's force. Between that farm and Zuurpoort there was a small clash with a pursuing force and the commando suffered some casualties. This was the first time Kritzinger had clashed with pursuing forces since the 8th, demonstrating that he had outstripped his pursuers since exiting from the Southern Cape and re-entering the Midlands. From Poortjie, Kritzinger crossed into the Middelburg district, moving east. At Tweefontein on the 7th he received another report from General de Wet. He turned north through the Sneeuberg and trekked in a semi-circle around the Compassberg.⁴⁶ Kritzinger encountered Lötter's small force near Nieu-Bethesda and sent him to dynamite the Fish River Station.⁴⁷ But the attack, on the 23rd, failed due to Lötter's inexperience.⁴⁸ The 23rd February also saw the start of an offensive against Kritzinger and Lötter's commandos in the area just east of the Sneeuberg.

43. On the 13th February for instance, near Driehoek, 40 km north-west of Steynsburg, van Reenen stipulated to the Colesberg butchers, Pettit Brothers, that while Mrs Dennis' stock could be removed to Colesberg for slaughter, 'you must not remove any of Percy Southey's stock, they all belong to us.' See Albert Times, 18 February 1901.

44. See for instance Ackerman, op cit., p. 26; Somerset Budget, 15 March 1902, 23 May 1902; A. Prinsloo, Die Geskiedenis van Smithfield en Die Caledon-rivierdistrik 1819-1952 (Priv. pub., Bloemfontein 1955), p. 431; Reitz and Goodman, op cit., p. 426; P.H.S. van Zyl, Waar en Trou (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg 1948), pp. 101-2; O.F.S.A.D., Renier collection, 119.217, 'Mnr. A.P. Pinsloo oor Kerkhof op plaas 'Driekop' naby Smithfield'; T.A.D., Preller collection, A787, Vol. 79, F-C.J.S. van der Merwe, 'Herinneringe uit die Opstand in Kaapland', pp. 12-16

45. Ackerman, op cit.

46. Ackerman, op cit., p. 27; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 16-22; P.H. Kritzinger and R.D. McDonald, In the Shadow of Death (London, William Clowes, 1904), pp. 81-2; Albert Times, 22 February 1901; Somerset Budget, 23 February 1901.

47. This station is 55 km east of the Lootsberg where Kritzinger was situated on the 23rd.

48. Eastern Province Annual, Christmas 1935, 'Anglo-Boer War Reminiscences of Genl. P.H. Kritzinger M.P.C.', p. 9. See also Somerset Budget, 27 February 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 1 March 1901; Albert Times, 1 March 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 15 March 1901.

The presence of Lötter's growing commando there⁴⁹ was the original reason for this offensive and this need became more pressing with the arrival of Kritzinger's force in the vicinity of Spitskop. The British offensive was led by Col. G.F. Gorringe with the Colonial Defence Force, and the pursuit orchestrated with an armoured-train commanded by Major A. Henniker.⁵⁰ At The Willows Kritzinger divided his force into two. Both groups crossed the line at Roodehoogte, being shelled as they crossed. Kritzinger attacked Roodehoogte station and also damaged the line. At Olievenboom in the Sneeberg he took up a defensive position and held off Gorringe's force for the whole of the 24th. In the evening he galloped south-east towards Spitskop. The two groups were reunited at the neighbouring farm of Wolwevallei which was one of the chief bases of the Boer guerrillas in the Midlands.⁵¹

Gorringe caught up with Kritzinger on the evening of the 25th at Wolwevallei, and shelled him. Kritzinger trekked east towards Fish River Station, intending to launch a second attack. But finding heavy troop concentrations in his path, he swung north towards Conway. Again, General A. Hunter engaged him and he turned west to Wolwevallei. He released a number of prisoners there and arrived at Spitskop⁵² on the 27th. The owner of this farm, P. Troskie, was a prominent rebel and a leading figure in the Midlands rebellion.⁵³ From the neighbouring farm of Spitskopvlei Kritzinger suddenly galloped south, guided by Lötter, crossed the Tandjiesberg and the Coetzeesberg and, taking the defenders by surprise, attacked and captured Pearston on the 3rd March. Sixty-one prisoners were taken, also 80 horses, 60 rifles and between 15 and 20 000 rounds of ammunition. The Boers commandeered freely from the stores. Two whose owners were connected to the military were completely looted. Most importantly, 20 men rebelled and joined the Boer ranks.⁵⁴

49. According to a newspaper report of the 24th February, 'The Boers have picqueted all the mountains and keep the farmers on their farms.' See Somerset Budget, 2 March 1901.

50. Northern Post, 22 February 1901; Somerset Budget, 27 February 1901.

51. Ackerman, op cit., pp. 27-8; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 22-9; Albert Times, 26 February 1901, 1 March 1901, 8 March 1901; Het Oosten, 7 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 2 March 1901.

52. Only 10 km away from the other important centre at Wolwevallei.

53. Ackerman, op cit., p. 28; Albert Times, 8 March 1901.

54. See Ackerman, op cit., pp. 28-9; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 29-33; Somerset Budget, 6 March 1901, 9 March 1901, 13 March 1901, 10 April 1901, 13 April 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 15 March 1901, 22 March 1901; Northern Post, 8 March 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901.

Gorringe's C.D.F. arrived in Pearston early on the 5th. Twenty-two men of Nesbitt's Horse had fled on the arrival of the commando, and he immediately instituted court-martial proceedings against these men. Gorringe also arrested about 15 local citizens, mostly close relatives of those who had rebelled. They were suspected of having sympathized with or assisted the Boers.⁵⁵ A few days before the capture of Pearston, Col. Gorringe had been involved in a controversial incident which was to have far-reaching implications for the Midlands guerrilla war. On the 2nd March Gorringe gave orders for the execution of a Midlands farmer named Hendrik van Heerden. Van Heerden, who farmed at Sewefontein,⁵⁶ had been seriously wounded the previous day in a Boer ambush, while guiding some British scouts.⁵⁷ Gorringe suspected van Heerden of having wilfully led the scouts into the ambush (both of them were also wounded), but van Heerden's summary execution created great bitterness among the Midlands Boers and resulted in political tensions in Cape Town.⁵⁸

Captains G.J. Scheepers and W.D. Fouché returned to the Midlands at the end of February, and on the 5th March attacked Aberdeen for the third time. The 14 martial-law prisoners in the jail were released and promptly joined the commando.⁵⁹ Another seven townsmen also enlisted. The available horses were commandeered, but before the situation could develop any farther the commando was ejected from the town by a counter-attack by its predominantly black Town Guard.⁶⁰ On the 6th a British column, guided by local Aberdeen men, went in pursuit of Scheepers and Fouché. It came under attack however and, according to one report, 7 British soldiers were killed and 60 captured.⁶¹ Four of the guides also were captured,

55. Somerset Budget, 9 March 1901, 13 March 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; N.A.D., A 353, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van F.R. Davel van Winburg', Chap. V, pp. 4-5, 11-20.

56. Sewefontein was only 10 km north of Wolwevlei and 20 km north of Lötter's headquarters at Spitskopvlei. Kritzinger's commando had stayed overnight at Sewefontein on the 24th February. See Ackerman, op cit., p. 28.

57. Somerset Budget, 16 March 1901; Ackerman, op cit.; J.H. Breytenbach, Gedenkalbum van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1949), pp. 492-5; G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town 1917), pp. 13-15.

58. See H.M. Wright (ed.), Sir James Rose Innes Selected Correspondence (1884-1902) (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1972), pp. 279-81.

59. According to various colonial newspapers however, the prisoners were forced to join the commando, but refused and escaped. See Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; Northern Post, 8 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 15 March 1901.

60. Fourie, op cit., pp. 8-11; Smith, op cit., pp. 4-5; Colesberg Advertiser, 8 March 1901; 15 March 1901; 22 March 1901; Northern Post, 8 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 9 March 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; Albert Times, 15 March 1901.

61. Fourie, op cit., pp. 11-15. See also Het Oosten, 14 March 1901.

including Capt. P. Rubidge, commander-in-chief of the Aberdeen Town Guard, who was compelled to sign the oath of neutrality.⁶² The commando spent the night of the 5th on Rubidge's farm, Corndale.⁶³ It then trekked towards Murraysburg, but that town was occupied by the K.F.S. under Col. Colenbrander, which came across from Richmond.⁶⁴ Scheepers then trekked south-east, to the area between Aberdeen and Graaff-Reinet.

At Uitkomst,⁶⁵ on the 15th, Scheepers burnt down the farmhouse of Meredith, a scout with the British forces who was at the time a prisoner in his hands. This was the first farmhouse burnt down by Scheepers in the colony, and the first building burnt down by the Boer forces in the Cape during the second invasion. As such it marked a distinct turning point in the war there. The contents of the proclamation of De Wet and Steyn of 14th January 1901 were thereby put into practice. At his trial Scheepers was found guilty of arson on this count. In his defence however, he stated as follows: 'I was only acting up to the instructions of my superior officers, and this was one of the objects with which the Boer commandos were sent into the colony.'⁶⁶

A third Republican commando entered the midlands in February 1901 when, on the 21st, Lieut. W.C. Malan's small force arrived at Elandsfontein, 30 km west of Hanover. Just a few days after De Wet's invasion, on the 18th, there were no fewer than 7 different commandos - those of Kritzinger, Fouché, Scheepers, Lötter, van Reenen, Botha and Malan - arranged in a complete circle around Graaff-Reinet. Going south-west, Malan raided Richmond on the 23rd, shooting down three defenders on the market square. He then trekked east of Richmond, capturing an entire column of 120 men at Klipplaatfontein, 60 km from Richmond. There his 37 men elected him to the position of commandant.⁶⁷

62. O.F.S.A.D., A 155/194, A.C. van Heerden collection.

63. One report stated that they burnt this farm down. See Het Oosten, 14 March 1901. Scheepers was however never charged with this.

64. One sees here the great value of telegraphic communication during the war. Scheepers and Fouché had previously occupied the town in early April, to the undisguised delight of the Boer inhabitants. On that occasion dances were given in their honour. The Murraysburg telegraph line was destroyed and it was some time before it was repaired. See Somerset Budget, 16 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 15 March 1901; Albert Times, 15 March 1901.

65. Midway between Graaff-Reinet and Aberdeen.

66. Sandford, op cit., pp. 19-20, 24.

67. R. de Kersauson de Pennendreff, Ek en die Vierkleur, (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 28-30; H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogs-avonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941) pp. 158-62.

Wherever Malan's commando went on the Midlands-Karoo border its arrival was greeted with great enthusiasm by the Boer farmers, who freely offered their assistance. 'There was,' Malan later recorded, 'as far as I know, not a single exception to this rule.'⁶⁸ To bypass the martial law regulations concerning the compulsory reporting of commandos, Malan routinely engaged in subtle tactics which fully justified British Intelligence's top-secret assessment of him as 'the cleverest of all the Commandants in the C.C.'⁶⁹ On the 2nd March Malan captured two coloured despatch-riders who were taking reports to the military in Victoria West. Their request that they be allowed to join the commando as agterryers was acceded to.⁷⁰ He trekked into the Winterberg then swung away south-eastwards towards Aberdeen. His intention was to link up with Scheepers and Fouché and he hoped to strike them on their line of march north-east of Willowmore.⁷¹ On the 16th March the commandos of Scheepers, Fouché and Malan were united at Glendinning in the Rooiberge, a mountain range east of Aberdeen.⁷²

In late February Cmdt. G.H.P. van Reenen was still firmly established on the farms of Diepkloof and Haasfontein, midway between Steynsburg and Colesberg.⁷³ Once it became known that Kritzinger had returned to the Midlands, and that Scheepers, Fouché and Malan were also operating there, enlistment with his commando began to increase significantly.⁷⁴ By late February van Reenen had succeeded in setting himself up as an alternative political authority in the northern Zuurberg.⁷⁵ Early in March van Reenen, Botha and Bornman combined and on the 4th occupied the undefended town of Maraisburg.⁷⁶ They appeared to be acting in co-ordination with Kritzinger, since Pearston was captured by the latter on the 3rd.⁷⁷ Van Reenen was received very enthusiastically by the Boer community of Maraisburg, and 10 local men joined his forces.⁷⁸ As a result of

68. Pieterse, op cit., p. 165.

69. Great Britain. War Office: Intelligence Division. Boer Army List. Cape Colony District, March 31st, 1901. (N.p., n.d.), p. 54. See also Pieterse, op cit., pp. 168-9, 178.

70. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., p. 31.

71. Ibid., p. 36; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 177-8.

72. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 38-40; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 179-80.

73. These farms are in the south-east corner of the Colesberg district and on the extreme northern edge of the Zuurberg.

74. Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 8 March 1901.

75. Colesberg Advertiser, 8 March 1901, 26 April 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901.

76. Now known as Hofmeyr.

77. The two villages are separated by more than 100 km.

78. Tarka Herald, 20 March 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 170-3; The Diary of Iris Vaughan (Howard Timmins, Cape Town 1958), pp. 12-14.

the capture of Maraisburg an offensive was organized against Van Reenen and on the 17th March a column under the command of Col. E. Crabbe dislodged the former's forces from their base in the mountains. Shortly after, van Reenen linked up with Lötter and they trekked into the Orange Free State.⁷⁹

Kritzinger's commando left Pearston on the afternoon of the 3rd March, taking with them as prisoners the twenty-two members of the black Town Guard. A commando krygsraad sentenced the men to death, but they were all released unharmed near Carlisle Bridge on the 11th March.⁸⁰ At Pearston, Kritzinger and Capt. J.J. Smith separated temporarily, Smith going north-east. Smith had only 17 men, but by the time he rejoined Kritzinger on the 30th March his patrol had grown to 54, all of them but two being armed.⁸¹ Kritzinger trekked first south and then south-east. On the 8th he passed the small settlement of Middlewater and reached Klipfontein, which marked the limit of his southward trek for the moment. From Klipfontein Kritzinger changed course, trekking first north-east then east. He crossed the LittleFish river and then also over the railway line south of Middleton. East of the line, on the 9th March, he entered the Eastern Cape for the first time.⁸²

On the 26th March Kritzinger was back in the Midlands. His commando at this stage numbered 150 men, and was well supplied with horses and ammunition. The columns which had been following Kritzinger were now pursuing Lötter and van Reenen as far as the Orange river, and the commando trekked slowly westwards to Wolwevallei. There Kritzinger learnt of the execution on the 2nd March of Hendrik van Heerden, at Sewefontein in the district of Middelburg. At Spitskop on the 3rd April a black prisoner was shot dead by the commando.⁸³ In April an

79. Albert Times, 20 March 1901; 25 March 1901, 5 April 1901; 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 179-84; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 58-9; Colesberg Advertiser, 29 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 27 March 1901.

80. See Somerset Budget, 16 March 1901. The leader of the group, Coert Jacobs, a Somerset East hairdresser, gave that newspaper an account of their experiences. His short narrative is one of the more important black autobiographical fragments to emerge from the Cape guerrilla war.

81. Somerset Budget, 23 May 1962; Ackerman, op cit., p. 32.

82. Ackerman, op cit., p. 29; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 32-6; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901.

83. Albert Times, 5 April 1901; Tarka Herald, 3 April 1901, 10 April 1901; Somerset Budget, 6 April 1901, 26 May 1962; Ackerman, op cit., p. 32.

offensive was mounted once again against Kritzinger and by the 6th no fewer than 7 columns, under the overall command of Genl. I. Jones, were operating against him. But, in a brilliant manoeuvre, Kritzinger galloped north-west from near Fish River Station on the 7th. Passing over Wolwevallei he crossed the line into the Renosterberg, having trekked 45 km in one day. This placed him at one stroke outside the dangerous rail-bound area which enclosed the Wolwevallei-Spitskop axis. Crossing through the Renosterberg he re-crossed the line eastwards to Schoonbeksfontein, where he linked up with Capt. W.D. Fouché. Proceeding eastwards the combined commando crossed the Rosmead-Cradock line on the 12th April south of Conway. On the 17th April, near Vlekpoort, Kritzinger crossed once again into the Eastern Cape. There he made the decision to return temporarily to the O.F.S.⁸⁴

After uniting at Rooiberg - 30 km east of Aberdeen - on the 16th March, Scheepers, Fouché and Malan trekked south-east towards Jansenville. Crossing the railway at Marais Halt, where Scheepers blew up a portion of the line, the force was fired on by an armoured train which unsuccessfully barred its way. Striking the Sundays river they followed that stream southward and at Uitkomst were fired on from a farmhouse. Finding the place defended by twelve coloured soldiers, Scheepers shot two of them 'since it is a white man's war,' and burnt down the farmhouse.⁸⁵ Charges 2, 3, 14, 16 and 17 at Scheeper's trial related to these events and he was found guilty on all 5 counts.⁸⁶ On the 20th March Col. H. Scobell managed to surround the entire combined force of 3 commandos at Bloukrans⁸⁷ on the Sundays river. The Boers had to fight furiously to escape the encirclement, and lost 70 spare horses.⁸⁸ The British assault at Bloukrans was such that the

84. Somerset Budget, 6 April 1901, 13 April 1901, 26 May 1962; Ackerman, op cit., pp. 33-4; Tarka Herald, 10 April 1901, 13 April 1901; Du Plessis, op cit., p. 37; Albert Times, 15 April 1901, 20 April 1901.

85. Somerset Budget, 27 March 1901; Albert Times, 25 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 27 March 1901; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 41-2; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 22 March 1901.

86. Sandford, op cit., pp. 5-8, 16-17, 19-20, 24, 28, 31.

87. Less than 20 km north of Jansenville.

88. For descriptions of Bloukrans see Fourie, op cit., pp. 17-21; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 42-4; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 181-5; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 33-5; Somerset Budget, 27 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 27 March 1901; Het Oosten, 28 March 1901; M. Maritz, My Lewe en Strewe (N.p., Johannesburg, n.d.), pp. 29-30.

3 commandos became separated. Scheepers and Malan were re-united at Palmietfontein in the Camdeboo on the 31st March. Fouché however was separated not only from the other two leaders but also from parts of his own commando. He never saw Scheepers again and was re-united with Malan only a year later. After Bloukrans Fouché first trekked south, then east, and finally north. Only at Tweefontein, in the Graaff-Reinet district, was he re-united with all the other detachments of his commando. He then trekked into the Sneeuberg, entering both Nieu-Bethesda and Murraysburg, capturing a great number of horses.⁸⁹

Fouché trekked north-east through the Midlands into the Richmond district, in an attempt to re-make contact with Scheepers. Fouché's was at this stage in many ways a model commando. His scouting system worked excellently, the men were well mounted, all were armed with captured Lee-Metfords, and there were many local rebels in his ranks.⁹⁰ From near Richmond Fouché trekked through the Hanover district into Middelburg. Crossing the line on the 8th April, he linked up with Kritzinger near Schoonbekfontein. Together they trekked south-east past Maraisburg and into the Bamboesberg west of Molteno.⁹¹

In the Camdeboo, Malan and Scheepers went over to the offensive. On the 30th April the latter captured 50 British troops at Kriegers Hoek, their horses being particularly valuable. The next day Major Arbuthnot and 17 troopers suffered a similar fate. These commandos obtained great assistance from the local farmers. 'That these Afrikaners weren't shot dead by the enemy always surprised me,' Malan recorded later 'because they were very blatant in their support for us.'⁹² At Newlands in the Camdeboo, on the 6th April, Scheepers and Malan combined in an attack on 90 men of the Lancashire Yeomanry and 17th Lancers, commanded by Capt. S. Bretherton. The entire force was captured, with 90 horses (in good condition) and rifles, 18 mules, 4 wagons, one maxim and a huge supply of ammunition and food.⁹³

89. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., p. 44; Somerset Budget, 27 March 1901, 6 April 1901; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 184-5.

90. Somerset Budget, 13 April 1901; Tarka Herald, 13 April 1901.

91. Ibid.; Ackerman, op cit., pp. 33-4; Frontier Guardian, 26 April 1901.

92. Pieterse, op cit., p. 186; Fourie, op cit., p. 23; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 46-7; Maritz, op cit., pp. 30-1.

93. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 47-8; Malan, op cit., pp. 187-93; Fourie, op cit., pp. 23-5; Maritz, op cit., pp. 30-1. The British regarded this clash as having occurred at Zeekoegat. See Amery, op cit., p. 244; Somerset Budget, 13 April 1901.

On the 6th April, after the clash at Zeekoegat, three rebel emissaries from the Kenhardt district reached Malan's commando. They came from Brandvlei where a spontaneous rebellion had erupted, drawing men from the Calvinia and Kenhardt districts. These men were on their way to De Wet to request that experienced men with leadership abilities be sent to Brandvlei as officers. Malan chose Cpl. S.G. Maritz as the leader of a group of seven men. They left on the 8th, accompanied by the 3 Brandvlei men, as well as 6 coloured agterryers, all dressed in khaki, with a total of 30 horses. These coloured agterryers sometimes carried the group's spare bandoliers and rifles,⁹⁴ which gave rise to a mistaken belief that the Boers armed their black servants. Maritz trekked west and on the 11th April entered the Karoo, crossing the line between Nelspoort and Three Sisters.⁹⁵

After Zeekoegat Malan and Scheepers separated briefly and the latter trekked south-east towards the line and Glendinning. Malan remained resting in the Camdeboo. At Vredenburg farm, Graaff-Reinet, Scheepers flogged a coloured member of the Willowmore D.F.⁹⁶ From Vredenburg the commando trekked north-east into the Swagershoek area between Pearston and Cradock, and from there into the Coetzeesberg. There he burnt down the farmhouse of Stockdale, belonging to a Dr. Moolman. Moolman was a medical officer with the British forces and had refused to sign the oath of neutrality. At his trial Scheepers stated that the farmhouse, like all the other buildings burnt down, had been destroyed 'under command of his superior officers; whose instructions were given at the Conference in the Free State in October before they came here and by subsequent proclamations.'⁹⁷

On the 30th April, Scheepers with 180 men was in the Sneeu-berg near Nieu-Bethesda, having moved north-east from Swagershoek. His senior lieutenant, S. Swanepoel, in the process of establishing a commando of his own, was on detached duty with 60 men looking for horses.⁹⁸ Scheepers wrecked a train near Mortimer⁹⁹ on the 3rd May, having acted on information received from local Boers. For a week from the 6th May on, Col. Henniker's column clashed repeatedly with the commando in the Swagershoek between Somerset East and Cradock. A squadron of M.M.R. ambushed Cmdt. Swanepoel's commando at Vaaldraai in the Swagershoek on the 9th. Swanepoel and 5 other men were killed and 4 wounded.¹⁰⁰

94. See de Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., p. 52.

95. Ibid., pp. 49-53; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 193-4; Maritz, op cit., pp. 32-4.

96. Charge 11 at his trial. See Sandford, op cit., p. 18.

97. Charge no. 18: See Sandford, op cit., pp. 6, 24, 31; also Somerset Budget, 13 April 1901, 20 April 1901, 27 April 1901; Albert Times, 3 May 1901.

98. Albert Times, 3 May 1901.

99. Twenty-two km south of Cradock.

100. Somerset Budget, 8 May 1901, 11 May 1901, 15 May 1901; Albert Times, 10 May 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 24 May 1901.

Malan and Scheepers were briefly re-united at Garstlands Kloof, 30 km west of Cradock, in mid-May. From there they retreated into the Waterkloof. They separated again, and from the mountains between Pearston and Somerset East Scheepers was driven eastward by Maj. A. Henniker's column. Crossing the line at Marais Halt in the Aberdeen district, on the 21st, he wrecked and burnt a passenger train.¹⁰¹

In June Scheepers returned to the Koudeveld mountains in the vicinity of Murraysburg. Because that town had not supplied a minimum of twenty-five Town Guards, no volunteer defence forces were raised there, and the town remained undefended for the duration of the war. Scheepers used the town for all his requirements. But by the end of June it was running out of provisions. He then warned the magistrate, Van Oudtshoorn, that if the town was not immediately garrisoned and re-supplied, he would burn down the government buildings. On the 6th July this threat was carried out when the magistracy was destroyed. The homes of Sharwood and Innes, two prominent Murraysburg loyalists, suffered the same fate. On the 8th Scheepers followed this up by burning down Vleiplaats, the 1822 farmhouse of the Hon. A.J. Herholdt, M.L.C.¹⁰² At this time Scheepers' commando consisted of 240 men, only 40 of whom were republicans. He had collected a large amount of grain in the Camdeboo mountains, and intended to go into winter quarters there before, in the spring, 'going westward to Oudtshoorn and Cape Town.'¹⁰³ Scheepers' forces were however not the only troops active in the Aberdeen district in mid-1901. The martial law authorities were denuding the district of grain and horses, and even going so far as to remove whole rural communities to the town, where they were held under close supervision. On the 19th June, for instance, all the Boer men, women and children who had been living at Allemanskraal were transported to Aberdeen, the men being imprisoned there. Their cattle, donkeys, sheep and goats were also brought in, and kept in the enclosure of the Dutch Reformed church.¹⁰⁴

101. Northern Post, 17 May 1901; Albert Times, 24 May 1901, 31 May 1901; Sandford, op cit., pp. 15-16, 24; Barkly East Reporter, 7 June 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 7 June 1901.

102. Pieterse, op cit., p. 231; Colesberg Advertiser, 28 June 1901, 19 July 1901; Umtata Herald, 20 July 1901; Sandford, op cit., pp. 6, 20, 24, 31.

103. See 'A Boer Commandant's Report', Scheepers' letter to Genl. C. de Wet, Colesberg Advertiser, 25 October 1901.

104. J.S.G.L., 23/1, 'Dagboek van John Fourie', entry for 19 June 1901.

In July a British offensive was launched against Scheepers in the Camdeboo. On the 12th that commando leader burnt down some buildings at Aberdeen Road, including the railway station. But on the 14th a drive of 4 columns, planned and orchestrated by Genl. J. French - the new commander-in-chief in the Cape - almost succeeded in trapping Scheeper's force on a Camdeboo plateau.¹⁰⁵ Thirty-five men of the commando were captured in these operations in the Camdeboo. Of these, 8 were republican citizens and 27 Cape rebels. Three of the republicans and 6 of the rebels were later executed.¹⁰⁶ This severe step was a clear warning to the republican forces in the Cape that even they were beginning to run the risk of being regarded as illegal belligerents.

After Kritzinger's return to the Cape Colony on the 19th May 1901, he went almost immediately to the North-East Cape to expand the war into that region. The only Boer commandos then remaining in the eastern part of the Midlands were Cmt. G.H.P. van Reenen, Capt. J.J. Smith and F-C C.J.F. Botha. In the first week of June van Reenen was active in the Eastern Cape, but returned to the Midlands. Receiving information that Van Reenen (with Botha and Bornman) were at Ruigtevlei, 12 km south-east of Steynsburg, Col. Wyndham's column attacked Ruigtevlei during the night of the 6th July. Van Reenen and Botha escaped, but F-C.M.J. Bornman and 21 other men were captured. One of the captured men, P.W. Kloppert, who had rebelled twice, was executed at Burghersdorp on the 20th July.¹⁰⁷

By June 1901 the rebellion in the Midlands had begun to assume crisis proportions. Referring to the increase in rebellion in the Cradock district alone, one newspaper wrote: 'Weeks ago the names of nearly 400 were known, and since then many more have joined the enemy, and the number of local rebels is now said to be close upon 600.'¹⁰⁸ A July report stated that 'The number of rebels who have joined the commandoes in the second invasion is very considerable. From the Somerset East district 200 joined and other divisions more to the north, have contributed largely.'¹⁰⁹

105. Amery, op cit., p. 315; Tarka Herald, 25 September 1901; Northern Post, 19 July 1901; Albert Times, 19 July 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 19 July 1901; Somerset Budget, 17 July 1901.

106. Jordaan, op cit., pp. 63-76, 81-8, 149-54.

107. 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 197-202; C. Theo Botha, 'Oorlogsherinnering van Kommandant C.J.F. Botha', Die Naweek, 20 June 1946; Reitz and Oost, op cit., p. 643; Frontier Guardian, 14 June 1901; Albert Times, 14 June 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 12 July 1901; Northern Post, 12 July 1901; Jordaan, op cit., pp. 43-52.

108. Frontier Guardian, 28 June 1901.

109. Ibid., 19 July 1901.

Kritzinger crossed from the Eastern Cape back into the Midlands on the 17th June and on the 18th he was 15 km north of Cradock. Hearing that a small column of 90 men of the M.M.R. was pursuing Malan west of Cradock, Kritzinger surprised them at Waterkloof, 50 km south-west of Cradock, killing 11 men. Among the dead was Capt. Spandau, commander of the column.¹¹⁰ This occurred on the 20th June. In July Kritzinger trekked north into the Zuurberg. Near Maraisburg he had encountered F-C. C.J.F. Botha and promoted him to commandant. On the Klein-Zuurberg he met Cmdt. L.B. Wessels who had been sent from the O.F.S. with despatches from De Wet. Wessels was accompanied by 22 men and also had instructions from De Wet for Kritzinger that he should supply Wessels with enough men to make up a commando. But since Kritzinger's numbers were too low he was unable to oblige and Wessels simply joined the commando. At about the end of July Lötter parted from Kritzinger and trekked south with his men. At the same time Kritzinger was involved in a heavy clash with Col. E. Crabbe's column at The Willows in the Middelburg district, where he inflicted a number of casualties and captured the small column, including hundreds of horses.¹¹¹

Malan had left the Camdeboo in early June and trekked east to Kendrew station, where he unsuccessfully attacked a train. From there he went north-east over Petersburg and crossed the line north of Cradock. Just east of Fish River Station he captured a small British column, inflicting a number of casualties. Returning to the eastern districts of the Midlands, Malan gained a number of outstanding recruits en route, especially in the Cradock district. In the Richmond district he linked up with Cmdt. J.J. Smith, with a commando of 150 men.¹¹² Malan and Smith launched a combined attack on Richmond on the 25th June. Smith was however wounded in the attack, which failed. Malan then trekked to the region of the Hanover-Richmond border. He also operated briefly in the Karoo. In July Malan decided to depart on a political mission to the O.F.S. The overall purpose of the mission was to attempt to influence the O.F.S. government to take steps to establish the Cape rebels as legitimate combatants. Malan had a three-fold plan:

110. Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., pp. 38-9; Somerset Budget, 22 June 1901, 30 May 1962; Frontier Guardian, 28 June 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 19 July 1901; Tarka Herald, 19 June 1901, 22 June 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 28 June 1901; Albert Times, 24 June 1901; Northern Post, 21 June 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 28 June 1901.

111. Somerset Budget, 13 July 1901; 30 May 1962, 6 June 1962; A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, München, 1902), p. 109; Barkly East Reporter, 26 July 1901.

112. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 198-226; Northern Post, 28 June 1901.

The forces in the colony had to be reorganized and reinforced. Secondly (and in order to introduce the element of legitimacy), Malan wanted the area of commando activity to be proclaimed as republican territory. Finally, in such proclaimed areas, all Boer soldiers would automatically become republican citizens.¹¹³

Malan's mission to the O.F.S. was planned in close consultation with Scheepers, but before leaving Malan warned Scheepers against the burning down of private houses. He stated that such actions could not promote the Boer cause.

Malan left from Sambokdorings, Aberdeen district, taking with him Cmdt. H. Hugo as his legal adviser.¹¹⁴ On the day of his departure, the 27th July, Scheepers trekked south to commence his raid westwards towards Cape Town, and burnt down two private houses in the Aberdeen district. He defeated the Willowmore Defence Force at Hartebeestkuil on the Kariega, then burnt down Miller station.¹¹⁵

Cmdt. H.W. Lategan was also active in the Midlands during this period. Trekking through the Richmond district, past Nieu-Bethesda into the Graaff-Reinet district, Lategan was at Tweefontein, 32 km north-west of Graaff-Reinet, on the 19th July. His hardened commando consisted of 130 men. A neighbouring Boer farmer betrayed his presence at Tweefontein to the Imperial authorities, and on the 19th a part of Col. H. Scobell's column attacked him at that Sneeberg farm. The attacking force consisted of 100 men drawn from the C.M.R. and 9th Lancers, and led by Col. H.T. Lukin. Taken by surprise, Lategan was defeated and lost 11 horses, 70 rifles, 1 000 rounds, 80 saddles and all his kit. Ten men were captured and a few wounded. Lategan lost two of his three officers, but one sheltered nearby and when fit raised a commando in the Karoo.¹¹⁶ After this defeat Lategan quickly re-equipped his force with fresh horses and vacated the Midlands, returning to the Northern Cape.

In August Kritzinger, sheltering in the Zuurberg, was the target of a very thorough drive, and his position quickly deteriorated. Driven north by Crabbe, Kritzinger trekked as far as Roosterfontein,¹¹⁷ 30 km north of Steynsburg. Col. G.F. Gorringer trapped him there and shattered his commando. Cmdt. C. Lion-Cachet -

113. Ibid., pp. 227-34; Smith, op cit., pp. 34-8.

114. Hugo had been a judge in the O.F.S. before the war.

115. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 235-9; Smith, op cit., pp. 39-41.

116. Wessels, op cit., pp. 63-8; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 129, Northern Post, 26 July 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 2 August 1901; Albert Times, 2 August 1901; R.E. Johnston, Ulundi to Delville Wood (Maskew Miller, Cape Town, n.d.), pp. 94-6.

117. The clash took place between Roosterfontein and Ruiterskraal, 5 km apart.

formerly Kritzinger's chief of scouts - was killed, Cmdt. J.L.P. Erasmus - political commissar - captured and Capt. D. du P. Scheepers seriously injured. Some other prisoners were also taken. On the 15th the scattered commando crossed into the O.F.S.¹¹⁸ This decisive action on the part of Gorringer ended Kritzinger's career in the Cape. Four months later he re-entered the colony, but was severely wounded and captured immediately after crossing the frontier. Although Gorringer's column (with the élite Cape Police under Col. J. Neylan) played an important role; the key factor in the defeat of Kritzinger's commando was the drive organized by Genl. J. French from his base at Middelburg.

After recovering from the wound he had received during the unsuccessful attack on Richmond, Smith trekked eastward and linked up with Botha in the Maraisburg district. Van Reenen had been operating in the Zuurberg since the last days of July. He linked up with Cmdt. J.H. Pypers there in early August, and on the 14th they both trekked over the border into the O.F.S. Van Reenen and Pypers later resumed their careers in the western Cape. Botha and Smith clashed with Col. Doran in the Maraisburg district in the first week of August. After separating from Kritzinger in the Zuurberg, Lötter joined these two commandos and together they trekked west across the line between Conway and Fish River Station, arriving at Wolwevallei in the Middelburg district on the 8th August.¹¹⁹

By 16th August 1901 the commandos of Lötter, Smith and Botha were the only ones left in the Midlands region. Kritzinger, van Reenen, Malan, Fouché and Scheepers had all left for other regions. The transportation of pro-republican elements of the Boer rural population - so important for providing succour and recruits to the commandos - continued in August. In the first week of that month all the Boer families from Waterkloof - the most rebellious part of the Cradock district - were removed to Cradock. By that stage, apart from the men who were on commando, there were also 30 Waterkloof men being held in Cradock jail.¹²⁰

118. Somerset Budget, 17 August 1901, 6 June 1962; I.S. Uys, For Valour (Ian S. Uys, Johannesburg, 1973), p. 164; Kritzinger and McDonald, op cit., pp. 54-5; Amery, op cit., pp. 316-7; Colesberg Advertiser, 16 August 1901, 11 October 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 23 August 1901, 6 September 1901; Albert Times, 23 August 1901.

119. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 109-10; C.C. Snyman, Avonture uit die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers-Boekhandel, Bloemfontein, n.d.), p. 28; Albert Times, 23 August 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 23 August 1901; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 222-3.

120. Northern Post, 9 August 1901.

Closely followed by three columns, Lötter, Smith and Botha clashed with Col. H. Scobell's 9th Lancer and C.M.R. column near Fish River Station in mid-August. They then crossed the line near Nieu-Bethesda but, not wishing to approach the Noupoot blockhouse line to the north, and finding their passage to the north-west blocked by various columns, the commandos re-crossed the line and trekked back eastwards into the Middelburg district. Near Wolwevallei the three groups separated for the last time, in order to divide their pursuers. Smith trekked west to the Karoo and spent the bulk of the remainder of the war in that region. Botha went to Quaggashoek in the Cradock district, where he was surrounded by six columns under the command of Genl. Hunter. The commando successfully eluded its pursuers however and Botha trekked first to the Middelburg, then the Tarkastad district. In the last-named district he obtained a number of horses and then trekked north into the Molteno district.¹²¹

After separating near Wolwevallei Lötter trekked east in the direction of Fish River Station. The pursuit had increased since the other columns had left the Midlands and his horses became exhausted. On the night of the 3rd September, in driving rain, the commando sheltered in a large wool shed on the farm of Bouwershoek, near the small Sneeuwberg settlement of Petersburg. The Boer owner of the farm alerted the authorities and, surrounding the commando, Col. Scobell's column attacked the shed at dawn, killing 13 men and capturing 103. Forty-six of those captured were wounded, including Lötter. In addition Scobell captured 200 horses, 2 500 rounds of ammunition and all the commando's kit and supplies. Only 19 men out on picket, who were themselves sheltering from the rain, were not captured. Lötter's commando of 135 men was composed almost exclusively of rebels. They were all tried under martial law and, in October, Lötter and his 4 most senior officers were executed in various Midlands towns.¹²²

Botha trekked to the Eastern Cape, so that for a few short weeks in September the Midlands was free of any organized activity. Greatly reduced in numerical

121. A. de Wet et al., op cit., pp. 110-11; Kokstad Advertiser, 23 August 1901.

122. For the entire saga of the capture of the commando, and the execution of its officers, see A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 110-11; Amery, op cit., pp. 319-20; T. Pakenham, The Boer War (Futura, London, 1982), pp. 527-8; Jordaan, op cit., pp. 95-104, 111-26; Northern Post, 30 August 1901, 6 September 1901, 4 October 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 6 September 1901, 27 September 1901, 4 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 7 September 1901, 12 October 1901, 13 November 1901; Albert Times, 13 September 1901, Frontier Guardian, 6 September 1901, 13 September 1901, 20 September 1901, 18 October 1901; 1 November 1901, Somerset Budget, 11 September 1901; 21 September 1901; 5 October 1901, 9 October 1901, 12 October 1901, 8 January 1902; Die Nieuwe Middelburger, 4 October 1901, 18 October 1901, 22 November 1901, 20 December 1901, 14 February 1902, 21 February 1902; Kokstad Advertiser, 20 September 1901, 4 October 1901, 18 October 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 6 December 1901.

and material terms, Botha linked up with Smuts in the Bamboesberg on the Midlands-Eastern Cape border, on the 18th September. Smuts trekked through the Eastern Cape then entered the Midlands at Middleton station on the 27th. He vetoed an attack on the railway line and the commando trekked west, then south into the Zuurberg. In those mountains most of the commando was temporarily incapacitated after eating the semi-poisonous fruit of the 'Hottentot's bread'¹²³ cycad. While the poisoned men were recovering, a detachment of Cmdts. B.D. Bouwer and J.L. van Deventer occupied the undefended village of Bayville,¹²⁴ looting a few hundred pounds from the bank there.¹²⁵

Closely followed by Gorrings's column and by the Defence Force of Somerset East, Smuts skirmished for a few days in the vicinity of the Zuurberg and Winterhoek mountains, then began to trek north towards Bruintjieshoogte. At a point approximately 20 km south of Somerset East, Smuts decided to divide his forces. He had been followed by 13 columns in the Zuurberg and, again, his purpose was to divide his pursuers. He and Bouwer travelled together, and van Deventer and Cmdt. J.R.F. Kirsten together. The flexible plan was for Smuts to trek towards the mountains west of Cradock, while van Deventer made for Graaff-Reinet. They would then rendezvous in the North-West Cape near Calvinia.¹²⁵ Near Bruintjieshoogte Smuts clashed with a local patrol. Elements of his force, dressed in khaki, lured this patrol into a trap and the result was that two colonial men, one of whom was Capt. W. Watson, commander of the Somerset East D.M.T., were killed. Before and after this incident 5 men of Smuts' force, all wearing khaki (due to necessity), were executed in the veld, some of them after a court martial.¹²⁷ After the clash near Bruintjieshoogte, Smuts left his pursuers behind. He began to follow the trail of Scheepers, passing Uitkomst which the latter had burnt earlier in the year. Crossing the line at Marais Halt, Smuts trekked past Aberdeen onto the Kariega river, crossing into the Karoo on the 13th October.¹²⁸

123. Encephalartos Longifolius.

124, Now known as Kirkwood.

125. W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. I, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 418-9, 434-5; O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), pp. 167-72; D. Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1929), p. 237-44; J.H. Meyer, Kommando-jare. 'n Oudstryder se Persoonlike Relaaas van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1971), pp. 268-78.

126. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 173-7; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 420, 435; Reitz, op cit., pp. 245-8; Meyer, op cit., pp. 279-89.

127. See Ferreira, op cit., pp. 179-84, 188-90; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 419-20, 437; Reitz, op cit., pp. 236, 245, 249-51, 259-60; Meyer op cit., pp. 284-5, 287; Jordaan, op cit., pp. 105-10.

128. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 178-91; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 419-20, 434-5.

After separating from Smuts, van Deventer captured a large camp at Doornbosch, midway between Somerset East and Pearston. The 157 men of the Somerset East D.M.T. surrendered there without resisting and van Deventer also captured 200 horses. Van Deventer trekked north-west through the Midlands and on about the 21st he was joined by 20 men of Scheepers' commando¹²⁹ in the mountains west of Murraysburg. With these reinforcements van Deventer crossed the line just south of Hutchinson, entering the Karoo.¹³⁰

The only commando group active in the Midlands in November was a small unit of 40 men under De Bruin, active in the north-east corner. In December Kritzinger's commando finally returned to the Midlands however. After Kritzinger's capture on the 16 December, Cmdt. L.B. Wessels led this unit. The horses were exhausted, and in poor condition, and Wessels was compelled to sacrifice his rearguard, which was captured on entering the Richmond district, in order to effect the escape of the bulk of the men. The commando divided into three small groups and Wessels himself went to Scheepers' former base, in the Camdeboo midway between Graaff-Reinet and Aberdeen. From there he went to Murraysburg, where the result of Scheepers activities, according to one of Wessels' men, 'was so great that the whole of Murraysburg was still on our side and received us heartily.'¹³¹ For a few weeks Wessels then operated in Malan's former area of operations on the Midlands-Karoo border, between Murraysburg and Victoria West. This area, as seen earlier, was one of the most pro-republican parts of the Midlands. He visited Murraysburg again, looting shops owned by pro-imperialists. A large British column then entered the town, pasting up proclamations which threatened people aiding the commandos with confiscation of their possessions and destruction of their property. Here too, pro-Boer civilians were transported, the women being confined at Noupoort in a women's camp. The Murraysburg proclamation succeeded in its purpose, for it ended the Boer's use of that town as a commissariat depot, which had begun on the 15th February 1901 and thus continued for 11 months.¹³²

In early January Wessels' commando was reunited at Allemansfontein. His sojourn in the Midlands began to be characterized by great bitterness between Boers and

129. After Scheepers' surrender on the 10th October his commando had broken up.

130. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 178-9; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., p. 435; Meyer, op cit., pp. 290-7; Amery, op cit., p. 395.

131. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 139-43; Northern Post, 30 November 1901, 27 December 1901, 3 January 1902.

132. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 141-4; Somerset Budget, 4 January 1902.

black troops. Atrocity gave rise to counter-atrocity. One of the links in this chain of escalating violence had been Scheepers' flogging of a number of coloureds in Murraysburg. On 4th January after a failed ambush at Leeuwfontein, near Murraysburg, one of Wessels' wounded men was shot dead by coloured troops who had captured him. This man, Jacobus van Heerden, had rebelled after his brother Hendrik had been erroneously executed by British troops on 2nd March 1901. A few days afterwards Wessels, in turn, shot dead two coloured troopers who had been captured.¹³³ Driven out of the Murraysburg district by Genl. H.L. Smith-Dorrien, Wessels entered the Graaff-Reinet district and on 23rd January burnt the station buildings at Nieu-Bethesda. His horses had long since recovered and been supplemented by large numbers of surplus horses. Defeating a column on the 27th January at Grootvlei, Wessels continued east and struck the line just north of Cradock. Here they received a message from Kritzinger, who was in grave danger of being executed, that they should immediately surrender. While crossing the line, Wessels captured and destroyed a fully-laden goods train north of Cradock. East of the line he linked up with Lieut. G. Bester's small force, which had attacked Conway station on the night of the 28th December. Having been supplemented by a variety of isolated bands such as Bester's, Wessels' force was now estimated at 200.¹³⁴

From near Cradock Wessels retraced his steps as far as Nieu-Bethesda. A British proclamation had ordered the destruction of all fodder and grain but he retaliated by punishing (usually by means of a fine) farmers who carried out this order. He then returned to his previous bases 20 km north of Murraysburg and on the Richmond district border. The Murraysburg district became overrun with British columns, and as these columns constantly employed the railways to get into position, Wessels decided to put as much distance between himself and the railway system as possible. He accordingly trekked westwards and on about the 12th February crossed the line at Three Sisters, entering the Karoo and leaving the Midlands behind.¹³⁵

133. Ibid., pp. 144-5.

134. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 145-51; Northern Post, 10 January 1901, 17 January 1901; Albert Times, 17 January 1901, 24 January 1902, 31 January 1902; Tarka Herald, 18 January 1902; 1 February 1902; Somerset Budget, 25 January 1902, 29 January 1902; Colesberg Advertiser, 7 February 1902.

135. A. de Wet et al., op cit., pp. 151-4; Colesberg Advertiser, 14 February 1902, 21 February 1902, 28 February 1902; Albert Times, 21 February 1902; Barkly East Reporter, 28 February 1902; 7 March 1902; Somerset Budget, 28 February 1902; 7 March 1902; Somerset Budget, 15 March 1902.

Malan had returned from his mission to the O.F.S. in September 1901. Trekking through the Richmond district to Murraysburg he had encountered Cmdt. Lategan's commando of 30 men, and the two groups had joined forces. From Murraysburg they trekked south-west to the Little Karoo, having heard that Malan's commando was at Oudtshoorn. But at Meiringspoort he received the news that Scheepers had been captured, van der Merwe killed and his commando smashed. Lategan placed himself and his men under Malan's command and they trekked to Calvinia, where Malan was reunited with the remnants of his force.¹³⁶ His political mission to the O.F.S. had not been a success and Steyn and De Wet had not supported his suggestions.¹³⁷ At the end of December 1901 Malan was one of the 4 commandants promoted to General by Smuts. His orders were to operate in the Midlands with the commandos of H. Hugo, J.H. Pypers, S.W. Pypers, J.J. Smith and G.H.P. van Reenen under him. Hugo was killed in the Karoo but Malan crossed into the Midlands at Biesiespoort, on 21st February 1902. The Midlands offensive had been carefully planned by Smuts and Malan, 'cleverest of all the commandants in Cape Colony,' to coincide with the opening of parliament at Whitehall. Smuts knew that the military authorities in the Cape had notified the British government that the commando movement there was on its last legs. The military offensive into the Midlands was designed to refute this report in the most emphatic way. But it failed because the other 4 commandants refused to cross the line into the dangerous Midlands. They trekked away to the north-west, leaving Malan alone with 150 men.¹³⁸

In February 1902 conditions in the North-East Cape also became intolerable and Fouché's junior officers demanded that he vacate the North-East Cape. Crossing the line just north of Molteno, Fouché entered the north-east corner of the Midlands between Steynsburg and Maraisburg on the first of March. Dropping south he crossed the Cookhouse-Middelburg line at Drennan on the 7th, and trekked west into the Swagershoek. On the 10th Col. R.H. Price attacked Fouché at Buffelshoek, killing Cmdts. van der Walt (Myburgh's successor) and P. Odendaal. The commando retreated to Plaat River, where it divided into a number of sections. The men with the best horses were grouped under Fouché, whose task was to draw the pursuers off the trail of those whose horses were exhausted. The other large

136. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 239-76.

137. Ibid., p. 280.

138. Ibid., pp. 305-34; Smith, op cit., pp. 101-25.

group was led by Field-Cornets G.J. Odendaal (brother of the dead commandant) and J.A.J. Bezuidenhout.¹³⁹

Odendaal and Bezuidenhout went to Petersburg, but there they decided to return to the Stormberg and trekked north-east into the Tandjiesberg. Many of their followers, including 15 Sneebergers, refused to accompany them and separated. These men continued north-west on their weak horses, some on foot, hoping to link up with Fouché. From Plaat River Fouché went south-west over Wheatlands, to the vicinity of Jansenville. He crossed the line between Saxony and Klipplaat on the 16th March. Price remained in pursuit of Fouché and overtook him on the 17th near Vlaklaagte, in the south-west corner of the Midlands. The Kariëga river was flooding and, held up on its banks, Price captured 4 men and 41 horses. Fouché then turned north and on about the 19th March linked up with Malan just west of Murraysburg.¹⁴⁰

During March and April Malan was subjected to very close pursuit in the districts of Murraysburg, Richmond, Hanover and Aberdeen. Colonels Price and Doran commenced a drive through the Camdeboo on the 26th March, which compelled the commandos to subdivide into a number of small groups. By late April Fouché's horses were sufficiently recovered and the two groups trekked eastward into the Middelburg district. In early May Fouché captured a column at The Willows, 35 km west of Middelburg, inflicting a number of casualties. At this time Malan and Fouché received a written order from Genl. de Wet for them to report at Vereeniging for the peace negotiations. Since Malan was certain that the negotiations would result in a 'humiliating peace,' in which the republics would lose their independence, he refused to attend. He was also mindful of the failure of his political mission to the O.F.S. in 1901. Fouché mistrusted the letter from De Wet and also refused to react. The result was that these two key Cape leaders were absent from the negotiations and Smuts alone represented the colonial interest.¹⁴¹

In March Cmdt. C.P. van Heerden, Hugo's successor, emerged as a strong commando leader and after The Willows he, Malan and Fouché trekked south-west individually

139. F.L. Coleman, The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986 (Kaffrarian Rifles Association, East London, 1988), p. 93; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 98-101; Albert Times, 7 March 1902; Frontier Guardian, 20 March 1902; Somerset Budget, 5 April 1902, 9th June 1962; Barkly East Reporter, 18 April 1902; Tarka Herald, 15 March 1902.

140. Coleman, op cit.; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 333-5; Somerset Budget, 9 June 1962; 5 April 1902.

141. Smith, op cit., pp. 126-36; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 335-60; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 116-20; Somerset Budget, 13 June 1962; Northern Post, 16 May 1902.

into the Richmond, Murraysburg and Aberdeen districts. Reunited with the others in the vicinity of Vleiplaas, Aberdeen district, van Heerden demanded permission to launch a full-scale attack on Aberdeen. His horses were in very poor condition and he hoped to obtain replacements there. Malan saw no alternative but to agree to van Heerden's demand, but the attack on the 19th May failed. Van Heerden captured 54 horses but was himself killed in the clash, as were two other men.¹⁴² After Aberdeen Malan and Fouché trekked south-east and crossed the Port Elizabeth-Graaff-Reinet line at Marais Halt. Fouché was attacked at Stapleford and suffered some losses. From the vicinity of Bloukrans and Stapleford on the Sundays river, the trek went east onto the Fish river and the Port Elizabeth-Cradock line. On the 27th May Malan was seriously wounded and captured there, between Benelegte and Sheldon station. Fouché crossed the line into the Eastern Cape for a few days and then returned to the Cradock district, where his commando received the news of the Treaty of Vereeniging.¹⁴³

In the eyes of the republican leaders who planned a colonial uprising in 1900 and 1901, the town of Graaff-Reinet represented the pièce de résistance. To them Kritzinger's capture of the train at Hell's Gate on the penultimate day of 1900 was a promising start to the guerrilla war in the Midlands. Although the event was unplanned and its timing coincidental, it was indeed to prove to be portentous, and Kritzinger could hardly have chosen a more dramatic nor a more symbolic way of extending the war into this hitherto untouched region. Kritzinger's first invasion of the Midlands was a sensational event but the second rebellion in the eastern half of the Cape Colony really dates from his re-entry into that region in February 1901. Over a thousand rebels joined the various units under Kritzinger's command, a figure which represented a high percentage of the young Boer men in the region. The Midlands became seriously destabilized and the theatre of hostilities was greatly extended. Some commandos were composed entirely of rebels and were therefore autochthonous, pointing to considerable pro-republican support on the part of Midlands Boer society. In this sense invasion and rebellion can be seen as distinct processes, but which nevertheless to a great extent coincided.

Enormous stimulus was given to the Midlands guerrilla war by the unification of Scheepers', Malan's and Fouché's groups in March 1901. The war in the area divides neatly into four quarters in 1901. The halcyon days of the first months of the

142. Smith, op cit., pp. 136-66; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 121-9; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 360-2; Somerset Budget, 16 June 1962.

143. Smith, op cit., pp. 167-79; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 103-40; Somerset Budget, 16 June 1962, 23 June 1962; Tarka Herald, 28 May 1902, 4 June 1902, 21 June 1902.

invasion ended in March with Scobell's victory over Scheepers, Malan and Fouché at Bloukrans. Fouché was permanently ejected from the Midlands after that encounter, and it signalled the first stiffening of British resolve. During the second quarter Malan, Scheepers and Kritzinger escalated their activities. By June 1901 the republican goal of a general Boer uprising had almost been reached. The scale of rebellion was far higher than has previously been recognized. In the short space of two months however, the situation had undergone a complete transformation and the rebellion had been crushed. This period of sudden decline for the commandos was marked by the ejection of Kritzinger's commando in August and the capture of Lötter's entire unit in September. During the last quarter of 1901 commando activity in the Midlands by groups based within it remained at a very low level.

The chief reason for the sudden decline of Boer arms was Genl. French's very successful counter-guerrilla offensive. Massive numbers of British troops were stationed in the Midlands. In bald terms this pointed to the success of Boer guerrilla strategies, since troops were drawn away from the republics. But this success was offset by the fact that a significant percentage of these troops were recruited from within colonial society. Nevertheless, considerable expense was incurred in the raising of this new army and the concentrated Midlands guerrilla campaign, by drawing troops - both crack cavalry regiments and infantry - out of the republics, definitely served to considerably lengthen the war. The blockhouse lines were integral parts of French's success. The martial law administration played its part in containing both rebellion and support for it, but covert support for the commandos was very effective and remained at a high level throughout the war.

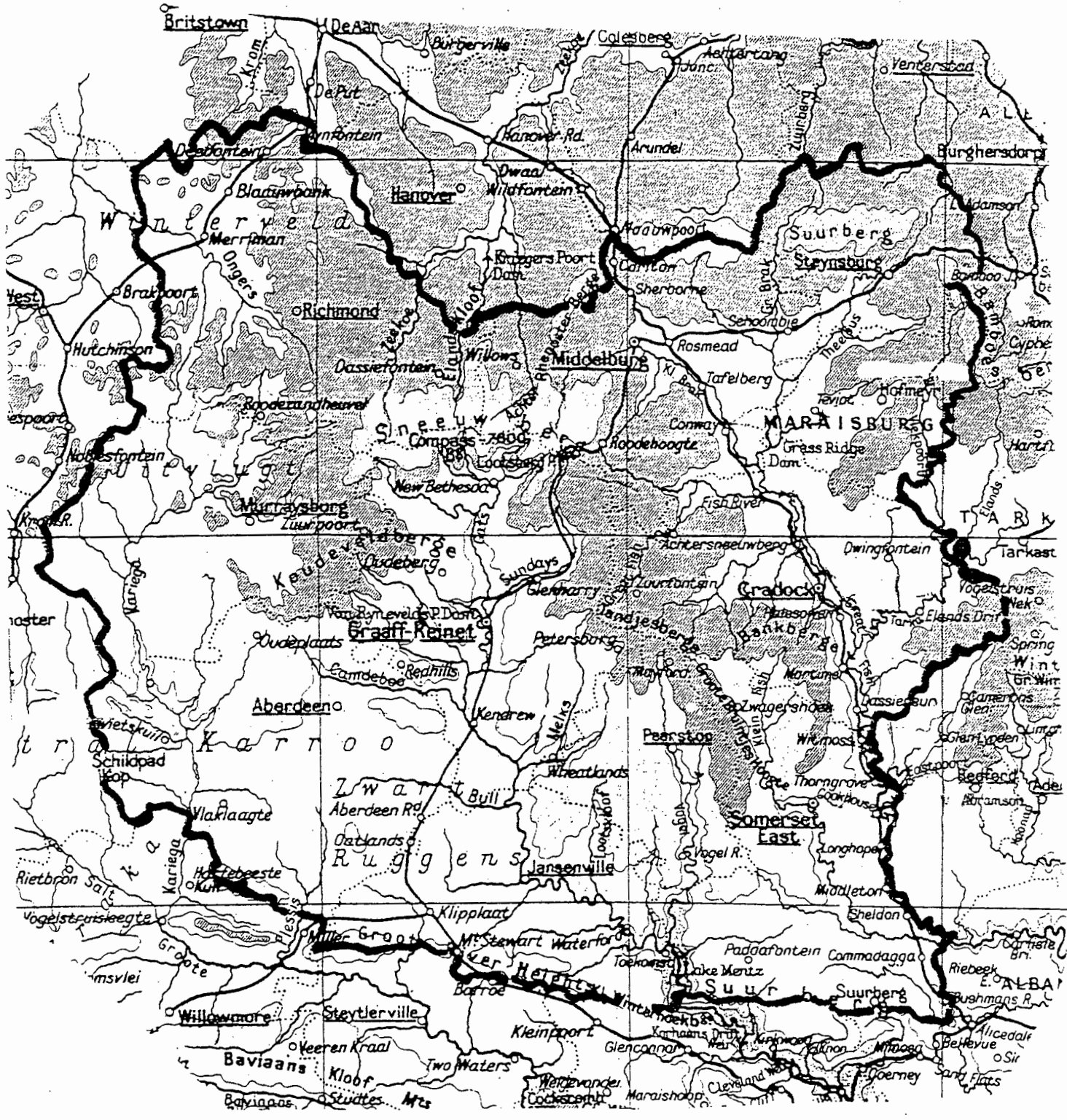
The reasons for the decline and failure of the Boer guerrilla war in the second half of 1901 can also be found in the Midlands topography, and at the level of inter-commando leadership and organization. The mountainous nature of the Midlands made guerrilla war possible, but communication between the different commandos was made more difficult. This was exacerbated by British control of the lines of communication, especially the telegraph and the railways. The communications difficulty is exemplified by the fact that Kritzinger and Malan never met, either during the war or after. And Kritzinger was the Boer commander-in-chief ('Assistant-Commandant-General') for the Cape Colony, while Malan was one of the foremost commando leaders. They were both active in the Midlands for long periods of time!

The communications difficulty meant that no concerted strategies could be formulated. As a result the Midlands was clogged at times by too many commandos, and at other times left virtually empty. Kritzinger's failures - not as a guerrilla commander, for he was very effective, but as supreme commander - were also evident. He was not able to unite the commandos under him,¹⁴⁴ and his long absence from the Midlands between August and December 1901 proved fatal to the Boer cause there.

The operations of first Wessels and then Malan and Fouché in the Midlands in 1902 proved that conditions there were still favourable for the waging of guerrilla war. The collapse of Smuts' offensive there and the reasons for it - cowardice on the part of four commando leaders, and their refusal to cross the line eastwards - was one of the major reasons for the possibilities which the Midlands still presented in 1902 not being fully exploited. The indiscriminate executions of rebel and republican alike - in particular of the officer corps - played therefore, in the final analysis, a powerful part in the decline of commando activity.

There was an upsurge in racial conflict in the Midlands in 1902, when Wessels arrived, a conflict which had its roots in the Boer policy of executing black scouts and spies ('spioene'). Although this conflict left a historical legacy, it was however essentially limited both in nature and extent.

144. Both Scheepers and Fouché became alienated from him, rejecting his authority.



THE MIDLANDS

IN HOSTILE WATERS : THE EASTERN CAPE

With its large English commercial and educational centres, the Eastern Cape did not present excellent prospects to the Boer guerrilla in 1901. The region was possessed of a very large African population, which made commando penetration of the countryside virtually impossible. The eastern province was also the cradle of British culture in South Africa, and it was the only Cape region where English farmers outnumbered their Boer counterparts. The region did, on the other hand, border on the Midlands, which was one of the most rebellious parts of the colony. In addition, the Winterberg in the west and the Bamboesberg in the north-west made guerrilla operations in the region to some extent possible.

It was in the south-west however, that Genl. P.H. Kritzinger chose to open up a new guerrilla front. At Klipfontein on the 8th March 1901, Kritzinger changed course and trekked north-east to Beenleegte, where his commando spent the night. On the 9th he turned eastwards and crossed the Little Fish river, then also crossed the railway line between Sheldon and Little-Fish stations. This was the first entry by a Boer commando into the Eastern Cape during the South African War. At Sheldon Kritzinger's men took the station-master prisoner, smashed the telegraph instrument, destroyed the wires, took the cash from the station till and blew up small portions of the line north and south of the station. They did not however damage the station buildings. The commando, which had captured Pearston just a week before, was pursued by 4 columns under the command of Cols. H. de B. de Lisle and G.F. Gorringe. A squadron of Gorringe's C.D.F. made contact with Kritzinger's rearguard, but was forced to retreat. A runner had meanwhile been sent to Middleton station from Sheldon. A wire was then sent to Cradock and an armoured train despatched from there. It arrived in the vicinity of Commadagga and Sheldon early on the morning of the 10th, just in time to lob a few shells in the direction of the commando as it disappeared into the hills. A horse-train also arrived there, and having remounted his C.D.F. column Gorringe pursued the Boer force.¹

From Sheldon Kritzinger trekked eastward to Carlisle Bridge on the Great Fish, where he released the twenty-two black prisoners taken at Pearston. He was then only 40 km north-west of Grahamstown. From Carlisle Bridge the commando trekked north-east to the Koonap river. A force of D.M.R. and Nesbitt's Horse lay in

1. B.W.M., 4299/4, 'Dagboek van J.M. Ackerman,' p. 30; Somerset Budget, 13 March 1901, 16 March 1901; Het Oosten, 14 March 1901; Albert Times, 15 March 1901.

wait for them so they crossed the Koonap and attacked this column, compelling it into retreat. One D.M.R. trooper was sent on ahead to warn Fort Beaufort. Panic ensued there. All stores were closed, the Town Guard called out and the Martello Tower supplied and reinforced. At that point Kritzinger was only 30 km south-west of Fort Beaufort, but he had no intention of attacking the town. His advance in that direction had merely been a feint, to destabilize the village. Kritzinger trekked back across the river through Leeuwdrift and turned north. In the evening he crossed the road between Adelaide and Fort Beaufort, sleeping on the night of the 12th in the veld.²

While Kritzinger had invaded the Eastern Cape from the south-west corner, Cmdt. G.H.P. van Reenen, with F.-Cs. C.J.F. Botha and M.J. Bornman, entered the region from the north-west. This concerted strategy had been arranged at a krygsraad on the 28th February. On the 4th March van Reenen had captured Maraisburg (Kritzinger had captured Pearston on the 3rd March) and three days later he trekked south of the Bamboesberg towards the Tarkastad district. Near the district border between Maraisburg and Tarkastad, van Reenen captured and disarmed 15 Cape Police. The policy during this invasion of the Eastern Cape was not to occupy or attempt to capture any towns, and van Reenen's force trekked south of Tarkastad into the Winterberg.³

North of the Bedford-Adelaide road, Kritzinger ascended the beautiful Baviaansrivierberg, spending the night on top of that mountain and linking up with some of van Reenen's men. The following day the commando descended into Baviaansrivier and clashed with an inexperienced local force at Cameron's Glen. Three of the British force were killed and 26 captured. The dead included Capt. J. Rennie, head of the Bedford D.D.F., and W.D. Ross, a prominent local farmer. Rennie was killed only 8 km from his own farm at Craig Rennie.⁴

The shooting of Rennie and Ross, especially, created great bitterness among the English communities of the eastern Cape, particularly since it was rumoured initially that they had been shot dead after being taken prisoner. Later it trans-

2. Ackerman, op cit.; Somerset Budget, 20 March 1901, 23 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 22 March 1901; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 22 March 1901.
3. 'Buurman', (M.J. Bornman), Oorlogswolke Oor Die Republieke (Voortrekkerpers, Johannesburg, 1944), pp. 170-82; Colesberg Advertiser, 22 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 13 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 13 March 1901, 16 March 1901, 20 March 1901.
4. Ackerman, op cit.; Somerset Budget, 23 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 27 March 1901, 4 April 1901; Albert Times, 22 March 1901.

pired that they had been shot at close range in an ambush.⁵ This was in contravention of normal practice observed by both sides, that the troops in an ambush should first be given the option of surrender.⁶ It appears that the execution-style shooting of the two men may have been an act of revenge, either due to the shooting of a Boer farmer in the Midlands earlier in the month, or to the escalation in the concentration of women and children in the camps in the O.F.S. Later in the month on the Zuurberg, Kritzinger warned one of his men, F-C. M.J. Bornman, who may have been responsible for the shootings, that 'The Afrikaner is a civilized people on whom no charge of barbarism must come to rest, let the enemy be barbaric with women and children, there is a righteous God, Who does not sleep, to Him alone the hour of vengeance is due.'⁷

Kritzinger, for the first time since crossing into the Eastern Cape, obtained some rebel recruits in the Baviaansrivier valley. Cameron's Glen, where some of them came from, was already a legendary site in the century-old history of Boer resistance to British rule. Freek Bezuidenhout was shot dead there during the Slagtersnek uprising of 1815, and the crack in the cliff-face where Bezuidenhout made his last stand was pointed out to all the Boer commandos.⁸ The rebels who came from this valley were strongly aware of its historical legacy.⁹ The greater Baviaansrivier area had however undergone a demographic transformation since the days when the Voortrekker leader Piet Retief had lived 100 km south of Cameron's Glen, at Riebeek-East. But as late as 1901, the beleaguered remnants¹⁰ of the once-thriving Boer population of the area were still sufficient in number to turn it into a significant centre of pro-republican support.

From Cameron's Glen Kritzinger continued trekking north-east. His large commando was broken up into various detachments and minimal contact existed between some of them. Capt. J.J. Smith, for instance, had separated from Kritzinger at Pearston

5. Somerset Budget, 23 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 27 March 1901.

6. See for instance the circumstances in which Cpl. W.E. Ansley was shot, Somerset Budget, op cit.

7. 'Buurman', op cit., pp. 178-83.

8. Ackerman, op cit.; Somerset Budget, op cit.

9. Ackerman, op cit.; B.W.M., 5127/2, 'Beroep Op Mede Afrikaners van Martinus Wessel Marais'; B.W.M., 5248/1, J.M.A. Le Clus (née Botha), 'Ons Ondervindende Gedurende die Anglo-Boer Oorlog', p. 1; Tarka Herald, 20 April 1901.

10. Their numbers declined even more after the war, during the tense reconstruction period. See Le Clus, op cit., pp. 9-10.

on the 4th March with 17 men. He took a full part in Kritzinger's invasion into the Eastern Cape, and was at Carlisle Bridge on the 11th March when the black prisoners were released,¹¹ yet his commando had no personal contact with Kritzinger's for six weeks after Pearston. When they remade contact in the Zuurberg Smith's patrol had grown to 54, many of them being Eastern Cape rebels.¹²

On the 15th March Kritzinger's advanced guard arrived at Quaggaskerk in the Winterberg. They clashed there with a force of 60 Winterberg M.R. under Capt. A. Frost. The Boers attempted to capture the W.M.R. horses, which were kept in a strongly guarded kraal at the adjoining farm of Ravenspring. This engagement was halted however by the arrival of Kritzinger's main force, driven by Col. Gorringer's cannon-fire up the Baviaansrivier valley. Kritzinger's entire force then turned north-west towards Paling Kloof, 35 km east of Cradock and 32 km south-west of Tarkastad.

Kritzinger rested at Paling Kloof on the 16th (Cradock district) then in the evening, in heavy rain, trekked through the Tarka river and spent the night in the veld. On the 17th he trekked northwards in a curving arc and arrived at Bredeleege, 20 km west of Tarkastad. Four columns under Gorringer's command attacked him there and he trekked into Eland's Poort, on the Eastern Cape border. Before reaching the Poort Kritzinger collided at right-angles with Col. de Lisle's column trekking back from Magersmansberg. De Lisle withdrew to Tarkastad, but only to leave his convoy in safety there. That same night, the 16th, de Lisle trekked back in driving rain to Magersmansberg and deployed his 400 men in a long front along the peaks and ridges of that mountain. In the morning Kritzinger's force came under heavy fire from de Lisle's two twelve-pounder guns and two pom-poms. The British left flank (comprising local Defence Force men) failed to come into position however. Gorringer was also engaged with the Boer forces, so was unable to close upon the main force from the rear. The result was that first a small commando of 40 men enfiladed de Lisle's left flank, and then the entire commando followed suit.

Trekking within 8 km of Tarkastad, Kritzinger swung north and fought the pursuing columns off all day, to arrive at Modderfontein, where he took some prisoners and

11. Somerset Budget, 16 March 1901, 23 May 1962; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 22 March 1901.

12. Somerset Budget, 23 May 1962. See also Colesberg Advertiser, 22 March 1901; H. Reitz and H. Oost, Die Nasionale Boek (Nasionale Boek Maatskappy, Johannesburg, 1931), pp. 426, 648.

captured two cars full of ammunition. An African driver who attempted to run away was shot dead. Continuing north to Klipdam in the Elands river valley, Kritzinger spent the night there. Galloping north across a mountain plateau to Groenfontein in the southern reaches of the Bamboesberg, he rested and fed his horses. On the afternoon of the same day (the 19th) he trekked through the poort at Middelberg before continuing on to The Pines, on the northern slopes of the Bamboesberg, where he spent the night. On the 19th March Kritzinger had trekked a total of 40 km, including right through the Bamboesberg range.¹³

During the fighting on the 17th, Kritzinger's men 'had shot in cold blood a Kafir, who they alleged was carrying despatches for the British.' 'The treatment of natives' the Somerset East newspaper commented, 'is the darkest feature of the second invasion of the Colony by the Boers. Evidently they mean to terrorize them. On every possible occasion the sjambok or the bullet is brought into use.'¹⁴

Kritzinger's was not the only commando operating in the Eastern Cape at this time. A number of other detachments spread out all over the region. Apart from the group of 40 who had broken past De Lisle's forces at Magersmansberg, 'A detached party of about 100' was reported also not yet to have gone north.¹⁵ Apart from the commandos of Smith, van Reenen, Bornman and Botha, Capt. C.J. Lötter's force and others also operated all over the western part of the region. On the 19th a patrol of 25 men were captured near Adelaide. A number of Boer patrols of 15 to 30 men were evident in the Bedford district. From the 13th March, for ten days, that town was constantly under fear of attack. By the 23rd the Town Guard there had served unbrokenly in the trenches for a period of ten days.¹⁶ The presence of Kritzinger's forces in the Queenstown district on the 15th March caused a panic at Cathcart. Learning of the arrival of Kritzinger's force at Kamastone, 5 hours away, the Town Guard was called out on the evening of the 16th. The new school was utilized as a fort, Africans being employed to barricade the windows with sandbags. Reinforcements arrived in Cathcart and other buildings were also fortified, while the wall of the pound kraal was flattened to prevent the Boers sheltering there. 'Although the actual danger of the enemy coming has passed,' a regional newspaper wrote on the 22nd, 'Captain Woodhouse, commanding

13. Ackerman, op cit., pp. 30-1; Tarka Herald, 20 March 1901, 27 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 23 March 1901; Het Oosten, 28 March 1901.

14. Somerset Budget, op cit.

15. Ibid.

16. Het Oosten, op cit.

troops in this district, assisted by Captain Estment, still continue the erection of fortifications, redoubts, trenches etc., and nightly the town is guarded by detachments of Town Guard and Somersets, while the approaches are well guarded by outlying pickets.¹⁷

From The Pines, on the 20th, north of the Bamboesberg, Kritzinger trekked briefly into the Cradock district, before doubling back on his tracks and entering, very briefly, the Molteno district at Vrolykskraal. He spent the night there, dividing his laager in two so that Lötter and van Reenen remained north of the Bamboesberg. Their horses were very poor and they intended to cross the Orange river back into the Free State.

On the 21st Kritzinger plunged back out of the North-East Cape, going in a south-east direction and recrossing the Bamboesberg. This south-east movement of his may have been partly in order to create a diversion for Lötter and van Reenen to get clear. Kritzinger did not stop until he reached Groenfontein.¹⁸ He spent the night there, having travelled 30 km including a crossing over the spine of the Bamboesberg, since to return via the passes would have been too dangerous.¹⁹

From Groenfontein on the 22nd Kritzinger hugged the north-east slopes of the Toorberg. He travelled south-east via Hartfontein and spent the night at Bossieshoek, the farm of Daniel Hattingh. Shortly after midnight on the 23rd the commando crossed the Tarkastad-Queenstown railway line near Platkop, arriving south of the line at Hartebeesfontein, less than 20 km from Queenstown! Kritzinger then turned south-west and spent the night in the veld.

Continuing on the 24th past the present-day settlements of Mitford, Loudon and Thornhill, Kritzinger crossed the Swart Kei river, passing within 5 km of where the Bulhoek massacre would occur in 1921. That day he sighted a British force near Groen Nek, 20 km south-west of Tarkastad. Crossing over the Nek, Kritzinger captured this Winterberg Mounted Rifles unit, taking 18 prisoners. On the 25th all the British troops available in Tarkastad (all small local colonial corps) trekked out in pursuit of Kritzinger. A clash ensued that day at Vogelstruisnek. The Tarkastad force suffered some casualties²⁰ and then retreated to that town,

17. Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 22 March 1901.

18. Not the same farm as the previously mentioned Groenfontein (Christian Hattingh), which is on the southern slopes of the Bamboesberg. This Groenfontein (D.J. Hattingh) is midway between Sterkstroom and Tarkastad, on the main road. These two farms - possibly owned by brothers - are 20 km apart.

19. Ackerman, op cit., p. 31.

20. One Boer source stated that the colonial losses were 5 dead, two wounded and 8 captured. See Ackerman, op cit.

but the Boers were also compelled to leave some wounded men behind on the battle-field.²¹

After the clash at Vogelstruisnek, Kritzinger trekked to Beestekraal, where he spent the night. On the 26th he continued north-east to Bredeleegte, where he had re-entered the Eastern Cape on the 17th. From there he trekked due west to Grootdam in the Midlands.²² He had been in the Eastern Cape for 17 days, from the 9th to the 26th March.

Although his horses were exhausted by the time he left the region he had inflicted a number of severe blows to British prestige, notably at Cameron's Glen, and succeeded in opening up a new guerrilla front in the Eastern Cape. A number of rebels had been recruited and the communications network disrupted. The daily train between Queenstown and Tarkastad, for instance, could not operate between the 20th and 26th March.²³ Business in parts of the Eastern Cape (particularly Tarkastad) had ground to a virtual halt.²⁴ The most serious consequence of Kritzinger's raid was however the effect it had on colonial morale: 'A month or two ago any suggestion that the war would be carried into the Bedford district and waged around the homes of the peaceful Bedford farmers would have been scouted as absurd,' wrote a colonial newspaper. 'Men talk of peace and tell us the war is almost over, but week by week the death roll lengthens,' it added.²⁵

The success of Kritzinger's destabilization tactics in the Eastern Cape depended on the extent to which his lieutenants were able to maintain the process which he had initiated. More specifically, it was necessary for a rebel commando to originate and maintain itself within the region. The officers appointed to drive this process were Cmdt. van Reenen and F-C. Botha. Van Reenen was absent in the O.F.S. during the first weeks of April, but Botha from his base on the regional border at Vlekpoort was well situated to continue with operations in the East. Botha was however barely able to make his presence felt, and it was only really during the last week of April, when van Reenen returned to the region, that any overt Boer activity was perceptible. Van Reenen moved through the Mostert's Hoek and Wildschutsberg wards, avoiding Tarkastad. He looted two stores

21. Ibid.; Tarka Herald, 27 March 1901.

22. Ackerman, op cit., pp. 31-2.

23. Somerset Budget, op cit.

24. Tarka Herald, 24 April 1901.

25. Colesberg Advertiser, 22 March 1901.

at Klipkraal and commandeered horses from farmers. Meanwhile the defences of Tarkastad were strengthened and forts erected commanding the principal roads. Col. H.J. Scobell's column briefly visited the town. During this time the Cradock-Tarkastad postcart was repeatedly captured.²⁶

The capture of Jamestown in early June 1901 brought about a complete change in the mood and atmosphere of the war in the eastern half of the colony. Tarkastad was one of the garrisons which were immediately reinforced. Small-scale guerrilla activity in the Vlekpoort and Mostert's Hoek wards continued into mid-June. These were still the commandos of van Reenen and Botha, engaged not in offensive action, but in defensive tactics involving the raiding of farms for horses and supplies.²⁷ As such, they were putting into practice one of the primary duties of the guerrilla, which is merely to survive. Another primary function, that of striking at the enemy's lines of communication, was entirely absent. With regard to a third role that of the transmission of pro-republican ideology to the local rural population, the time for that in the Eastern Cape had already passed.

On the 14th June however, after the holding of an important krygsraad at Burnley, near Cyphergat, and the issuing of a proclamation two days before that at Stormberg, Kritzinger re-entered the Eastern Cape from the north. He clashed with the column of Col. S.C.H. Monro and three other columns in the Bamboesberg on the 17th and was driven south, again losing a number of horses in the process. Kritzinger's purpose in re-entering the region was partly to give some support to van Reenen. All over the Tarkastad district Kritzinger's men stated that they were going to take the village just as they had taken Jamestown. The commando was however quickly driven north by Cols. Crabbe and Scobell and Genl. H.L. Smith-Dorrien. Kritzinger then turned west, going past Maraisburg (again with a number of men dismounted) and re-entered the Midlands. Cmdt. van Reenen broke past the line of columns however and penetrated south into the Bedford district, also 'looting and careering about the Fort Bedford district, below the Great Winterberg.'²⁸ On the 3rd July van Reenen turned north, ascending the steep slopes of the mountain between the Katberg and Winterberg, and arriving at Rui-tjies Vlake. He captured a large number of horses and some sheep and trekked

26. Tarka Herald, 3 April 1901; 10 April 1901, 17 April 1901, 27 April 1901, 1 May 1901, 4 May 1901, 15 May 1901, 22 May 1901, 25 May 1901, 29 May 1901.

27. Ibid., 5 June 1901, 12 June 1901, 15 June 1901.

28. Kokstad Advertiser, 19 July 1901; Somerset Budget, 30 May 1962; Barkly East Reporter, 28 June 1901; Tarka Herald, 19 June 1901, 22 June 1901; Albert Times, 24 June 1901; Northern Post, 21 June 1901; A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, München, 1902), p. 109.

north towards Tafelberg and Bulhoek. Van Reenen's men exchanged shots on occasion with C.D.F. scouts, and also captured a number of these, whom they told to go home, hoping that 'the next time they met it would be peace.' 'The Boers were very civil' to the scouts, recorded one newspaper 'and rode good horses, were well clothed, and most of them were smoking cigarettes.'²⁹

From Tafelberg van Reenen was pursued north-west by Crabbe towards Tarkastad. Haig and Gorringe came in touch with him on the 6th July and in order to escape van Reenen was compelled to leave behind most of the horses he had collected. His incursion into the Eastern Cape therefore resulted in failure.³⁰

Kritzinger linked up with F-C. C. Botha on the Tarkastad - Maraisburg border on the 30th July, and promoted him to commandant. Kritzinger then began to move north towards the Orange river and on the 13th August his commando was smashed near Venterstad. On receiving his promotion Botha returned to the Tarkastad district for the first two weeks of August. Van Reenen however crossed the Orange river on the 14th August, abandoning the Eastern Cape. Botha combined with Lötter for the last fortnight of July, in the Midlands. But there were far too few Boer commandos to counter the overwhelming number of British columns. Splitting up at the end of August, Botha was surrounded at Quaggashoek³¹ by 6 columns under the command of Genl. Hunter. He managed to escape however, on a little-known goat-track. He then returned to the Tarkastad district, where he managed to obtain horses. Lötter's entire commando was surrounded and captured at Petersburg on the 4th September. Botha and F-C. J.S. van Heerden then trekked through the Bamboesberg to Molteno. Van Heerden went on to the O.F.S., but Botha returned with his greatly depleted force, in mid-September. The Boer guerrilla campaign in the Midlands and Eastern Cape had, for the moment, been entirely smashed. Botha hid in the mountains with a handful of men, on the Maraisburg-Tarkastad border, where his rebellion had begun ten months previously.³²

Genl. J.C. Smuts' Transvaal invasion force entered the Eastern Cape in the Stormberg mountains, a few kilometres north-east of Halseton station, on the 12th September 1901. Because of the fighting quality of his force, Smuts' invasion was of a magnitude never before experienced within the region, and it was set to

29. Albert Times, 5 July 1901.

30. Northern Post, 12 July 1901.

31. 40 km north-east of Bedford.

32. De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 109-10; Tarka Herald, 3 August 1901, 7 August 1901; C. Theo Botha, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant C.J.F. Botha', Die Naweek, 20 June 1946.

strain the defensive capability of the East to the utmost. On the other hand, his horses were in very poor condition, ammunition was very low and the clothing of the men was in very poor condition. Hence, arriving in a region which was in a peak state of military preparedness also posed extraordinary demands of survival for the Transvaal commandos.

While nearing the railway line Smuts' men had seen a train approaching, but he would not allow them to attempt to derail this train, or fire on it 'for fear of killing civilians.' But, in fact, Genl. French was on the train with his staff, hurrying up to control the operations against Smuts!³³ Heading south-west, guided by local Boers, Smuts also crossed the Port Elizabeth-Bloemfontein line at Putterskraal, just south of Sterkstroom. In freezing cold and driving rain he continued south-west along the southern fringes of the Bamboesberg. Smuts' guide now was Cmdt. J.R.F. Kirsten, who had spent time in the colony in late August 1901, in order to scout out Smuts' line of advance.³⁴ But Kirsten lost his way and his place was taken by Cmdt. J. L. van Deventer. The entire Tarkastad district was saturated with British troops. Indeed, one of Smuts' men recorded his first sight of the Eastern Cape as follows: 'in every valley and on every road, stood the white tents of English camps, to bar our progress.'³⁵ On the 16th September Smuts reached a point 10 km north of Tarkastad but was compelled by heavy British troop concentrations to swerve north-west and trek right into the Bamboesberg. A number of his horses had died as a result of the severe cold, so that his overall position had deteriorated.³⁶

On the 17th September, Smuts attacked a squadron of 17th Lancers at Elands River Poort. Approximately 26 of the 100 men were killed in the attack and 40 wounded. This clash was therefore the most successful skirmish in which Boer troops were involved during the Cape guerrilla war. Ironically however, Smuts' attack here was motivated more by desperation than by any sense of military superiority.³⁷

33. D. Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber, London, 1929), p. 220.

34. T.A.D., A 787, Preller Collection, Vol. 75, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van P.D. Roux', pp. 511-2.

35. Reitz, op cit., p. 215.

36. C. Bosman, Slaan en Vlug (A.P.B., Johannesburg, 1946), pp. 227-32; Reitz, op cit., pp. 216-25; O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouver (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), pp. 156-60; J.H. Meyer, Kommando-jare. 'n Ouds-tryder Se Persoonlike Relaaas van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1971), pp. 230-50; W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers. Vol. 1. June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 417, 432; L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. V, p. 388.

37. In this sense it was similar to Kritzinger's attack on Jamestown in June 1901.

Prior to this clash the disintegration of the commando had begun to appear inevitable. But this victory at Modderfontein meant that the commando was once again fully equipped with regard to horses, clothing, food, ammunition and other supplies. Deneys Reitz, one of Smuts' men, had for instance entered the fight with his last two rounds of ammunition.

Once the fight at Modderfontein started, the real military command passed to Cmdt. van Deventer, and it was chiefly due to his decisive actions and inspirational presence that the clash was so successful for the Transvalers.³⁸

From Elands River Poort Smuts' commando continued trekking north-west. On the 18th he met up with the remnants of Cmdt. Botha's commando at Uijenhoek³⁹ in the Bamboesberg. Botha and his 25 men attached themselves to Smuts' commando and trekked to the Western Cape.⁴⁰ From the northern reaches of the Bamboesberg Smuts trekked west then south in a curving arc before turning south-east. He passed 40 km to the west of Tarkastad then went through Paling Kloof into the Kamberg. The commando had some minor clashes with the local district forces, but the farther south they went in the Eastern Cape the more the pursuit lessened, until it ceased entirely. Botha's skilful guidance was primarily responsible for this. From the Katberg Smuts ascended the Winterberg then trekked south along the Mancazana river, east of the Baviaansrivierberge. By the 24th September he was 15 km north-east of Adelaide. A few of his men entered that town incognito. He intended to trek through the Fort Beaufort district, but was warned that 'the presence of numerous Kaffir spies' would make that impossible.⁴¹ Ten kilometres east of Adelaide Smuts swung to the south-west. He was followed by a column from Adelaide and clashed briefly with a C.M.R. unit under the command of Col. T.H. Lukin which trekked out from Grahamstown, 70 km to the south-east. Crossing the Great Fish river, Smuts' force also crossed over the railway line a few kilometres south of Middleton station, on the 27th September, and entered the south-east corner of the Midlands. He had been in the Eastern Cape for 15 days.⁴² At the line Bouver and van Deventer attempted to destroy the rails in

38. This last statement is based on the descriptions of the skirmish by Bosman and Meyer. See Bosman, op cit., pp. 233-6; Reitz, op cit., pp. 226-32; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 161-3; Meyer, op cit., pp. 251-8; Hancock and van der Poel, op cit.; Amery, op cit., p. 389.

39. This farm was in the Bamboesberg poort through which Kritzinger had trekked on the 19th March.

40. Botha went into exile in Europe after the war.

41. Ferreira, op cit., p. 165.

42. Reitz, op cit., pp. 232-7; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 163-7; Meyer, op cit., pp. 258-69; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 11 October 1901.

order to capture an armoured train which was patrolling between Middleton and Sheldon stations. But, unsuccessful at a first attempt, 'General Smuts vetoed the plan, on the ground that an armoured train was in any case worth little to us.'⁴³

During the heavy rains of the 12th September 12 of Smuts' men lost their way and were separated from the main body. Remaining in the Eastern Cape, they raised a new commando under Cmdt. Pretorius, a Maclear rebel. Pretorius, like Myburgh a Field-Cornet before the war,⁴⁴ began to some extent to fill the vacuum left by the departure of van Reenen and Botha. Smuts later wrote that he had heard from British sources that they 'have done good work.'⁴⁵

In early October however the Sterkstroom commandant, with 10 Cape Police, clashed with Pretorius' small commando. Two Boers were killed, one of them being Pretorius, and two captured.⁴⁶ This nascent commando then fragmented⁴⁷ but underwent a mutation.

F-C. Paul Coetzer, a Tarkastad rebel emerged at the head of this new formation. In November he began to employ basic guerrilla tactics in the Tarkastad district, 'marauding' and arresting Boer farmers who gave information to the British. On the night of the 8th December a joint patrol of the Queenstown Volunteer Rifles and Kidger's Scouts surprised Coetzer's force at Hoogstede, a farmhouse near Klaarfontein. The commando escaped, but left behind 24 horses, 14 saddles, 7 rifles, 600 rounds of ammunition, a gig, clothing and camp equipment. A Boer farmer they had arrested for giving information was also left behind.⁴⁸

From early March the remnants of the rebel forces in the Tarkastad district gradually began to surrender, following the same process then occurring in the North-East Cape.⁴⁹ At the end of the month detachments of Cmdt. W.D. Fouche's commandos trekked through the district, on their passage between the North-East Cape and the Midlands. Some of the local district forces were taken prisoner.⁵⁰ In the last week of April a number of rebels were again captured at Uijenhoek in the Bamboesberg. The Tarkastad newspaper reported, at the end of April, that it

43. Ferreira, op cit., p. 167.

44. See J.W. MacQuarrie (ed.), The Reminiscences of Sir Walter Stanford, Vol. II, 1885-1929 (The Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1962), pp. 204-6.

45. Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., p. 432.

46. Albert Times, 11 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 5 October 1901.

47. Bouver, op cit., pp. 159, 164, 274-5; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 1 November 1901.

48. Tarka Herald, 14 December 1901.

49. Ibid., 12 March 1902, 15 March 1902.

50. Ibid., 26 March 1902.

had heard 'on good authority that excepting a small party of 8 Boers in Paling Kloof the district is now clear of the enemy.'⁵¹ This small remnant raided the farm of Clifton, in the Baviaansrivier, one evening early in May. Helping themselves to food and clothing, 'The band of robbers, who had been hiding in the mountains also took possession of the post cart and turning the boy out to carry the mails, drove boisterously from farm to farm up the river, blowing the post-horn.'⁵²

On the 27th May Genl. W.C. Malan was severely wounded and captured at Beneleegte, in the south-east corner of the Midlands. Assuming command of Malan's commando, Fouché retreated across the line at Sheldon into the Eastern Cape. The commando trekked north-east into the Adelaide district, where it was fired on from the town by a maxim gun fixed on the tower of the D.R.C. Fouché then captured a large detachment of the Grahamstown D.F. He divided his force in Adelaide, promoting the Cradock rebel H.J.J. van Rensburg to commandant. Fouché trekked up through the Baviaansrivier area. He spent the night of the 1st June at Palmietfontein. He was well equipped with spare horses and, unaware that peace had been declared, he trekked through Paling Kloof on the 2nd, back into the Midlands. Fouché was followed by the Bedford D.M.T., Col. Doran's column, and Lord Lovat with 500 men, which came up the Baviaansrivier, all close on his heels. In the Adelaide district it was reported that Fouché's men 'treated our people civilly.' But in the Baviaansrivier 'the Boers boasted of their ability to continue the war for an indefinite period and scouted the idea of surrender.' Peace had however already been declared and Fouché's commando surrendered at Cradock on the 5th June.⁵³

It was reported in mid-June that 'local rebels' had surrendered at Tarkastad on the night of the 8th. However, a week later the Tarkastad newspaper wrote that 'there are still over 40 local rebels whose surrender has not yet been notified to the military here.'⁵⁴

The guerrilla campaign initiated in the Eastern Cape by Kritzinger in March 1901 was always a low-key affair, due mainly to the fact that no towns were ever

51. Ibid., 30 April 1902.

52. Albert Times, 9 May 1902.

53. H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 362-6; J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), pp. 169-76; P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), pp. 134-44; Tarka Herald, 4 June 1902, 21 June 1902; De Nieuwe Middelburger, 13 June 1902.

54. Albert Times, 13 June 1902; Tarka Herald, 18 June 1902.

attacked or captured and no sizeable rebel formations ever arose. The eastern three-quarters of the region - east of a line drawn over Queenstown and Grahams-town - was inhabited by densely concentrated Xhosa communities, and this made Boer penetration of those parts of the region impossible. Within the small part of the region that was therefore accessible to guerrilla penetration, it was only really the Tarkastad district which fulfilled all the necessary requirements. The mountaineous nature of this district - especially the Bamboesberg in the north and Winterberg in the south - ensured that guerrilla operations continued there for a full year. To some extent however, these operations were merely an extension of the campaigns in the adjoining regions of the Midlands and the North-East Cape.

The main failure of the Eastern Cape was the absence of an autochthonous rebel movement and the failures (for various reasons) of the few rebel leaders who attempted to initiate that process. It was only when Kritzinger was personally in the region that rebellion there appeared viable. These failures of the region as a whole were most evident in the northern half of the Bedford district. The Baviaansrivier area there presented certain possibilities which however went untested by the Boer leadership.

Ultimately however, the failure of the guerrilla front in the Eastern Cape lay in the demographic mix of the region. Although the topography was ideal for guerrilla operations, this was cancelled out by the heterogenous nature of the population. The Boer rural population there was relatively small, and this meant that in a region inhabited primarily by English loyalists and Xhosa-speaking Africans, Boer guerrilla penetration was doomed to failure.

BEYOND IMPERIAL CONTROL : THE WESTERN CAPE

The Western Cape was far removed from the theatre of hostilities during the first half of the South African War. Between 1899 and 1900 the region was untouched by any form of conflict. Even the Prieska Expedition did not penetrate the region, but after the collapse of that expedition a deputation went from Calvinia to Kenhardt on the 9th March. It requested Cmdt. L.P. Steenkamp not to 'proclaim', or annex the town and district, a request which was acceded to.¹ The first Boer commando to reach the Western Cape was that of Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog. Hertzog's force began to cross from the Karoo into the western region on about the 5th January 1901. All pursuit by British columns had been abandoned as he had trekked farther from the railway line. The advanced guard arrived in Calvinia on the 7th. Hertzog immediately annexed the town to the O.F.S. Martial law was declared and a landdrost appointed. The eight stores were thrown open and the republicans commandeered freely until all their requirements had been met. Republican native administration was instituted including indentured labour for all unmarried males. Labour terms for children were particularly severe. Hertzog's forces commandeered 600 horses in Calvinia, and dozens of local rebels began to attach themselves to his units. On the 16th January Hertzog's force left Calvinia for Vanrhynsdorp, leaving behind an occupying force under landdrost F. van der Merwe.

When Hertzog arrived in Calvinia in January 1901 Boers and coloureds in the region were already locked into a relationship of bitter conflict. Van der Merwe immediately proceeded to give substance to this adversarial relationship, continuing with the reign of terror which had been instituted by Cmdt. T.K. Nieuwoudt. Van der Merwe immediately flogged a number of coloured men, including an artisan named Abraham Esau. Recalling this Calvinia incident, one of Hertzog's men later wrote: 'Here a Baster with the name of Abram Esau had a saddlery business. He was the only one who made a big noise against the Boer commando.'³ Esau had indeed headed a procession in honour of the relief of Mafeking. He was

1. J.N. Brink, Oorlog en Ballingskap (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), p. 50.
2. Bill Nasson, Abraham Esau's War (David Philip, Cape Town, 1991), pp. 128-9; O.F.S.A.D., A 419, Kapt. W.H. Muller, 'Herinneringe van die Anglo-Boere Oorlog 1899-1902', p. 106; A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, Munich, 1902), p. 91; C.J.S. Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1943), p. 96.
3. Muller, op cit., p. 106.

a British agent who had attempted to mobilize resistance against the Boers, but dozens of men who were flogged had engaged in no such activities.⁴

In January the commandos of G.A. Brand and M. Hertzog detached themselves from the main force, in order to scout the approaches to the Boland. Volunteer forces had, however, hurriedly been raised in Cape Town and rushed forward to defend the mountain passes. These forces encountered the advanced patrols of the above two commandos at Piekenierskloof pass, 40 km south of Clanwilliam, and pushed the invading forces northward. This ended the threat to the Boland but for some weeks in January the districts of Ceres, Piketberg and Clanwilliam were overrun by Boer patrols.⁵ Travelling over Nieuwoudtville, Hertzog arrived at Vanrhynsdorp on the 19th January. As had been done at Calvinia, the telegraph line (to the north) was cut. The magistrate, Bam, was arrested but later released on parole. Hertzog raised the O.F.S. flag and occupied the magistrate's offices, reading out the annexation proclamation. Martial law was declared over the town and district. The colonial administration was replaced by a republican one, and F.-C. Oberholster appointed landdrost. Goods were commandeered from the shops and the Jewish-owned stores were particularly hard hit. Prior to the arrival of the commando a number of coloureds from the town and district had fled onto the Gifberg plateau, and some of these men were later flogged for labour desertion by Oberholster. In most respects therefore the republican occupation of Vanrhynsdorp was similar to that of Calvinia, but was not characterized by the same degree of brutality towards local coloureds. Vanrhynsdorp was however not a pro-republican centre in the way in which Calvinia was. The commando was generally well-received on its arrival at the former place but only 7 local men rebelled initially, most somewhat hesitantly.⁶

4. Somerset Budget, op cit., 6 March 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 1 March 1901; Nasson, op cit., pp. 120-41. For a biographical sketch of van der Merwe, see C.J. Beyers (ed.), Dictionary of South African Biography, Vol. V (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1987), p. 797.
5. C. de Jong, Skandinawiërs in die Tweede Anglo-Boere-Oorlog, 1899-1902, (C. de Jong, Pretoria, 1897), Vol. III, pp. 124-8; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901, 24 January 1901; A. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 80; Tarka Herald, 6 February 1901; F.A. Steytler, 'Genl. Hertzog as Krygsman', in Gedenkboek vir Generaal Hertzog (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1965), p. 86.
6. Muller, op cit., pp. 109-12; Steytler, op cit., p. 86; Van den Heever, op cit., p. 117; P.L. Scholtz, Die Historiese Ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifantsrivier 1660-1902, Argiefjaarboek vir S.A. geskiedenis 29(2), 1966 (Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1966), pp. 159-61.

Some days before the occupation of Vanrhynsdorp one of Nieuwoudt's roving patrols, under a Cpl. Myburgh, trekked west of Clanwilliam to the coast and fired on a cruiser at anchor at Lambert's Bay. Immediately after this the cruiser, H.M.S. Sybille, ran aground in a storm and was wrecked at Steenboksfontein 10 km south of Lambert's Bay. This occurred on the 16th January, 3 days before the full occupation of Vanrhynsdorp. Although the Boers' role in the destruction of the Sybille was indirect, it was nevertheless one of the most important events of the entire South African War, due to the great expense involved in losing a 2nd Class steel cruiser of 3 400 tons. Imperial strategists believed that Hertzog's men had expected to find a ship coming from Europe at Lamberts' Bay, loaded with men and supplies, but Hertzog never had any such expectations. British naval supremacy in 1901 was still absolute and the global scale which these strategists applied to the western Cape did not match the small-scale, localized and haphazard guerrilla operations of this time.⁷

While Hertzog remained in Vanrhynsdorp, Nieuwoudt trekked west to the Olifants river bridge at Vredendal, where he clashed on about the 20th January with local coloured troops. One of Nieuwoudt's men was killed. This was only the second (and last) known fatality of Hertzog's invasion force, and both of those fatalities had resulted from clashes with local coloured troops. From the Olifants river bridge Nieuwoudt trekked south to the Heerenlogement cave and then west through the Sandveld to Lambert's Bay, where one of his patrols had been active a week previously. Near Lambert's Bay he captured a patrol of 21 British troops. His commando remained for some weeks in the vicinity of the fishing village, sending out patrols through the Sandveld and the surrounding areas.⁸ From Calvinia in early January Cmdt. H. Theunissen's Boshof volunteers trekked north-east to Brandvlei, De Drift and Tontelboskolk. Their main task was to collect horses but they also fomented rebellion and enlisted recruits. Brandvlei's special J.P., Dr. Cooper, was arrested and imprisoned by Theunissen's force, for hoisting the Union Jack after the occupation. From Tontelboskolk patrols went out into the Bushmanland to buy horses. By early February Hertzog's force was estimated to

7. Graham Dominy, 'Firing Broadsides Against Boers: Warships versus Horsemen on the South African Coast,' Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin, Vol. XVII No. 3, January 1993, pp. 104-11; P.H.S. van Zyl, Die Helde-Album (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), p. 211; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 92; L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. V, pp. 130-1; Scholtz, op cit., p. 161; Cape Argus, 30 January 1901; Beeld, 13 October 1979; Albert Times, 21 January 1901; B.W.M., 6037/1, Eric Rosenthal, 'Jackals' vertel uit die Vryheidsoorlog', p.2.

8. Steytler, op cit., p. 86; B.W.M., 2005, 'Oorlogsherrinneringe van P.J. Horak', p.5.

have commandeered 2 000 horses and mules.⁹

Hertzog meanwhile had received despatches from De Wet at Vanrhynsdorp which requested him to trek east to link up with De Wet. The long-awaited British onslaught from the south was the main factor however, which compelled Hertzog to evacuate the town in the first days of February. Reinforced by Col. H. de B. de Lisle, the British forces drove a Boer occupying force out of Clanwilliam on the 22nd and attacked them again in the Pakhuis pass. In this clash in the pass there were slight casualties on both sides. Calvinia was similarly evacuated some days later. Before trekking east into the Karoo, Hertzog divided his force into two, one half commanded by himself and the other by Brand. Most of the 200 rebels Hertzog had recruited during his invasion accompanied the commandos.

Charles Duk, the Calvinia A.R.M., was arrested on the 5th February, when the Boers abandoned the town. He was forced to accompany Cmdts. Brand and L.B. Wessels, as was Abraham Esau the community leader, and a number of other coloured prisoners. Esau was shot dead on the Calvinia-Williston border. Duk was released there. The other coloured captives were first flogged then released.¹⁰ The Abraham Esau affair quickly became a cause célèbre and has continued to be so for almost a century.¹¹ A young Norwegian serving in the British forces which liberated Calvinia commented as follows on the incident: 'A well off and reserved light-skinned man expressed his sympathy for the English to the Boers. For this reason alone he was tied to a wagon wheel, flogged and then shot dead.'¹²

By the second week of February the only republicans left in the Western Cape were a very few individuals such as Cmdt. J.H. Fronemann, deputed by Hertzog to stimulate rebellion in the region. But, not owing anything to the presence of this officer, a rebellion that was once again autochthonous in character had begun to develop. It was centred on Brandvlei, over 100 km north-east of Calvinia. The leading lights in the rebellion were two local farmers, A. van Niekerk and T.

9. O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van P.J.A. Spies', p. 5; T.A.D., A 247, 'Oorlogsgeskiedenis van Kmdt. J.P. Brits', p. 7; Northern Post, 8 February 1901; Tarka Herald, 6 February 1901.
10. A. Wessels, 'Die Oorlogsherrinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Nèser', Christiaan de Wet-Annale, 7 (S.A. Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1987), p. 59; De Jong, op cit., pp. 127-9; Strydom, op cit., p. 97; Nasson, op cit., pp. 130-1; Steytler, op cit., p. 87; Van den Heever, op cit., p. 117; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 92; Albert Times, 4 March 1901; Somerset Budget, 6 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 15 March 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 1 March, 1901.
11. See for instance Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa (Reader's Digest Association S.A. (Pty) Ltd., Cape Town, 1988), pp. 258-9.
12. De Jong, op cit., p. 129.

Boonzaaier. One of Genl. C. de Wet's adjudants arrived at Nelskop just south of Brandvlei late in February, and found almost 20 local Boers waiting only for a signal to go into rebellion. These men were critical of Hertzog's sudden decision to leave the colony. Hertzog's departure and the failure of De Wet's invasion had left them without any significant republican support.¹³ In March these Brandvlei rebels sent emissaries eastward to De Wet, in an attempt to gain experienced officers who could drive the rebellion. Before waiting for assistance to return however, they went over to the offensive on the 17th April 1901, attacking the small Brandvlei garrison and capturing a number of horses and guns. The rebel commando had grown by then to 60, and Boonzaaier and van Niekerk had been superseded in local command by J. Oosthuizen, although Fronemann also claimed control over the group. After capturing the small settlement of Brandvlei the local rebels then attacked Loeriesfontein. But a schoolteacher there had hastily formed a Town Guard which repulsed the attack, and then fortified the town.¹⁴

The emissaries which had been despatched eastward in March returned to Brandvlei on the 20th April. Instead of reaching De Wet in the O.F.S. they had found Cmdts. G.J. Scheepers and W.C. Malan, and received from them a crack corporalship of 7 men under S.G. Maritz. Assuming command in the region Maritz captured a small patrol the next day at Nelskop, but was wounded in the process. While Maritz recovered he concentrated on reorganizing his command. Fronemann's mission to the Calvinia district had collapsed and Maritz sent him, Oosthuizen and F.-C.J. Louw¹⁵ back to Kakamas. In this way he removed these officers from his theatre of operations for the duration of the war. He sent scouts throughout the vast Calvinia district to locate the British areas of occupation. These were at Calvinia, Loeriesfontein and Tontelboskolk. But by the end of the month the post at Tontelboskolk had been abandoned. Establishing his base at T'Boop, Maritz systematically collected all agricultural produce (mainly grain) and sheep he could find, and

13. O.T. de Villiers, Met de Wet en Steyn in het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 100-3.
14. H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 193-4; M. Maritz, My Lewe en Strewe (Priv. pub., Johannesburg, 1939), pp. 31-3; R. de Kersauson de Pennendreff, Ek en die Vierkleur (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 49-63; De Jong, op cit., p. 135; Great Britain. War Office : Intelligence Division. Boer Army List. Cape Colony District, March 31st, 1902. (N.p., n.d.), pp. 102-3, 137.
15. Louw inaugurated the rebellion at Kenhardt in early April 1901. See De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 161.

secreted them at various secret storage depots throughout the southern Bushmanland. Finally, he revised his entire command structure. After despatching a part of his command to Pella and Kakamas, 100 men remained. But in his first week 20 more rebels had joined.¹⁶

After recovering from his wound Maritz shifted his base from T'Boop 15 km south to Klawervlei,¹⁷ the farm of F-C.M. Boonzaaier. Taking 40 of his best men he trekked south-west on the 8th, intending to attack Loeriesfontein. Hearing of a small British column at Breekbeen, Maritz veered south-east and captured Capt. Bertram's column on the 12th. He gained 2 wagons, and 7 cars loaded with grain, new rifles and ammunition, also 15 prisoners with their rifles and horses. He returned to Klawervlei on 16th May with 4 wagons, 8 cars and a fully-equipped ambulance. Here Maritz encountered a challenge to his leadership in the form of Cmdt. E.A. Conroy. The latter had an appointment from Genl. Hertzog (similar to Fronemann's) as chief commandant in the western Cape. Conroy accepted that his appointment had been a mistake and left for Kakamas.¹⁸

To counter Maritz's activities in the Calvinia district a column had meanwhile been formed at Van Wyk's Vlei. The column was led by Maj. H.S. Jeudwine and consisted of 540 men, including two squadrons (about 200 men) of the Border Scouts, with only 560 horses. Jeudwine had two guns and a convoy of over 50 vehicles. The column left Van Wyk's Vlei on 3rd May and arrived at Brandvlei on the 12th.¹⁹ Maritz was then 50 km south-west of the village at Beenbreek, engaged in the capture of Capt. Bertram's column, which formed part of the left-flank of Jeudwine's three-pronged assault on Brandvlei. The village was undefended and Maritz had not even arranged for the evacuation of the supplies heaped up there.²⁰ Hence, according to a Norwegian trooper in Jeudwine's column, 30 wagons loaded with food and ammunition, a great number of horses, mules and cattle,

16. Pieterse, op cit.; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 64-7; De Jong, op cit., pp. 136-7; Maritz, op cit., pp. 34-7; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 159-67; A. Wessels (ed.), 'The Anglo-Boer War Diary of Major H.S. Jeudwine' in Egodokumente (Oorlogsmuseum van die Boererepublieke, Bloemfontein, 1993), p. 58.

17. 65 km north-west of Brandvlei.

18. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 67-8; Maritz, op cit., pp. 37-40; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 167-9; Die Brandwag, 25 July 1941, 1 August 1941, 15 August 1941, 22 August 1951.

19. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., pp. 62-3.

20. The Boers were apparently taken by surprise, since Jeudwine advanced from the east. See De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., p. 68.

and 25 000 sheep were captured.²¹ The village was then burnt to the ground.²² The Norwegian soldier described the scene as follows: 'Then the work of destruction began which certainly is terrible, but which has to happen in war to destroy the enemy, namely to burn houses and supplies. It was heartbreaking to see the weeping women and children, who begged us to be allowed to keep their possessions, but although it was a painful affair the order had to be obeyed. No mercy was shown and everything was wasted and destroyed until nothing remained.'²³

The Boer civilians of Brandvlei were given 10 minutes to gather their personal clothing and bedding, before the burning began: 'Around us the women and children walked and wept, but there were also many women on whose faces determined resistance and hatred could be seen and who gazed at us with a look of deepest contempt. But we paid no attention to this and continued with the destruction until everything was destroyed.' The civilians were then transported to an unnamed concentration camp.²⁴ From Brandvlei Jeurwine made a move towards Klawervlei, so Maritz evacuated his base there. A number of Boer civilians attached themselves to him but he sent them north into the relative safety of the Bushmanland. Jeurwine turned south however, continuing his destructive path destroying farmhouses and supplies. The guerrilla and scorched-earth tactics which existed in the north-east corner of the Calvinia district at this time were no different to those existing in the republics.²⁵

Leaving the re-garrisoned Tontelboskolk on the 19th May, Jeurwine marched via Loeriesfontein to Klawervlei, and from there to Brandvlei. On the 8th June he was back at Tontelboskolk. Hearing that Loeriesfontein was threatened, Jeurwine marched there on the following day. Maritz in this time was concerned with dealing with the civilian refugees who came to him for protection, and with shadowing Jeurwine's large column, attacking his flanking patrols whenever possible. One of Maritz's patrols clashed with a Loeriesfontein patrol at Middel-

21. The figures quoted by various sources vary widely. See Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeurwine', op cit., p. 64.

22. De Jong, op cit., p. 142.

23. Ibid. Paul Schultz, the Norwegian, published his account in Oslo in 1902, entitled Mine Oplevelser i boerkrigen.

24. De Jong, op cit., p. 142.

25. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 68-73; Maritz, op cit., p. 40; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeurwine,' op cit., p. 64.

kraal²⁶ on the 12th. By then Maritz and Jeurwine's forces, in the absence of other British columns, had been locked into a perverse symbiotic relationship for some weeks. Maritz had however clearly gained the ascendancy in the guerrilla struggle. Jeurwine was only very rarely able to risk sending out small patrols, and because his column was so large and unwieldy he could not live off the countryside and was regularly compelled to return to a base to be re-supplied.²⁷

In mid-June Maritz's force began to shift westward and south-west from the vicinity of Loeriesfontein and the Hantam mountains. Since Calvinia was no longer threatened, Jeurwine decided to return to that village. Maritz however attacked Nieuwoudtville on about the 19th, and Jeurwine was compelled to march to relieve that village. The main commando at this stage numbered approximately 150 men, but rebels had begun to stream towards the various detachments. Jeurwine withdrew the Nieuwoudtville garrison on the 20th June. At the end of June Maritz trekked north-east to Tontelboskolk and then eastward into the Karoo. After a month of operating mainly in the Karoo he returned to the Western Cape and captured Vanrhynsdorp on the 7th August. The small garrison of 30 delivered only 46 rifles and 36 horses, however, Maritz then rested for some weeks in the Bokkeveldberge.²⁸

The escalation of the war in the Western Cape was evident in events at Clanwilliam in August, when arson destroyed the magistrate's court and all the records. The deteriorating security situation in the region was also signalled by the arrival of the first external Boer commando in five months. This was that of Cmdt. J.J. Smith who had been given an independent command by Kritzinger, and who had been operating mainly in the Midlands and Karoo. Smith established his base at Vanrhynsdorp, which the British had evacuated in August. Except for short periods when it was evacuated for a day or two on the arrival of a British column, Vanrhynsdorp remained in Boer hands between August 1901 and May 1902. It served the same function as did Kakamas in the North-West, Murraysburg in the Midlands, Postmasburg in Griqualand West and Rhodes in the North-East for long

26. Approximately 20 km north of Calvinia.

27. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 73-81; Maritz, op cit.; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 169; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeurwine', op cit., pp. 65-7.

28. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 82-9; Maritz, op cit., pp. 41-5; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 170-3; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeurwine', op cit., pp. 68-72.

periods during the guerrilla war. Possession of a town gave greater cohesion to the guerrilla struggle in a particular region, and was also a reflection of the weakness of imperial power there. At the end of September the commando of J.L. Theron and the remnants of P. van der Merwe's band also arrived in the west.²⁹

Following on his offensive foray into the Karoo in July, Maritz launched an invasion into the Boland in October. Fodder was becoming scarce and he was unwilling to trek into Namaqualand as he maintained the resources of that region as an emergency reserve. His plan was to trek past Wellington towards Swellendam and then return quickly in an attempt to take Calvinia by surprise and capture that town. Maritz was at Vanrhynsdorp on the 26th September, but immediately after that commenced his southward trek. Trekking west of Clanwilliam he went to Saldanah Bay where one of his detachments fired on a warship. He captured the blockhouse at Velddrift and then took possession of 600 horses at Kersefontein, the farm of the horse-breeder R.H. Melck. He turned east and captured the two blockhouses guarding the road-bridge over the Berg river, between Piketberg and Moorreesburg. While Maritz continued on to Hopefield, on the 7th Cmdt. J.J. Smith occupied Porterville. Maritz then joined him at Porterville. He clashed with 30 D.M.T.s and 16th Lancers at Twenty-Four Rivers on the 24th October and was compelled to retreat, but captured 6 heavily loaded wagons near Porterville.³⁰

Maritz's raid south into the Boland to a point south of Bok Bay³¹ - less than 30 km north of Cape Town - had a number of important and immediate results. Firstly, martial law was finally proclaimed in the Cape Town, Wynberg, Simonstown, Port Elizabeth and East London districts.³² Secondly, Genl. J.D.P. French arrived in the Western Cape on the 13th October to personally supervise the operations against Maritz. Thousands of troop reinforcements flooded into the region on the same day. Where Jeudwine's column had operated alone in the region for five months, now no less than 4 columns would operate against Maritz in the region.³³

29. Scholtz, op cit., pp. 164-5; B.W.M., 5075/2, P.J. Hugo, 'Die Oorlogservaringe van P.F.J. Hugo', p. 5; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 177-8; J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1939), pp. 75-6. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., p. 74.

30. Scholtz, op cit., p. 166; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., pp. 75-7; S.W. van der Merwe, Porterville en die 24 Riviere (C.F. Albertyn, Stellenbosch, 1972), pp. 94-7; Maritz, op cit., pp. 45-7; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 178-9; O.T. de Villiers, Met de Wet en Steyn in Het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 154-74; Northern Post, 25 October 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 15 November 1901.

31. Harrison M. Wright (ed.), Sir James Rose Innes Selected Correspondence (1884-1902) (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1972), p. 307.

32. On 9th October 1901. See Amery, op cit., Vol. VI, pp. 559-60.

33. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., pp. 75-6.

The effect of Maritz's raid on Imperial officials at Cape Town was well summarized by J.R. Innes, the attorney-general, who wrote as follows: 'A number of Town Guards have been called out and various precautions taken, and there is considerable excitement, but personally I do not apprehend the slightest danger to Cape Town; what one does feel is the humiliation of knowing that at this stage of the war any commando should be in a position to approach the Capital of the Colony. The moral effect - or rather the unmoral effect - must be very bad indeed.'³⁴

In the last week of October Maritz was driven north, but a contributory reason for his retreat was that the volume of captured supplies and horses was so great that his mobility was greatly reduced. He trekked back the way he had come to Vanrhynsdorp and then, in a carefully planned operation, he and Theron captured a large convoy of approximately 30 wagons going between Lambert's Bay and Clanwilliam. Six wagons were driven away and the rest burnt. In this action, on the 30th October, a number of the escort were killed,³⁵ the dead including a prominent Afrikaner lieutenant named de Kock. October was an expensive month for the Imperial forces in the Western Cape. On the 17th Smith had killed 5 and wounded 3 of Lt-Col. T. Capper's column at Wilgebosch Drift on the Berg river.³⁶ The attorney-general described one of the dead as 'a particularly fine young fellow called Falcon, who was manager of one of Pickstone's farms.'³⁷ A number of men also died at Twenty-Four Rivers on the 24th, including Capt. Bellew of the 16th Lancers.³⁸

After capturing the convoy Maritz returned to the farm Brandwag in the Calvinia district. A measles epidemic kept him there for eight days, but in November he embarked on a second raid southward into the Boland. His commando had now grown to 800 men. Four hundred of these men accompanied him, as did the force of J.L. Theron, which trekked by a different route. Maritz attacked Piketberg on the 7th and 8th but as that town was well-fortified he was unable to capture it. He then trekked towards Darling. During this raid one of Maritz's patrols fired on H.M.S. Partridge at Saldanah Bay.³⁹ Theron meanwhile had occupied Hopefield.

34. Wright, op cit.

35. One source puts the Imperial dead at 22. See De Villiers, op cit., p. 178. Another report listed 14 casualties. See Northern Post, 15 November 1901. See also Maritz, op cit., p. 45.

36. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., p. 76.

37. Wright, op cit., p. 308.

38. Northern Post, 25 October 1901.

39. Maritz, op cit., pp. 47-8; Dominy, op cit., p. 109; Smith, op cit., pp. 82-9; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 179-91; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 177-9; Tarka Herald, 16 November 1901; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., pp. 78-9.

The Boer population of that town was strongly pro-Imperial and therefore antagonistic towards the Boer commandos. This was in marked contrast to Porterville, which was strongly pro-Boer. Hopefield political attitudes may have been influenced by the close proximity of the pro-imperial Melck family, which farmed at Kersefontein.⁴⁰ Although Boer support for the Imperial position was greater in the Western Cape than in any other Cape region, it still did not represent the majority point of view. C.W.H. Kohler, deputy-commandant of the imperial forces in the Franschhoek valley, stated 'Here the feelings of the people in general were also pro-Transvaal.'⁴¹ The pro-Imperial attitudes of prominent Western Cape Afrikaner families such as the Melcks, Kohlers, de Kocks and van der Byls suggests however that class was an important determinant of ideology in this region.

At Darling Maritz clashed with a column then trekked to Moorreesburg, capturing that town. A patrol of his went as far as Parow, raiding horses. At Parow this small patrol was only 15 km from the Castle. Maritz then fought at the Twenty-Four Rivers area before trekking east of the Berg river towards Ceres. Once again his departure from the Boland was hastened by the immobilizing weight of his many captures, rather than any really effective British counter-measures.⁴² Major Jeudwine arrived at Zand Drift on the Berg river on the 14th November, recording that 'Maritz had just crossed at his leisure - no signs of driving. He fought stubbornly in thick bush country and we were only able to hasten his retreat.'⁴³ For the second time in consecutive months a raid southward by Maritz caused considerable consternation in Cape Town. On the 11th November the attorney-general wrote again as follows: 'Last night the suburban Town Guards from Claremont were called out at 4.00 in the morning to man the blockhouses on the Cape flats; some men from the Coldstream Guards occupied the Maitland outspan and the Salt River bridge, and altogether there was great excitement. Just fancy at this stage of the Campaign that a commando should be allowed to approach within striking distance of the Capital!'⁴⁴

40. De Villiers, op cit., pp. 157, 161-2, 187, 198; O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), p. 236.

41. Annette Joelson (ed.), Herinneringe van Kohler van die K.W.V. (Unie-Volkspers Beperk, Cape Town, 1945), p. 83.

42. Maritz, op cit., p. 48; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 178; Smith, op cit., pp. 93-4; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 191-7; Van der Merwe, op cit., p. 98.

43. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., p. 79.

44. Wright, op cit., p. 318.

Genl. J.C. Smuts entered the Western Cape at Constable on the Worcester-Laingsburg railway line, on the 31st October. He was accompanied by F-C. S.W. Pypers (Scheepers' successor) and Cmdt. B.D. Bouwer. He immediately captured 17 men of the Worcester D.F.; commanded by Capt. C.B. Heatlie.⁴⁵ Large numbers of rebel recruits began to attach themselves to Smuts' commando. Of this period and this region, Cmdt. Bouwer later wrote: 'Some people in the two ex-republics have been inclined to be scornful of the warm national spirit that has reigned in the Cape since the Boer War, as if this spirit could be no more than a pose, held by folk who had never known independence nor ever suffered for the sake of it; but, while it may not have been universal, there was no part of South Africa where we found a stronger love of their nation and traditions, nor a greater readiness to sacrifice individually for their sakes, than in the Cape Colony.'⁴⁶

From Constable Smuts trekked via Elandsvlei, Wupperthal and Pakhuis to Vanrhynsdorp. Leaving Bouwer at that town, Smuts went to Willemsrivier, on the Bokkeveld mountains. On the 25th November Smuts left for Nieuwoudtville. The Boer forces in the Western Cape numbered 3 000 and were divided into approximately 16 commandos, and Smuts immediately set about reorganizing these forces. One of his first major acts of reorganization was to create four new generals from among the existing pool of commandants, and assign new operational areas to them. J.L. van Deventer, S.G. Maritz, H.W. Lategan, and W.C. Malan were all promoted to 'veggeneraal.'⁴⁷ Smuts' idea was that Maritz would operate in Namaqualand, Lategan on the middle Orange (the North-West Cape), van Deventer in the Boland and south-west Karoo and Malan⁴⁸ in the Karoo and Northern Cape.⁴⁹ Malan's position was originally offered to Bouwer but his men considered the area too dangerous and refused to return there.⁵⁰

45. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 208-15; W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel (eds.), Selections From the Smuts Papers, Vol. I, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), p. 421; Maritz, op cit., p. 49; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 179.

46. Ferreira, op cit., p. 215.

47. This was a special military rank, the officer would have no civil duties after the war.

48. According to Malan himself, he was first offered and accepted the Boland. But when the other officers refused to operate in the Midlands, he accepted the commission to go there. See Pieterse, op cit., pp. 306-7.

49. See Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 500-2; also T.A.D., A 1328, letters of Smuts to Cmdt. H.W. Lategan.

50. See Ferreira, op cit., pp. 225-6.

While Smuts was formulating these changes at Nieuwoudtville, Boucher remained at Vanrhynsdorp. He linked up there with J.J. Smith on the 1st December and Smith shortly afterwards attacked a column in the Pakhuis Pass.⁵¹ After exiting from the Boland in November, Maritz trekked to the Cold Bokkeveld, then to the Porterville area, before moving on to Lambert's Bay in the company of Cmdt. J.L. Theron.⁵² In late November Maritz combined with van Deventer in an attack on the large horse-camp and storage depot at Tontelboskolk. The attack failed to capture the base and Maritz was wounded, but 400 horses were captured. In early December the garrison at Tontelboskolk abandoned that outpost, leaving it in Boer hands.⁵³

In early January 1902 Smuts sent Maritz northward into Namaqualand to prepare the way for an invasion of that region. While trekking past Leliefontein Maritz called in at that mission station to deliver a proclamation outlawing the free movement of individuals between the station and British military posts. While at the station, with a small number of his staff, Maritz was attacked by the inhabitants, but succeeded in escaping. Returning with reinforcements, he destroyed the settlement. The coloured men there defended themselves with antiquated firearms, but 38 were shot down. The wounded were sent to Garies.⁵⁴ Before he could proceed much farther Maritz was recalled to Vanrhynsdorp by Smuts, to consult with him about another planned invasion of the Boland.

51. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 219-25.

52. Maritz, op cit., pp. 48-9; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 197-203; Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., p. 81.

53. Maritz, op cit., pp. 49-51; C.C. Snyman, Avonture Uit die Tweede Vryheids-oorlog (N.P.B., Bloemfontein, n.d.), pp. 48-59; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 179-81; D. Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1929), pp. 280-1; J.H. Meyer, Kommando-Jare (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1971), pp. 297-300; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 301-2; Die Brandwag, 8 August 1941, 15 August 1941; Wessels, 'Jacob Naser', op cit., p. 98; T.A.D., A787, Preller collection, 79 'Herinneringe van vk. J.S. van der Merwe', p. 93.

54. An important interpretation of this notable event is provided in Nasson, op cit., pp. 108-12. A copy of Maritz's proclamation can be found at the B.W.M., 3846/2 'Kennisgewing Proklamasie van S.G. Maritz.' Three contemporary Boer accounts by men who participated in the incident are in Maritz, op cit., p. 54; S.A.L., M.S.B. 446, 'The Treachery of Lilyfountain' by Hendrik Nel and 'Leliefontein, Soos Vertel deur Joubertjie', in Die Noord-Wester, 6 September 1960. Contemporary accounts by non-participants are in Reitz, op cit., pp. 298-9; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 259, 295-6; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 211-14; Meyer, op cit., pp. 323-5; De Kersauson, op cit., pp. 105-6; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 211-12. The settlement was destroyed on the 12th January 1902.

General van Deventer had been active east of Calvinia and on the 5th February he destroyed a huge column of 130 wagons at Middelpost. This column of Lt-Col. W.R.B. Doran had been travelling between Ceres and Calvinia. Van Deventer also captured 400 horses and mules, but suffered casualties too.⁵⁵ Since arriving in the Western Cape Cmdt. Bouver had remained near Vanrhynsdorp. On the 9th February a column of 1 500 men under the command of Colonels C.T.M. Kavanagh, G.P. Wyndham and D. Haig took Vanrhynsdorp by surprise, first surrounding and than capturing it. Bouver's commando on that day was at Windhoek, but 7 sick men were captured in the town. Two days earlier the column had captured Nieuwoudtville. On the 14th February part of this British force attacked Bouver at the farm of Krantz, 30 km south-west of Vanrhynsdorp. One-third of Bouver's personal commando, including his entire staff, were captured. This defeat ended plans Bouver was formulating for an attack on Clanwilliam. The British column re-entered Vanrhynsdorp on the 16th February.⁵⁶

When the British column trekked away from Vanrhynsdorp, they left a small garrison of 80 Cape Police troopers at the heavily-fortified outpost of Windhoek, 20 km south-east of the town. Smuts' plans for a large-scale invasion of the Boland were far advanced, but he could not advance with an armed outpost covering his line of retreat. He accordingly attacked Windhoek on the 25th February. The post was captured and 9 of the defenders killed, but at great cost. The combined commandos lost 6 killed and 17 wounded. Both van Deventer and Bouver were wounded, the former seriously. Another officer was wounded and one killed.⁵⁷ The serious losses incurred at Windhoek had the immediate result of postponing Smuts' Boland invasion, since he could not proceed without his most senior lieutenants. Ultimately the Pyrrhic victory at that farm had the effect of halting the southward movement of the Boers in the Western Cape and, indeed, of reversing that trend. After Windhoek all movement turned northward, to the copper-mining areas of Namaqualand.

Shortly after Windhoek (and Leliefontein), Maritz and Smuts linked up at the farm of Aties, 10 km south-west of Vanrhynsdorp. Maritz finally persuaded Smuts to abandon his southward invasion plans, citing as reasons the approach of the

55. Wessels, 'Jacob Naser', op cit., p. 85; Meyer, op cit., pp. 305-10; Ferreira, op cit., p. 249; Amery, op cit., Vol. V, pp. 548-9; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 206-9; Reitz, op cit., pp. 282-8.
56. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 238-48; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 217-24; Scholtz, op cit., p. 168; Reitz, op cit., pp. 288-9.
57. Ferreira, op cit., pp. 249-55; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 226-9; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 209-11; Scholtz, op cit., pp. 168-9; Reitz, op cit., pp. 288-93; Meyer, op cit., pp. 314-19; Wessels, 'Jacob Naser', op cit., pp. 94-5.

rainy season (which would flood the rivers), the large size of the commando and the small area they would have to operate in in the Boland. In addition, there was no fodder for the reserve back-up force in the Calvinia area. Smuts agreed to Maritz's plan for the invasion of Namaqualand and the latter went on ahead to arrange for horses and fodder to be collected at certain places. These were also to be sent back to the advancing commandos.⁵⁸

During March and April 1902 the bitter racial conflict in the region reached a peak, as the coloured reaction to Leliefontein set in. A general uprising had long since set in in the Western Cape and, as it took shape, so the racial war which had threatened in the area for generations⁵⁹ also developed. Both sides suffered heavily in this conflict - the coloured troops in terms of numbers and the commandos in terms of experienced officers who were irreplaceable. In a clash at Rietfontein, 32 km north-west of Calvinia, on the 2nd March, Cmdt. W.H. de Vos of Theron's commando was killed. On the 19th March Cmdt. C. Schoeman was wounded in a clash with the Namaqualand Border Scouts near Garies. Cmdt. M. Boonzaaier, who had been one of the leading lights in the Brandvlei rebellion in early 1901, was one of those killed in this clash. According to one account (probably heavily exaggerated), 40 coloured troopers were killed there. Some weeks later Cmdt. Bouwer killed 11 Border Scouts in an ambush at Grootkouw, east of Springbok. These men had been engaged in clearing all the trekboer families from the area and transporting them to Springbok.⁶⁰

Smuts captured Springbok on the 2nd April. The deserted centre of Nababeep was then occupied. On the 4th the two hundred strong garrison of Concordia surrendered without a shot being fired. O'Okiep was defended by twenty-one blockhouses and a large garrison and the commander there, Lt-Col. W.S. Shelton, refused to surrender. Smuts then commenced a siege of O'Okiep. Smuts' strategy in attacking

58. Maritz, op cit., pp. 54-5.

59. Boer and Baster communities had been allies for generations, first against the Bushmen and later the Korana. This relationship began to break down in 1860, as a result of trekboer expansion. In that year Calvinia farmers threatened 'a bloody quarrel' with their coloured neighbours. This however only materialized in 1901. See J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People (Witwatersrand Press, Johannesburg, 1957), p. 90.

60. De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 211, 217; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 104-5; Maritz, op cit., p. 55; Hugo, op cit., pp. 6-7; Reitz, op cit., p. 281; De Villiers, op cit., pp. 228-9; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 229, 258; Wessels, 'Jacob Naser', op cit., p. 96; Peter Burke, The Siege of O'Okiep (War Museum of the Boer Republics, Bloemfontein, 1995), p. 202.

the Namaqualand copper-mining towns was not clearly thought out. In some respects his move north merely reflected an unwillingness to confront the well-defended Boland. A fresh invasion there would have entailed large casualties, and the Boers were unwilling to endure this. The thinking with regard to Namaqualand was that Smuts would first clear all the garrison towns in his rear and then turn south. The second tactical objective was that the attack in the north would act as a decoy, drawing in large British reinforcements by ship at Port Nolloth. Smuts could then turn south and attack the depleted forces there. That this strategy was not well formulated is indicated by the fact that, even if briefly captured, the Namaqualand towns were hardly likely to be left ungarrisoned for long. Secondly, the Boland and Namaqualand are separated by approximately 400 kilometres. It was therefore unlikely that Smuts could take the Boland by surprise. Similarly, in the time it took his forces to trek south by horse, British troops could easily be moved by ship from Port Nolloth to Lambert's Bay or Saldanah Bay. After Windhoek the military relations in the Western Cape were increasingly characterized by stalemate and equilibrium. With the exception of the handful of garrisoned towns, the Boers were masters of most of the Western Cape region. But the circumstances which had ensured their success in the region - the absence of railways and of a loyalist population, the isolation - now worked to restrict and curtail that success. Smuts' force became, in effect, prisoners of the region.

On the 23rd April, while the siege was continuing, Smuts was summoned to the peace conference taking place at Vereeniging. Some of Smuts' senior officers were also invited. The negotiations were not accompanied by an armistice however, so van Deventer, Boucher and Maritz decided to remain and allow Smuts to also represent their point of view, since they 'had complete confidence in General Smuts and that whatever he did would carry our concurrence.'⁶¹

Van Deventer was deputed to guard the trainline between O'Okiep and Port Nolloth, by which the British reinforcements would come. Van Deventer clashed with this force, under Col. H. Cooper, at Steinkopf on the 28th April. This bloody clash ended inconclusively and was the last important skirmish of the war in the Western Cape.⁶² Partly as a result of pressure from Col. Cooper's relief column, van Deventer (commander in Smuts' absence) lifted the siege of O'Okiep in early May and trekked southwards. Advised of the peace treaty on the 31st May, the

61. Ferreira, op cit., p. 277; De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 223-33; Van der Merwe, op cit., pp. 100-05; Reitz, op cit., pp. 298-317; Maritz, op cit., pp. 54-7; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 107-24; Burke, op cit., pp. 90-172.

62. Ferreira, op cit., p. 279. The British lost four killed and the Boers six; Burke, op cit., pp. 173-81.

British forces remained south of Aties and the Boers at Vanrhynsdorp and north of it, while they awaited the terms of the treaty.⁶³

In June Smuts went from one place of concentration to the next, advising the assembled men of the terms of the treaty. Before leaving he had sounded out some of his men as to the possibility of continuing with the struggle should the republics capitulate.⁶⁴ There was thus a buoyant mood among the Western Cape commandos. Due to the successes of the region, the majority of the rank-and-file were convinced that the Boers had won the war. Smuts' account of the true state of affairs therefore came as a shock to many. He addressed many of the Western Cape and Karoo commandos at Soetwater, 35 km west of Calvinia. Cmdt. J.P. Nesor accused him there of having betrayed the Cape commandos,⁶⁵ after having heard the terms applicable to the rebel officers.⁶⁶ Nesor tried to mobilize resistance against Smuts' surrender order, but none of the other officers (most of whom were republicans) were prepared to continue with military activity. Nesor then went into exile in Europe, along with a small group of other men. His resistance to the surrender (personified in his opposition to Smuts) was not the only such incident in June 1901 however,⁶⁷ and the bitter antagonisms which characterized the pro- and anti-Smuts factions in the second quarter of the century can be traced back to this small incident.

For a variety of reasons conditions in the Western Cape were ideal for the cultivation of rebellion in 1900. The white population was composed almost exclusively of Boers who, for historical reasons, identified strongly with the republican factor. Except for the Boland and Namaqualand - the extreme southern and northern parts of the region - it was also a very isolated region. The almost complete absence of railways meant that British counter-guerrilla strategies could not operate there. Initially, this isolation mitigated against the growth of rebellion in the region. Hertzog's invasion gave tremendous stimulus to this

63. Ferreira, op cit., p. 282; Burke, op cit., pp. 182-89.

64. Maritz, op cit., p. 57.

65. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., p. 103; Maritz, op cit., p. 58.

66. According to the terms of the treaty of Vereeniging the rebel officers, unlike the men, did not receive an automatic indemnity but had to be tried in a court of law. See J.D. Kestell and D.E. van Velden, Die Vredesonderhandelinge (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1982), p. 120.

67. See Ferreira, op cit., p. 285.

process however. Immediately after his departure a spontaneous rebellion occurred centred on Brandvlei. But it was only after the arrival of S.G. Maritz in April 1901 that this rebellion assumed crisis proportions for the imperial authorities, and enveloped the entire region. By August 1901 Maritz had succeeded, after four months in the region, in destabilizing large areas not only of the Western Cape but also of the Karoo. The entire central portion of the Western Cape - the districts of Calvinia and Vanrhynsdorp and part of Clanwilliam - were under his control. In his July trek into the Karoo - his first offensive - he succeeded in expanding the area of hostilities into the western part of that region. He left behind small satellite commandos there and also at various places in the parts of the Western Cape which were under his control. By August the Boer strength (overwhelmingly rebel) in these regions totalled almost 500,⁶⁸ and more than half of them were directly under Maritz's control at any given time.

With Maritz as the driving force a general uprising occurred within the Western Cape by October 1901. While this rebellion was contained within the strategically unimportant Vanrhynsdorp, Clanwilliam and Calvinia districts, the imperial authorities did not find it particularly alarming. This is illustrated by the fact that Maj. H.S. Jeudwine's force operated as the only British column in the Western Cape for five months between April and October. Maritz's first raid into the Boland in October 1901 brought about a complete change in the character of the military operations in the west. His raid was a serious blow to imperial prestige in the area.

The second great change which the Western Cape underwent was the arrival of Genl. J.C. Smuts, as supreme commander in November 1901. Smuts' arrival, to some extent, put a stop to Maritz's very effective offensive forays within and across the borders of the region. In 1902 stalemate descended on the west. This change in the military balance of power was brought about also by the erection of a blockhouse line eastwards from Lambert's Bay. This line was begun in January 1902, and by March had reached a point midway between Clanwilliam and Calvinia.⁶⁹ The fortification line cut the Olifants river valley into two and ensured that any invasion of the Boland in 1902 would be an expensive affair.

68. Wessels, 'Major H.S. Jeudwine', op cit., p. 73.

69. Amery, op cit., pp. 401, 542-3.

Smuts spent six months in the Western Cape, but his command there was characterized by relative inertia and the absence of a clearly thought-out offensive strategy. His military reorganization there had no important results. Even before his arrival in the west the region (being something of a safe haven) was clogged by too many commandos. At that stage the military interests of the Boers would have been best served by Smuts leaving a handful of officers with Maritz (who needed no assistance of any kind) and trekking off with his commando to some other region. Remaining in the west, Smuts failed to unite the commandos under his authority, just as Kritzinger had failed in the east. The centre-piece of his entire offensive strategy - the trek into the eastern Cape in February 1902 by 5 commandos under Genl. W.C. Malan - failed dismally when 4 of them refused to cross the Midlands line and trekked away into the Karoo and Northern Cape.⁷⁰ Hemmed in by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Smuts' obvious strategy lay in a simultaneous invasion south, north and west, but he never even began to formulate such a strategy, being unwilling to divide his forces. Since the Boers had no control over any of the lines of communication, Smuts was unable to formulate a role for himself in the west. He was overshadowed as a soldier both by Maritz and van Deventer - indeed, by Bouver, Schoeman and Theron also - at a time when martial qualities were the only ones required by the Boer war effort. The confidential profile on him by the British Intelligence department stated as follows: 'Carries no arms and is seldom seen near the fighting line.'⁷¹

For a variety of reasons Smuts was the sole Cape representative at the peace negotiations in May 1902. He quickly came under the influence of Genl. L. Botha there, and adopted his point of view that there should be a general surrender of all the Boer forces throughout South Africa.⁷² Whereas the guerrilla war in the Western Cape had been won, in most regions of the republics it had been lost. This legacy of a defeat snatched from the jaws of victory represented an historical anomaly, which had somehow to be realigned with the forces of history in the post-war period. How (and if) this occurred can however best be explained by scholars of that period.

70. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 333-4; Smith, op cit., pp. 125-6.

71. 'Boer Army List', op cit., p. 118.

72. See Kestell and van Velden, op cit., pp. 76-82, 152-7.

RACIAL WAR ON THE FRINGES OF THE KALAHARI : THE NORTH-WEST CAPE

The outstanding event in the North-West Cape during 1900 was the Prieska Expedition, which was an important precursor to the second invasion into the colony. Initially conceived of as a lightning thrust southward to cut the lines of communication - in particular the railways - between Bloemfontein and Cape Town, the expedition quickly degenerated into a political movement with the accent on the annexation of districts and mobilization of rebels.¹

The advanced guard of the expedition arrived at Kenhardt on the 20th February, where the local police rebelled and joined the republican invaders. This process was repeated at Kakamas on the 25th and a few days later at Schuitdrift.² The main force arrived at Kenhardt on the 28th February where, after a very brief clash with black **auxiliaries**, the town was annexed to the O.F.S. and a republican administration established.³ Capt. J.P. Jooste then went on to do the same in the undefended town of Upington. Rebel recruitment was very successful and by the end of March the combined Upington-Kenhardt commando numbered over 700.⁴

At the beginning of March, to counter the Boer proclamations and contain the rebellion in the Bushmanland and northern Karoo, the authorities proclaimed martial law in the districts of Kenhardt, Britstown and Prieska.⁵ Lord Roberts had meanwhile ordered Genl. Settle to form three columns which could advance and halt the progress of the republican expedition.⁶

In early March a telegram from Genl. de Wet reached the leaders of the expedition at Houwater, informing them of the full extent of Cronje's defeat, and ordering them to return to the republics.⁷ But this was ignored.

Lord Roberts' plan was to converge on Prieska and cut off the expedition's line of retreat. After a small defeat at Houwater on the 6th March, Roberts sent Lord Kitchener to command the British forces. By the 20th March Kitchener had reached

1. For the origins of this expedition see J.H. Breytenbach, Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902, (Die Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1983), Vol. IV, pp. 89-96; A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England, (A. Schowalter, Munich, 1902), pp. 68-70; F.R.M. Cleaver, A Young South African (State Library, Pretoria, 1974), pp. 50-7.
2. C.P.C., M. Oosthuizen, 'Gesiedenis van Kakamas', p. 34; C.F. MacDonald, Kalahari Mac (L. and S. Boek- en Kunssentrum, Johannesburg, 1948), p. 11.
3. C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1943), p. 59; Cleaver, op cit., p. 90; G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), p. 119.
4. A. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 79-80; Preller, op cit.; Strydom, op cit.
5. Frontier Guardian, 9 March 1900.
6. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, London, 1906), Vol. IV., p. 3.
7. J.N. Brink, Oorlog en Ballingskap (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), p. 47.

Prieska, and the rebellion in the North-West collapsed.⁸ Gen. Settle marched to Upington which he occupied unopposed on the 3rd April, arresting the whole rebel war committee there, including Ds. C.H.W. Schröder, M.L.A.⁹ Most of the republicans retreated through Gordonia to Griqualand West, but a small composite force of rebels and Transvalers made a futile last stand at Kheis, on the Orange River, at the end of May.¹⁰

Apart from the Kenhardt and Upington rebels, a large rebel commando was established at Kakamas, where the D.R.C. had a labour colony which was only two years old. The first patrol of republicans and rebels from Kenhardt arrived at Kakamas on the 25th February 1900. Within hours 54 men had already rebelled there. This commando, enlarged, later left for Kenhardt and a part of it went on to Prieska. They took a full part in the Prieska Expedition and the first rebellion in the region.¹¹

One of the most important results of the first rebellion, and one that was to have equally important ramifications for the second rebellion, was the formation of the coloured Border Scouts at Upington, in May 1900. Initially comprising 200 men under Maj. J. Birbeck, the strength of the regiment was raised to 500 in January 1901 and at its peak the official attestation was 786. This was a huge force for the very sparsely-populated North-West and in all likelihood represented almost the total Gordonia population of young coloured men. In 1901 the Bushmanland Borderers were raised at Kenhardt, and numbered 600 in 1902. To the west and south-west of the region, the Namaqualand Border Scouts were raised in July 1901, at which point they already numbered 262.¹²

Most of the local rebels who surrendered at Kenhardt in March or April were allowed to go home on parole. Ds. Schröder was imprisoned at Upington and Kenhardt for a year, then fined £500 and was detained at Tokai until 1903 as a prisoner-of-war.¹³ It appears that few of the Kakamas rebels were prosecuted, in itself

8. Amery, op cit., p. 4; Brink, op cit., p. 52.
9. Amery, op cit., pp. 5-6; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 19.
10. Albert Times, 6 June 1900; Amery, op cit., pp. 227-8.
11. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 34-5.
12. Amery, op cit., Vol. V., pp. 612-3; P. Warwick, Black People and the South African War 1899-1902 (Ravan, Johannesburg, 1983), p. 121; Bill Nasson, Abraham Esau's War (David Philip, Cape Town, 1991), p. 19.
13. W.J. de Kock and D.W. Kruger (eds.), Dictionary of South African Biography (Fafelberg, Cape Town, 1983), Vol. II, p. 639-40.

an indication of how isolated the community was in an area where there were no loyalists and no English-speakers.¹⁴ Some rebels and their families fled to South West Africa, settling in Great Namaqualand, in the far south.¹⁵

The second rebellion in the North-West Cape began under the auspices of Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog. Sometime during the early stages of his invasion Hertzog despatched a number of undercover agents to various parts of the colony to foment rebellion. Three of these were Commandants J.C. Lötter and G.H.P. van Reenen, and H. Brazzelle.¹⁶ A fourth such man was Cmdt. J.H. Fronemann. He was an escaped P.O.W. from Simonstown¹⁷ who was reputed to have made his way by ship to the German territory, and from there to Schuitdrift and through to the Boer lines.¹⁸ A patrol of the Boshof commando was also sent by Hertzog to the Bushmanland in February 1901, to buy up horses for De Wet.¹⁹

As early as the 21st December 1900, the telegraph line from Upington to Prieska had been cut. For a few weeks there was periodic interference with the telegraph line and with the mail-carts.²⁰ The Upington A.R.M., D. Eadie, was however far more concerned about the threat from the north-east - and in particular from Kuruman - than he was about the threat from the south-east.²¹ On the 10th January Eadie engaged a frontier outlaw, J. St. Leger Lennox,²² 'to engage absolutely trustworthy natives to obtain intelligence as to the whereabouts and movements of any forces of the enemy along the north and north-eastern boundary of the district.'²³

14. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 37; MacDonald, op cit., pp. 158-9, 192.
15. In December 1900 however, the total number of Boers in this German colony only showed an increase of 68 over the corresponding census for December 1899. See C.J.S. Strydom (ed.), Afrikaners in die Vreemde (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1976), p. 103.
16. See A. Wessels (ed.), Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Nesor, Christiaan de Wet-Annale, 7 (S.A. Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1987), pp. 19, 22, 24, 25-7, 33-56, 62-3.
17. There was, for instance, an escape by 18 men from the Simonstown P.O.W. camp on 6th April 1900, 14 of them getting away. See Kokstad Advertiser, 13 April 1900.
18. Northern Post, 12 April 1901.
19. T.A.D., A 246, 'Geskiedenis van Kmdt. J.P. Brits', pp. 5-7.
20. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 18 January 1901.
21. Ibid., Eadie to Upington Commandant, 7 January 1901.
22. Better known as 'Scotty Smith'.
23. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to J. St. Leger Lennox, 10 January 1901.

In late January or early February 1901, Fronemann encountered some resistance from the Bushmanland Boers, in his attempts to compel all to join the rebellion.²⁴ But by mid-February he was strong enough to stage his first offensive action, the capture of the waterhole near Aggenys.²⁵ This waterhole remained in rebel hands for a month. On the 15th Obiquaputs was occupied,²⁶ and from there Fronemann proceeded to Pella. A small town was beginning to develop around this prosperous Roman Catholic mission station, and in March 1901 the settlement had a white population alone of 100.²⁷ At Pella Fronemann took four prisoners, commandeered a number of horses and looted the stores. The four prisoners were three coloured men from the Namaqualand Border Scouts, and a Cape Policeman.²⁸ In late February postal and telegraphic communication with Upington were once again cut off.²⁹ Leaving Pella, Froneman took possession of the waterholes at Gams and Namies. A Cape Police patrol was fired on on the 2nd March, at Baviaanskrantz, near Kakamas, and four horses captured.³⁰ Fronemann arrived at Kakamas on the 10th March. He released the Cape Policeman but the three coloured soldiers were severely flogged and enslaved there. One later escaped, carrying back vital information about conditions at the labour colony to the British authorities.³¹ By March 1901 then, the signs of the inter-communal conflict which within two months would plunge the region into a bloody racial war were already evident. This process was accelerated by the decision in December 1900 to withdraw all white troops from the North-West, after which the defence of the region was exclusively in the hands of coloured scouts commanded by Imperial officers.³² While the arming of coloured troops in the region was at once both a result of rebellion³³ and a stimulus to that process, it was the only decision the British

24. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 37-8.

25. Kokstad Advertiser, 7 June 1901.

26. Albert Times, 15 February 1901.

27. Somerset Budget, 17 March 1901.

28. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 37; Kokstad Advertiser, 7 June 1901.

29. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to Field Intelligence Department, 28 February 1901; Ibid., Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 1 March 1901.

30. Ibid., Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 8 March 1901; Tarka Herald, 9 March 1901; Northern Post, 8 March 1901; Albert Times, 8 March 1901.

31. Kokstad Advertiser, 7 June 1901.

32. C.J.S. Strydom, op cit., p. 101.

33. See for instance the case of General Manie Maritz, who decided to come to the North-West in April 1901, when he heard how the Boers there 'were virtually left to the mercy of the Hottentots.' (S.G. Maritz : My Lewe en Strewe (Priv. pub., Johannesburg, 1939), p. 32.

authorities could have made in 1901, if they wanted to keep the vast and strategically important North-West region within their political orbit.

Through March Fronemann continued looting the farms of loyalists in the Bushmanland, and commandeering all their cattle. When a Boer farmer's son refused to rebel he 'sjambokked him unmercifully,' then threw him into jail at Kakamas. He was the 11th loyalist to be imprisoned there.³⁴

Col. Shelton with the Bushmanland Field Column had gone east from O'Okiep during the last week in March. On the 6th April he recaptured and entrenched the waterhole at Aggenys. This meant that by the 9th April the Bushmanland Field Column held all the waterholes west of Namies.³⁵ Shelton's policy was one of containment, since control of the water sources³⁶ meant that the Boers could not move from east to west (from Kakamas to O'Okiep), and threaten the copper mines.

Realizing the strategic importance of the Aggenys waterhole, Fronemann attacked it in April. As a result of his own cowardice the attack failed, and his prestige suffered a fatal blow.³⁷ He then contented himself with moving supplies from all

over the Bushmanland to various laagers north and west of Kenhardt, notably at De Tuin.³⁸ In March Fronemann had sent three despatch-riders to General de Wet, requesting that experienced men be sent as officers to the North-West. These men reached the commandos of Malan and Scheepers in the Midlands during the first week of April. Malan chose seven men and the group of ten, with six coloured agterryers, arrived back at Brandvlei on the 20 April 1901. The group was commanded by Cpl. S.G. Maritz, a former Transvaal policeman, and brought with them a small herd of 30 horses.³⁹ Fronemann's command had collapsed and his personal

34. Northern Post, 29 March 1901; Albert Times, 5 April 1901; Tarka Herald, 17 April 1901.

35. Albert Times, 12 April 1901; Somerset Budget, 13 April 1901; Tarka Herald, 17 April 1901.

36. The only surface water between Little Namaqualand and the Bushmanland was along the western border of the latter. Bushmen control of those sources meant that 100 years separated trekboer penetration of the two regions, since the Bushmanland could not be approached from the waterless south. See P.J. van der Merwe, Pioniers van die Dorsland (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 28-9.

37. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 39.

38. Somerset Budget, 13 April 1901; Northern Post, 10 April 1901; Albert Times, 3 May 1901; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 39-40. There had been an unsuccessful Bushmen station at De Tuin during the 19th century, under Kicherer.

39. Northern Post, 29 March 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 25 October 1901; R. de Kersauson de Pennendreff, Ek en die Vierkleur (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 49-62; Maritz, op cit., pp. 31-36; H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 193-4.

prestige was at rock-bottom. Maritz therefore immediately took command of the Brandvlei-Kenhardt rebels. Maritz had found F-C. Jan Louw of Kakamas at Brandvlei with 20 men, and he sent these men, with Louw and Fronemann, back to Kakamas. Their instructions were to form new commandos with the help of the 200 rebels already there. En route to Kakamas the 20 men held a court-martial at Pypklip, where Fronemann was stripped of his rank, Louw being elected as commandant in his place.⁴⁰

On about the 1st May Genl. Settle telegraphed from De Aar to Upington that the outposts along the lower Orange should be evacuated. The 130 Border Scouts at Keimoes fell back on Upington and Keimoes was immediately occupied by the Kakamas rebels. The approach of the rebel commando caused panic in the coloured community there and they nearly all trekked to Upington with their large flocks. In Upington the Chairman of the Management Council insisted that the refugee's flocks not be held on the Upington commonage (the only available grazing). But Eadie, the A.R.M. there, resisted this demand, despite the highly unsatisfactory nature of the grazing situation.

The 30 Australians, with two 15-pounder guns, and 20 Cape Police who had bolstered the garrison had also been withdrawn, the latter having been added to Major H.S. Jeurwine's column operating near Brandvlei.⁴¹ 'Contrary to my expectations,' wrote Eadie to the Law Department, 'the general condition of affairs in this district are not improving as time goes on.'⁴²

Fronemann's request for officers to drive the Brandvlei rebellion was not the only one to reach the commandos to the east, for in April a similar request from 'thirty rebels' in Kakamas had reached Hertzog in the O.F.S. Hertzog appointed the twenty-one year old F-C. E.A. Conroy, and promoted him to commandant. Conroy, son of Irish-Afrikaner parents, had rebelled in Britstown in December 1900, so he had only 4 months experience as a soldier, but his rise through the Boer ranks had been meteoric.

Maritz had just packed off Louw and Fronemann to the dumping ground of the 'poor white' colony, when Conroy (with only 6 rebels) arrived at Brandvlei on the 10th May, armed with his letter of appointment and contesting the command of the

40. Maritz, op cit., p. 36; De Pennendreff, op cit., p. 65; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 40.

41. See A. Wessels (ed.), 'The Anglo-Boer War Diary of Major H.S. Jeurwine', in Egodokumente : Persoonlike Ervaringe uit die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902 (Oorlogsmuseum van die Boererepublieke, Bloemfontein, 1993), pp. 52-63.

42. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 3 May 1901.

Kenhardt-Brandvlei rebels.⁴³ With a potential clash of interests looming, the choice of local commandant was put to the rebels at Klawervlei on the 16th May. Their unanimous choice was Maritz, who then gave Conroy a written appointment as commandant of the Kakamas commando.

On arrival at Kakamas, Louw once again stood down, and Conroy dealt out floggings 'left, right and centre,' including to the ex-Cmdt. Fronemann, who then disappeared without trace. There were 60 rebels waiting for Conroy at Kakamas, but within days this figure had grown to 500. This total was merely academic however, as it included old men and boys, unarmed rebels without horses, and men totally unsuitable as soldiers.⁴⁴ The operational commando consisted of 150 mounted and armed men, while within that only 25 men could be classed as truly effective. The only Kakamas officer capable of offensive action was F-C. A.J. van J. Stadler. On the 16th May there had been a small clash at Leeukop, 14 km north of Kenhardt. This appears to have been the first armed clash in the Bushmanland after the fiasco at Aggenys, and Stadler was probably responsible.

The Kakamas commando began to exert pressure on Kenhardt during May, and Conroy immediately continued with this policy.⁴⁵ On the 23rd May Conroy received a report at Pypklip that horses had been seen grazing at the farmhouse at Naroegas, 25 km north of Kenhardt. Without scouting the vicinity adequately Conroy rode to the farm with 25 men and was ambushed. Pinned down by the very accurate rifle-fire of the Border Scouts, five of his men were killed and two mortally wounded. A number of others were also wounded and captured. When night fell Conroy returned to his command to fetch water and reinforcements, but on arriving back found that two of the wounded had been stoned to death. He then swore an oath that he would shoot without trial any armed coloured who fell into his hands: 'This blood will be avenged like the blood of a Piet Retief was avenged.'⁴⁶

Two of the captured rebels were executed at Kenhardt on the 24th July 1901.⁴⁷ These were the only Boers executed in the North-West during the war. The final number of Naroegas dead was thus eleven. This was a tremendous blow to the tightly-knit Kakamas community. Another two men were shot repeatedly at close

43. Die Brandwag, 1 August 1941, 8 August 1941, 15 August 1941; De Pennendreff, op cit., p. 68; Maritz, op cit., p. 40. See also De Kock and Krüger, op cit., p. 141.

44. Die Brandwag, 22 August 1941; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 40; Maritz, op cit., p. 40; De Pennendreff, op cit., p. 72.

45. Albert Times, 20 May 1901.

46. Die Brandwag, 5 September 1941, p. 13. See also Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 141-5; Somerset Budget, 25 May 1901; Frontier Guardian, 31 May 1901; Die Brandwag, 29 August 1941.

47. G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1917), pp. 57-60; Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 44.

range while lying helplessly wounded on the ground. They were however sheltered by local farmers and survived, later escaping back to the commando.⁴⁸

Naroegas had a fundamental impact on the Boers' attempts to mobilize rebellion and resistance in the Bushmanland and Gordonias. The regional balance of power swung entirely in favour of the imperial authorities and it was obvious that Kakamas would be attacked. Naturally the earlier plans to attack Kenhardt were completely abandoned. The reverse resulted, in fact, in the Kakamas commando assuming a defensive posture which they would not lose for the duration of the war.

Conroy's first act after Narogegas was to write to the Kenhardt commandant, stating that if the killings were committed with the knowledge of the commanding officer, he intended to take reprisals in line with the oath he had taken. This letter was taken in to Kenhardt but did not receive a reply. He then issued a proclamation saying that all armed coloureds who were captured would be shot, but that those who surrendered would not be harmed. Naturally, none did surrender. In June Conroy did indeed capture and shoot 7 Border Scouts outside Kenhardt. None of the Kakamas commando would carry out his order to shoot them, and he carried out the shootings himself.⁴⁹

Conroy had no faith in his ability to mount an effective defence of Kakamas and decided to try and link up with the republican forces in the Transvaal. He felt his isolation keenly in the North-West and considered the area too dangerous for a small commando. His preparations took him some weeks however, before he was able to leave.

He first trekked to South West Africa to negotiate with the German authorities at Schuitdrift for the receipt of a number of Boer refugees. These negotiations were successful, with the proviso that armed men were not allowed to enter the territory. In June, before Conroy's departure, 38 families left for the Germany colony, and were placed in a locality near Schuitdrift.⁵⁰

Feeling the need to attempt to win over the Kakamas community, whose confidence in him had plummeted after Narogegas, Conroy decided to raid Keimoes and obtain supplies which could carry the community through in his absence. Keimoes had been re-garrisoned on the 12th June, and a convoy had re-supplied the town. In the

48. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 42.

49. Die Brandwag, 12 September 1941.

50. Colesberg Advertiser, 5 July 1901.

weeks before that Conroy had not occupied the village, but merely raided it from time to time. He had carried off approximately 10 wagon loads of various grains.⁵¹ On the second day of the attack on Keimoes the garrison fled and Conroy's force occupied the town, filling the wagon they had brought and also loading another two wagons they found in the town. On the fourth day the garrison returned with reinforcements from Upington and drove the Boers out of the town. Conroy retained the three wagons however, and established a committee in Kakamas to supervise the distribution of the supplies.

The Kakamas commando left on the 17th June for their eastward trek, while the 38 local families trekked to the west, to South West Africa.⁵² The commando had severe misgivings about leaving their home district, but did not want to be abandoned politically and militarily a second time. Some men first conveyed their families west, while others - especially relatives of those killed at Narogas - remained behind and took no farther part in the war.⁵³

Conroy did not immediately trek east, but crossed the Orange river and trekked north through Gordonia. Already on the 17th he clashed with a small force from Upington, capturing a few coloured scouts whom he shot. In June he had shot another 9 prisoners in the Bushmanland, bringing the total shot since the 23rd May to about fifteen.

At Swartmodder Conroy turned south-east trekking as far as Karos. He did not acquire any rebel recruits in Gordonia. He then trekked over Grondneus to Steenkampspan, passing very close to Upington and, for some unknown reason, crossed the river back into the Bushmanland. This gave a column from Kenhardt under Capt. White, which had left that place on the 21st, time to get in behind him. The result was that by the 24th June he was trapped against the river at Swartkop. The following day he managed to cross however, and the commando trekked on to Rooilyf and Witsand in the Langeberg, thereby crossing over into Griqualand West.⁵⁴

51. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 27 June 1901. See also Die Brandwag, 12 September 1901.
52. Die Brandwag, 19 September 1941.
53. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 48.
54. C.A.D., 1/UPT, 5/3/3, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 27 June 1901; Ibid., Eadie to Officer Commanding, North-West District, 5 July 1901; Ibid., Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 5 July 1901; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 48-50; Tarka Herald, 10 July 1901; Die Brandwag, 26 September 1941, 3 October 1941.

Simultaneous with the commando's departure, the refugee trek proceeded westwards towards South West Africa. Over 200 people were present on this trek but only a handful of sick and elderly men were present. Four of the seriously wounded from Narogas were also transported to the safety of the German colony. To avoid a bottle-neck at the river some crossed at Schuitdrift while others crossed over the mountains at Byna-Bo.

This trek was accompanied by extreme hardship for the women, especially for those who crossed over the mountains at Byna-Bo. A diphtheria epidemic was raging among the trekkers, and a number - especially children - died en route. After crossing the Orange at the end of June 1901, the refugees were accommodated at Jerusalem, originally the base of the Nama leader Jager Afrikaner.⁵⁵

Col. Ramsbottom, formerly a captain in the Border Scouts, occupied Kakamas in July 1901. Many families remained, mainly men who had taken no prominent part in the rebellions and their families, and the families of some rebels also. Former inhabitant and loyalist D.J. Kuys returned as produce collector for the British forces. Kuys requisitioned wheat, mealies and peas for the English commissariat, drawing no distinction between loyalists and others. He only requisitioned the surplus agricultural production, always leaving sufficient for the family. According to one source this made little difference to the Kakamas farmers since, before the trek to South West Africa, huge amounts of surplus produce had been buried.⁵⁶

After three months in Griqualand West the Kakamas commando decided to return to the Bushmanland, and gave Conroy an 'honourable discharge'. In his place they re-elected F-C. J. Louw to his former position of commandant. Conroy initially remained behind in Griqualand West, but soon followed the commando to Kakamas. The men meanwhile had collected their families in Namaland.

The commando laager was formed at Putsies.⁵⁷ There a commando of 50 men had once again formed around Conroy. Louw's nominal strength was 200. Capt. A.G. de Wet, bringing despatches from Europe, encountered the Kakamas commando at this time: 'Since the days which had preceded Cronje's capture, I had not again seen such

55. For a description of the trek see T.A.D., A 1664, 'Herinneringe van Cornelia Stadler i.v.m. die Anglo-Boereoorlog en die Rebellie', pp. 1-2; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 52-4. For some background to this Boer community and, earlier, that of Jager Afrikaner see, respectively: MacDonald, op cit., pp. 56-120; Brigitte Lau, Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time (National Archives, Windhoek, 1987), pp. 19-25, 32, 41-2, 78.

56. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 55-7.

57. Also spelt Putjes.

a positive spirit as existed in this commando', he wrote.⁵⁸

Conroy's first act was to organize another attack on Keimoes, in the last week of October 1901. This attack followed the same pattern as the attack in June. The Boers drove the Border Scouts out, but they later returned with reinforcements. Trapped against the river and surrounded, Conroy nevertheless managed to break out, with some casualties.⁵⁹ These farther casualties served however to once again undermine his position in the region, since the defensive state of mind of the Kakamas community was such that they could absorb no more casualties. Under Louw's command the commando reverted to defensive patrolling after October 1901. All their activities were directed towards the pursuit of only two considerations. One was to prevent the recapture of Kakamas, and the other to increase the size of their herds and flocks - horses also of course, but more especially cattle. Vast amounts of cattle were continually being captured and stolen, and then changing hands as a result of British counter-raids.⁶⁰

A thriving trade was set up in the Mierland near Rietfontein, where German officers regularly crossed the border to buy horses from the Boers. Exorbitant prices were paid for this hardy breed of desert mount: £20 for a mule, £16 per horse and £3 per donkey.⁶¹

Profiteering was of course not restricted to the Boers and was indeed institutionalized within the terms of service of the British forces in the Bushmanland. British strategy was concentrated on the capture of horses. At Keimoes in November 1901, two shillings were paid for every captured horse brought into the British lines. At war's end Lieut. T.W.H. Sarll of the Border Scouts was in credit to £1 800. Part of this was back-pay, but most of it was 'horse prize money.' Sarll claimed that on one occasion his patrol had captured 6 000 horses from a Boer commando.⁶²

By late October 1901 the entire Bushmanland, with the exception of Kenhardt, was in the hands of the rebels. Gordonia, on the other hand, was completely controlled by the powerful Border Scouts, backed up by the imperial authority. The only

58. A.G. de Wet, et al., op cit., p. 199. See also Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 51, 56-7; Stadler, op cit., p. 1.

59. A.G. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 200-2; Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 57-8; Die Brandwag, 12 September 1941, 26 September 1941; 1/UPT, 5/4/1, Eadie to Law Department, Cape Town, 1 January 1902.

60. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 56-7.

61. L.A. Visagie, Terug na Kommando (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1936), pp. 231-2.

62. Godfrey Lias, Adventurer Extraordinary (Cassell, London, 1961), p. 42.

exception to this was the north-western part of Gordonia, the Mierland, which was an area of contested control. The region thus divided neatly into two armed camps, with the Orange river the border. While Gordonia was almost completely depopulated, there were still large numbers of trekboers and others in the Bushmanland.⁶³

In approximately late November Conroy decided to leave Kakamas, where he had begun to find the conditions increasingly unfavourable. Taking about thirty-five volunteers he trekked east into the Doornberge south of Prieska, where he established a new commando. Utterly ruthless and merciless, Conroy was the outstanding figure in the North-West Cape during the war. His extremist attitudes towards armed coloureds was not shared by the local Boer inhabitants, who had lived cheek-by-jowl with the 'old nation' for generations. This was merely one of the many sources of tension between Conroy and the local commando.⁶⁴

After carrying despatches to South West Africa, Capt. A.G. De Wet arrived back at Kakamas in December 1901. In Conroy's absence discipline had collapsed at the labour colony, and he found the conditions to be chaotic.⁶⁵ On the 19 December Genl. J.C. Smuts had promoted Cmdt. H.W. Lategan to General in command of the 'Upington and Kenhardt' commandos. Lategan however only arrived at Kakamas in January, 1902. In his letter to Lategan, Smuts stated that he wanted an officer on the northern border whose 'secrecy and discretion' he could count on. Lategan's main task was to keep the line of communication open through South West Africa to Europe. This line went from Schuitdrift to Keetmanshoop to Angra Pequena (Lüderitz). Smuts gave Lategan a free hand over the Bushmanland commandants, adding that Conroy's appointment by General Hertzog was 'illegal,' since the latter's jurisdiction was confined to the O.F.S. Finally, Smuts' letter requested Lategan to occasionally work eastwards towards Prieska.⁶⁶

Smuts' official letter of appointment, written the same day, went much farther than the more informal letter. In this letter Smuts asked Lategan to do his best to open communications with Genl. P.J. de Villiers in Griqualand West. He had,

63. See C.J. Barnard, Die Vyf Swemmers (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1988), pp. 171-7; McDonald, op cit., pp. 200-3; Reitz, op cit., p. 281; Sarll, op cit., p. 42.

64. Die Brandwag, 26 September 1941; T.A.D., A 787, Preller Collection, Vol. 79, F-C. J.S. van der Merwe, 'Herinneringe uit die Opstand in Kaapland', pp. 90-1.

65. A.G. de Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 202-3.

66. T.A.D., A 1328, Letter from Genl. J.C. Smuts to Cmdt. H.W. Lategan; Nieuwoudtville, 19 December 1901.

Smuts stated, sent Genl. de Villiers instructions to cross the Orange river as soon as possible with a part of his commando and, in co-operation with Lategan, to attempt to defeat the British and their allies in the Kenhardt and Upington districts. Smuts' ultimate aim here was to also open up communication between South West Africa through Griqualand West to the Transvaal. This he considered to be a matter of great importance.⁶⁷

In a letter to Genl. de la Rey on 26 January 1902 however, Smuts acknowledged that de Villiers had remained under the former's direct command, so that Smuts had not felt free to send him orders. He reiterated his request though that Lategan and de Villiers should co-operate for strategic purposes, and attempt to clear the British from Gordonia.⁶⁸ Finally, on the 28th January Smuts wrote again to Lategan, from Kakamas, and once he had familiarized himself with the position there. He repeated his earlier advice to Lategan, that if he considered it advisable he had full authority to discharge Conroy. The ostensible reason was that Conroy's appointment by Hertzog was invalid,⁶⁹ but obviously Smuts had not received good reports on Conroy at Kakamas.

It is ironic that nothing came of Smuts' strategic objectives to the east, and yet Conroy had already in fact, during the third quarter of 1901, opened up a line of communication between the North-West Cape and the Transvaal via Griqualand West. Nothing had however come of this and after the return of the Kakamas commando the line had again closed completely. The commandos of the North-West were not sufficiently organized to maintain such a long line. In January 1902 Genl. P.J. de Villiers was also struggling to establish control over his very large and unwieldy force, and was in no position to expand his operations eastward into Gordonia.⁷⁰ He is known to have visited Gordonia at least once during the guerrilla war,⁷¹ but that region was very tightly controlled by the Border Scouts and the visit was without any consequence whatsoever.

In early January 1902, Cmdt. J. Louw's scout corps, commanded by F.-C. A.J. Stadler, discovered that a column was preparing to trek out from Brandvlei to attack

67. Ibid., Letter of Appointment, from Genl. J.C. Smuts to Cmdt. H.W. Lategan.

68. W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel, Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. 1, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, London, 1966), pp. 501-2.

69. T.A.D., A 1328, Smuts to Lategan, Kakamas, 28 January 1902.

70. See H. Verloren van Themaat, Twee Jaren in den Boerenoorlog (Willink, Haarlem, 1903), pp. 339-43.

71. F.C. Metrowich, Scotty Smith (Books of Africa, Cape Town, 1983), pp. 187-8.

Kakamas. A Similar column trekked out from Upington.⁷²

Stadler alerted Louw, who immediately sent four men to Genl. S.G. Maritz in Namaqualand, to request assistance. One of the four men was Capt. A.G. de Wet.⁷³ This was the first time since Fronemann's departure that an attempt had been made to unite the Hantam and the Bushmanland. During Fronemann's time the unity of these two regions had been a tenuous but accomplished fact, and from his base at Brandvlei Fronemann had maintained low-level operations in the Calvinia district and northward throughout the entire Bushmanland. Maritz broke the unity of the two regions however. He never operated north of Brandvlei,⁷⁴ and showed very little interest in events in the Bushmanland.

Scraping together a commando of 63 men, Cmdt. Louw trekked towards Kakamas. Stadler, Louw's scout commander, scraped together all the men he could find and, proceeding with them southward, managed to slow the column down and then take up positions in the ridges near Omkyk. News that the wagons from Kenhardt were empty had alarmed the Kakamas women, who knew that they were to be transported to a concentration camp, probably the 'transit' camps at either Kenhardt or Upington.⁷⁵ As a result when Louw arrived at Kakamas the women were in an agitated state, but all singing the Transvaal anthem, 'Kent Gij dat Volk vol Helden Moed?' Louw proceeded to Omkyk where he added his 63 men to Stadler's 14. For some days a static, low-level clash ensued at Omkyk, before the convoy abandoned its advance and retreated to Kenhardt.

Known as the 'battle of Kakamas,' this was the last attack during the war on that settlement. The rebel victory there saved the Bushmanland for the republican cause and ensured that the lines of communication into South West Africa were kept open.⁷⁶

When Louw's four emissaries arrived at Tontelboskolk they found Maritz suffering from a wound incurred in an attack on that settlement, but Smuts himself left immediately for Kakamas with only 25 men, arriving well after the clash there had ended. Smuts treked over Brandvlei and Breipaal to Kakamas. Once there, he sent a despatch-rider to summon Genl. Lategan at Rooipad.⁷⁷

72. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 59; MacDonald, op cit., p. 136.

73. Ibid.; A.G. de Wet, op cit., p. 203.

74. See Barnard, op cit., p. 182; Visagie, op cit., p. 207; Steyn, op cit., p. 70.

75. Virtually nothing is known of either of these 'unofficial' and very obscure camps. But for the former see C. de Jong, Skandinawiërs in die Tweede Anglo-Boere-Oorlog, 1899-1902 (C. de Jong, Pretoria, 1983-1987), Vol. III, pp. 134, 143; for the latter see O.F.S.A.D. A 155/210, 'Korrespondensie met D.F. van Tonder in Konsentrasiekamp, Upington'.

76. Oosthuizen, op cit., pp. 61-3; MacDonald, op cit., pp. 138-59.

77. Ibid., p. 60.

Three days before Smuts arrived at Kakamas, Lt. W.H. Steyn had arrived there. This man was an ex-P.O.W. who had escaped from Ceylon and returned to South Africa. Smuts had sent him back to Europe with despatches in December 1901. He, Cmdt. F.A. Alleman and Lieut. D. Malan had left Nieuwoudtville on the 6th January 1902. Alleman's instructions were to buy 10 000 suits of clothing and shoes of the right type 'If the Treasury allows it'; to 'very cautiously' smuggle weapons through the border; to organize a proper communication line of despatch-riders; to bring money back from Holland to be used in urgent cases; and to bring back despatches and reports.⁷⁸

At Schuifdrift the three men encountered Capt. A.G. de Wet, who convinced Steyn that the latter was a wanted man in the German colony. Steyn accordingly returned with despatches, finding Smuts at Kakamas:

On 31st March 1902, at Brussels, Cmdt. Alleman wrote a vague and tautological account of his mission, touching on the events at Schuifdrift: 'On arriving at the Orange river, I had, according to my orders, to investigate certain matters and found it necessary to send Lieut. Steyn back to General Smuts to inform him of certain irregularities committed by certain burghers across the border of (South) West Africa, and to request him to lay down stricter rules for the commandos stationed along the Orange river, so that our communication line will not be interrupted and so that it can be properly established.'⁷⁹

On receipt of Cmdt. Alleman's despatches at Kakamas, Genl. Smuts sent Lieut. Steyn on a mission to Rietfontein. He was joined by F-C. A.J. Stadler, with 35 men. North of Swartmodder, at Middelpoos, they clashed with coloured scouts who were disputing their entry into the Mierland. The chief of the Mierland Basters, David Vilander, was killed in this clash.⁸⁰

From Middelpoos the patrol went on to Rietfontein, where illicit supplies were being secretly stored at the house of C.F.A. Le Riche, a local trader and farmer. These supplies included clothing, hats, shoes and tobacco, all of which had come from Holland, also a number of heavy electrical battery sets for some unknown purpose. This load was transported back to Kakamas by wagon.⁸¹

The last months of the war in the North-West were very quiet, and Louw returned

78. Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 456-8; Visagie, op cit., p. 229; W.H. Steyn, op cit., pp. 73-4.

79. Ibid., p. 457. These 'irregularities' probably entailed collusion with the Vilanders at Rietfontein in the sale of horses to the Germans, and/or the theft by rebels of supplies smuggled across the border.

80. This clash occurred apparently on the 14th March 1902. See J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937 (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1957), pp. 97-8.

81. Oosthuizen, op cit., p. 64; W.H. Steyn, op cit., p. 75; Visagie, op cit., pp. 230-1.

to Brabees and Putsies, and the life of the laager. Lategan did not base himself at Kakamas permanently, but visited the region from time to time. His command was not a success and he lapsed quickly into passivity and defensiveness. In March however he appeared to move permanently into the Britstown district.⁸²

In June the Kakamas commando surrendered at Kenhardt. Cmdts. Jan Louw and E.A. Conroy fled to South West Africa, through Schuitdrift. Scores of prominent Cape rebels and other adventurers fled to that territory at the end of the war. Apart from some of the most prominent men, such as Genls. H.W. Lategan and S.G. Maritz, there were Cmdts. E.A. Conroy, J.Louw, J.P. Nesor, J.J. Smith, L.B. Wessels, A.G. de Wet, G.H.P. van Reenen and C.J.F. Botha. Under them were scores of men such as Lieut. Dirk van Deventer, one of Conroy's scout officers, who was responsible for many of the shootings in that commando. There was Lt. Loubser of Nesor's commando, who had to flee for the same reason, and F-C. F. Muller, of the same commando, who took a prominent part in the rebellion. At the bottom level there were ordinary rebels such as the boy C.F. MacDonald, who accompanied Cmdt. J. Louw to Namaland, as his family had disintegrated and he had little choice. Finally, there was a group of foreigners - especially Germans, Hollanders and Irish Americans - who returned to Europe.⁸³ Many men who remained in Namaland (between Warmbad and Keetmanshoop) were joined by their families, and a Boer colony evolved in the south of the German territory in 1903. The evolution of this colony was one of the more important results of the South African War in the North-West. It had important ramifications for the immediate future of South West Africa, and provoked an active debate in the colonial and Imperial newspapers in the post-war years, in South Africa, South West Africa and Germany.⁸⁴

The lines of communication between the North-West Cape and Europe were kept open during the last year of the war, but aside from acting as a conduit for despatches and returned prisoners-of-war, very little in the way of supplies was brought into the Cape via this route. The equally ambitious strategy of linking the North-West Cape rebellion with the Transvaal guerrilla war, via Griqualand West, did not succeed due to the enormous distances involved and the low level of commando organization.

82. MacDonald, op cit., pp. 163, 167, 183-7.

83. See Die Brandwag, 28 November 1941; Wessels, 'Jacob Petrus Nesor', op cit., pp. 105-109; O.T. de Villiers, Met die Wet en Steyn in Het Veld (Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1903), pp. 247-251; Maritz, op cit., pp. 58-9.

84. See Northern Post, 9 September 1902; L.G. Green, To the River's End (Howard Timmins, Cape Town, n.d.), pp. 65-71; Frontier Guardian, 11 December 1902.

Rebel control of the Bushmanland (except for Kenhardt) left an important legacy, but at the same time the importance of that control was diminished by the fact that it was an unimportant semi-desert region, both far north of the agriculturally-rich Boland, and far to the north-west of the strategically important railway-line. The low calibre of both recruit and officer in the North-West meant that there was an almost complete lack of an offensive spirit. The opportunity to push south and link up with Maritz in the Western Cape, to push east into the Karoo, to contest British control of Gordonia, and to forge permanent links with Griqualand West was therefore lost. Nevertheless, total control of so large an area as the Bushmanland had important medium-term political results after the war.

A unique feature of the guerrilla war in the North-West was the full-blown race-war which erupted in the region. Faced with losing control of the entire North-West (an event which might have had important geo-political consequences), imperial authorities in the region had no choice but to arm the coloured population of Gordonia. This decision was a result of the first rebellion and a cause of the second, but from the imperial point of view its consequences were unavoidable, and a part of the price to be paid for continued imperial dominance in South Africa.

SCHEEPERS' DESPERATE GAMBLE : THE SOUTHERN CAPE

In common with the other Cape regions which did not share a frontier with the republics, the first phase of the South African War had no direct impact on the Southern Cape. On the 17th January 1901 however, Genl. P.H. Kritzinger's commando invaded the region, in accordance with Genl. C.R. de Wet's policy of escalating the conflict and of expanding it into every region of the Cape. Kritzinger entered the Southern Cape at Vogelstruisleegte, 20 km north of Willowmore. His advanced guard, under Capt. G.J. Scheepers, unsuccessfully attacked Willowmore, then went on and occupied the undefended village of Uniondale.

Instead of trekking down through Perdepoort onto Willowmore, Kritzinger with the main force turned south-west and galloped the 35 km to Kalkkraal. On the 19th he crossed through the Swartberge at Towerwater Poort, entering the eastern reaches of the Little Karoo. In the poort Kritzinger destroyed a steam traction engine, trucks and bridges.¹

On the 20th at Paardekloof, the commandos of Kritzinger, Fouché (returning from Aberdeen) and Scheepers (returning from Uniondale) were all reunited. A krygsraad was held at Wilgerivier that night, and Scheepers and Fouché sent back an independent report to Genl. de Wet.

From Wilgerivier Kritzinger moved west through the very narrow Olifants river valley, the Swartberge on his right and the Kammanassie mountains to the left. This movement severely destabilized Oudtshoorn, and that town expected an attack at any moment.

The Olifants valley formed a natural trap however and British troops began to mass up ahead, just east of De Rust. At Kruis Rivier, near Vlakteplaas, the commando came under artillery fire and, in order to escape, were compelled to scale the slopes of the Kammanassie mountains to the south. Spending the night on top of that range, Kritzinger descended on the 24th into the parallel Kammanassie river valley. The three commandos all separated there.²

After separating Kritzinger continued west in the Kammanassie valley. Kritzinger only proceeded as far as Grootfontein however, north of the Wilderness and only 20 km from the sea. The farm Grootfontein, in the George district, thus marked

1. B.W.M., 4299/4, 'Dagboek van J.M. Ackerman', p. 23; P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), pp. 19-23; Albert Times, 21 January 1901, 25 January 1901; R. Morrow, Uniondale 1901 (Priv. pub., N.p., 1902), pp. 2-7.
2. Northern Post, 25 January 1901; Ackerman, op cit., p. 24; Du Plessis, op cit., pp. 23-6; Colesberg Advertiser, 1 February 1901; Somerset Budget, 1 February 1901, 13 February 1901; Het Oosten, 24 January 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 1 February 1901; Albert Times, 25 January 1901; Tarka Herald, 23 January 1901.

the most westerly point of Kritzinger's penetration into the Cape Colony. On the 26th January he turned eastwards from that farthest point, and trekked through Avontuur. Within 36 hours of leaving Grootfontein he reached Vyekraal, 70 km away. At that place the main commando came under fire for the second day in a row. Artillery fire drove Kritzinger north-east over the Witberg to Grootrivier. While trekking from there to the Kougaberge Kritzinger clashed with a British force. He inflicted a number of casualties and captured a number of prisoners. Hearing that his route into the Longkloof was blocked, he released his prisoners the next day (the 30th January) at Dieprivier, doubled back on his tracks, and went north over the Kougaberge to Dwaas.³

The news that Kritzinger was at Avontuur, in late February, created great alarm at Knysna. The C.C. and R.M. there, taking advantage of the nagmaal services (which were in progress), issued orders that no Boer farmers were to leave the town that evening. The next morning he commandeered all the horses in the town. He also collected all the ammunition he could find and had it thrown into the river.⁴ West of George, the Royal Navy bolstered the weak Imperial defences, H.M.S. Doris landing sailors to strengthen the garrison at Mossel Bay, and providing a communications link with Col. D. Haig's inland column.⁵

East of Knysna H.M.S. Widgeon patrolled very close to the shore beyond Plettenberg Bay, giving moral support to the people living along the coast, 'who had given themselves up for lost.'⁶

On the afternoon of the 31st Kritzinger left Dwaas, galloping north-east over the western reaches of the Baviaansrivier mountains. On the 2nd February he captured rifles and ammunition from the store at Campbell, reaching Antonieskraal near Steytlerville the next day. A party of 30 Boers were sent to Steytlerville. They captured 40 horses, but found the town occupied by a British column. From Antonieskraal, 30 km west of Steytlerville, Kritzinger went north past Klipplaat. He clashed on the 6th with a small British column 20 km from Klipplaat. The skirmish continued all day and three of the British column were killed and 7 wounded.

3. Ackerman, op cit., Somerset Budget, 13 February 1901; Colesberg Advertiser, 22 February 1901.
4. Frontier Guardian, 8 February 1901.
5. Graham Dominy, 'Firing Broadships Against Boers : Warships Versus Horsemen on the South African Coast', Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin, Vol. XVII, No. 3, January 1993, p. 107.
6. Ibid.

Continuing past Palmietfontein on the 7th Kritzinger began to veer west, trekked past Visgat and arrived at Grootfontein, 45 km south of the Camdeboo mountains, on the 8th February. In so doing Kritzinger exited from the Southern Cape and entered the Midlands. He had encountered no rebel commandos in the southern region, and had enlisted only a small number of rebel recruits. Fouché and Scheepers also returned to the Midlands shortly afterwards.⁷

After the departure of Kritzinger and his other commandos from the Southern Cape the region remained quiet for a number of months. At the end of May Cmdt. Scheepers suddenly trekked south of Aberdeen and attacked Willowmore. His attack on that town in February had been unsuccessful and this one, on the 1st June 1901, also failed. The attack lasted all day and by the time the commando drew off both sides had suffered casualties. Scheepers then returned to the Midlands.⁸

At the beginning of August he returned to the south however; this time intending to remain for a much longer period. He was accompanied by the commando of P. van der Merwe, who led Malan's unit in the latter's absence in the O.F.S.⁹

On the Midlands-Southern Cape border Scheepers burnt down the station buildings at Miller. On the 5th August he burnt down the homestead of Featherstonehaugh, in the Willowmore district. He defeated the Willowmore Defence Force at Hartebeestkuil on the Kariëga then, on the 6th, shot dead a captured African policeman at Rooiklip in the Steytlerville district.¹⁰

Before parting in the Aberdeen district, Cmdt. W.C. Malan had issued Scheepers with a strong warning against the burning down of private houses. But Scheepers chose to ignore that warning.

He operated for a few weeks in the Willowmore and Steytlerville districts, attracting dozens of rebel recruits and burning down numbers of houses. Six houses were burnt down in the first week of August (3 on the 3rd and 3 on the 5th) and in the first two weeks of that month 21 rebels enlisted. Scheepers clashed repeatedly

7. Ackerman, *op cit.*, pp. 25-6; Du Plessis, *op cit.*, pp. 26-30; Somerset Budget, 12 February 1901, 23 February 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 15 February 1901, 23 February 1901.
8. Barkly East Reporter, 7 June 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 7 June 1901; Albert Times, 7 June 1901.
9. J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), pp. 38-40; H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), p. 238.
10. See Bill Nasson, Abraham Esau's War (David Philip, Cape Town, 1994), p. 185.

with local district forces, capturing numbers of prisoners, rifles and horses. On the 7th he captured the Steytlerville C.C. and R.M., Cloete. Since Cloete refused to sign the oath of neutrality he was compelled to accompany the commando.¹¹

In the second week of August Scheepers trekked south-west over both the Baviaanskloof mountains and the Kouga mountains. On the latter range his men shot a mountain zebra.¹²

On about the 15th August Scheepers was at Krakeel where he captured a number of Defence Force scouts, also J. van Niekerk, J.P. of the Longkloof. This van Niekerk had a local reputation as a 'Saul who had gone out of his way to prosecute people.'¹³ Van Niekerk was compelled to accompany the commando as a prisoner. At Misgund, on the 18th, his house was burnt down. The shop and canteen of a certain Stone were both burnt down there, on the same day.

Scheeper's rearguard had been engaged by Col. H. Scobell on the 11th near Willowmore, but now he was repeatedly engaged by Col. Alexander's column. On the 20th a large column came over the Kouga mountains and attacked Scheepers near Avontuur. In heavy fighting over the next few days two of Scheepers' officers were wounded, including van der Merwe. Two of his men were killed and a few captured on the 24th. But in these few days the British columns lost at least 20 men captured, and 14 killed and wounded. On the 21st Scheepers captured a convoy, burning 22 wagons and cars. Two houses were burnt down on the same day. In the midst of these actions a number of horses, rifles and saddles were captured.¹⁴

At Molenrivier, in the Longkloof, Scheepers and van der Merwe separated briefly. While Scheepers trekked down the Kammanassie river towards Oudtshoorn, van der Merwe moved along the northern slopes of the Outeniqua mountains. Col. Alexander attacked van der Merwe on the 24th at Ezeljacht, 18 km north-east of George, inflicting some casualties. Cloete and the other Steytlerville D.M.T. men managed to escape to Alexander's column on this occasion.

11. Smith, op cit., pp. 41-4; C.M., P.L. Strydom, 'Oorlogdagboekie', p. 1; Northern Post, 16 August 1901; Tarka Herald, 28 August 1901; Pieterse, op cit., pp. 238-42; Frontier Guardian, 27 September 1901; Somerset Budget, 21 August 1901. See also C.P.C., C. Sandford, 'The Trial of Scheepers', pp. 5, 6, 11, 17, 18, 22, 24.

12. Smith, op cit., p. 44.

13. Ibid., pp. 44-5.

14. Ibid., pp. 48-51; Strydom, op cit.

Scheepers was also attacked on the 24th and lost some horses. On the following day he entered the Oudtshoorn district, and 6 rebels joined his commando. The Little Karoo had not been cleared of horses and on the 25th Scheepers' men commandeered 150 horses, all of them fresh and all in excellent condition. The two commandos had now reunited, and most of the horses were acquired along the Olifants river. Scouts were sent out to see if it would be possible to attack Oudtshoorn.¹⁵ J. van Niekerk, J.P. of the Longkloof was also released on the 24th August. Van Niekerk estimated the total combined commando at 300, with only approximately 10% being republican citizens. 'I never came across such scum, and never in all my experience heard such filthy language as I did in my eleven days with the Boers,' was van Niekerk's final comment on his period of imprisonment.¹⁶

In the last week of August Scheepers trekked west of Oudtshoorn, clashing with a column between that town and Calitzdorp. Going through the Huisrivier pass, Scheepers turned south-west towards Barrydale. At the end of the month he clashed with a pursuing column near Vanwyksdorp in the Ladismith district. Turning south towards Riversdale, the commando clashed with the Riversdale D.F. at Muiskraal, in the northern foothills of the Langeberg and only 20 km north of the town. This clash occurred on 30th August and Scheepers burnt down a house belonging to one of the D.F. men. A majority of Afrikaners in the Riversdale district were pro-imperial, and it was a considerable shock to Scheepers' commando to enter a region where the recruitment potential was extremely low.

Intending to attack Barrydale, Scheepers remained north of the Langeberg, sending a patrol west towards that town. Scheepers captured the town on the 31st, occupying it only for the day. Continuing towards Montagu, the commando clashed with that town's D.F., forcing them to retreat. Col. Alexander's column attacked Scheepers' rearguard here and the commando swung north towards Oudeberg. At this point, a few miles east of Montagu, Scheepers' westward movement came to an end, on the 4th September 1901. He was then 150 km east of Cape Town.¹⁷

On the 5th a patrol was sent north towards Touwsrivier, to scout the advance. Two coloured scouts who sent up smoke signals from a koppie warning of the Boer advance

15. Smith, op cit., pp. 46-56; Strydom, op cit.; Frontier Guardian, 27 September 1901, 4 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 28 August 1901; Albert Times, 30 August 1901; Northern Post, 30 August 1901.

16. Frontier Guardian, 4 October 1901.

17. Smith, op cit., pp. 57-62; Strydom, op cit., p. 2; Tarka Herald, 7 September 1901; Frans van Wyk, Riversdal, 1838-1988 (Frans van Wyk, Cape Town, 1988), p. 144.

were captured and, on van der Merwe's orders, shot dead. Scheepers was later charged with these shootings. But on the 6th September one of Scheepers men wrote in his diary '7 kaffers doodgeschiet,'¹⁸ no charges ever being laid in connection with this event.

There were a number of coloureds and Africans present in these two commandos as agterryers. The loyalty of the majority of these men towards the Boers was not in doubt,¹⁹ but a few were also under suspicion. No steps were taken against these latter as the commando 'was completely unable to prove' that they were disloyal.²⁰ On the 7th September at De Fontein in the Worcester district, another African prisoner was shot dead.²¹

After a few days in the mountainous country south of Touwsrivier, Scheepers and van der Merwe trekked east again. Going over the Witberge, just south of Matjiesfontein, the commando continued east towards Laingsburg. The Ladismith district was entered in the second week of September. As they had done east of Oudtshoorn, the two commandos trekked separately but in close association with each other.²²

At the end of September a Northern Cape newspaper recorded that 'The Boers have burnt about twenty homes of loyal farmers in the Oudtshoorn district. Scheepers is the champion farm burner of the Boer forces. Nearly every outrage of the kind committed within our borders had been his work.'²³

A report about Scheepers, released at Cape Town on the 6th September under the heading 'The Biter Bit,' stated 'Strong force of troops are operating against him, while Colonel Alexander is hotly pressing him behind. Armoured train is operating on railway.'²⁴

A far more detailed report, released at Matjiesfontein on the same day under the heading 'His Day Practically Over,' wrote that 'Scheepers' raiding in the Cape Colony appears to have reached its limit for he is hard-pressed by Col. Alexander,

18. Strydom, op cit.

19. See G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek en Die Stryd in Kaapland (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), p. 75; Retief Koch, Van Die Oewer van die Dwyka Na Graaff-Reinet Se Sand (Priv. pub., Somerset West, 1980), pp. 6-8.

20. Smith, op cit., p. 63.

21. Sandford, op cit., pp. 5, 6, 13, 14, 22, 23.

22. Smith, op cit.; Strydom, op cit., p. 2; Colesberg Advertiser, 25 October 1901; Frontier Guardian, 13 September 1901; Northern Post, 6 September 1901.

23. Colesberg Advertiser, 27 September 1901.

24. Frontier Guardian, 13 September 1901.

and finding garisoned towns everywhere has 'turned North again.' Though he gained some recruits and horses he found the country in a far different state from the period when the former raids occurred, the country being better prepared and the population less openly sympathetic. His recruits are as usual thoughtless youths of the black sheep class, lured mainly by love of adventure.'²⁵

Scheepers, in the mountainous area south of the line, between Touwsrivier and Laingsburg, had indeed been surprised at how heavily fortified the line had become, and by the size of the heavy British troop concentrations at places such as Matjiesfontein.²⁶

The commando had approached the line with a view to crossing it and proceeding to the Calvinia district. The security presence on the line made that impossible, but Scheepers then committed the error of remaining too long in the immediate vicinity. He then compounded this error with a second one, when he trekked just south of the line to the vicinity of Laingsburg. These errors gave the counter-guerrilla strategists an opportunity to marshal numbers of columns against him, something which was to have very serious consequences for both his and van der Merwe's detachments.

Scheepers' immediate response to the heavy forces brought against him, at the end of the first week of September, was to divide his forces into two. After trekking east for some distance, van der Merwe moved south on the Laingsburg-Ladismith main road. Scheepers was then in the vicinity of Algerynskraal, 20 km south-west of Ladismith.

The two commandos met up again on about the 7th somewhere between Anysberg and the Little Swartberg. It was decided that, to divide the forces pursuing them, van der Merwe would trek north of the Little Swartberg. Trekking through the Buffalo river poort, van der Merwe arrived at sunset on the 9th September at Driefontein, on the northern slopes of the Little Swartberg. Van der Merwe had 79 men, but for some reason no guards were posted north of the mountain range, where there were approaches from the north (Laingsburg) and east (Seven Weeks Poort). During the night one of the Boer farmers on the farm sent a report to Laingsburg. The coloured labourer carrying the message encountered Col. E.M.S. Crabbe's column 8 miles from Driefontein, and at dawn on the 10th Crabbe attacked the Boers there. During this attack van der Merwe and another two men were killed and more than 20 men captured. Numbers of horses, saddles, rifles and rounds of ammunition were also captured.

25. Northern Post, 6 September 1901.

26. Smith, op cit., p. 64.

Without officers, 60 men of van der Merwe's commando broke out of the ambush and fled eastwards.²⁷

Under the temporary command of H.J.J. van Rensburg, the remnants of van der Merwe's commando trekked east to Seven Week's Poort. The Prince Albert D.F., with 150 men, were stationed at Koueveld, near the Poort. But before the arrival of the Boers they fled east towards Witpoort. Going north along the Dwyka river the Boers arrived at Koppieskraal. These men were now separated from Scheepers by the Great Swartberg range and they had no prospects or hope of remaking contact with him. Their sole intention was to escape from the Southern Cape to the relatively safe refuge of the Calvinia district. In mid-September van Rensburg's commando crossed the line near Blood river station, at night. They were then in the Karoo.²⁸

Scheepers was involved in a heavy clash on the 9th September, inflicting a number of casualties on a British column. From at least that day however, his commando began to undergo a process of fragmentation. On the 9th September Major Lund captured 4 Boers, with 3 Africans, 14 horses and a mule.²⁹ At this stage 4 of Scheepers men, who had 'become separated,' joined F-C. J.P. Nesor's small commando in the Sutherland district.³⁰ On the 12th September one of Scheepers' men surrendered, the first 'handsupper' to be produced by the commando. The brother of Judge H.J. Hugo joined the commando on the 13th, somewhere in the vicinity of Calitzdorp.³¹ Judge Hugo was a close personal friend of Scheepers. He had accompanied Cmdt. W.C. Malan on his political mission to the O.F.S. at the end of July, and was still absent there. His brother, however, was an Imperial agent and (when not a spy and assassin) a uniformed member of the British army.³² Hugo had joined the commando with the dual purpose of poisoning Scheepers, and of leading the unit into an ambush. He quickly attached himself to the commando cook.³³

27. Smith, op cit., pp. 54-74; Albert Times, 20 September 1901; Northern Post, 13 September 1901; Somerset Budget, 14 September 1901; O.F.S.A.D., A 597, 'Herinneringe van Moeder van J.J.M. van Zyl, van Zylsdamme'.
28. Smith, op cit., pp. 74-5. Much of the activities of Scheepers and van der Merwe in September 1901, including the clash at Driefontein, occurred not in the Southern Cape but in the south-west corner of the Karoo. I have however included a description of these events in the Southern Cape case study, so as to retain the narrative continuity of the region, and because their activities seemed to be more a part of that structure than of the Karoo.
29. Strydom, op cit.; Northern Post, 13 September 1901.
30. A. Wessels (ed.), Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Nesor, Christiaan de Wet-Annale, 7 (S.A. Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1987), p. 69.
31. Strydom, op cit.
32. O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van Daniel Jacobus du Toit, p. 2; Wessels, op cit., pp. 91-3.
33. Die Huisgenoot. 20 May 1938.

On both the 14th and 15th September Scheepers clashed with Col. Crabbe's column, inflicting a large number of casualties on both occasions.

He was moving east and on the 16th he re-entered the Oudtshoorn district, inflicting heavy losses again on a column on the following day. On the 18th he clashed with Col. Atherton's column of 12th Lancers. These operations against Scheepers were controlled by Maj.-Genl. S. Beatson. He had 4 columns under his control - those of Atherton, Crabbe, Kavanagh and Alexander.³⁴

Returning to the Kammanassie river, east of Oudtshoorn, Scheepers re-entered the George district for one day then turned north towards Dysselsdorp. On the 22nd September, back on the Kammanassie river, just east of Oudtshoorn, Hugo administered poison in a glass of wine to Scheepers, and then promptly disappeared. Scheepers had been awaiting the return of a patrol which had gone out to investigate the possibility of attacking Oudtshoorn. Although the commando had been certain that there were no British columns in their immediate vicinity, immediately after Hugo's disappearance they were attacked by one, in the midst of the confusion resulting from Scheepers' sudden sickness. The commando suffered some casualties in this attack.³⁵

When Scheepers was sufficiently recovered to be able to ride, the commando moved north into the Cango, halting close to the caves. Every day they fought small engagements. On the 26th the commando was trapped against the Swartberg, inflicting some casualties on their pursuers. On the same day Scheepers shot dead a captured coloured spy. His purpose in shooting prisoners was still to attempt to deter the local black population from dispensing valuable information to the British columns. At Kruis river in the Oudtshoorn district he had had two captured men draw lots to see who would be shot. The surviving man was sent to warn the local population against giving assistance to the British.³⁶

Scheepers was subsequently convicted of murder in connection with this event, at his December trial.³⁷

In the last quarter of 1901, other commandos began to enter the Southern Cape,

34. Tarka Herald, 21 September 1901, 25 September 1901; Northern Post, 20 September 1901; L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. V, p. 394.

35. Scheepers' adjutant, also poisoned by Hugo, later wrote an account of the incident, see Die Huisgenoot, 20 May 1938. See also Die Brandwag, 13 August 1937; Preller, op cit., p. 136; Du Toit, op cit.; Strydom, op cit.

36. Die Brandwag, op cit.; Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 18 October 1901.

37. Sandford, op cit., p. 6, 14, 15, 23, 27.

trekking between the republics and the Calvinia district. Cmdt. J.L. Theron's was the first of these. Theron entered the colony in July with a crack commando unit, trekked through the Midlands and arrived in the Southern Cape in late August, following Scheepers' route.

Theron attacked the Oudtshoorn D.M.T. at Vlakteplaats on the Kruis river, 30 km north-east of Oudtshoorn, on the 1st September. He killed 3 of them and wounded and captured others. He then crossed over the Outeniqua mountains via the Robinson Pass. He clashed with Col. Kavanagh's force at Brandwacht. His commando visited farms to the north-west of Great Brak River, threatening that village: 'one dark night a mysterious and unidentified horseman, believed to be a Boer scout, rode down the Sandhoogte road to the causeway and back.'³⁸ Theron's commando therefore came within a few kilometres of the sea and very close to Mossel Bay.³⁹

From the vicinity of Mossel Bay, Theron crossed over the Botterberg at Ruiterbos. The commando crossed over the Gourits river at Zandfontein, and spent the night at Wydersrivier. The next day Theron was at Soebattersvlakte. He took up a position in the koppie at Droëvlakte and was attacked there by Kavanagh's column, with the D.M.T.s of Riversdale, Oudtshoorn, Caledon and Swellendam. From Droëvlakte Theron retreated over Rooiklaasheuwel and Oudemuragie in the direction of Heidelberg. Three of his men were wounded and captured in this skirmish, which took place on the 12th September. He attacked Heidelberg a few days later, but was driven off.⁴⁰

Theron's commando was the first to operate south of the Langeberg, but in the third week of September he trekked north-west over that range in the direction of Touwsrivier, where Scheepers had been operating a fortnight earlier. The commando arrived at Driefontein, near Touwsrivier, on the 22nd September. There they recruited the son of a local farmer who guided them across the line, over the Hex River Mountains via the footpath over Kaaimansgat, and into the Ceres district.⁴¹

In the last days of September Scheepers' commando trekked westwards from the Congo, keeping to the southern slopes of the Swartberg. On the 28th September he entered the Ladismith district. After his poisoning his condition had worsened and he

38. Margaret Franklin, The Story of Great Brak River (C. Struik Publishers, Cape Town, 1975), p. 91.

39. C.A.D., A 973, Unaccredited newspaper cuttings from Cape newspapers; Tarka Herald, 14 September 1901; Franklin, op cit.

40. Van Wyk, op cit., pp. 144-5.

41. B.W.M., 5075/2, P.J. Hugo, 'Enige Vertellings uit die Anglo-Boereoorlog uit die Omstreke van Touwsrivier', pp. 1-8. See also Wessels (ed.), The Anglo-Boer War Diary of Major H. S. Jeurwine in Egodokumente (Oorlogsmuseum van die Boererepublieke, Bloemfontein, 1993), pp. 74-5, 79.

travelled in a captured car. From the Ladismith district he struck south, away from the Swartberg, towards Riversdale and Heidelberg. At Brand river in the Riversdale district, on the 30th, Scheepers burnt down a Boer farmhouse. He clashed every day with the pursuing columns, inflicting large casualties and capturing large numbers of prisoners, horses and rifles.⁴²

At the end of September Scheepers was driven north again and on the 1st October was near Calitzdorp. When forced to flee into the mountains, four of his men rode with him in a blanket slung between them. He soon captured another car however, and trekked south and then south-east around Rooiberg. Arriving at Buffelsfontein (now the village of Vanwyksdorp) on the 2nd, Scheepers clashed with a column there, inflicting a number of casualties.⁴³

On the 3rd October Scheepers was driven south of Buffelsfontein, and trekked in the direction of Riversdale. In the hills between the Rooiberg and the Langeberg he trekked east towards the Grootrivier then changed course and trekked north-west, arriving back at Buffelsfontein on the 4th, having travelled in a circle. Fodder requirements had forced his return to Buffelsfontein. On the 4th he trekked west to Ockertskraal, 25 km south of Ladismith. His commando was ambushed there and scattered, 2 men being killed and 10 captured.⁴⁴ These were the first serious losses suffered by Scheepers' commando. A slow process of fragmentation had however set in in mid-September and by early October he had been able to attract only 3 genuine recruits in the previous 6 weeks. On the 4th Lieut. S.W. Pypers had however captured 67 horses, fully equipped with saddles and bridles.

Moving south to Nellsplaats to re-form his scattered commando, Scheepers then turned towards Riversdale before again trekking north and camping on the 7th just south of Anysberg. Trekking north-east over Anysberg towards Laingsburg, the commando moved through Rooinek, with the Witteberge on the left and the Elandsberg on the right. On the 8th at Floriskraal the line lay before him but the Swartberg was now in his rear.⁴⁵

Having arrived in the Koup region, Scheepers turned east and trekked towards Prince Albert. Moving parallel with the railway line, he also had the Swartberg range

42. Strydom, op cit., pp. 2-3; Huisgenoot, op cit.; Brandwag, op cit.; Sandford, op cit., pp. 6, 24, 31; Du Toit, op cit., pp. 1-2.

43. Preller, op cit., p. 71; Strydom, op cit., p. 3; Huisgenoot, op cit.; Brandwag, op cit.; Du Toit, op cit., p. 2.

44. Preller, op cit., pp. 157-8; Strydom, op cit.

45. Ibid.; Koch, op cit., p.4.

on his right, and was closely pursued by various columns. His horses were in a state of exhaustion. The proximity to the line meant that he was in the same dangerous position he had been in a month previously, between Touwsrivier and Matjiesfontein.

Arriving at the farm of Koppieskraal on the Dwyka river, 40 km west of Prince Albert, Scheepers decided to surrender. This took place on the 10th October.⁴⁶ His commando, under the command of S.W. Pypers, continued eastward. A party of 13 men, possibly under the command of Lieut. J.F. Luyt, broke away from Pypers and went on their own. Pypers broke through the columns barring his path and continued eastwards towards the Willowmore district.⁴⁷

Genl. J.C. Smuts' Transvaal commando followed Theron into the Southern Cape in October 1901. Smuts entered the region at Meiring's Poort on the 18th October. On the previous day, near Schoongezicht, on the northern slopes of the Swartberg, Smuts had linked up with Cmdt. Pypers' nearly 100 men.

With Pypers to guide him, a man who was very well acquainted with the Little Karoo, Smuts crossed through the Pass to Vlakteplaats. He considered attacking Oudtshoorn, and with that purpose in mind marched to De Rust. But abandoning that project as impossible, Smuts went on to Dysselsdorp where he captured a few men.

At Dysselsdorp he turned south-east and trekked onto the Kammanassie river, where there was sufficient fodder for his horses. Col. Crabbe remained on his trail and he had to fight perpetual rearguard actions. He reached the river on the 21st October.⁴⁸

Smuts continued along the Kammanassie as far as Diepekloof rivier, 25 km west of Uniondale, then turned south-west, trekking along the valley running parallel with the Outeniqua mountains. The chase was taken over by Col. Kavanagh's column. Smuts observed, in these eastern reaches of the Longkloof, 'Most farmers here British-inclined; several houses burnt down by Scheepers.'⁴⁹ One of Genl. Smuts' commandants was more concerned with the threat posed to them by coloured soldiers and civilians: 'The country here swarmed with Hottentot spies,' Cmdt. B.D. Bouwer wrote, 'some of them armed. Pypers' men caught a few and shot them, which I may say was

46. He was tried at Graaff-Reinet, and executed there in January 1902. See Sandford, op cit.

47. Strydom, op cit.; Preller, op cit., pp. 72-4; Huisgenoot, op cit., 14 December 1945; Brandwag, op cit.; Koch, op cit.

48. W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers. Vol. I. June 1886-May 1901 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 420, 435; O.J.O. Ferreira, Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), pp. 192-203; Deneys Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1929), pp. 259-64; Strydom, op cit.

49. Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., p. 420.

our invariable practice with any native found under arms. We never gave weapons to any, and had warned our opponents that if they did so they would be morally responsible for the death of those so found by us.'⁵⁰

At Attaqua's Kloof on the 26th Smuts swung north-west and, guided by Pypers, trekked over Buffelsfontein and Ockertskraal to Anysberg. Smuts was still followed by Kavanagh and Crabbe but they were unable to halt his progress. Crossing the line at Constable on the 31st October, after a relatively uneventful trek through the Southern Cape, Smuts entered the Western Cape.⁵¹

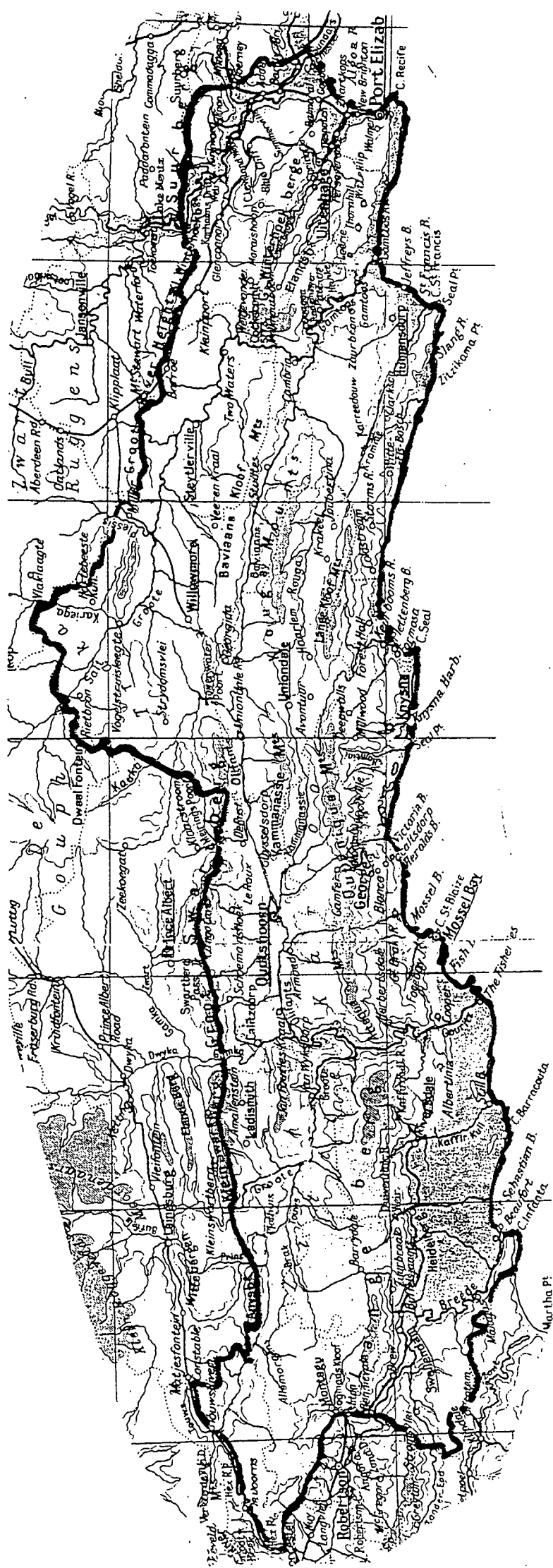
Kritzinger's entry into the Southern Cape early in 1901 destabilized the region but did very little to initiate rebellion there. It was only after Scheepers' entry into the region in August that rebellion developed there. Geography and demography made the region extremely difficult to operate within however. The Southern Cape was a long, narrow region bounded by the sea on the south and railway lines and mountain ranges in the north. Between these two extremes there was a series of parallel, east-west running mountain ranges. The sea was a particularly effective line of communication, rendering guerrilla penetration onto the coast particularly hazardous.

Despite these obvious drawbacks, the region was initially an easy one to operate within. As soon as the British troop presence reached a certain critical mass however, the Southern Cape became impossible guerrilla terrain. The long chains of impenetrable mountains in combination with the railways proved in particular to be a deadly combination.

Many of the Afrikaners of the Southern Cape were pro-imperialist and the coloured population in particular was stridently anti-republican and pro-imperialist in character. Once Scheepers and other commandants failed in their attempt to prevent the formation of a black-imperial alliance, the fate of the region was sealed. In the final analysis, the Boer rebellion was more quickly and more totally extinguished in this region, than in any other Cape region. In combination the unique geographical and demographic features of the region rendered guerrilla operations impossible, and for the last 7 months of the war there were no operations of any kind here. This was the only Cape region where the guerrilla presence had been entirely eliminated even before the close of 1901.

50. Ferreira, op cit., p. 206.

51. Hancock and van der Poel, op cit., pp. 421, 435; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 20-203-9; Strydom, op cit.; Northern Post, 1 November 1901; Albert Times, 25 October 1901.



THE SOUTHERN CAPE

A MOUNTAIN TOO FAR : THE KAROO

The Karoo was another of the Cape regions which were untouched by the first, conventional phase of the South African War. Arid, isolated, very sparsely populated, and strategically unimportant, this large semi-desert region was one of the last to experience hostilities. Boer opinion was however overwhelmingly pro-republican there from the beginning.¹ Clear evidence of this was provided by a very destructive fire at the military headquarters at Victoria West Road in October 1900. A huge amount of ammunition and supplies, valued at £20,000 was destroyed.² At about the same time, a British sentry was shot dead by a sniper at Fraserburg Road railway bridge. The Cape government offered a reward of £1,000 for information leading to the conviction of the killer.³

Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog's invasion force arrived in the Karoo on the 27th December 1900. On that day Hertzog captured Vosburg, commandeering the required supplies from the village shops.⁴ Hertzog left on the following day for Brandewynskuil, crossing into the Carnarvon district. Capt. L.B. Wessels remained behind with a small patrol, ambushing the British advanced guard and inflicting a number of casualties.⁵ Trekking very slowly, Hertzog continued south-west towards Carnarvon, but that town was occupied on the 29th by a strong British column.⁶ This prevented Hertzog's occupation of the town. He then turned north and on 1st January was at Witwater, 40 km north-west of Vosburg. Hertzog was attacked there by a detachment of African troops, and one of his men was killed.⁷ The burial of this man in Carnarvon created something of an incident, for the Boer population attended en masse, also placing wreaths on the man's grave.⁸ This was once again clear evidence of the region's support for the republican position. Martial law had meanwhile been declared in the Victoria West district on the 20th December.

1. See for instance Karel Schoeman, Die Wêreld Van Die Digter (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1986), p. 94.
2. Het Oosten, 1 November 1900.
3. Farmer's Chronicle and Stutterheim Times, 9 November 1900.
4. A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, Munich, 1902), p. 89; A. Wessels (ed.), 'Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Nesor', Christiaan De Wet-Annale, 7 (Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie Vir Wetenskap En Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1987), p. 59; O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Oorlogsondervindinge van Pieter Jan Andries Spies', p. 5; Umtata Herald, 5 January 1901.
5. De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 89-90.
6. Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; 24 January 1901.
7. De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 20; B.W.M., 2005, 'Oorlogsherinneringe van P.J. Horak', p. 5.
8. Northern Post, 4 January 1901.

On the 27th this was extended to Beaufort West and Carnarvon. On January 17th martial law was extended to the rest of the colony, excluding the sea-ports and the Transkei.⁹

At Witwater on the 1st January 1901, Hertzog's force divided into three. While Hertzog continued south-west towards Calvinia, Cmdt. H. Theunissen went west to Tontelboskolk and Cmdts. G.A. Brand and H. Pretorius south towards the new village of Loxton. On the same day Brand's advanced guard was already at Krabfontein, 65 km north-east of Fraserburg. Fraserburg was undefended, but Brand passed south of the town. Everywhere he went he commandeered horses and rifles, and cut the telegraph lines. He also gained a few rebel recruits. One of these was a Sutherland Field-Cornet, F. Muller. Instructed by the civil authorities to collect up all his ward's horses, Muller waited until he heard news of an approaching commando, and then rode off with all the horses to join them. In all likelihood it was information he supplied that persuaded Brand to ignore Fraserburg and ride on to Sutherland.¹⁰

Brand occupied Sutherland on the 9th January, after having cut the telegraph lines. The small garrison was arrested, but three of the local police rendered him a certain degree of assistance. The local Boer population gave Brand a particularly friendly reception, and the chief constable quoted in his report that 'If he had had vehicles enough he would have arrested half the town.'¹¹

While Brand commandeered supplies in Sutherland, British troops began flooding towards the town. Lt-Col. A.H. Henniker guarded the passes on the Roggeveld escarpment with 1 000 men, and Col. E.C. Bethune trekked to Sutherland with a small column of 130 men. Lt-Col. A.W. Thorneycroft and Col. C. Parsons trekked south-west from Fraserburg with 1 000 men.

Brand's scouts clashed with one of the columns at Jakkalsfontein, at the entrance to Verlatekloof. They were forced to retreat and on the 9th the British reoccupied Sutherland. Brand trekked westwards from Sutherland, over the Roggeveld escarpment and into the Western Cape.¹²

9. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa, 1899-1902 (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. VI, pp. 556-7.

10. Horak, op cit., p. 5; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 90; Northern Post, 4 January 1901, 11 January 1901; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901; Wessels, op cit.; D.A. Scholtz, Fraserburg en Sy Kerk (Priv. Pub., N.p., N.d.), p. 115.

11. As quoted in Schoeman, op cit., p. 95.

12. Schoeman, op cit., pp. 95-6; De Wet, et al., op cit., p. 91; Het Oosten, 10 January 1901.

After separating from the other commandos Hertzog trekked slowly south-west towards Spioen Berg. He occupied Williston, which was undefended, on the 7th January. Twenty miles west of that village he passed into the Western Cape.¹³

There was a sequel to Brand's occupation of Sutherland in February 1901, when a number of martial law trials were held at Matjiesfontein. The town acquired a certain notoriety with the Imperial authorities, as it was widely reported that 'The Boers in the Sutherland district went over to the enemy voluntarily.'¹⁴ This had a considerable impact on the development of the rebellion in the southern Karoo, as one result was that, in the absence of sufficient loyalists, local coloured troops were raised to assist in the defence of the region.¹⁵ This development alienated many pro-republican Boers even farther and set the tone for the bitter and deadly racial conflict which was to come. In this sense the pattern which was established in the North-West and Western Cape was repeated here in the Karoo. One of Genl. W.C. Malan's rebels, J.A. Smith, recorded that 'The enemy waged an entire reign of terror in the Sutherland district after the return of Genl. Hertzog and Cmdt. Brand from that region.' Smith later noted, as late as September 1901: 'We even found families fleeing about in the mountains, all inhabitants of the district who sought safety in the veld from the base prosecution of British-oriented Afrikaners and Coloureds.'¹⁶

Hertzog's entire force commenced its retreat through the northern Karoo in the second week of February. In mid-February Brand and Capt. Wessels captured a small detachment of British troops at Paarde Vlei, having shortly before that, on the 10th, occupied Vanwyksvlei. Brand occupied Vosburg on the 17th February, and was joined shortly after that by Hertzog. Supplies were freely commandeered in Vosburg, and a few loyalists imprisoned. Hertzog personally intervened to prevent the total destruction of a shop there, by wading fiercely into his own men with a sjambok. Shortly after this Hertzog's entire invasion force trekked into the

13. Northern Post, 4 January 1901, 11 January 1901; F.A. Steytler, 'Genl. Hertzog as krygsman' in Gedenkboek Generaal J.B.M. Hertzog (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1965), p. 86.
14. See for instance Tarka Herald, 6 February 1901; also Northern Post, 8 February 1901, 15 February 1901; Schoeman, op cit., p. 95.
15. J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), p. 77. See also M. Maritz, My Lewe en Strewe (Priv. Pub., Johannesburg, 1939).
16. Smith, op cit.

Northern Cape.¹⁷

After Hertzog's departure there was a lull of some months in the Karoo, punctuated only by the quick movements of occasional small patrols. On the 8th April a commando, probably that of Capt. J.J. Smith, attacked Nelspoort station, capturing a large number of horses. It then returned to the Murraysburg district.¹⁸ Also in April, a patrol of 16 men led by Cpl. S.G. Maritz crossed the Karoo, trekking through from the south-east to the north-west corner. Six of Maritz's men were agterryers and his patrol had 30 horses. The patrol entered the Karoo on the 11th April, crossing the line between Nelspoort and Three Sisters. Seventy men were sent from the British garrison at Carnarvan, to intercept the party. This patrol intercepted Maritz at Blousyfer, 30 km west of Williston, on the 17th. But Maritz captured part of this patrol and it returned to Fraserburg.¹⁹ A French volunteer with Maritz noted that they were received with great enthusiasm 'at virtually every farm.' On the 18th, he wrote as follows in his diary: 'It strikes me how heartily we are received everywhere - and this applies not only to the Transvaal and the Free State, but particularly to the Cape Colony. All the Boers with whom I have come in contact are united in heart and soul in their striving to become one nation. One realizes that they are already closely tied to each other by religion, language and naturally by the blood ties of their common ancestors, namely Hollanders, French Huguenots and German immigrants.'²⁰ Maritz entered the Western Cape at Brandvlei on the 20th April, but in June, having placed the rebellion in the west on a solid footing, he was back in the Karoo. At the end of June he occupied Williston, very briefly, satisfying all his requirements from the local stores. He took a few prisoners and got a few horses shod. With his commando of 100 he then trekked west past Calvinia, having captured the post cart between Fraserburg and Williston. Maritz then trekked along the Fish river valley to Sutherland, which he captured. He remained for most of July in the Sutherland district, scouting in the direction of the railway line. At

17. Northern Post, 8 February 1901, 15 February 1901, 22 February 1901; Albert Times, 18 February 1901, 22 February 1901; Somerset Budget, 27 February 1901.
18. R. de Kersauson de Pennendreff, Ek en die Vierkleur (Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1960), p. 52.
19. De Wet, et al., op cit., pp. 163-6; G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1940), pp. 148-50; Maritz, op cit., pp. 34-5; De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 53-62; Tarka Herald, 17 April 1901.
20. De Kersauson de Pennendreff, op cit., pp. 58-9.

the beginning of August he trekked north-east towards Vanrhynsdorp and Nieuwoudtville, after a relatively uneventful month in the Karoo.²¹

In April 1901 A. Louw, a Calvinia rebel commandant, trekked through the Karoo with a small commando of 70 men en route to the Western Cape. He was followed in the same month by Cmdt. E.A. Conroy, with a small patrol.²²

In August 1901 the Karoo developed as a revolving door for harassed commandos trekking through from the east and north to the relative refuge of the Western Cape. Capt. J.J. Smith's commando was the first of these. It captured the post cart at the bottom end of Oukloof pass before disappearing. Perdeplaas, in the Sutherland district was one of Smith's temporary bases.

The commandos of Cmdts. J.H. Pypers and G.H.P. van Reenen also travelled through the northern part of the Karoo in September. At Verkeerdevlei on the 5th September, in the Carnarvon district, Pypers clashed with the local D.M.T. But, as they had done with Maritz, they retreated to the town immediately after making the initial contact. On the 6th Pypers occupied Vanwyksvlei and requisitioned supplies there. The next sign this commando saw of any British force was at Onderstedoors, on the 20th. Two of van Reenen's men were captured there and immediately afterwards the two commandos trekked into the Western Cape.²³

There was a change in the developing transitory pattern in the region on the 7th September, when Cmdts. A. Louw and A. Smith launched a half-hearted attack on Sutherland. Louw led about 200 Calvinia rebels and Smith about 50 men from Fraserburg. These forces besieged the small garrison of Sutherland for a few days, but were unable to compel its surrender. The district was however completely under rebel control, and this heralded another change in the conditions in the south-western Karoo. These changes came about as a result of Maritz's organizational activities in the area in July.

The remnants of Cmdt. P. van der Merwe's commando, under the temporary command

21. Maritz, op cit., p. 43; A. Wessels (ed.), 'The Anglo-Boer War Diary of Major H.S. Jeudwine', in Egodokumente (Oorlogsmuseum van die Boererepublieke, Bloemfontein, 1993), pp. 70-1; Schoeman, op cit., p. 98; Scholtz, op cit., p. 116; J.H. Breytenbach (ed.), Gedenkalbum van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1949), p. 235.

22. See Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., p. 62; Die Brandwag, 15 August 1941.

23. Scholtz, op cit., p. 116; O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Ondervindinge van Oom Japie Malan, 'n Kaapse Rebel', p. 4; C.C. Snyman, Avonture Uit die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (N.P.B., Bloemfontein, n.d.), pp. 40-7; Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 72-3.

of F-C.H. van Rensburg, entered the Sutherland district in September.²⁴

In October and November the various commandos of General J.C. Smuts' Transvaal invasion force trekked through the Karoo. Cmdt. J.L. van Deventer was the first to enter, in mid-October, crossing the line 20 km north of Nelspoort. Van Deventer then trekked west to Fraserburg, where he captured 30 men of the local Defence Force. Shortly afterwards Cmdt. J.R.F. Kirsten captured 19 men of the Fraserburg garrison.²⁵

Cmdt. A. Louw meanwhile had returned to the Western Cape with a huge force of recently-recruited rebels. At Kloudskraal in the Nieuwoudtville district, in early October, F-C.J.P. Nesor of van Reenen's commando was promoted to commandant and given command of about 65 of these rebels. Natives of the Sutherland and Fraserburg districts, most of these men were unarmed. Nesor returned immediately to the Sutherland district with these men, only 12 of whom were properly armed. This development had the most profound implications for the Karoo region, both during the war and, no doubt, in the post-war years. It was the first time that a Boer commando had installed itself permanently in the region, and for the next 9 months most of the region (except for a few garrison towns) was under republican and rebel control. Nesor also routinely killed all coloured and African troops captured under arms. Immediately after returning to Sutherland he began a reign of terror against these small armed communities. Rebels began to stream towards his commando and within a short time it numbered 300. These men were all quickly armed, with rifles captured from local British troops.²⁶

Nesor was also very active in the south-west Karoo countering the imperial martial law proclamations, which compelled farmers to report the presence of commandos. He pasted up counter-proclamations threatening fines and other heavy penalties to farmers who adhered to this. The result was that he obtained the co-operation of Sutherland farmers.²⁷ Without this co-operation a guerrilla campaign could not be waged successfully in the Cape Colony. The very low population density in the Karoo simplified the situation somewhat however, for movements of individuals within a district were that much easier to monitor.

24. Schoeman, op cit., pp. 98-100; Northern Post, 13 September 1901; Kokstad Advertiser, 17 September 1901; J.A. Smith, op cit., pp. 76-8.

25. J.H. Meyer, Kommando-jare. 'n Oudstryder se Persoonlike Relaaas van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1971), pp. 294-7; Scholtz, ibid.; Schoeman, op cit., p. 100.

26. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 73-6.

27. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 75-6, 82-3, 92-3, 96.

At the end of October and during the first days of November the commandos of Genl. J.C. Smuts and Cmdt. B.D. Bouwer just shaved the extreme south-west tip of the Karoo before entering the Western Cape. The commando of C.J.F. Botha was also active in the Karoo at this time, and in November Cmdt. J.L. Theron trekked in briefly.²⁸

In early November van Deventer and Nesor linked up and clashed with a small column of the 5th Lancers under Lt.-Col. C.E. Callwell. In this clash at Brandenkraal, Callwell's force suffered about 50 casualties.²⁹

In late November and early December Nesor took a prominent part in the attempts made to capture a convoy sent to relieve the beleaguered outpost of Tontelboskolk. The convoy was trekking from Sutherland to Tontelboskolk. Hearing that the British commander had placed African troops on a series of farms between the two places, to maintain communications, Nesor went to Klipplaat, 20 km north-west of Sutherland, and shot three Africans there, all prisoners. He then did the same at Matjiesfontein.

Armed conflict was paralleled by tense developments within the towns of the region. At the end of November there was an assassination attempt on the British commandant of Carnarvon. The would-be assassin fired into the officer's bedroom at night, the bullet just missing his head. In December Rev. Stremner, the Rhenish missionary at Carnarvon, was sentenced to 30 days imprisonment for 'using language with the intention of raising and fomenting disaffection among his Majesty's subjects.' Stremner refused to give evidence but denied the truth of the statement. It was obvious from these small reefs of disaffection that a spirit of rebellion was continuing to sweep the Karoo.³⁰

Cmdts. W.C. Malan and H.W. Lategan entered the extreme south-east corner of the Karoo at some point in November. While at Meiring's Poort Malan had heard of the decimation of his own commando at Driefontein, in September. Turning north-west Malan trekked past Prince Albert. He was closely followed by a column under the command of Lt.-Col. W.R.B. Doran and in a clash north of Prince Albert Doran was wounded. Malan crossed the line near Kruidfontein and then eluded his pursuers

28. O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), pp. 205-12; W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol. I, June 1886-1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), p. 421.

29. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 77-9; Ferreira, op cit.

30. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 89-91; Tarka Herald, 27 November 1901, 4 January 1902; Northern Post, 3 January 1902.

in the Nuweveld range between Sutherland and Fraserburg. From there he continued on to Calvinia, being reunited with his depleted commando there.³¹

In December Smuts promoted Malan to General, and he was given the command of six commandos. His orders were to trek east and operate in the Midlands. His six commandos were to be led by J.H. Pypers, S.W. Pypers, J.J. Smith, C.J.F. Botha, G.H.P. van Reenen and H.J. Hugo.³² While Malan was beginning preparations for his departure eastwards the last of Smuts' original Transvaal detachments, under Cmdt. J.C. Naudé, arrived in the Karoo. Naudé's small force entered the north-east corner of the Karoo towards the end of December. While a patrol trekked towards Vanwyksvlei, the main force continued on to Carnarvon. Supplies were obtained at Vanwyksvlei. Naudé encountered a strange commando of about 40 men in the Karreeberge near Carnarvon. Falling under no-one's command, this commando had elected one of its own men as leader, and merely trekked about with a total excess of horses, avoiding all contact with the British forces. These groups were known as 'the rag's brigade' by the fighting units, and this was the name Naudé's men gave to this commando. When they heard that Naudé's men were on their way to link up with Genl. Smuts, the odd commando suddenly disappeared.

Naudé spent a week in the vicinity of Carnarvon, attempting unsuccessfully to entice the local D.M.T. into a fight. The condition of the veld was very poor and their horses began to suffer accordingly.

Naudé trekked via Fraserburg and Williston and in late January made contact with van Deventer on the Fish river south of Tontelboskolk.³³

Malan's force left Calvinia in early January and before he had gone far about 40 raw Bushmanlanders deserted, unwilling to serve away from their home district, and returned to the Western Cape. The combined force trekked due west from Calvinia

31. H.J.C. Pieterse, Oorlogsavonture van Genl. Wynand Malan (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1941), pp. 295-300.

32. Ibid., pp. 301-7; Smith, op cit., 101-2; Ferreira, op cit., pp. 225-6.

33. T.A.D., A 787, Preller collection, 79, F-C.J.S. van der Merwe, 'Herinneringe Uit die Opstand in Kaapland', pp. 90-6; J.D. Kestell, Abraham Paul Kriel, Sy Lewe en Werk (Die Abraham Kriel-Kinderhuis, Langlaagte, 1932), pp. 110-11; O.F.S.A.D., A 289, 'Oorlogsontervindinge van Gert Hendrik Jansen van Vuuren', pp. 15-17.

and at Williston the Rev. S.H. Kühn advised Malan that his entire congregation wished to go into rebellion. He wished only to know where they could obtain rifles and ammunition. Malan was however compelled to advise him to await the arrival of Genl. J.H. de la Rey in the colony and/or any positive results resulting from his own political mission to the O.F.S. in 1901.

West of Fraserburg Malan encountered no British forces, but at Uitspanningsfontein, 75 km east of Fraserburg, his force clashed with a large convoy under the command of Col. E.M.S. Crabbe. Crabbe's force of 500 men acted as escort for the convoy which was under the command of Maj. H.W.G. Crofton. The convoy was travelling from Beaufort West to Fraserburg. In five days fighting between Uitspanningsfontein and Waterval, 15 km to the east, Malan first pinned Crabbe down, then captured and burnt Crofton's entire convoy of sixty-three wagons. Twelve men with the convoy were killed, including Maj. Crofton, and about 110 prisoners were taken, of whom 41 were wounded. Crabbe's losses were similarly heavy.³⁴

Malan was seriously wounded at Uitspanningsfontein and while a few of his commandos waited at Wagenaarskraal for him to recover, patrols went out delivering Genl. de Wet's proclamation which outlawed the reporting of the presence of the Boer commandos. Malan's commando found, in this part of the Karoo (close to Beaufort West) that a majority even of the Boers were pro-imperialists. Cmdt., L.B. Wessels linked up with Malan's force here, but he continued moving west. When Malan was sufficiently recovered to ride he went to Wagenaarskraal where he made arrangements for a krygsraad to be held the next day at the neighbouring farm of Oorlogsfontein. He wished to obtain important local information from the farmer there and explain to his commandants how they should cross the line between Three Sisters and Biesiespoort. Brig.-Genl. T.E. Stephenson had meanwhile ordered a sweep north-west from the Beaufort West-Biesiespoort line, with six columns on the 17th. On the 18th this line struck Oorlogspoort and, in a brief clash there Cmdt. H.J. Hugo was seriously wounded. He died shortly afterwards in captivity.³⁵

In the early morning of the 21st February Malan crossed the line eastwards near Biesiespoort, first blowing up a section to prevent the armoured trains from

34. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 308-27; Wessels, 'Major Jeurwine', op cit., p. 83; Scholtz, op cit., pp. 117-8; Smith, op cit., pp. 106-16; Amery, op cit., Vol. V, pp. 546-8; Snyman, op cit., pp. 64-7.

35. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 328-31; Smith, op cit., pp. 117-22; Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor'; op cit., pp. 93-4; Amery, op cit., pp. 546, 549; E. Immelman, 'Die Geveg by Oorlogsfontein' in Contree:Tydskrif vir Suid-Afrikaanse Stedelike en Streeksgeeskiedenis 2, Julie 1977, pp. 12-14; Die Volksblad, 2 February 1933; O.F.S.A.D., A 119, Renier collection, 138, 'G.J. Marais oor die Dood van Regter Hugo'; 157, 'F.G. Lubbe Oor die Dood van Regter Hugo'; 252, 'Mnr Carl Lemkühl Oor die Dood van Regter Hugo'.

blocking his crossing. His commandos refused to accompany him into the dangerous Midlands however, and either remained in the Karoo or trekked away north to the Northern Cape. The only exception to this was the commando of J.S. Rudolph, Hugo's successor, which accompanied him eastward.³⁶

The eastward expansion of Malan's commandos into the Karoo and Midlands led the Times History to state that 'At the end of February, indeed, the situation in the Cape Colony was worse than it had been since the middle of September 1901, when Smuts made his first invasion.'³⁷ Ironically, however, the situation in the Colony was far less critical than it would have been had Smuts' Midlands offensive succeeded, and had Malan's new command been an instant success. One of Malan's men wrote later, diplomatically, of the 4 mutinous commandos: 'This decision of theirs to ignore the order of the krygsraad and operate on their own authority did not only render the position completely intolerable for us, but also assisted the enemy'.³⁸

Cmdt. Nesor was in the Western Cape during February, with Cmdt. J.L. Theron, but in March he returned to the Karoo. From Tontelboskolk he trekked up the Sak river towards Williston and then south towards the area between Sutherland and Fraserburg. His commando numbered 300 now, and as its size made it unwieldy van Deventer and Smuts had placed 150 of his Karoo men under F-C.J. Gölding. Gölding began operating in The Rante³⁹ in March. His was not the only other small commando operating in the Karoo. Cmdt. L.J. Erasmus, operating under the nom de guerre of 'Marais', had been captured in the Laingsburg district on the 31st January. But the Fraserburg rebel Cmdt. P.A. du Toit began to step up his activities in March 1902. He had rebelled in 1901.⁴⁰

Nesor clashed with a column of Marshall's Horse at Die Uitspanning, near Sutherland. The regiment was commanded by Lt.-Col. C.E. Callwell, and in two days of fighting starting on the 23rd March 7 of his men were killed and 100 captured. Gölding's new force suffered from a great shortage of rifles and supplies. In March he successfully raided Steenkampspoort and Steenkampsvlakte for horses

36. Pieterse, op cit., pp. 332-4; Smith, op cit., pp. 123-6; P.H.S. van Zyl, Die Helde-Album (Afrikaanse Pers-boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1944), pp. 357-9.

37. Amery, op cit., p. 549.

38. Smith, op cit., p. 125. See also Snyman, op cit., pp. 62-70.

39. The mountainous area between Fraserburg and Sutherland, comprising the eastern Roggeveld and western Nuweveld ranges.

40. Wessels, 'Jacob Nesor', op cit., pp. 94-6; Colesberg Advertiser, 14 February 1902; Kokstad Advertiser, 20 September 1901; Scholtz, op cit., p. 118; Tarka Herald, 18 September 1901.

and also acquired sheep at Bokseplaas. On the 17th April Cmdt. du Toit ambushed a column of the 3rd South Staffordshire Mounted Infantry and Colonial Light Horse at Ratelfontein, inflicting a number of casualties. After this the Fraserburg district became overrun with British columns and, except for a very brief visit by Cmdts. Pypers and Wessels, the district was avoided by the commandos for the rest of the war.

On the 3rd June, unaware of the peace treaty, Nesor clashed with the Colonial Light Horse at Groenberg, killing 4 men and wounding two. Again, his forces suffered no losses. This clash took place between Fraserburg and Sutherland, 45 km south-east of the former place. Advised a few days later that peace had been declared, Nesor trekked up with his commando as ordered, to Soetwater near Calvinia.⁴¹

Gölding's commando took part in the fighting around Groenberg, but then refused to trek to Soetwater to surrender. Pursued by a column under Maj. Brock for a few weeks, Gölding and his group of 200 rebels only surrendered at Beaufort West on the 26th June. A measles epidemic broke out among his men there, which delayed their trial. When recovered they were sent under an escort of 1000 men to Fraserburg, for 145 of the men were from that district.⁴² Nesor went into exile in Europe.⁴³

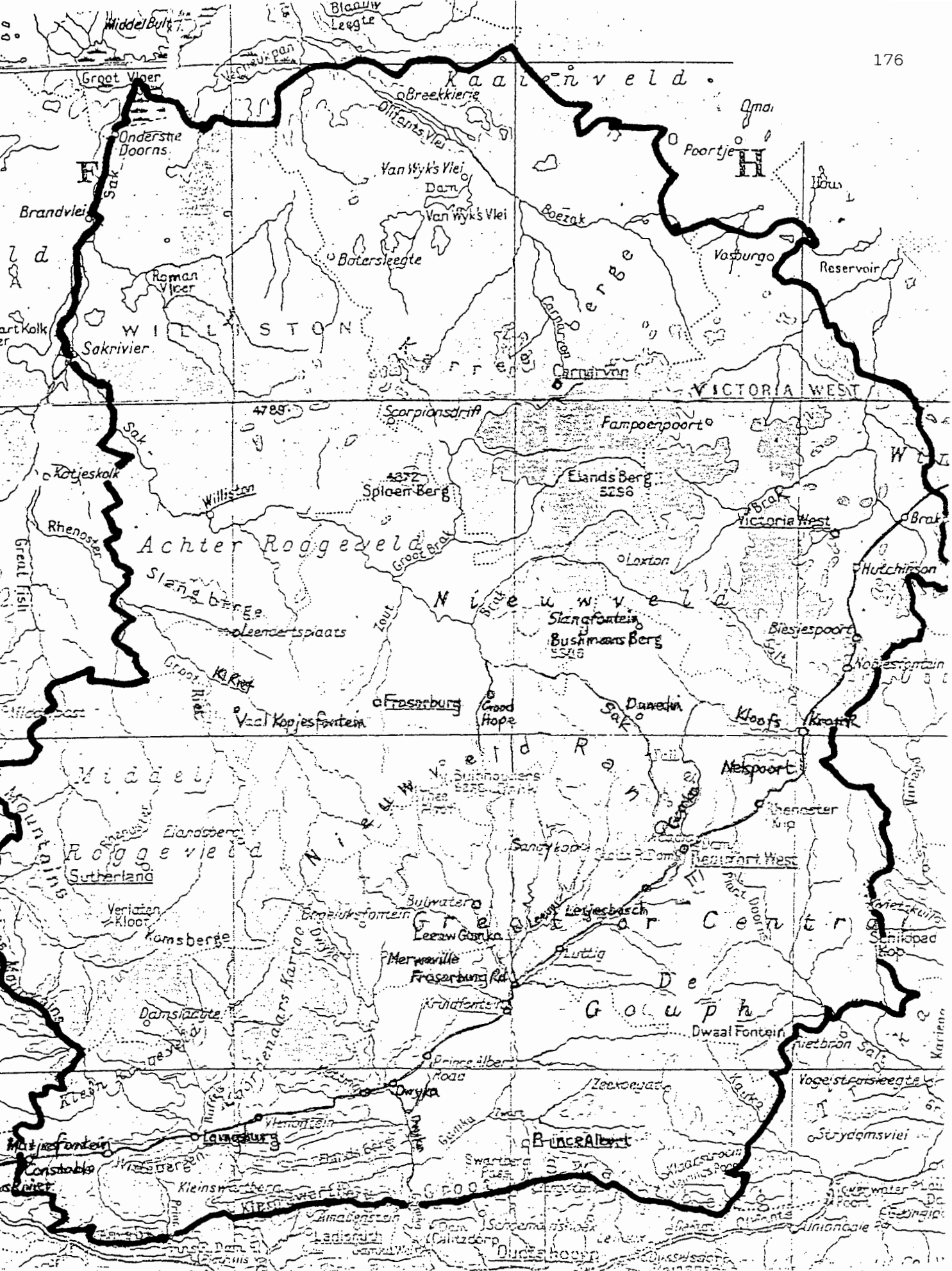
The northern part of the Karoo was too dry and too flat to support a guerrilla movement, but the southern part, especially the Roggeveld and Nuweveld ranges, was eminently suited to the waging of guerrilla war. With the arrival of J.P. Nesor in those parts the region underwent a transformation and republican control of the countryside there was a semi-permanent feature of the period between October 1901 and June 1902. Nesor was an effective guerrilla commander, but his refusal to launch attacks on the railway line, as ordered by Smuts⁴⁴ meant that the full potential of this area was also never fully realized. Ultimately the successes of the region were undercut by political developments elsewhere, and the central feature of the war in the Karoo remained that of a revolving door filtering men between the Eastern and Western Cape.

41. Wessels, op cit., pp. 97-100; Scholtz, op cit.; pp. 118-9.

42. Wessels, op cit., p. 100; Scholtz, op cit., p. 119; Colesberg Advertiser, 14 July 1902, 22 August 1902; Northern Post, 25 July 1902.

43. Wessels, op cit., pp. 101-119.

44. Ibid., p. 95.



THE KAROO

THE FAILURE OF THE BOER GUERRILLA WAR : CONCLUDING PERSPECTIVES

At war's end 3 635 men surrendered in the Cape Colony, 3 437 of them being rebels.¹ This figure does not however include the hundreds of men who never surrendered or who trekked into the German colony of South West Africa, or who went into exile overseas. This figure does also not take into account the hundreds of Boers who were killed in the guerrilla war, or the thousands who were captured, surrendered, or simply made their way undetected back to their farms after short periods of service with the rebel commandos. A more accurate figure of rebel attestation during the guerrilla war would therefore be in the region of 6-7 000 men.²

Closely allied to these serving rebels were the many thousands of Cape Boer farming households which gave direct support to the rebel commandos, and which often provided one or two recruits from among those men and boys in the age group of 15-25. Hundreds of these men (and some women) were imprisoned during the war. A large minority of Cape townsmen also gave active support to the rebel commandos. Hundreds of these people were imprisoned under martial law, the prisoners being mainly ministers, teachers and small-town politicians.

Cape rebels from the first invasion, who did not rebel a second time, fell into this category of Cape Boers who gave direct but covert support to the rebel commandos. Approximately 10 000 colonial subjects rebelled during the first invasion.³ Many of these were imprisoned during the second rebellion, but those who were not, and who did not rebel a second time, constituted a part of the hospital services, commissariat depots and intelligence networks which were so valuable to the serving rebels in the field. It is extremely difficult to quantify this diverse group, but an estimation would place it at roughly the same number of serving rebels - that is, at approximately 6-7 000 households.

Falling between these two distinct groups - rebels under arms, and their active supporters in the civilian population - was a third group which is more difficult to define. It consisted of trekboers and farmers under arms, but of people who never served in any Boer commando. This group was confined to the parts of the colony under semi-permanent Boer control - that is, the greater north-west Cape.⁴ At

1. C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1943), pp. 115-6; Northern Post, 23 September 1902.
2. This figure would exclude the thousands of O.F.S. burghers who returned to that state after brief periods of service in the colony. In June 1902 there were only 198 republican citizens still serving in the commandos on colonial territory.
3. Strydom, op cit., p. 67.
4. See D. Reitz, Commando (Faber and Faber, London, 1929), p. 281; C.F. MacDonald, Kalahari Mac (L and S Boek- en Kunssentrum, Johannesburg, 1948), p. 201.

war's end these men felt no necessity to surrender, but simply buried their rifles and went on with their normal activities. Their numbers may be estimated at 2-3 000.

From these figures it can readily be seen that rebel participation in the second invasion was at a far higher level than has previously been recognized. If actual rebel recruitment during this period was at the level of approximately 6 500 men then there were also almost 10 000 men in the civilian population who were in covert alliance with them. This last figure also represents a similar number of households, so that multiplication by a factor of 5 gives a figure of close on 50 000 individuals who inclined strongly towards the rebel and pro-republican position.

No official census of the various South African populations was done until 1904, but in mid-1900 a realistic estimate placed the British population in the Cape Colony at 200 000 and the Dutch population at 290 000.⁵

Lord Milner's own estimates, made in November 1901, also placed the British population at 200 000, the Afrikaners at 270 000, and 'other whites' at 30 000.⁶

The non-white Cape population was then estimated at 1 762 000.⁷ ✓

Given the large urban concentrations such as Cape Town, it can be accepted that Boer society in the colony was divided roughly equally between rural and urban areas. Rebellion was exclusively however a rural phenomenon. Even within the category of 'rural' though, rebels were drawn from farms and not from country towns. The percentage of rebels who came from towns during the second rebellion was so small as to be irrelevant - in the region of about 3%.

If half of Cape Afrikaners lived in rural districts, including country towns (that is, 100 000 people), and if 50 000 of the Boers in interior farms and small towns were directly connected with the rebellion, and approximately 6 500 served as rebels, then it is obvious that a majority of Boers in the country districts supported and participated to some extent in the republican-led rebellion. The second rebellion had its roots firmly **embedded** in agrarian society, not exclusively for economic reasons, but also for social, cultural, religious, historical, racial, military, political, psychological, sociological and ethnographic reasons.

5. Colesberg Advertiser, 1 June 1900.

6. P. Warwick and S.B. Spies (eds.), The South African War. The Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902 (Longman, London, 1980), p. 343.

7. Somerset Budget, 18 January 1902.

The **phenomenon** of rebellion therefore, both in its visible and invisible forms, was far more widespread than has previously been recognized.

One of the major reasons for the republican invasion of the Cape in the last quarter of 1900 was in order to dramatically escalate the financial costs of the war. In terms of this aspect of their guerrilla strategy the Boers were conspicuously successful.⁸ By October 1901, 20 000 colonists had been raised in the Cape to counter the Boer incursions. Many thousands of troops had also been brought in from the republics. At the end of October 1901 Genl. French had 16 mobile columns, representing 46 guns and 8 000 men operating in the colony.⁹ By April 1902 thousands more mobile troops had been added to the columns but local levies had been withdrawn from them.¹⁰ There were altogether 31 000 Cape men under arms at war's end.¹¹

The Midlands News wrote in February 1902 that the colony was spending £3 600 000 a year 'in defending the Colony against 3 000 rebels.' Each rebel, it concluded, was costing £1 200 a year, or £100 a month.¹²

From this it can be seen that the escalation of costs, partly by the drawing in of troops from other parts of the country, and the raising of new colonial forces, succeeded only too well in placing financial pressures on the Imperial authorities. In terms of classic guerrilla theory however, this strategy is very closely tied to the lengthening of the period of conflict. A guerrilla war tends not to be successful if the one strategy is not accompanied by the other.

In June 1902 the entire, vast area west of the Cape Town-Bulawayo railway line (and north of the Berg river in the Western Cape) was, generally speaking, under joint republican-rebel control.¹³ The single exception to this was the region of British Bechuanaland. East of that line however the only operationally offensive commandos surviving were those of Malan and Fouché, with Fouché the sole surviving commander of any ability. By June 1902 the Boer guerrilla campaign in the strategically important region of the Midlands had been smashed.

Control of the Midlands would have given the Boers the ability to disrupt rail traffic not only on the sole line into the O.F.S. and Transvaal, but also to the Eastern Cape ports and Cape Town itself. The Cape - Johannesburg line was

8. The escalation of costs is a basic strategy of all guerrilla warfare and, moreover, the easiest at which to be successful.
9. L.S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa (Sampson Low, Marston and Co., London, 1907), Vol. V, p. 539.
10. Ibid.
11. Tarka Herald, 18 June 1902.
12. As quoted in the Albert Times, 21 February 1902.
13. This is of course with the exception of various heavily-fortified towns, which were more-or-less permanently under siege.

very vulnerable for the duration of the war. However, no concerted campaign of sabotage was ever directed against the line, something that even imperial strategists could not understand. Genl. P.H. Kritzinger's campaign in the Midlands lasted for 8 months, but was finally smashed in August 1901. However, Cmdt. L.B. Wessels proved as late as February 1902, that with the virtues of courage and commitment it was possible to operate successfully in the region, and to operate against the railway line. One of the main reasons why no consistent campaign against the line ever evolved in 1902 was that Genl. J.C. Smuts, in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the Boer forces in the colony, was opposed to such a campaign in principle! Although Smuts was opposed in principle to such attacks he did, under pressure from his commandants, encourage some token attacks on the lines in early 1902.¹⁴ Nothing came of this however. Smuts generally opposed attacks on the railways because he consistently strove to restrict the conflict, to limit the destruction and contain the war within rigidly circumscribed limits of conventional warfare.

The regions of the Midlands and Eastern Cape, with their relatively dense, heterogeneous populations, and their tangled railway networks, were extremely difficult regions to operate and survive within. The semi-desert regions west of the line were, by contrast, much easier to operate within. Strategically unimportant, the imperial troop presence there was low, and the population was more homogenous than in the east.

Genl. Kritzinger's command in the colony was generally a very successful one. This command stretched over a period of one year - from December 1900 to December 1901 - and Kritzinger successfully expanded the war into the Southern Cape, the North-East Cape and the Eastern Cape. His effectiveness was undercut however by a shortage of efficient officers who were capable of developing the process he had initiated, and of operating in independent units. Cmdt. W.D. Fouché fulfilled this role admirably in the North-East Cape. But it was only in Kritzinger's presence that the Eastern Cape functioned as a unit of the rebellion. The Southern Cape never produced a guerrilla commando or commander germane to the region, and after Kritzinger's departure it was only the movements of Cmdts. G.J. Scheepers and J.L. Theron and Genl. Smuts, in the spring of 1901, which ensured a strong degree of destabilization there.

The success of Kritzinger's command overall was also however severely undercut by his absence from the colony for four months between August and December 1901. This absence was a result not of failures on his part, but of the success of Genl. J.D.P. French's counter-guerrilla strategies. Meeting in the O.F.S. on the 30th

14. Wessels, op cit., p. 95.

August 1901, Smuts ordered Kritzinger to return to the Cape as soon as possible.¹⁵ When, in mid-December 1901, Kritzinger had still not returned to the colony, Smuts was critical of him.¹⁶ Kritzinger however had been trying for months to cross the Orange river frontier.¹⁷ He was aware of the pressure on him, but as late as December 1901 he was still ill-equipped, with a very small commando, his horses in poor condition. The result was that his third invasion of the Cape was virtually an act of suicide, and he was dangerously wounded and captured at the first blockhouse line he encountered, in December 1901.

Genl. Smuts made an epic trek through the O.F.S. and Cape Colony, between August and November 1901. Due to the presence of various scribes in his commando, Smuts' trek has acquired legendary status. But his command in the Western Cape in 1902 was, by contrast, characterized by inertia and stagnation. There was a concentration of weary but experienced and effective commandos in the Western Cape at that time, in an area which was a safe refuge after the dangers of the regions east of the line. Smuts was unable to break this logjam.

In 1902 the outstanding commandos of Wessels, Theron and Cmdt. B.D. Boucher were congregated in the West. They went unutilized there, and there was a decline in their offensive movements, Smuts failing to deploy them in areas where they could have been better utilized.

The guerrilla fronts opened up in the western part of the Northern Cape and in the Karoo, by Cmdts. E.A. Conroy and J.P. Neser respectively, owed nothing to Smuts' actions and occurred, indeed, in direct opposition to him.¹⁸ Smuts' military reorganization of the Western Cape was of little value. He opened up a line of communication through South West Africa to Europe, but this had very little impact on the Cape guerrilla war. When Genl. W.C. Malan's 4 commandos broke away from him in February 1902, and refused to enter the Midlands, Smuts' personal command suffered a severe blow.

Smuts' personal authority was insufficient to unite the western commandos under his control just as Kritzinger's had ultimately been insufficient in the

15. W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers. Vol. I, June 1886-May 1902 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1966), pp. 410, 431.

16. Ibid., pp. 431, 442.

17. A. de Wet, H. van Doornik and G.C. du Plessis, Die Buren in der Kapkolonie im Kriege mit England (J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, Munich, 1902), pp. 111-24; P.H. Kritzinger and R.D. McDonald, In the Shadow of Death (William Clowes, London, 1904), pp. 33-6, 47-51, 70-9; Northern Post, 25 October 1901, 6 December 1901; Die Nieuwe Middelburger, 11 October 1901; Tarka Herald, 12 October 1901, 4 December 1901; Barkly East Reporter, 1 November 1901.

18. See T.A.D., A 787, Preller Collection, 79, F-C. J.S. van der Merwe, 'Herinneringe uit die Opstand in Kaapland', pp. 95-6; A. Wessels, Die Oorlogsherinneringe van Kommandant Jacob Petrus Neser, Christiaan de Wet-Annale, 7 (S.A. Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Bloemfontein, 1987), p. 86.

east.¹⁹

The only Cape commander who was able to permanently unite a number of commandos under his leadership, in a large area, was Genl. S.G. Maritz. Maritz achieved this by inspiring a unique combination of fear and devotion in his followers.²⁰ After the blow he suffered to his personal authority in February 1902, Smuts withdrew increasingly from the military operations in the west. He became in fact superfluous there, just as Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog did in the O.F.S. in 1902. The rebellion continued to be driven by Maritz, as it had been since April 1901, and by the very capable Genl. J.L. van Deventer on the Karoo-Western Cape border. In March the de facto command in the West passed into Maritz's hands. The plan to attack Namaqualand was his, and he persuaded Smuts to adopt it, while at the same time postponing his own plan of a raid into the Boland.

With all the resources it had at its disposal, the imperial army's application of martial law was far more successful than any counter-measures the Boers were able to initiate, and this was one of the major reasons for the Boer defeat east of the line. In the West most farmers were subject to republican authority. In contested areas such as the Karoo and the western half of the Northern Cape, where imperial resources were thinly spread, Cmdts. Nesor and Conroy were able to force a grudging adherence from pro-imperialist farmers, by means of flogging and the levying of heavy fines. East of the line not even these measures were successful. Significantly, the rebel commanders were careful not to go too far in enforcing their counter-measures there.²¹ C.P. van Heerden for instance, a man whose extremist politics were close to those of E.A. Conroy, flogged a Boer farmer named Piet Booysen near Graaff-Reinet in the spring of 1902. Booysen's evidence had been important in the conviction of Cmt. Scheepers. Van Heerden flogged rather than shot Booysen 'because the deed was too low to have the English elevate him to the position of hero and martyr as a result of his death.'²² One encounters again here the containing principle, and that from one of the most radical of the rebel commandants.

The rebel commandos in the east fought an unequal duel over martial law, since the imperial military authorities, not being subject to political controls, did not have to act under the inhibiting effect of any political considerations. The commandos, by contrast, were conscious of the fact that all their actions were

19. Both Cmdts. Fouché and Scheepers had become alienated from Kritzingen there in 1901.

20. During the war Maritz had 'killed one of his followers.....with a single blow of his fist.' See D. Reitz, Trekking On (Faber and Faber, London, 1933), p. 38.

21. See P.J. du Plessis, Oomblikke van Spanning (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1942), pp. 47-8.

22. J.A. Smith, Ek Rebelleer (Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1946), pp. 152-3.

perceived as occurring under the political banner of republicanism. While the short-term results of martial law were therefore beneficial towards the imperial interest, the post-war political history of the Cape Province, and of South Africa, suggests that the restraint with which the commandos generally dealt with farmers who observed the martial law regulations, was beneficial towards the republican interest in the medium- and longer term.

During the period of the guerrilla war in the colony, over 50 captured Boers were executed by the Imperial authorities.²³ One was a Midlands farmer, and many of them were republican citizens. After September 1901 no distinction was made, in terms of executions, between Cape rebels and republican citizens. Some of those executed were condemned to death by martial law trials, while others were summarily executed in the veld. In a small number of these latter cases, men simply disappeared without trace and their fate remained unknown.

The Boers, by contrast, executed all African and coloured scouts, spies and despatch-riders whom they captured, whether in uniform or not. Some commandos - notably Conroy's - routinely shot all blacks captured under arms and in uniform. The Boers regarded all blacks as illegal belligerents in a 'white man's war' and thus as technically guilty of treason. Rebellion naturally complicated this pseudo-legal situation endlessly. The real reason for the Boer execution of black prisoners-of-war was that Boers viewed an imperial-black alliance against them as having inevitably fatal consequences for their war effort. Blacks invariably were well-acquainted with the terrain on which they were operating, and their local intelligence tended to be of a very high quality. In the Western Cape and North-West especially, the approximately 1 500 coloured men under arms were renowned as excellent shots and formidable opponents. The Boer shooting of black prisoners then, was designed from the very start to drive a wedge between the black-imperialist war effort, and to abort the growth of that incipient military alliance. Through the use of terror and intimidation, the Boers hoped to prevent blacks taking service with the military, and to leave the imperial authorities deprived of potentially valuable allies.²⁴

The military authorities in the Cape were slow to react to the Boer execution of black prisoners, chiefly because they themselves continued to pay lip-service

23. See G. Jordaan, Hoe Zij Stierven (H.A.U.M., Cape Town, 1917).

24. See for instance O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), Memoirs of General Ben Bower (H.S.R.C., Pretoria, 1980), p. 260.

to the principle of a 'white man's war,' and were initially unenthusiastic about the use of black troops against the Boers. As the military crisis deepened through 1901 however, and as black assistance to the war effort in the Cape became more important (indeed, crucial in some regions), and the Boer executions began to be successful in inhibiting and restricting that overt support, so the imperial martial law authorities went over to a policy of taking reprisals for the shooting of black prisoners. This change came with the execution of Cmdt. C.J. Lötter in October 1901, not merely for rebellion and arson and 'marauding', but also for ordering the execution of blacks.²⁵ This new development reached a peak with the execution of the popular and charismatic Cmdt. G.J. Scheepers, also for having ordered the execution of black prisoners. After the execution of Scheepers, many Boer commandos were ordered for the first time to halt the shooting of black scouts.²⁶ Some commandos however persisted with this practice right up to war's end (notably those of Conroy and Neser), notwithstanding Smuts' orders to the contrary.²⁷

The Boer policy with regard to armed blacks was successful in some regions of the Cape, notably in isolated regions west of the line. With regard to coloured civilians, Cmdt. B.D. Bouwer commented after Maritz's attack on Leliefontein, 'We had very little further trouble with the Hottentots in Namaqualand.'²⁸

As a guerrilla tactic, taking the colony as a whole, the Boer policy of selective shooting of prisoners was a complete failure however since it could not prevent the formation of a black-imperialist alliance against the Boers. By contrast, the counter-guerrilla tactic of selective execution of Boer prisoners was a marked success. Imperial policy succeeded where republican policy failed because it targeted the small core of Boer leadership, men who were irreplaceable and whose execution was so shocking to the Boer forces that the majority of them immediately suspended the activities which had given rise to the executions. The execution of Lötter and all his officers, in the Midlands, was a particularly shocking event. Another crucial and direct result of the so successfully applied imperial policy with regard to the executions was that many commandos refused to serve after 1901 in the dangerous Midlands and eastern regions. The vast majority of executions

25. Colesberg Advertiser, 4 October 1901.

26. Smith, op cit., p. 112.

27. Wessels, op cit.

28. Ferreira, op cit., p. 296.

were carried out east of the line and most of these took place in the strategically-important Midlands. This point was well-taken by the various commandos.

Another reason for the success of the imperial counter-guerrilla campaign east of the Cape Town-Bloemfontein line, was the control of the communications network. Control of territory was not as important as control of the lines of communication. In the west where the only line of communication was the telegraph (leaving out for the moment that of the sea), control of territory meant very little. The most important line of communication in the east was the railway, and it was control of this line helped to ensure the imperial victory there.

Lacking access to the railway, the telegraph and the heliograph, let alone the sea, Boer communications were of the most arduous, primitive and tenuous kind. They tended to be haphazard and were of very little significance to the various commandos. As a result of this great difficulty, no concerted Boer guerrilla strategy could be formulated, and the position of the republican commander-in-chief was endlessly complicated and even nullified. Lack of access to the lines of communication was one of the chief reasons why a grand strategist such as Smuts was unable to formulate a role for himself in the West in 1902.

The blockhouse lines were a key element of the imperial defence of the strategically important areas, especially the railways. Erected at great expense at regular intervals along a large percentage of the existing Cape lines, as well as in dozens of towns and along some rivers, the blockhouse system was an important determinant of Imperial success in the east. It increased the strain on the Boer commandos and added to the rate of attrition by rendering each crossing of the blockhouse lines a hazardous undertaking. These defensive lines were one of the main reasons why there was such a superfluous accumulation of commandos west of the line in 1902.²⁹ It was no coincidence that Kritzinger was severely wounded and captured at the blockhouse line. At war's end there were 8 000 blockhouses all over South Africa, and in the Cape alone approximately 1 000 miles of railway were blockhoused at regular intervals.³⁰ The blockhouses shortened the duration of the war, but their presence was, paradoxically, also an indicator of Boer guerrilla success. The enormous expenditure involved in the erection of these defensive constructions was also naturally not devoid of political implications.

29. Smith, op cit., p. 105.

30. Amery, op cit., Vol. VI, pp. 337-8.

The success of a guerrilla war is often determined by the length of the period for which the guerrillas manage to keep to the field. Among the Cape commanders, Maritz and Fouché in particular were preparing themselves for a long war. This decision was however taken out of their hands by developments at Vereeniging, during the negotiations leading up to the peace treaty, in May 1902. ✓

Genl. Smuts was empowered by Maritz, van Deventer and Boucher to represent them also at the negotiations, and was the only Cape representative there. The message Smuts put across at Vereeniging was that there was no hope of a general uprising in the colony and that it was therefore useless for the republics to look to the Cape for any form of salvation.³¹ This position was immediately adopted by Genl. L. Botha, from as early on as his watershed speech of the 16th May, and from then on he discounted the Cape as a military factor.³² Botha, a consummate politician and the most skilled negotiator on the Boer side at Vereeniging, had been keen to end the war for some time.³³ He was anxious to begin the work of reconstruction. Botha had no interest in the continuation of the war in any form. He quickly mobilized majority support for his point of view, insisting that the Boer surrender be a total one, binding on all forces in South Africa.³⁴ His views prevailed during the negotiations and the result was that by the time the treaty had been signed on the 31st May, the colony had become a rather irrelevant adjunct to events in the Transvaal.

With the transfer of the main arena of struggle from the military to the political field, the Cape Boer forces, being mainly rebel, were immediately nullified, and found no ready method of translating the military gains they had made into political gains. Cape republicanism could not even find any form of political expression in the immediately post-war period, and entered a cul-de-sac. Plans for a continuation of the guerrilla campaign were abandoned, as both sides party to the negotiations drew back from the brink. 'Kitchener and Smuts were both aware of the accumulated horror of a long guerrilla warfare. They were both sincerely anxious for an arrangement,' wrote one imperial commentator.³⁵

31. W.K. Hancock, Smuts : The Sanguine Years 1870-1919 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1962), pp. 155-163; Sarah Gertrude Millin, General Smuts (Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1936), p. 177.
32. F.V. Engelenburg, General Louis Botha (J.L. van Schaik Ltd., Pretoria, 1929), p. 90.
33. Ibid., p. 99.
34. A.M. Grundlingh, Die Hendsoppers en Joiners (H.A.U.M., Pretoria, 1979), pp. 220-3.
35. Lord Shaw (later Lord Craigmyle) of Dunfermline. See Millin, op cit., p. 182.

The commando leaders in the Cape, instead of going back into the veld, went into exile overseas. But, because military power invariably translates into some form of political power, the abrupt departure of the Boer commandos from the Cape (and more particularly, from the west and north-west) was an anomalous situation, which led to a political disjuncture. This situation had somehow to be reconciled, over the medium-term, so that the normal forces of historical causality could be restored.

The defining characteristic of the guerrilla war in the Cape Colony was the limited and restrained nature of the operations which unfolded. Ultimately, it developed into an inter-communal conflict with in-built, self-containing devices. Where excesses developed which threatened to inhibit the operation of self-regulating mechanisms, extra resources were introduced from external sources to restore the intrinsic balance. Generally speaking, this pattern of relative moderation and restraint was openly deviated from only in the case of the Boer execution of black prisoners, and even in this case it was restricted to a handful of rebel commanders. The Boer-black conflict in the Cape at times exhibited vestiges of total war, but in general even this sharper conflict, with its heightened forms of abrasive positioning, was ultimately subject to the defining temper of a war which continually sought for a moderating stance, even when historical forces were compelling it in the opposite direction.

Approx. to suggest the following:

1) The Boer side was keen to end the war as peacefully as possible
2) The British side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
3) The Boer side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
4) The British side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
5) The Boer side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
6) The British side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
7) The Boer side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
8) The British side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
9) The Boer side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible
10) The British side was keen to end the war as quickly as possible

'The history we read, though based on facts, is, strictly speaking, not factual at all, but a series of accepted judgements.'

- E.H. Carr (c. 1955)

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(2) ARCHIVE COLLECTIONS

(i)	<u>Transvaal Archives Depot</u>
W 19	Van Zyl Collection
W 77	Du Toit Collection
W 210	Fraser Letters
A 61	Coetsee Diary
A 230	Saamwerk-Unie Collection
A 247	Saamwerk-Unie Collection
A 551	State Museum Collection
A 575	Boldingh Collection
A 648	Pretorius Memoirs
A 749	Van Heerden Memoirs
A 787	Preller Collection
A 951	Huyser Collection
A 1221	Martins Collection
A 1237	Olivier Memoirs
A 1250	Van der Merwe Collection
A 1299	Vice Collection
A 1328	Smuts Letters
A 1443	HSRC Collection
A 1549	Beuster Collection
A 1554	Van den Berg Notebook
A 1569	Klerksdorp Museum Collection
A 1578	Potchefstroom Museum Collection

- A 1695 Van Niekerk Memoirs
- A 1762 Meintjies Collection
- A 1763 Du Plooy Diary

(ii) Orange Free State Archives Depot

- A 28 Biemond Letter
- A 119 Renier Collection
- A 138 Van Selm Collection
- A 145 Kruger Memoirs
- A 146 Liebenberg Collection
- A 155 War Museum Collection
- A 201 Genl. C.R. de Wet Gedenkboek
- A 289 Renier Collection
- A 391 De Villiers Collection
- A 419 Muller Memoirs
- A 447 Hancock Memoirs
- A 450 Deare Memoirs

(iii) Bloemfontein War Museum

This museum contains over 6 000 memoirs and letters, most of them short but of greatly varying length. The most **important manuscripts with regard to this** dissertation were the following:

- 2005 Oorlogsherinneringe van P.J. Horak
- 4208/1 Oorlogsherinneringe van Gysbert Roos van Winburg Kommando
- 4502/1 Oorlogsherinneringe van Lizzie Geldenhuis
- 4502/2 Oorlogsherinneringe van Jan Geldenhuis
- 6025/1 C.A. Vieweg, 'Herinneringe uit die Boere Oorlog 1899-1902'
- 6320/1 M.M. de Wet, 'Omswerwinge'

(iv) Natal Archives Depot

- A 353 Davel Memoirs
- A 362 Saamwerk-Unie Collection
- A 572 Homann Memoirs
- A 827 Strydom Diary
- A 1603 Edge Letters
- A 1610 Aveling Memoirs
- A 1628 R.B.K. Joyner Diary

(v) Cape Archives Depot

- A 459 Brabant Autobiography
- A 701 Lukin Scrapbook

A 854 Van der Merwe Letters
 A 1595 Botha Memoirs
 A 1621 Louw Collection
 A 1782 Siege of O'Okiep

(vi) South African Library

MSB 519 Cape Police Material
 MSB 593 Boer War Letters
 MSB 565 Seymour Papers
 MSB 566 Isaacson Memoirs
 MSB 655 Viljoen Diaries
 MSB 679 Stormberg Letter
 MSC 9 Rex Collection
 MSC 33 Steyn Diaries
 MSC 40 Maydon Memoirs
 MSC 44 Judd Memoirs and Papers

(vii) J.W. Jagger Library, University of Cape Town (U.C.T.L.)

B.C. 594 Havenga Miscellany
 B.C. 617 Wilson Album
 B.C. 650 Nettelton Memoirs
 B.C. 674 Van Coller Memoirs
 B.C. 678 Currey Papers
 B.C. 800 Fry Memoirs
 B.C. 901 Ross Family Miscellany
 B.C.S. 161 Baneshik Memoirs
 B.C.S. 347 Cripps Diary
 B.C.S. 356 Caine Memoirs
 B.C.ZA71/8 Hutton Diary
 B.C.ZA73/3 Murray Diaries

Stanford Papers

(viii) J.S. Gericke Library, Stellenbosch

25 Fourie Diary and Memoirs
 25 Flemming Memoirs
 55 Republican Diary
 120 Krause Papers
 126 Lipp Diary
 141 Wookey Diary

(ix) Constantine Private Collection

- 1 'Oorlogsherinneringe van Jan Geldenhuys' (typescript copy)
- 2 C. Sandford, The Trial of Scheepers (typescript copy)
- 3 M. Oosthuizen, et al., 'Geskiedenis van Kakamas' (typescript copy)
- 4 Gregorowski Album

(3) CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPERS

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Colesberg Advertiser 1900-1902
Tarka Herald 1900-1902
Albert Times + Molteno News 1900-1902
Frontier Guardian 1900-1902
Somerset Budget 1900-1902
Barkly East Reporter 1900-1902
Umtata Herald 1900-1902
Kokstad Advertiser 1900-1902
Midget Advertiser 1902
Het Oosten 1900-1901
De Nieuwe Middelburger 1900-1902
Farmer's Chronicle + Stutterheim Times 1900-1902
Queenstown Free Press 1900-1901

(4) MAGAZINES

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(6) OFFICIAL MATERIAL (C.A.D.)

1/Upt 5/4/1
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