POVERTY, LIVING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL RELATIONS - ASPECTS OF LIFE IN CAPE TOWN IN THE 1830S

by

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CONTENTS

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LIST OF TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

All material from the Cape Archives is referred to in the footnotes by its inventory or list initials and number; the initials are as follows:

A.C. - Advisory Council records.

C.O. - Colonial Office correspondance.

G.H. - Government House correspondance.

L.C.A. - Legislative Council records.

M.O.O.C. - Records of the Master of the Orphan Chamber.

S.O. - Slave Office records.

1/C.T. - Records of the Clerk of the Peace.

3/C.T. - Records of the Cape Town Municipality.

Newspapers:

C.A. - South African Commercial Advertiser.

W.A. - Ware Afrikaan.

Z.A. - Zuid Afrikaan.

INTRODUCTION

> 'The task of the historian, especially if he is a specialist of social history, is very much akin to that of a novelist. There must be a wide element of guesswork. It is like attempting to sound the unsoundable and to penetrate the secrets of the human heart.' [1]

During the 1830s Cape Town was the Cape Colony's leading town. It was not the largest - in 1827 Graaf Reinet's population of 19,864 exceeded that of Cape Town by 1,500 [2] - but it was the largest port. [3] Cape Town was also the legislative and administrative centre of the colony. It is reasonable to suppose that the colony's prominent men - the merchants and legislators - were aware of what was happening in Cape Town and may have been influenced so some extent by it. Because it wes a port and so subject to external influence to a greater extent than the inland towns, and because it had the prestige of a capital city, albeit a small one, Cape Town does not necessarily fit in to generalisations about the Cape Colony as a whole. For these reasons it is worthwhile examining life in Cape Town itself.

The '1830s' is used to describe the period from 1828 to roughly 1840. This is a coherent period in Cape Town's history because during that time the town was administered by the colonial government.[4]

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1. Cobb, R., Paris and its Provinces 1792-1802
2. 'Population 1827' in Theal, G.M., Records of Cape Colony, 1905, vol. 35 p.81
3. An average of 225 merchant ships per annum put into Table Bay - Theal, G.M., History of South Africa from 1795-1872, 4th edition 1915, vol. 2 p.43
4. Ibid p.168. The Burgher Senate which had controlled the town, wes dissolved in December 1827 - Ordinance 34 1827; a municipality with elected representatives was finally established in 1840 - Ordinance I 1840

It was also a significant period because of changes affecting the status of the coloured population. Ordinance 50 of 1828 liberated free coloured people from restrictions not imposed on whites and affirmed their right to own landed property. During the 1830s slavery finally came to an end, with inevitably far-reaching results. Over half Cape Town's population and over half the population of the colony as a whole, was coloured or enslaved [1] and so these changes were important to Cape Town, the colony and ultimately to South Africa as a whole.

There are already histories of Cape Town [2] but they tend to be descriptive and anecdotal, and like contemporary visitors' accounts, to concentrate on the life of the well-to-do. No serious attempt has been made to get beneath this and portray life as it was for the mass of the population, particularly in the poorer areas of the town.

The chief topic discussed in this thesis is poverty - whether it existed in Cape Town during the 1830s; if so, how it can be measured, how it came to exist. Related to this are general living conditions in Cape Town and in particular, the effect their poverty had on the living conditions, health and well-being of the poor. There are also the questions of whether there was any relationship between poverty and race and/or poverty and slavery, and the extent to which social relations in Cape Town were based on economic or racial considerations. Also, given the changes in the status of coloured people, what effect these changes had on Cape Town society during this period.

The emphasis throughout this thesis is on 'the poor'. This raises the question of what 'the poor' and 'poverty' actually mean. In Section I an attempt is made to define poverty by drawing up an estimate of minimum family expenditure, thus establishing a 'poverty line'. Some occupations are identified, the earnings from which were insufficient to meet this minimum. This provides an indication of the sort of people likely to have been suffering poverty. Clearly, however, what is

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1. Theal, G.M., 'Population 1827', R.C.C. vol.35 p.81 and Population Table, Appendix 3)

2. e.g. Leidler, P.W., The Growth and Government of Cape Town, 1939 and several works by C. Pama, including Regency Cape Town, 1975

understood by 'the poor' is usually something broader than this. Charles Booth, one of the pioneers of a quantitive approach to social questions,[1] identified four classes of poor people. They were 'the lowest', i.e. occasional labourers, loafers and semi-criminals; the 'very poor' who were 'in want'; and two groups of 'poor' who 'lacked comfort'.[2] The first two groups would fall below a poverty line but the other two would be above it; nevertheless, the term 'the poor' as used in sections 2 and 3 may be taken to include all four groups.

A problem in discussing the poor in Cape Town's society is the availability or lack of sources. Poor people did not leave descriptions of their lives and so much, though not all, of the information about them is indirect. Some discussion of sources is included in the text, but it should be pointed out that because source material was often limited, conclusions put forward in this thesis are necessarily tentative.

It would be helpful, perhaps to look briefly at Cape Town as it appeared to an outsider, before putting bits of it under the microscope. Although one of the largest towns in the colony, Cape Town was small by comparison with the major towns of England[3] - indeed, one visitor compared it with Yarmouth.[4]

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1. Abrams, M., Social Surveys and Social Action, 1951 p.34
2. Hennock, E.P., 'Poverty and social theory in England: the experience of the eighteen eighties' in Social History No.1 1976 p.73
3. Manchester's population was about ten times that of Cape Town - see below p.99
4. Bunbury, C.J.F., Journal of a Residence at the Cape of Good Hope, 1848 p.52

This population was exceedingly mixed - 'motley' is an adjective travellers often used to describe it.[1] As well as the Hottentots, or 'bastard Hottentots' and Dutch, the population included English, Irish, Scots and Germans; Malays , Indians, Madagascans, East and North Africans, and Bantu in the form of a settlement of 'Fingoes'.[2] Miscegenation had produced many people of 'mixed blood'. These intermediate groups included the 'Afrikander' slaves - slaves born at the Cape of slave mothers by European fathers,[3] among others.[4] One writer commented that Cape Town society was composed of so many nations and sects that 'no general desciption will answer'.[5]

Visitor's impressions of Cape Town itself varied, possibly depending on the time of year that they were there. Some commented on the clean, neat appearance of the streets, which were straight, spacious and sometimes lined with trees; the canals or 'ditches' running down some streets were a reminder to them of Cape Town's Dutch origins.[6] Other travellers found, however, that first impressions of Cape Town were 'far from pleasing.....'[7]; the ditches were dry and very smelly[8] and the streets swept by rolling clouds of dust and sand.[9] Only one visitor mentioned the 'lanes and alleys, the haunts of pauper wretchedness....'.[10] It is to the occupants of those lanes and alleys that we now turn.

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1. e.g. Bunbury, op.cit. p.52; Champion, G., The Journal of an American Missionary at the Cape of Good Hope 1835 (ed.Alan Roberts) 1968 p.4; Napier, E.E., Excursions in Southern Africa, including a History.... 1849, vol. I p.3
2. MacCrone, I.D., Race Attitudes in South Africa: Historical, Experimental and Psychological Studies, 1937, p.68 footnote; Judges, S. and Saunders, C.C. 'The beginnings of an African Community in Cape Town' in South African Outlook, August 1976, pp.122 - 123
3. Bird, W., State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822 (ed.H.T.Colebrooke) p.73
4. Krauss, F., 'A description of Cape Town and its way of life, 1838-40' in South African Library Quarterly Bulletin (2 parts in vol. 21 Nos.1 and 2), Part 2, vol.21 No.2 p.47
5. Champion, G., Journal p.28
6. Alexander, J., Narrative of a voyage of observation among the colonies of West Africa... 1837, vol. 1 p.326; Reynolds, J.N., Voyage of the U.S. Frigate 'Potomac' 1835, December 1831; Webster, W.H.B., Narrative of a voyage to the Southern Atlantic Ocean.... , 1834, vol. pp.236-7
7. Polson, N., A Subaltan's Sick Leave....1837, p.77
8. Ibid and Bunbury, C.F., Journal of a Residence, p.52
9. Bunbury, C.F., op.cit p.53 and Low, H. (Mrs. Hillard), My Mother's Journal: a young lady's journal from 1829-1834, 1900 entries for 17 January and 15 March 1834
10. Webster, W.H.B., ... op.cit

Section I - Poverty in Cape Town during the 1830s

The Assessment of Poverty

According to many contemporary sources there were poor people in Cape Town in the 1830s. The government recognised the existence of poverty: for example in 1829 the Hearth Tax was reviewed because it had 'been found to press heavily on the poorer classes of the inhabitants...'[1]. During the measles and smallpox epidemics of 1839 and 1840 the government provided special hospitals and free medical treatment for the poor[2] and in 1840 replaced clothing burnt to destroy infection for those 'too poor to provide properly for themselves in this respect ...'[3].

Newspaper comment is frequent, particularly in the Commercial Advertiser. Twice in January 1830 alone Advertiser editorials referred to 'the poor'[4]. Following revelations of poverty resulting from the measles epidemic it observed that 'the poor of Cape Town are poor indeed'[5], and in 1840 wrote of 'the great body of the fixed inhabitants - we mean the poor - of Cape Town'[6].

There are also numerous examples of people describing themselves as 'poor'. Although the claims of some of the poor men with large families to support did not withstand

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1. Ordinance No. 55, 1829, Section V.
2. Government Advertisements, 28 February 1839 (2) and 22 April 1840.
3. C.A. 16 May 1840.
4. C.A. 20 January and 27 January 1830.
5. C.A. 6 April 1839.
6. C.A. 23 May 1840.

scrutiny[1], other pleas of poverty were confirmed by investigating officials[2]. Among the examples are the 26 fishermen who described themselves as 'indigent persons ...'[3] and the people of Rose Street who said they were 'indigent ...' and referred to the 'poverty and age of many of them ...'[4].

Contemporaries, therefore, considered that there was poverty in Cape Town. The problem arising from this fact is that of defining what 'poverty' was. Writing on The Problem of Measuring Poverty, Samual Mencher points out that it is difficult to obtain reliable data now on which to base conclusions about what poverty is and who is poor[5]. The problem of assessing poverty is much greater when one is attempting to look at people living nearly 150 years ago, about whom no systematic data is available and whose experiences and expectation of life were very different from those of the present. One obviously cannot apply present day criteria of poverty; the difficulty is to arrive at an assessment of poverty which is realistic for the period under study, in the complete absence of any definition by contemporaries. An attempt will be made to produce a standard for

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1. For example the report on the application of Abdol Wasie to be excused payment for a deed of Burghership stated that 'the poverty alluded to by Memorialist is not consistent with truth'. C.O. 3949 item 344.
2. An example is the old shopkeeper who claimed to be in 'necessitous circumstances' and was described in the report on his Memorial as 'a very poor man'. C.O. 3975 Item 109.
3. C.O. 3964 Item 120.
4. C.O. 3992 Item 115.
5. Roach, Jack L. and Janet K. (ed.) Poverty, p. 71.

measuring poverty in Cape Town in the 1830s; the interpretations and conclusions proferred must, however, be very much open to question, particularly by those whose training in the application of quantification techniques to social problems is more extensive than that of the present writer.

The concept of a 'poverty line' was first put forward by Seebohm Rowntree.

> 'He constructed, in money terms, a quantitative standard of minimum family needs in respect of food, clothing, fuel and rent. If any family's income was insufficient to buy this minimum, it followed ipso facto that the family's health was deteriorating and that the family was below the 'Poverty Line'[1].

This method may be applied to Cape Town families in the 1830s. Their needs would be similar, allowing for the difference in climate[2] and a very rough and ready estimate of family size[3] suggests an average of three children per family which is in line with the family of two parents and three children on which Rowntree's estimates were based[4].

Table I represents an estimate of the minimum expenditure for survival for a family of five in Cape Town in the 1830s. The items included are basic necessities; other things, such as tea, which might well have featured in a family's shopping are listed in the Appendices[5]. Among the items not included

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1. Abrams, Mark, Social Surveys and Social Action p. 41.
2. Rowntree's survey was carried out in York!
3. Obtained by averaging the number of children listed on the death notices of people who died in 1840. - M.O.O.C. 6/9/19; this is a random and so not very reliable source.
4. Abrams, Mark, op. cit. p. 42.
5. See Appendix I.

Table 1 - An estimate of the minimum living costs of a family of two adults and three children per 28 day month in the early 1830s

		£	s.	d.
Food				
Meat or fish	88 lbs. at 1½d per lb.		11	-
Bread (coarse)	" " " " " "		11	-
Rice/Beans	39 lbs. at ¾d. per lb.		2	5
Milk	28 pints at 3d. per quart		3	6
Fuel and lighting				
Candles	7 lbs. at 8d. per lb.		4	8
Wood	370 lbs., estimated at		3	4
Rent	estimated at	1	10	-
Clothing	estimated at		2	11
	TOTAL	£3	8s	10d.

This works out at just under 6d. per person per day.

1. For sources and additional information see Appendix I.

are things like cooking utensils, water containers, blankets, salt, which families would have required. Although expenditure on certain items, such as clothing and candles, may have been over-estimated, it seems likely that a family would have required what Rowntree called 'other sundries'[1] so that the amount of £3.8s.10d. a month is an under-, rather than an over-estimate of the minimum expenditure required to maintain a family of five in reasonable health.

There are indications to support this estimate. £3.8s.10d. divided among five people for 28 days works out at approximately 6d. per person per day. In 1830, Dr. Samuel Bailey[2] recommended acceptance of a woman's offer to pay two skillings, or 4½d.[3] a day to keep her mother in Somerset Hospital as it would 'nearly meet the expence of her daily provisions'[4]. William Assue received 6d. per day per man for the support of some 'aged Chinese' lodged with him at government expense[5]. That this was a minimum is suggested by the facts that a single man living in a '<u>poor</u>, but respectable house ...' paid about 1s.6d. a day for 'board and lodging, and must be content to eat <u>Bakfish</u> and Rice, six days out of seven...'[6]; and that a working widow with three

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1. Abrams, Mark, <u>op. cit.</u> p. 42.
2. Surgeon in charge of the Somerset Hospital.
3. <u>Cape of Good Hope Almanack and Directory</u> 1830 p. 14.
4. <u>C.O.</u> 376 Item 39.
5. <u>C.O.</u> 3985 Item 24; this was in 1836 - in 1838 he estimated that the cost of maintaining them had risen to 8d. a day and was given an increase - <u>C.O.</u> 3996 Item 5.
6. <u>C.A.</u> 12 July 1834, (letter).

children, earning £3.1s.7d. per 28 day month, appealed for relief from paying tax as the extra expenditure would 'subject her to great inconvenience and distress ...'[1]. The estimate of £3.8s.10d. as a minimum rate of expenditure for a family of five would appear to be realistic.

The other factor to be taken into account in the assessment of poverty is family income. A crucial element in a family's income is the earnings of its principal wage earner, which will in turn depend on his or her occupation. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the occupational structure of Cape Town before going on to look to wages in relation to poverty.

The Occupational Structure of Cape Town.

The most comprehensive guide to the occupational structure of Cape Town during the 1830s is the series of Almanacks, containing Street Directories, which came out annually. Valuable though these are, however, they must be used with caution, for the following reasons.

Firstly, with very few exceptions, the Almanacks listed householders only, so that the occupations of other inhabitants of a house, even if they were not members of the householder's family and their occupation was completely different, were omitted. Clearly, too, not all householders are included[2] and it seems that the poorer, less skilled people are the ones left out. For example, the 1830 Street Directory lists nine 'coolies'[3], but according to the police, there were 360

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1. C.O. 3964 Item 54.
2. See below, p.128
3. Almanack, 1830, pp. 283-316.

registered coolies in Cape Town[1] and it seems most unlikely that the number should drop so dramatically in only two years. Unlike the street lists, where missing house numbers suggest that people may have been omitted, there is no way of checking whether lists of people in a given occupation are complete. Furthermore, not all the occupations carried on in Cape Town are included in the Street Directories. No porters - men who carried goods through the surf to and from the boats ferrying out to ships in Table Bay - are included in the 1830 Street Directory although it is clear that this work was done[2]. Again, this is a distortion away from the less skilled workers.

Another problem is the possible ambiguity of occupation names used in the Street Directories. An example is 'fisherman'. There were 40 fishing boats in Table Bay in 1830, employing 200 men[3]; it may be that the men working in one boat all had shares in it and divided the profits whereas another boat was owned by one man who employed the others. There is evidence that many fishermen were poor[4] but at least one died leaving 'immoveable property' in 1838[5]. There is no way of distinguishing between employer and employed from the Street Directories and hence the different levels within a given occupation are glossed over.

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1. C.O. 301 Item 57.
2. Alexander, J.E., An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, 1838, Vol. II, p. 283 and Soonike, H.E., 'The Development of the Harbour of Table Bay with Special Reference to the Period 1825-1860', unpublished M.A. Thesis, U.C.T. 1974, p. 60.
3. Blue Book and Statistical Register 1830, p. 249.
4. C.O. 3964 Item 120; C.O. 490 Item 159, Special Wardmasters' report for Ward I.
5. M.O.O.C. 6/9/84 No. 5571.

Table 2 shows the occupations in which coloured people participated according to the 1830 Street Directory[1]. The object is to obtain some indication of the levels at which there was such participation and whether there was any overlap between white and coloured people. This, in conjunction with an examination of wage levels and costs will hopefully suggest to what extent there was a correlation between race and poverty.

Immediately striking is the complete absence of coloured people in professional occupations other than that of clerk[2] and those within the Malay community. According to the Civil lists in the Almanacks, no coloureds were employed as officials in government departments and there appear to have been no coloured book-keepers, notaries and so on. In the group of 'responsible' occupations it seems that there were more coloureds employed in the less prestigious job of watchmen[3] than as policemen, who were possibly more respectable[4].

Among the retailers, coloured participation seems much greater in the sort of business where the cost of stock and equipment was relatively low, such as 'retail shop' and 'fruiterer'. It is impossible to tell from the Street

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1. Almanack, 1830, pp. 283-316.
2. Which in wage terms was at the bottom of the professional category - *see Table 3.*
3. Who at this time were not paid sufficient to live on - see below p.21 .
4. The police had been re-organised in 1828, following the report of the Commissioners of Enquiry. Ordinance 48, 1828.

Table 2

To Show the Involvement of White, 'Near White' and Coloured People in Various Occupations, According to a Computer Analysis of the Cape Town Street Directory[1] for 1830.

Occupation	White/ Assumed White	'Near White'	Coloured/ Assumed Coloured	Total
1. Government and Professional				
Clerk	20	1	1	22
Police Constable	3	1	-	4
Watchman	2	1	4	7
'Malay Priest'	-	-	2	2
2. Retailers, etc.				
Retail Shops	135	5	24	164
Baker	24	-	1	25
Butcher	5	-	2	7
Tallow Chandler	5	-	5	10
Fruiterer	1	2	14	17
Percentage of Category	76%	3%	21%	
Licenced Premises				
Inn/Public House	6	-	-	6
Wine House	4	-	-	4
Beer/Ale House	3	1	1	5
Tap House	6	-	2	8
Billiard House	2	1	-	3
Hotels, etc.				
Hotel	2	-	-	2
Boarding House	8	-	-	8
Lodging House	12	-	2	14
Eating House	3	-	2	5

1. Almanack 1830, pp. 283-317. I am grateful to Dr. J.A. Heese for going through this Street Directory with me and identifying the names of 'near white' and coloured people.

Table 2 - continued

Occupation	White/ Assumed White	'Near White'	Coloured/ Assumed Coloured	Total
3. Craftsmen and Artisans, etc.				
Gold smiths	4	-	-	4
Silver smiths	5	-	1	6
Copper smiths	5	-	-	5
Tin smiths	5	-	-	5
Black smiths	10	-	1	11
Smiths and Farriers	14	-	1	15
Ship wrights	6	-	-	6
Wheel wrights	2	-	1	3
Coopers	18	1	5	24
Waggon or Coach Makers	13	-	1	14
Saddler and Harness Makers	11	-	2	13
Cabinet Makers	2	-	2	4
Chair Makers and Seaters	-	-	4	4
Upholsterers	2	-	-	2
Joiner	1	-	-	1
Carpenters	52	2	11	65
Sawyers	7	-	1	8
Turners	2	-	-	2
Masons	11	-	13	24
Painters	3	1	5	9
Bonnet Makers	2	1	4	7
Sempstresses	6	-	22	28
Shoe and Boot Makers	39	1	22	62
Tailors	13	1	29	43
Boatmen	20	-	5	25
4. Unskilled and Domestic.				
Coolies	-	-	9	9
Fishermen	7	2	26	35
Labourers	1	-	4	5
Laundresses	10	1	45	56
Coachmen	1	-	2	3
Cooks	3	-	1	4
Groom	1	-	-	1

Directories the scale on which a particular business was run but it seems possible that many of the fruiterers had stalls,[1] rather than proper shops and that some retail shops were the same[2]. In contrast, butchers were obliged to rent part of the town shambles in which to slaughter animals[3] whatever the premises they used to sell their meat. Similarly, whereas a licence to sell fruit and vegetables cost 7s.6d. in 1830, a baker's licence cost £3.15s.0d. - ten times as much[4]. That the cost of a licence was considered a burden is indicated by the fact that many people 'smuggled' - i.e. sold goods without a licence[5]. It is significant that coloured retailers seem concentrated in the areas requiring comparatively little capital outlay. In the same way the few coloured liquor licence holders were beer, ale and tahouse keepers, for which licences, at £10.0s.0d. were relatively cheap[6].

According to the Street Directories craftsmen were overwhelmingly white. This may be a distorted picture, resulting from the omission of coloured craftsmen. There were craftsmen among the slaves, for example, but if they lived with their masters their names did not appear in the

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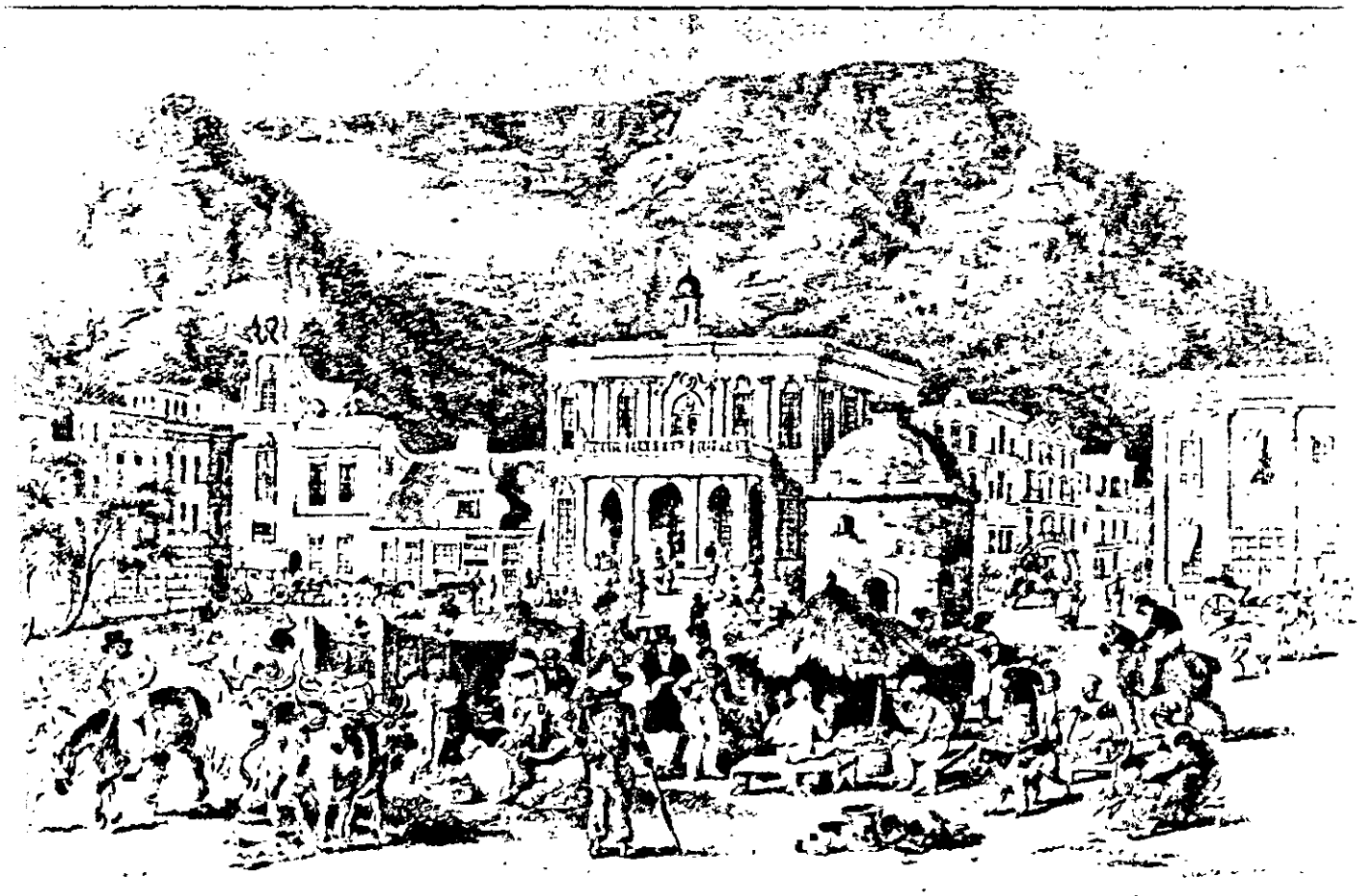
1. Such as the one 'under the stoep of a large house ...' C.A. 16 June 1830.
2. See pictures, Sheet A.
3. Ordinance 48 of 1828.
4. Cape Archives, Advisory Council, Vol. 9, p. 88 and Almanack, 1830, p. 111.
5. C.A. 21 January 1835.
6. A general licence, which was required for a public house, cost £112.0s.0d. a year - Advisory Council, Vol. 9, p. 88.

SHEET A

'Shop in cellar under stoep steps', c. 1838, by C. Webb Smith

(Library of Parliament No. 19359 (vii) 4, reverse)



[Greenmarket] Square, Cape of Good Hope, by G.F. White, c. 1834

(Library of Parliament No. 20607/1)

Directories[1] and even when they lived separately their names might be omitted[2]. Given that the number of coloured people in craft occupations was relatively low, it may have been because of the expense and length of training[3]. It is noticeable that there was apparently a higher proportion of coloureds in crafts such as tailoring or masonry, where the materials and equipment were relatively cheap[4] or where the craftsman was employed to use his skill, rather than working on his own account[5]. Even then the carpenters, who were the best paid of the employed craftsmen[6] were predominantly white.

The unskilled workers, despite the obvious omission of many of them, are predominantly coloured. The only examples of significant numbers of whites are among the fishermen - which may be explained by the lack of distinction between different levels among them[7] - and laundresses. The involvment of white women in such work may well have resulted from the lack of alternatives. Apart from the one or two who took over their husbands' businesses[8], or became teachers, a woman who had to

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1. E.g. Hector, a blacksmith belonging to S.G. Richter - S.O. 3/6 Item 215.
2. E.g. Africa, a silversmith of J. Combrink who had his own house and rented out rooms. S.O. 3/13 Item 712.
3. Expenses included payment of a premium - C.O. 399B Item 79 and loss of earnings
4. Jones, G. Stegman, Outcast London - A Study of the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society, Oxford, 1971, p. 29.
5. E.g. masons employed by the Civil Engineers Department - C.O. 370 Item 43.
6. In 1829 they could earn up to 7s.6d. per day whereas masons earned up to 6s.0d. - C.O. 370 Item 135.
7. See above p. 6.
8. E.g. Widows Wrankmore and Rimrod, lodgining house keeper and partner in a firm of apothecaries, Almanacks, 1836, p. 103 and 1840 (no pagination) respectively. Earlier Street Directories give their husbands' names.

earn her own living had the choice of domestic service and becoming a sempstress or something of that sort or a laundress. Even among laundresses there was an elite: Mrs. Hobley, the 'widdow' of a Dragoons Sargeant Major, washed 'for some of the prencipal Families ...' of Cape Town[1] which suggests that again whites tended to be involved at a higher level than coloured people.

It would appear, then, that the people at the lower end of the occupational structure were predominantly, though not exclusively, coloured. They tended to be concentrated in the less skilled occupations, or in those requiring a relatively small capital outlay. (The fact that coloured businesses may often have been on a small scale would probably have meant that they were vulnerable to fluctuations in the economic climate and[2] that their returns were small.) Whether this in turn means that they were poor needs to be examined in terms of their wages and family incomes by comparison with the minimum family expenditure already worked out.

Family Incomes.

It is extremely difficult to work out the income of a Cape Town family in the 1830s because there are so many factors to be taken into consideration. An attempt will be made, however, to show how a family's income might have been made up and to suggest reasons why some families might not have earned sufficient to meet their needs.

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1. C.O. 3993 Item 71.
2. See Appendix 2.

First it is necessary to look at wages, but consistent records of wage levels do not exist for the 1830s. The Almanacks often contain the salaries of public employees, but some lists are much more complete than others - the 1843 list includes the salaries of minor staff at the Somerset Hospital, the 1830 list does not[1] - and none of the lists include the casual labour force required by the Civil Engineer's or Town Waterworks departments. People in these lists generally have a European name and a salary exceeding £100.0s.0d. a year, which was not typical of Cape Town workers in the 1830s.

There is one exception - the rates of hire for coolies were laid down by the police and published annually in the Almanacks[2]. The value of this information is limited by the fact that it is impossible to know how often a man was hired, or at what rate[3] so that what a coolie actually earned can only be estimated.

A useful source of information about the wage rates for some workers is the Colonial Office correspondence from the Civil Engineer and the Superintendant of Waterworks. Both contain estimates showing the payment per day of carpenters, masons, smiths, plumbers and labourers. But again, knowing

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1. Almanacks, 1830, p. 182 and 1843, Lists of Public Offices (no pagination).
2. A coolie's job was defined as being 'to carry burthens' in a court case in 1829 - C.A, 14 February 1829.
3. This varied according to the weight of an item and the distance involved - Almanack, 1830, p. 138.

what a man could earn per day is not the same thing as knowing his monthly income. Even though there was a labour shortage, according to contemporaries[1] it does not follow that people worked every day; a man might have been unwilling to do so[2] or might not have been able to go from one casual labouring job to another without some delay.

A whole group of people whose incomes are impossible to ascertain are those of the self-employed - shopkeepers, liquor licence-holders, tailors, sempstresses and so on. According to the 1830 Street Directory there were 164 retail shopkeepers alone[3] quite apart from the butchers, drapers, tallow chandlers et al. It is possible to pick out one or two people from this group about whom additional information is available[4] but impossible to generalise about the group as a whole.

Table 3 attempts to show the monthly earnings of various types of worker in Cape Town in the early 1830s, but for the above reasons it should be regarded as an indication rather than a final statement about wage levels. It is not a representative sample - occupations are included simply because there is evidence about earnings within them. What it does suggest is that (a) there was a very considerable

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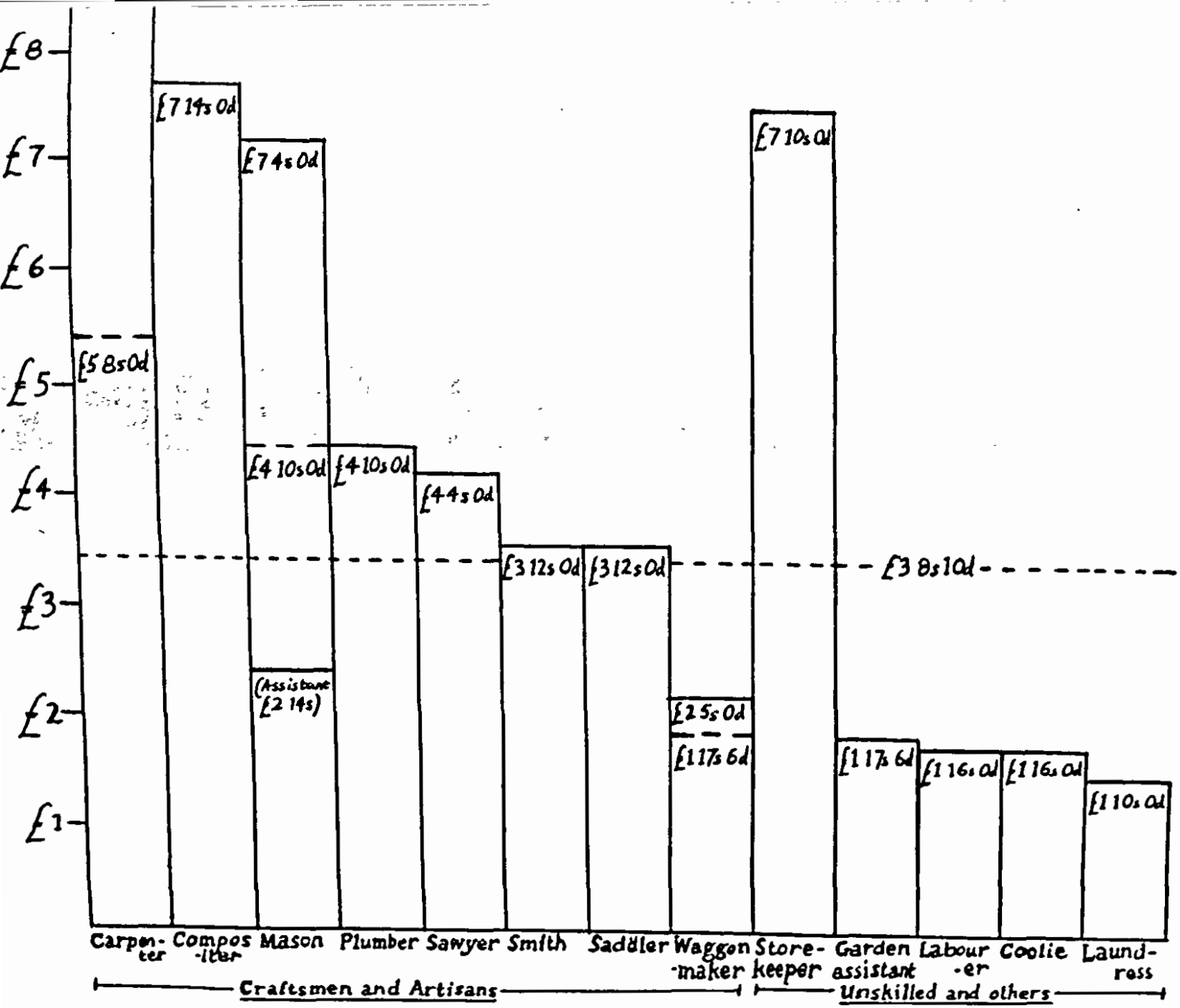
1. See below p.13
2. W.A. 12 May 1840.
3. Almanack, 1830, pp. 283-316.
4. See Appendix 2.

Table 3 - Earnings of various occupations in Cape Town in the early 1830's



(For sources see Appendix 1)

disparity between earnings at the top and bottom of the occupational scale, at a time when taxation was not intended to modify differences in incomes or provide a safety net for those at the bottom level; and (b) that occupations in which there was a significant amount of coloured participation tended to be relatively badly paid.

The earnings shown in Table 3 are for a month of 24 working days and so assume that a person would have been fully employed, but one must question whether this was so. Almost the only source of information about employment levels is newspaper comment, usually in the form of complaints about the shortage of labour and the need for immigrants from Europe. Such comments were irregular and tended to reflect the views of the employers rather than the employed and so are not a satisfactory index of employment levels, but one must use them given the absence of any better source.

It is clear from the newspapers that labourers and servants were in short supply following the emancipation of the apprentices in December 1838[1]. The Advertiser reported a legislative Council discussion on the shortage of domestic servants in March 1839[2] and less than a month later commented on 'The want of cooks in particular ...'[3]. In its New Year editorial for 1840 (which as usual consisted of a review of the previous year) the Advertiser observed that 'The only

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1. See below, p.15 .
2. C.A. 23 March 1839.
3. C.A. 17 April 1839.

complaint' against the former slaves was that 'they are slow to engage as servants or laborers (sic) ...' and asked high wages when they did[1]. Remarks about the labour shortage continued during 1840[2], along with the need for immigrants who might 'almost make their own terms with employers ...' as mechanics and artisans[3]. In 1841 the Advertiser asserted that 'Every man, woman, and child able to work, can always find employment'[4]. Its opinion that more labourers were needed to 'set the laborers we already have, in motion ...' was reinforced by public enthusiasm for the importation of Prize Negroes from St. Helena[5].

This apparent pressure on the labour supply is surprising since the Cape economy was in the throes of a depression between 1838 and 1841[6]. A straight forward economic explanation seems unlikely but there are other possible reasons. One cause of short-term shortages of labour in 1839 and 1840 was disease. The 1839 measles epidemic 'upset all domestic arrangements; swept the counting house and work-shop of their clerks and artizans ...' and at one stage 'threatened to suspend all labour of every kind'[7]. During

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1. C.A. 1 January 1840.
2. C.A. 22 and 29 January and 1 August.
3. C.A. 27 June 1840.
4. C.A. 20 March 1841.
5. C.A. 22 and 25 December 1841.
6. Schumann, C.G.W., Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa 1806-1936, Table 14, p. 111.
7. C.A. 3 April 1839.

the 1840 smallpox outbreak 42 out of about 50 fishing boats were one day 'drawn up on the beach, the men or their families being sick'[1]. The measles epidemic was acknowledged as a reason for the shortage of servants in 1839[2] so that the demand for labour then did not necessarily reflect full employment.

Both epidemics took place early in the year, however, and so cannot be used to explain labour shortages in later months. An explanation put forward was that the emancipation of the apprentices was to blame and that the former slaves did not work as well as they had done while enslaved or apprenticed[3]. The Ware Afrikaan wrote that

> 'Shortly after the period when emancipation gave freedom to all classes in this colong a great number of the late slaves disappeared, no one could positively state, where. They were not in the country districts ... while labour remained just as dear, and as scarce, in the Town as it had previously been ... the domiciliary visits now going forward /by Special Wardmasters during the smallpox epidemic/ fully explain the matter ... it is now evident that an immense number of the late slaves have been, ever since their freedom, herding together in idleness and filth ...'[4].

It is clear that the final abolition of slavery immediately affected employment since the majority of the 'apprentices' apparently abandoned their former owners as soon as they were freed[5], 'as if by arrangement ...'[6]. Cape Town, however,

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1. C.A. 6 May 1840.
2. C.A. 23 March.
3. W.A. 4 February 1840.
4. W.A. 12 May 1840.
5. Hengherr, E., 'Emancipation and After - A Study of Cape Slavery and the Issues Arising from it 1830-43', unpublished M.A. thesis, U.C.T. 1953, p. 72.
6. Krauss, F., 'A Description of Cape Town and Its Way of Life, 1838-40' Part 2 in the Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 42.

should have benefitted from the fact that many of them made their way there[1]. More to the point is the fact that, once free, some former slaves withdrew from the labour market altogether; among them were 'a great number of female servants ...' who retired to their own homes and were supported by their husbands[2]. There were also those who established their own businesses and so were no longer available for employment[3].

Those former slaves who continued to form part of the labour force functioned differently in two ways. First, they could choose their employment to an extent impossible under slavery and this meant that unpopular jobs were abandoned in favour of more congenial or better paid work[4]. In particular there was a 'dislike' of domestic work which may have resulted from the measure of control exercised by an employer, especially if the servant lived in. A complete day off on Sunday, the possibility of a home and the choice of clothes and food are suggested as attracting workers to the brick fields and away from domestic service[5]. Also domestic service demanded a regular commitment to work which casual labour did not. The fact that Cape Town's brick fields were 'crowded with laborers' at the beginning of 1839[6]

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1. According to Theal, G.M., History of South Africa from 1795-1872, Vol. 2, pp. 191-2, also C.O. 5476, p. 128.
2. C.A. 23 March 1839.
3. A.F. Hattersley points out that 'petty retail trading ... was ... increasingly monopolised by the coloured man' after emancipation - An Illustrated Social History of South Africa, p. 97.
4. C.A. 20 February and 23 March 1840.
5. Ibid.
6. C.A. 20 February 1839.

while people who had 'already, in some way or other, earned enough not to go hungry that day' joined the crowd in the Market Square[1] suggests that many people preferred to choose for themselves when to work, and when not to! The labour shortage after 1838 may therefore be more because people could not or would not work or worked only spasmodically because there was full employment. This would obviously have been reflected in wage levels.

Although complaints about the labour shortage were vociferous after 1838 there had been shortages before; in 1831, for example[2] and when the slave compensation money arrived and was being invested, particularly in building, in 1838[3]. There seem to have been fewer problems between 1834-37 which is again surprising in view of the fact that 1835-38 was a period of 'decided prosperity', which might have been expected to impose a strain on the labour supply.

It should be pointed out that the demand for labour reflected in the newspapers was only for certain types of worker-skilled men, servants and manual labourers. The labour shortage therefore was not necessarily general and it may have been that there was under-employment in some areas where people were willing to work. For example, there is a large number of laundresses listed in the 1830 Street Directory[4] and a likelihood

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1. Krauss, F., 'A Description of Cape Town and Its Way of Life 1838-40' part I in the Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library, Vol. 21, No. 1, p.6.
2. Z.A. 25 February, C.A. 10 August and 19 November 1831.
3. C.A. 7 April 1838 and 29 January and 1 February 1840.
4. 56 of them - Almanack, pp. 283-316.

that many more were omitted[1]. The advantage of being a laundress was that a woman could work, unsupervised, from her own home[2]. Women with families particularly may often not have been able to work as domestic servants and so been forced to do this sort of work. But it seems likely that slave-owning households would have done their own washing[3] so that one wonders how much work was available for these women. The Advertiser did not complain of any shortage of laundresses but under-employment among them is unlikely to have attracted its attention. Older, unskilled men no longer capable of arduous manual work are another group who did not fit in to the categories of labour in demand and it is not clear what work was available to them. Possibly some joined the pedlars and hawkers complained of by Cape Town's shop keepers[4] - again, one wonders to what extent they were employed and how adequate their earnings were.

Another consideration is that at least some of the work available would have been seasonal. Following the arrival of the slave compensation money, houses started ' springing up with amazing rapidity ...'[5]; but building work would largely have been done in the summer, so that men employed in building might well have found it difficult to get work in the winter

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1. See above p.5.
2. As did Mrs. Hobley and the slaves Rachel and Lea - C.O. 3993 Item 71 and S.O. 3/6, p. 553.
3. Some households actually had washmaids, e.g. that of V. Anhuyzer, a Cape Town shop keeper - S.O. 3/7 Item 131.
4. C.O. 3942 Item 187/2.
5. C.A. 1 February 1840.

and so faced periods when their earnings were low. Men working as fishermen and boatmen in Table Bay would also have been affected by bad weather and forfeited earnings when they could not take their boats out[1]. This problem may have been exacerbated by some degree of seasonal migration to and from Cape Town. There is an example of a Cape Town slave hiring himself into the country to help with harvest[2] and the Advertiser suggested that farmers might recruit labour from Cape Town at harvest time[3]. The countryside would have been very much less welcoming to casual workers during the winter and so possibly there was a drift to Cape Town. This might explain in part the reports of deaths on the roads around Cape Town from exposure and arrests of people who were unemployed and homeless[4].

In his discussion of the seasonality of production Stegman Jones points out that a 'seasonal credit system' developed as the result of the fluctuation of people's earnings, so that they accumulated debts in winter which they paid off while working in the summer[5]. This may also have happened in Cape Town. Bakers, for example, were obliged to extend credit to their customers over long periods - they found that a measure intended to benefit them by restricting the period of repayment

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1. C.O. 3970 Item 38.
2. S.O. 3/7 Item 117.
3. 17 October 1840.
4. C.A. reports 27 June and 4 July 1829 and 15 July 1829 (letter); 8 July 1837.
5. Outcast London, p. 48.

to two months in fact meant that in some cases the debt lapsed altogether so that they lost their money[1]. Landlords, too, extended credit and then found difficulty in collecting the arrears of rent[2]. In 1832 a very large memorial was presented to the governor by landlords, merchants, tradesmen and others complaining about the difficulty of collecting debts of less than £20.0s.0d.[3] which suggests that the practice of extending credit was widespread. Stegman Jones also suggests that workers bought luxury goods, such as furniture and clothing, during the summer which they pawned to help them through the winter[4]. Cape Town's poorer classes apparently possessed 'articles of furniture, such as bedsteads ...'[5] and were well-dressed[6] although the conditions in which they lived were often deplorable[7]. It may be that they did the same. The possibility that there were groups of people within Cape Town's occupational structure who were consistently under-employed and others whose employment was subject to seasonal fluctuation must be considered in any attempt to assess earnings and poverty.

Against this, there is evidence suggesting that it was common for people to supplement their incomes by doing a second job. It seems to have been expected that people who could not support themselves on their earnings from one job

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1. C.O. 3984 Item 62.
2. C.O. 3942 Item 187/1.
3. C.O. 3955 Item 142.
4. Outcast London, p. 49.
5. C.A. 23 May 1840.
6. C.A. 1 January 1840.
7. See below, p. 61.

would take on another - only if they could not were they considered unfortunate. Patrick Kelly applied for relief from tax, since 'in consequence of the smallness of his salary, and having moreover lost his right arm, the use of which would otherwise enable him to earn something in addition thereto, has barely sufficient to provide himself with the common necessaries of life'. The Collector of Taxes recommended that his application be granted, not because of 'the smallness of his salary' but because 'as he has only one Arm - he is not able to work at any Trade ...' to supplement it[1]. Similarly the Cape Town night watchmen requested a pay rise in 1830 because 'owing to the increase of duty memorialists are not able as heretofore to employ some hours in the day time to earn something to supply the insufficience of their salary which is £2.12s.6d. pr. month to maintain their families'[2]. A letter to the Advertiser suggesting that the night watch be paid 'in a way that might admit of their resting in the day ...'[3] bears out the claim that they had to do other work. In both cases people were applying for relief only because they could not undertake supplementary work, which suggests that in the early 1830s it was quite normal for wage earners to do some extra work when their wages were inadequate.

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1. He earned £40.0s.0d. per annum, about £3.1s.7d. per 28 day month - C.O. 3964 Item 49.
2. C.O. 380 Item 122.
3. 18 July 1829.

There is evidence that in some areas wages were pushed up during the 1830s. In 1839 labourers working on the town water works for the established rate of 1s.6d. a day came 'to a conclusion not to remain in the works under two Shills ...', which the authorities had to pay them[1]. There were complaints about the high rate of wages demanded by mechanics and labourers[2] but it would appear that not all wages were rising. Some messengers employed by government departments in 1843 were being paid £40.0s.0d., the same as in 1830, and there were other government employees who got less[3]. This reinforces the possibility that although there was a shortage of some types of labour, particularly at the end of the 1830s, which enabled certain workers to press for wage increases, other workers were not in such demand and had to accept low and static wages.

So far family income has been discussed in terms of the earnings of a single wage earner. It is clear, however, that often more than one member of a family worked. John Collins, a mason, was assisted by his son who earned £2.8s.6d. a month for his work[4] and Thomas, a free black, stated in a memorial that he, his wife and his eldest child, aged 14, could all work[5]. On a far larger scale, J.H. Lesar was 'employing upwards of One Hundred persons, chiefly consisting of the

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1. C.O. 478 Item 27; see also C.O. 483 Item 44.
2. C.A. 7 April and 28 November 1838 and 1 January 1840.
3. Almanacks 1830, pp. 180-182 and 1843, List of Public Offices (no pagination).
4. C.O. 376 Item 88.
5. C.O. 4003 Item 85.

wives and children of the Poor Fishermen ...' in his fish curing business in 1840[1]. This suggests that there were Cape Town families whose incomes consisted of the earnings of two, three or even more of their members.

There are, however, examples suggesting that some families depended on the earnings of one person. A witness at the trial of Thomas Davy for the murder of his wife apparently remained at home all day while her husband went out to work. Thomas Davy himself seems not to have been employed and the fact that when he asked for his dinner his wife replied that she 'had no means of obtaining it ...' suggests that his family was dependant on him and suffered as a result of his lack of earnings[2].

Primary Poverty in Cape Town in the 1830s.

Seebohm Rowntree, surveying poverty in 1901, defined 'primary poverty' as existing when a family's income was insufficient to maintain it above the 'poverty line'[3]. Comparison of some of the earnings shown by Table 3 with the estimate of a family's minimum expenditure shown in Table 1 suggest that there may well have been primary poverty in Cape Town in the 1830s.

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1. C.O. 4005 Item 144.
2. Z.A. 18 November 1831; Mrs. Davy had two children by a previous marriage which may explain why she did not work - C.A. 26 November 1831.
3. Abrams, M., Social Surveys and Social Action, pp. 41-2.

Table 3 shows several occupations the pay for which does not reach the estimated minimum expenditure of £3.8s.10d. per 28 day month and since this table is not comprehensive, there may well have been others. Although supplementary work was seemingly common it is difficult to see how a labourer or coolie could have more than doubled his earnings by doing extra work, as he would have had to, to reach the estimated minimum. The working day was apparently long - the daily rate for a coolie was assessed on the basis of 10 hours work[1] - which did not leave much time for other work. Although there is evidence that often more than one member of a family worked it has been shown that this was not always the case. Even if more than one person was earning it might not have raised the family's income above the poverty line: a labourer or coolie and a laundress together would not have earned the estimated minimum of £3.8s.10d.[2]

The estimated £3.8s.10d. would not have been sufficient to maintain a larger than average family although there were certainly large families in Cape Town[3]. Moses Dantu, a fisherman, wanted tax relief in 1833 because he had 'a large family to provide for and a sickly wife ...' so that his earnings were 'merely sufficient to meet the wants of his family ...', a request upheld by the Collector of Taxes[4].

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1. Almanack 1830, p. 138; one Lawrence Welsh's working day was about 12½ hours, with breaks for meals - Z.A. 18 November 1831.
2. See Table 3.
3. The 1840 death notices included 9 coloured families with more than 6 children, out of 55 - M.O.O.C. 6/9/19.
4. C.O. 3962 Item 73.

Benjamin Solomon, earning £50.0s.0d. per annum (i.e. £3.16s.6d. per 28 day month), found it 'impossible to support a family of six children, his wife and an aged mother-in-law 'with the salary I have ...'[1]. Speaking in 1862 the Rev. G. Morgan, who had been Minister of St. Andrew's Church for 20 years and chosen for that office because his knowledge of Dutch meant he could work among the Church's coloured congregation[2], said that many of them earned 'good wages', 'yet many are in straightened circumstances, especially if they have a large family'. It would appear that the same was true of some families during the 1830s.

It seems possible, therefore, that there were families in Cape Town receiving regular incomes in the form of wages which were insufficient under normal circumstances to maintain them above the poverty line. It is clear that under adverse conditions many more families were likely to topple over the edge into primary poverty.

For much of the 1830s people were expected to provide for their own support in sickness, old age and misfortune. Cases of 'casual distress' were considered as 'arising from, or aggravated by the improvidence and vices of the poor ...'[3] and when the measles outbreak caused hardship there were those

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1. C.O. 3990 Item 32.
2. St. Andrew's Church Letter Book - Summary of St. Andrew's Mission (no pagination).
3. Evidence given before the Education Commission 1863, Report, p. 131, qu. 1119.

who blamed 'These people ... They ought to have been more provident ... and laid by money for the days of sickness!'[1]. Charles Booth, working on poverty in the 1880s[2] found that 'the principal causes of pauperism were not only "crime, vice, drink and laziness ..." but also "lack of work, death of husband, sickness, trade misfortune, old age and accident" ...'[3]. The Advertiser's statement during the smallpox epidemic of 1840 that 'there are numerous cases of destitution ... among the sick ...' followed by its assertion only two months later that there was no destitution at the Cape[4] suggest that there were many people in Cape Town who normally managed to maintain themselves but who were thrown into poverty by sickness or misfortune. There are certainly individual examples of this. Peter O'Neil was left 'destitute of the means of support ...' when a long illness 'prevented him from following his usual occupation as a labourer ...' and resulted in his savings being 'intirely expended ...'[5]. Andrew Millan was found 'in a destitute condition' having been 'dis-abled by a stroke of paralysis from working at his trade (that of a Tailor)'[6]. Again, 'a poor Man' was found 'lying ill under Typhus Fever

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1. C.A. 6 April 1839.
2. Hennock, E.P., 'Poverty and Social Theory in England ...' in Social History, No. 1, 1976.
3. Abrams, M., Social Surveys and Social Action, p. 39.
4. 25 April and 27 June 1840.
5. C.O. 3988 Item 97.
6. C.O. 424 Sundry Commissions Item 99 - letter from the Ladies Benevolent Society.

... together with three of his Children ... in great distress and nearly destitute of every comfort ...'[1]. Examples of distress caused by injury are those of Jane Lemon and David Oddy. She had 'received two wounds ... in consequence of which she is unable to earn her livelihood and is at this moment entirely destitute' but it was hoped that, once recovered, 'she will be able to maintain herself by honest labour'[2]. Oddy was brought to Somerset Hospital with a broken leg, 'nearly destitute of the necessaries of life'[3].

Illness could cause distress indirectly, when the sickness of a member of a family prevented a wage earner from working. This seems to have been most common when the family depended on the earnings of the mother. One woman petitioned for her husband, who was 'raving mad', to be admitted to Somerset Hospital as she found it 'impossible to maintain herself and her Four Children and to attend to her unfortunate husband ...' and Dr. Bailey found the family 'apparently under great privation, and in want of every necessary comfort ...'[4]. Another was 'owing to the dangerous illness of her child ... prevented from earning her livelihood as a House Servant /and/ ... consequently left destitute of the common means of support ...'[5].

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1. C.O. 393 Item 12.
2. C.O. 385 Item 21.
3. C.O. 376 Item 128.
4. C.O. 3996 Item 145.
5. C.O. 3970 Item 15; a similar case is described in C.O. 3973 Item 22.

The loss of a husband could mean considerable hardship for his wife and family. A tide waiter (customs official) died in 1834 'leaving six children quite Destitute'[1]; and the early death of the Civil Engineer's department foreman left his wife 'and three or four young children with little or nothing to support them, beyond what may be the widow's precarious earnings ...'[2]. Similar difficulties faced the families of convicts. Sophie, whose husband was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment on Robben Island, was left to support their four children alone which she 'struggled hard to do ...'[3]. The loss of a mother who was sole parent could leave her children entirely unsupported. Hanna, a child of five, was left 'in a state of destitution ...' by the death of her mother from consumption[4] and a girl of four was left unprovided for when her mother, a Hottentot, died of venereal disease[5]. The 'Orphan boys McCormack' were left 'completely destitute' when their mother died in poverty in 1836 although they had been known in better circumstances'[6]. Where elderly parents depended on a child, the loss of that support could also cause distress. Ambrense, a coloured woman, made a desperate plea for the remission of a death sentence passed on her 17 year old son, partly because

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1. C.O. 3974 Items 54 and 102.
2. C.O. 487 Item 94.
3. C.O. 4007 Item 40.
4. C.O. 481 Item 63.
5. C.O. 368 Item 10.
6. C.O. 499 Item 136, also C.O. 490 Item 158.

'he is that hand who obtains a livelihood for Memorialist in her 65th year of her age and her only support'[1].

An example of loss of support combined with unemployment is that Catherine, a former slave, found 'in a deplorable state of weakness, occasioned by utter destitution and want of food ... in consequence of her not being able to get employment ...' after the death of her husband[2].

So far discussion has been about people reduced to poverty by temporary illness or injury or by misfortune, all of which might be overcome in time. But there were people who could not hope to overcome the circumstances which had brought them to poverty. Among them were the old. Age in itself was not considered a sufficient reason for a person to stop supporting him or herself. People were expected to work for their livings until actually prevented from doing so by illness or physical handicap and then were supposed to have made some provision for themselves or have relatives to support them. Those who had neither were consistently treated as exceptional cases whose admission to government institutions had to be individually approved by the Governor[3]. For example, a free black, David, was admitted to Somerset Hospital at the age of 84 in a 'deplored condition of exhaustion and disease ...'; this made him an 'Object of Charity' in the opinion of the

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1. C.O. 3976 Item 16.
2. C.O. 378 Item 35.
3. See the Colonial Office correspondance of the Somerset Hospital and the Pauper Establishment; also below, p.36.

Surgeon, but his admission without charge had to be approved by the authorities[1].

Long term disability was another problem. Sarah Gallagher was discharged from Somerset Hospital in 1831 after treatment for epilepsy but she was unable to find work. She became 'miserably poor without friends and without a home ...' and begged to be allowed to return to hospital and work there[2]. By September 1834 Mary Capp, had 'been frequently in the Somerset Hospital ...' and only recently discharged. It seems from the description of her case that she was an alcoholic; she was 'again reduced to such a pitiable state ...' that the Ladies Benevolent Society pressed for her readmission to hospital and asked for her to be allowed to stay there and 'be made useful ... and thus preserved from the depravity in which she indulges when left at large'[3]. Another possible alcoholic was Klaas, 'the almost hopeless', on whom 'the toils of the Mill and the insipidity of rice water have in vain bea (sic) tried'. He was constantly before the courts on charges of drunkenness and related crimes, and the Advertiser considered it 'a pity that some Humane society, or individuals, do not interfere to rescue this poor creature from the gulph of perdition'[4]. He cannot have held down a regular job and his circumstances must have been bad.

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1. C.O. 376 Item 86.
2. C.O. 3951 Items 50 and 52.
3. C.O. 3968 Item 125/2.
4. 5 May 1832 and below p.109

Provision for the Destitute.

People unable to support themselves, with earnings or savings, were expected to have relatives or friends to provide for them. This did happen: Berendina Sertyn, who was nearly 70, 'very Sickly' and 'not able to gain a livelihood ...' lived 'on the charity of her relations ...'[1]; and a man called Nasky was supported in 'A Saver State of ill health this 2 years ...' by a 'Poore old woman' called Doortjie Sebastian till she became 'totaly unable to Sopart him any Longer ...'[2]. The Malay community in particular appears to have cared for its own people. Moslems have a responsibility to put money aside for destitute relatives[3]. It was suggested that some non-Malay adherents of Islam in Cape Town were 'pressed by poverty and allured by Mahometan benevolence, having been induced to join a community where they might secure aid and sympathy'[4]. People were not always able to turn to their families, however, either because they did not have one or it was not in a position to help. Peter O'Neil had 'no friends or relations ...' to help him when he was ill[5]. Cathryn, a 'free Bastard' had five children, two of them in service, but when she became ill none of them could help her and she was admitted to hospital free of charge[6].

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1. C.O. 3982 Item 104.
2. C.O. 3982 Item 125.
3. Du Plessis, I.D., and Luckhoff, C.A., The Malay Quarter and Its People, 1953, p. 69.
4. Mayson, J.S., The Malays of Cape Town, 1855, p. 11.
5. C.O. 3988 Item 97.
6. C.O. 3950 Item 124.

Sometimes employers were prepared to help their work people. The employer of a free black who had a leg and three ribs broken when the building in which he was working 'fell in' paid his Somerset hospital fees for a time[1]. The Surveyor-General recommended a government pension for the widow of the foreman of the Civil Engineer's department[2]; and the Collector of Tithes and Transfer Dues asked that a clerk who had been discharged because of ill-health after thirteen years' service should be admitted free to the Somerset hospital[3].

During the early 1830s, 'Private charity ..., nearly met the demands of misfortune, and even of want that has not innocence to plead in its behalf ...'[4] from those without families or contacts to help them. The Ladies Benevolent Society, for example, dispensed about £60.0s.0d. a year in the form of 'relief to Poor Widows, and Persons in indigent circumstances'[5] as well as bringing cases of hardship due to illness to the attention of the authorities[6]. Churches, too, provided financial and other help[7] and during the smallpox epidemic people contributed to a special fund 'for the relief of the Destitute Sick'[8]. The government, too, provided help

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1. C.O. 3977 Item 122.
2. C.O. 487 Item 94 - also above p.
3. C.O. 393 Item 45.
4. C.A. 8 July 1837.
5. Almanack 1833, p. 144.
6. See above pp 26 and 27
7. C.O. 451 Item 55 and C.O. 499 Item 115.
8. C.A. 13 June 1840.

for the poor in times of crisis; during the epidemics of 1839 and 1840 they organised free drugs and medical treatment for those in need and set up hospitals for those from over crowded and unventilated homes, although that was in the interests of public health as much as the sick poor[1]. Normally anyone ill enough to warrant admission to hospital and without the means to pay hospital fees could be admitted free of charge. The Resident Surgeon, Dr. Samuel Bailey, declared that he would 'never suffer any person to be sent from the Hospital Gates that are known or appear to me to be /an/ object of charity'[2] and he frequently admitted people free before obtaining the required approval from the Governor[3]. Those applying for such relief, however, were supposed to be deserving. The Somerset Hospital seems to have liked people admitted free to 'bear a good Character' or produce 'Certificates of Sobriety and Industry'[4].

Provision for the destitute was thus on an ad hoc basis and did not cover all circumstances. Reporting that 'Several Hottentots' had been found dead in the open outside Cape Town, the Advertiser suggested that 'some more accessible Hospital or place of refuge for the poor ...' be provided[5]. The Ladies

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1. Government Advertisements, 28 February 1839 (2) and 22 April 1840.
2. C.O. 427 Item 49.
3. For example he wrote about a free black needing immediate surgery who was 'admitted without charge, which I hope will meet with His Excellency's approval'. C.O. 427 Item 10.
4. C.O. 424 Item 99 and 3988 Item 97.
5. 27 June 1829; also 8 July 1837.

Benevolent Society asked that Mary Capp be allowed to stay in Somerset Hospital when cured, 'There being at present no other Asylum for the Destitute and Aged'[1]. But Dr. Bailey was running a hospital, not an asylum for the destitute. A year earlier, in 1833 he had recommended that 'an old blind Caffer woman', found 'helpless and destitute' in the street, should be cared for the in the House of Correction: 'I would without hesitation order her to the Hospital', he wrote, 'but am tenacious of establishing a precedent for its becoming a Poor House'[2]. The approach of the emancipation of the former slaves in 1838, and with it the ending of the owners' traditional responsibility for old or infirm slaves, high-lighted this problem. 'There is one class', remarked the Advertiser in 1837, 'on whom the Emancipation may bring unmerited distress ... namely the aged and infirm who may chance to have no relatives in the Colony. For such it may be proper in Government to make some arrangement ...'[3].

Unintentionally, a step had already been taken in that direction when the bulk of the government slaves had been freed in 1827; those too old, or otherwise unable to support themselves had remained - still technically slaves - in the Slave Lodge which was renamed 'the Hospital for Aged and

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1. C.O. 3968 Item 125/2.
2. C.O. 419 Item 6 and also C.O. 415 Item 57.
3. 20 December 1837.

Infirm Government Slaves and Apprentices'[1]. Further, some of the older slaves were manumitted on the understanding that they had the right to return to this hospital when they became too old or ill to support themselves[2]. To begin with, the authorities tried to prevent the Infirm Hospital becoming a refuge for the destitute. In 1830 re-admission was refused to one of their own former slaves, who had been left destitute, since 'The Government Slave Hospital was not established for the purpose of providing shelter or nourishment for those manumitted slaves who may be either unable or unwilling to procure employment'[3].

Final emancipation in December 1838 was followed almost immediately by the first outbreak of measles 'for upwards of Thirty years'[4]. The Infirm Hospital became a temporary measles hospital and when the epidemic died out inevitably there were people left over. An orphan aged five who was suffering from tuberculosis and so too 'delicate' to be apprenticed and a man who had lost the use of his hands and feet but whose wife could work in the Lodge, with their seven children, were allowed to stay[5]. A softening of official attitudes is indicated by the admission of a 'very sober

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1. C.O. 311 Item 75, 88 and C.O. 324 Item 12 Section B; also Almanack 1830, p. 182.
2. E.g. Maart, aged 60 and infirm, who was re-admitted on this understanding in 1832 - C.O. 407 Item 64.
3. Secretary of Government to the Director of the Government Slave Hospital, C.O. 4900 p. 153.
4. C.A. 3 April 1839.
5. C.O. 481 Item 63 and C.O. 4000 Item 100.

quiet worthy old creature', 'in capable of supporting herself and destitute of friends, whose husband ... (now dead) was a Government slave ...'[1]. Finally in June 1839 the infirm paupers in the Somerset Hospital were transferred to the 'Infirm Hospital', which was put under the supervision of the Somerset Hospital, renamed the 'Pauper Establishment' and opened to anyone whose admission as a pauper was approved by the government[2]. In this way the principle that 'free Paupers' who had paid Taxes were 'entitled to the Priviledges of support ...'[3] was put into practice.

Nevertheless it is likely that were possible people preferred not to turn to the government. Food and clothing provided in the Pauper Establishment were 'just enough and no more ...'[4] and the furnishings were absolutely basic - just white-washed wards containing beds. To begin with the paupers had nowhere to put their clothes, 'except among the bed clothes, which both litters the beds and creates vermin'[5] and cleanliness was a problem since 'The most of these people are extremely dirty and careless in their habits ...' in the opinion of the Director[6]. There were no extras; the Director's efforts to get an allowance per pauper for snuff and tobacco to encourage them to become 'more tolerable in

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1. C.O. 481 Item 63.
2. See correspondence of the Colonial Medical Committee etc. 1839 in C.O. 481, especially Item 66.
3. Observations of the Protector of Slaves, June - December 1830, in S.O. 3/20a.
4. C.O. 481 Item 94.
5. Ibid Item 84.
6. Ibid Item 94.

their habits' were met with a request from the Secretary to Government 'to cease any further representation on the ... subject'[1]. To prevent the paupers from begging or committing 'sundry nuisances' they were not allowed out of the gates without papers[2] and any pauper who really misbehaved could be discharged. Although the Director thought this 'too dreadful an alternative as the most of them /the paupers/ are debilitated in mind and body ...' it was the only punishment available to him and he was 'compelled' to use it 'to make an example ...'[3]. It sounds pretty joyless.

To help the poorer elements of the population avoid the Pauper Establishment, various bodies were set up during the 1830s to help them save or insure against misfortune. At the beginning of the decade the only friendly society listed in the Almanacks was the European Sick and Burial Society, which was as exclusive as its name suggests[4]. There were apparently no means for the coloured poor to make systematic provision for themselves in illness or old age, although they were expected to do so. But in 1831 the Cape of Good Hope Savings Bank was established[5] as a 'scheme for introducing Economy and Foresight among the Poor ...'. Small sums could be invested in it and so diverted from the 'Treasury of Vice ...'[6] and the poor had, for the first time, a secure place to deposit

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1. C.O. 481 Items 89 and 94.
2. C.O. 490 Item 74.
3. Ibid.
4. Almanack, 1830.
5. Ordinance No. 86, 1831.
6. C.A. 18 June 1831.

their savings. A second scheme was the establishment of a Mutual Society[1], an idea taken up by some of the churches. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church set up 'a Friendly or Benefit Society ... by which members subscribing one shilling per month are supplied with medical attention, medicines and burial', in connection with its mission to the coloured people[2]. Attempts were also made to help the poor to help themselves by setting up more schools[3]. By the 1840s, therefore, it was possible for working people who could afford it to save systematically and the Pauper Establishment provided a last resort for those who needed it - an improvement on the situation of 1829, when people were found dead in the street[4].

Slavery and Poverty.

It is difficult to consider the slaves separately from the rest of Cape Town's inhabitants. They comprised a significant proportion of the population - almost 32%[5] - and were closely integrated into the community in terms of occupation, residence and personal relationships[6]. Nevertheless the existence of slavery did have an effect on Cape Town's economy and the slaves themselves faced difficulties, particularly when freed, not experienced by others. An attempt will

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1. C.A. 19 June 1831.
2. St. Andrew's Church Letter Book - Summary of St. Andrew's Mission (no pagination.
3. See below pp. 129-131
4. C.A. 27 June 1829.
5. Calculation based on figures given in the Blue Book and Statistical Register, 1830 - see Appendix 3.
6. See below pp. 139-140

therefore be made to examine the relationship between poverty and slavery in Cape Town during the 1830s, though it will necessarily be brief.

Slavery, employment and wages. Slavery was a crucial feature in the employment structure of Cape Town. Effectively it lasted until December 1938, since the abolition of slavery in 1834 when the former slaves became 'apprentices' made no effective difference to their standing[1]. A third of Cape Town's population were slaves, but since all of them except the old and helpless and very young were expected to work, they would have composed a greater proportion of the work force.

The fact that under slavery people were compelled to work meant that there were people in the labour force who would not otherwise have been there. The labour shortage which followed final emancipation in 1838 indicates that slavery may have kept the labour supply unnaturally high and this would have been against the interests of other working people. On the other hand, slave labour was often wasteful. Owners used slave labour inefficiently and the slaves themselves did not work as well under compulsion as they would in their own interests[2].

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1. They could still be hired out, inherited or sold and their conditions of work were precisely the same - Hengher, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' pp. 46-47 and Edwards, I.E., Towards Emancipation - a study in South African slavery, 1942, p. 178.
2. Krauss, F., 'A description of Cape Town ...', Part 2, in the South African Library Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 48; Bird, W., State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822, p. 80; Minutes of Evidence taken before Council, 6 December 1826 in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 29, p. 426.

There were advantages to the employers of slave labour, even so. A change which seems to have resulted from emancipation was the more frequent payment of wages. The police department was one body which hired large numbers of slaves from their owners for whem they paid at two monthly intervals. In 1838 the Superintendant wrote that 'Hitherto (the greater part of these /Town/ labourers being apprentices) the Masters could afford to wait for the money - but a free man, who has to provide for his own support, cannot afford to engage himself unless his wages are paid, at least, once a month ...'[1]; the next year weekly payment was made[2]. This suggests the possibility that large scale employers used slaves for the convenience of being able to pay for their services in bulk at less frequent intervals and perhaps also because they felt assured of a more reliable work force than if they had individuals who had some choice as to whether to work or not.

Whether slave labour was any cheaper than free is not clear. Slaves who were hired out by their owners and provided for by them might have been because they did not depend on their earnings for their livelihood[3]. But slaves living apart from their owners and paying 'hire money' would have been at a disadvantage compared with the free. To provide themselves with lodging and food, if not clothing,

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1. C.O. 473 Item 78.
2. C.O. 478 Item 3.
3. Minutes of Evidence ... in Theal, R.C.C. vol. 29, pp. 457-8.

and also pay hire money to their owners they needed to earn substantial sums. Some slaves were paying £2.4s.0d. to £4.10s.0d. a month in hire money and being paid from £5.8s.0d. themselves so that they were parting with at least 40% of their income and were left with about £3.0s.0d. a month to live on[1]. These seem to have been skilled men but many slaves living apart from their owners were not and some of the lower paid struggled to continue payment of their hire money[2]. Such payments must have seriously undermined the ability of these slaves to lower their wage demands when work was scarce and they cannot have constituted a source of cheap labour. In the Advertiser's opinion, slavery and the consequent mis-use of labour[3] was, along with high wages and the lack of free skilled workers, part of the whole labour problem[4] which existed in Cape Town[5].

In the case of slaves' occupations, as with those of the free, the available sources are not complete. The Slave Registers contain a column for the slaves' occupations but it is often not filled in; also, the series of registers for Cape Town and district is not complete and there seem to be some omissions in the registers there are[6]. An attempt at a

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1. Minutes of Evidence ... in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 29, p 462.
2. S.O. 3/6 Item 8, 3/9 Item 287 and 3/13 Item 654.
3. C.A. 23 January 1830.
4. From the employers' point of view.
5. C.A. 10 August 1831.
6. E.g. the name of John Saunders does not appear although there is evidence that he was a slave owner - S.O. 6/11 and 3/7 Item 78.

complete breakdown of the occupations of slaves would therefore be liable to error and is in any case beyond the scope of this work. Some generalisations can, nevertheless, be made.

The difference between slaves and free people - apart from the white professional classes and merchants - seems to have been of degree rather than kind. Many of the slaves whose occupations are listed in the registers were domestic servants of one kind or another, but there were free black and even European servants too[1]. There are also many skilled occupations listed; as with the coloured people, the skilled slaves are generally tailors, masons or shoemakers. It may be that the proportion of the slave population who were skilled was greater than that of the 'free blacks' since slave owners were more likely to be able to pay for training for their slaves than coloured parents for their children[2], and would be enhancing the value of their slave if they did. This, combined with the Dutch dislike of trades[3] might explain why slaves assumed 'a practical monopoly of most of the skilled trades ...' following emancipation[4]. A few slaves were trained craftsmen; for example Africa, who belonged to

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1. C.A. 5 August and 16 December 1829 and 12 January 1831 - Advertisement.
2. See above p.9
3. Hemming, J., 'Communication', dated 1848, in A Brief Account of Some of the Survey Operations Undertaken at Cape of Good Hope, p. 38.
4. Patterson, S., Colour and Culture in South Africa, 1953 p. 66.

J. Combrink, a silversmith[1], was himself a silversmith and worked on his own account[2] and there were also some blacksmiths and coopers.

Much less frequent were slave shop keepers, although slaves were used as shop assistants[3] and hawkers[4]. The 'old Colonial Laws' had forbidden slaves to have their own shops, but in 1827 an owner applied for a retail licence for a slave[5] and it was established that if the licence was taken out in the owner's name a slave could keep a shop[6]. It seems, however, that very few slaves did become retailers, only two are listed in the 'Free Blacks etc.' section of the 1836 street directory[7].

Many of the slaves in the registers are listed as labourers and coolies. Both were unskilled but the coolies, by the nature of their job, would have worked independently of their owners. Slave labourers were employed along with Europeans and free blacks[8]. Often jobs were advertised for labourers or servants, which were available to free people or

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1. Almanack, 1830, p. 289.
2. Almanack, 1836, p. 105; S.O. 3/12 Item 578.
3. Hattersley, A.F., Illustrated Social History of South Africa, p. 97 and S.O. 3/10 Item 321.
4. S.O. 3/6 Item 45.
5. C.O. 301 Item 38.
6. C.O. 4891 p. 84.
7. This section did include some apprentices, including 'Africa of Mr. Combrink' on p. 105 - Almanack, p. 108 and 110.
8. Minutes of Evidence ... in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 29, p. 460 and C.A. 2 March 1831 - Advertisement.

slaves[1] which indicates that there was considerable overlapping between unskilled slaves and the free. Overall, therefore, the work done by the slaves was the same as that done by free people and members of the two groups seem often to have worked together and been used as alternatives to each other.

There was one important difference, however: the problem of un- or under-employment did not concern the slaves in the same way as it did the free. They were bound to be maintained by their owners, even if they 'did not over-reach' themselves[2]. Those living apart from their owners and taking up hire money were more directly concerned, but even they could have the right to receive clothing and food[3] and if desperate could return to their owners. (This held true until 1838). The free blacks had no such safety net. If they could not earn sufficient to fee themselves and their families, they had to 'go with Empty Stomachs'[4].

Poverty among former slaves. Analysis of the returns of the Pauper Establishment for 1840 provides some indication of what group, then, was most liable to suffer extreme poverty. The graph on Sheet B shows that the great majority of inmates of the Pauper Establishment were former slaves;

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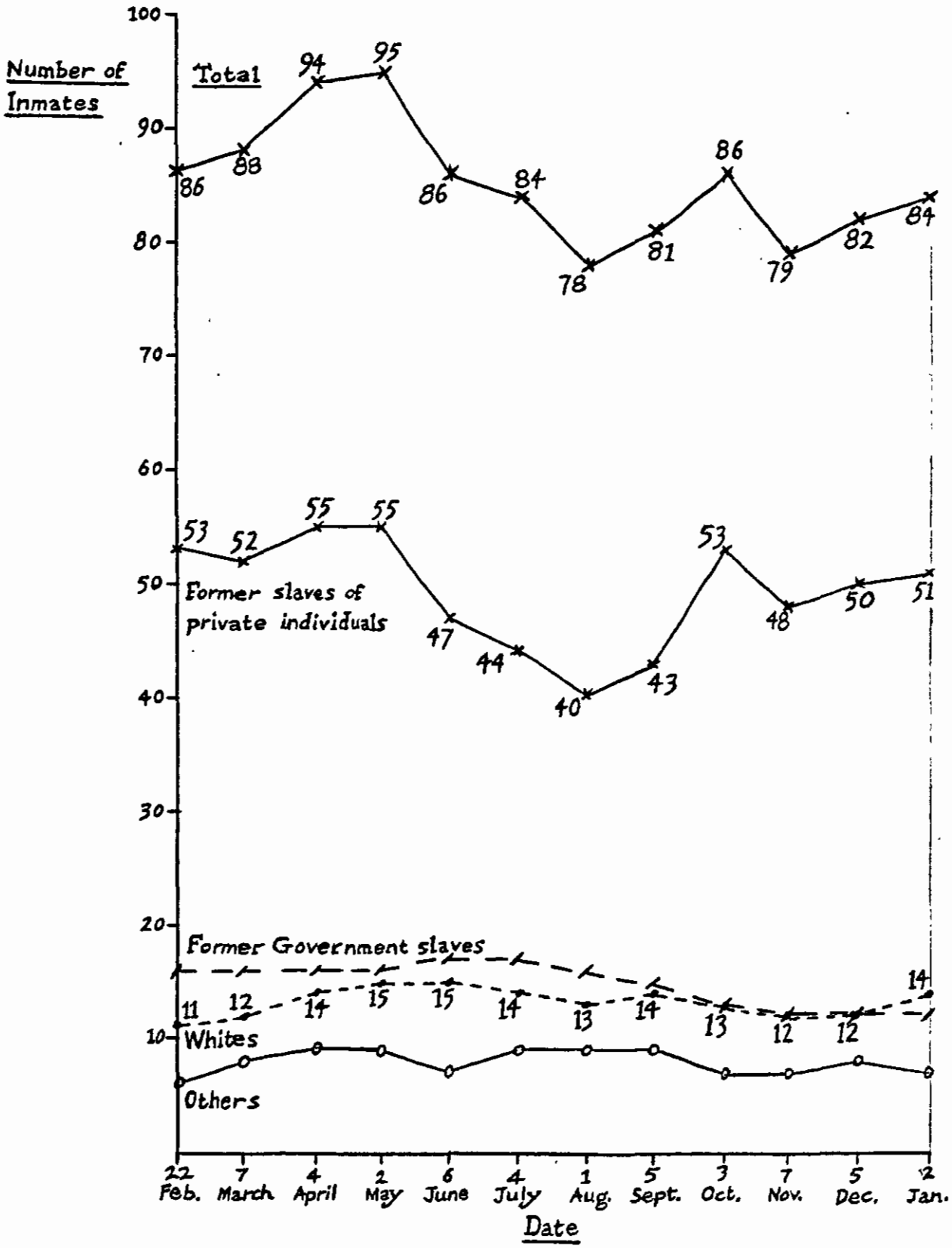
1. Eg. C.A. 13 April, 4 June, 23 July 1831.
2. Krauss, F., 'A description of Cape Town', part 2 in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, vol. 2, p. 48.
3. S.O. 3/8 Item 2/7 and 3/10 Items 383 and 409.
4. C.O. 3970 Item 38.

SHEET B

Graph to show the numbers and types of people in the Pauper Establishment[1].



There were on average 62 male and 24 female inmates.

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1. C.O. 490 Item 158

also that there were significantly more males than females among them. In contrast, there are very few free blacks (who came into the category 'other'): fewer, in fact, than the whites. This suggests that although they were protected from destitution while enslaved, the slaves were much more likely to suffer hardship and have no resources or relatives to fall back on than others once they were free. One must examine possible reasons for this.

A particular difficulty faced by slaves which affected them when free was that of accumulating savings. Slaves could earn money by working for themselves on Sundays[1]; those allowed to work for themselves obviously did earn, but their ability to save must often have been undermined by having to pay hire money. In either case the sums involved must generally have been small. Moreover, although the desirability of emancipation was discussed much earlier[2], it was not until 1833 that it became definite[3] and a date was set[4]. The apprentices had no more opportunity to save money than they had had as slaves[5], although they perhaps had more incentive; and so many of those freed on 1 December 1838 can have had very little to fall back on in time of need, and only three months later the measles epidemic broke out[6].

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1. S.O. 3/20a - Observations December 1830 - June 1831.
2. Eg. in Bird, W., The State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822, Section V, esp. p. 78.
3. C.A. 4 September 1833.
4. C.A. 1 January 1834.
5. See above p. 39 note 1
6. Government Advertisements, 28 February 1839.

There is evidence of some slaves who managed to save - they are the ones who bought their freedom or that of relatives. A touching example is that of the old man who was advised to bid for himself at the public auction following his owner's death, 'as it was not likely that any person would bid against him ...', and so bought himself for 20 rixdollars (about £1.10s. but it was not usually so simple. In some cases slaves were bought so that they should work towards buying their freedom[2]; other cases involved raising loans and finding sureties and slaves were often freed on condition that they paid for themselves by installments, a process which could take years[3]. Even when a slave was bought by relatives who were free there could be problems over raising the money and repayments might take years[4]. Raising and repaying this money does seem to have been difficult[5]; the Commission of Enquiry stated that 'the Opportunities of acquiring the means of purchasing their freedom are not frequent amongst the slaves at the Cape ...'[6]. Very few slaves or their families seem to have

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1. S.O. 3/10 Item 384.
2. Egs. S.O. 3/9 Item 283 and 3/10 Item 373.
3. Egs. S.O. 3/8 Items 2/9 and 234.
4. Eg. a 'free black' bought his wife and four children for 3,000 rixdollars - 1700 in cash and 700 he was loaned, to be repaid by instalments, with a surety for the remaining 600 - a total of £225.0s.0d. - S.O. 3/7 Item 96; other examples S.O. 3/7 Items 97 and 191; 3/10 Item 328.
5. Egs. S.O. 3/9 Item 284 and 3/10 Item 341.
6. 'Report upon the Slaves and State of Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope', 1831, in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 362.

bought their freedom[1] and those who did had either used their savings to do so, committed themselves to long term repayments, or both. This must have undermined the ability of such people to provide for themselves in case of misfortune.

The fact that more male than female former slaves had to turn to the authorities may be due to the type of relationship which existed among slaves because of slavery. As late as 1822 slaves were not allowed to marry[2] and after marriage was allowed, married slaves were not automatically allowed to live together and might indeed live far apart[3]. Many slaves simply 'co-habited'[4] and were apparently quite prepared to change partners when circumstances required[5]; the death notices contain a noticeable number of people who apparently had only one parent - an unmarried slave woman - or were themselves unmarried mothers[6]. The result of this may have been that fathers were much less likely than mothers to retain contact with their children and so could not turn to them in distress. Overall it seems likely that whether they were freed through manumission or the general emancipation of 1838, former slaves were particularly vulnerable to misfortune especially in the period just after they became free .

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1. In 1831 and 1832 a total of about 80 slaves were freed in this way through the Protector of Slaves - a few more may have made their own agreements with their owners - this represents less than 1% of Cape Town's slave population - S.O. 3/7-3/10 and Population Table, Appendix 3.
2. Bird, W., The State of the Cape of Good Hope ..., p. 74.
3. Eg. the wife of Maart, a Cape Town slave, lived in Paarl - S.O. 3/10 Item 412.
4. There are numerous examples in the Slave Office records.
5. Bird, W., op. cit. pp. 74-5.
6. See for examples M.O.OC. 6/9/21 for 1840.

Secondary Poverty during the 1830s.

'Secondary poverty' was identified by Charles Booth in the 1880s[1] although it was Seebohm Rowntree who first used the term[2]. It is poverty which results when a family's income is sufficient to provide basic requirements but is mismanaged so that money is diverted from essentials to non-necessities, leaving less than the required minimum[3].

The primary direction in which working people's money was diverted in Cape Town in the 1830s was that of drink. There is abundant evidence of this in the press, contemporary travellers' accounts and the Colonial Office records. One of Cape Town's doctors stated that "There were hundreds of tipplers in this town, who would take offence at being called drunkards; who began with their soopie in the morning - took wine at breakfast, wine at dinner, wine at supper, and then their soopie again' and suggested that there were some people who were continually not quite sober[4]. Travellers were appalled by what they saw of the problem. 'I had ever thought that drunkenness had in India reached the summit of its destructiveness,' wrote one, 'but I had yet to see a still more awful display of its alarming, lamentable,and debasing effects as exhibited in South Africa.'[5] Another wrote that

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1. Hennock, E.P., 'Poverty and Social Theory in England ...' in Social History No. 1, 1976, pp. 82-3.
2. Abrams, M., Social Surveys and Social Action, p. 42.
3. Ibid.
4. C.A. 14 December 1831 - report of the meeting to establish a Temperance Society.
5. Fawcett, J., Account of an eighteen months residence at the Cape of Good Hope in 1835-6, p. 8.

'few places are more destructive to the lower classes /than Cape Town/, from the cheapness of wine and brandy'[1]. A diarist noted that 'we see grogshops in every street and staggering drunkards daily meet our eyes ...'[2]

Among the reasons for this were the cheapness and availability of alcohol. The Commissioners of Enquiry stated that 'the free labourers and slaves' indulged in the 'excessive use' of alcohol, 'partly from the bad regulation of the canteens, and partly from the cheapness of wine and spirits'[3]. In 1830 the Advertiser pointed out 'The cheapness of spirituous liquors, and the grossly deleterious qualities of those which are vended at many of the retail wine house ...' as a cause for public concern[4]. Attempts to limit the hours during which alcohol could be sold and to prevent Sunday drinking[5], (which had led to 'just and frequent complaint' resulting from the 'riots and drunkenness of slaves and Hottentots in the streets ...' because of 'the practice of keeping open canteens during all hours excepting those appointed for Divine Service ...'[6]) were frustrated by the

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1. Alexander, J.E., An expedition of discovery into the interior of Africa, 1838, vol. I, p. 7.
2. Champion, G., The Journal of an American Missionary in the Cape Colony, 1835, p. 7.
3. 'Report ... upon the Police at the Cape of Good Hope', 1827, in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 140.
4. C.A. 21 August 1830.
5. Proscribed by Ordinance 93 of 1832.
6. Report on the Police in Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 136.

existence of innumerable 'smuggling houses', where people could buy drink at any time, and the willingness of publicans to sell drink out of hours[1]. The type of alcohol so freely consumed exacerbated the problem - ale and beer were relatively expensive, wine and Cape Brandy relatively cheap, so that poor people were drinking spirits at 3d. a half pint[2]. A suggested solution therefore was to increase the prices of wine and brandy and encourage people to drink beer instead and to subject licenced premises to strict police surveillance[3].

The Commissioners of Enquiry referred specifically to drunkenness among Hottentots and slaves, but excessive drinking was by no means exclusive to them, although it was prevalent among them[4]. In 1830 one European man was tried for killing another while both were drunk; a third, one of the witnesses, was found to be drunk at the trial and had to be sobered up before he could give evidence - which was to the effect that he had been present at the time of the murder, but drunk! The Advertiser commented:

> 'It has become too common to descant on the depraved manners of the Hottentot and coloured population, and the crimes of slaves; but these unfortunate men furnish an example of well-trained, and in some instances of well-educated Europeans, sinking ... below the level of the unreclaimed and most neglected of the Natives.'[5]

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1. C.A. 29 October 1829; 2 and 5 October 1833 (letters); 18 February 1835 (letter).
2. C.A. 27 June 1832 (letter); Z.A. 18 November 1831 (report of the Davy trial.
3. C.A. 8 September 1830 (letter).
4. The Slave Office records contain numerous cases of drunkenness among slaves; J.W.D. Moodie, who sympathised with the Hottentots, stated that they were 'very much addicted' to drinking - Ten Years in South Africa, 1835, p. 219.
5. 25 August 1830.

European immigrants appeared to be particularly susceptible to cheap spirits. '... many of the less prudent ...' among a group of Irish labourers brought to the Cape in 1823 were said in 1829 to have 'died of Cape Brandy'[1]. A visitor wrote that 'The Cape wines and brandies are so attractive to the generality of mechanics, that not one in twenty can resist their seductive influence. Clever artisans exist a few years in a state of constant and wearying exceitement from liquor, and are then transferred from the hospital to the churchyard ...'[2] A man who spent several years at the Cape stated that in most cases the English mechanic found himself 'on a downward course ... in which he goes on spell bound, until madness, or a violent death ... closes his career, and the best he has to hope for is a pauper's grave' as a result of starting to drink wine or Cape Brandy. 'I do not think I have exaggerated', he added[3]. Excessive drinking was not confined to men either. 'Two incorrigible drunkards' were 'Abigail Diamond and Hannah'[4]. Mrs. Diamond was often convicted for drunkenness[5] and the Superintendant of Police asserted that he had 'incontestable proof ... to what extent of depravity many of the Hottentot women are reduced from excessive drinking'[6].

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1. C.A. 19 December 1829.
2. Alexander, J.E., An expedition of discovery ..., vol. p. 286.
3. Hemming, J., A communication in A Brief Account of Some Survey Operations ..., p. 39.
4. C.A. 10 July 1833.
5. See Appendix 2.
6. C.O. 342 Item 18.

So serious was the problem considered to be that in 1831 an attempt was made to establish a Temperance Society in Cape Town. Dr. Bailey of the Somerset Hospital was among those who addressed the first meeting[1] and John Fairbairn, editor of the Commercial Advertiser, was one of the Society's leaders. Members pledged to abstain from drinking spirits, convinced that unless they set such an example, they would 'not be held guiltless of the dreadful effects of Intoxication'[2]. This was 'a considerable sacrifice' for those members who made 'a temperate use' of spirits, since it required them 'to break a habit which in them had nothing of evil in it'[3]. The Society made little if any progress, however and was by 1835 nothing more than a name[4].

There are indications of a contemporary belief that money *was* diverted from necessities to drink by those who could ill afford it. The Advertiser enthused over a proposal that butchers' shops should stay open late on Saturday evenings because 'the labouring classes who receive their wages at that time will be enabled to make their purchases for the next day - and considerable sums will thus be beneficially arrested on their way to the Brandy shops'[5]. Dr. Bailey confirmed the claim of a 'very poor woman' that

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1. C.A. 14 December 1831.
2. C.O. 385 Item 27.
3. C.A. 19 November 1831.
4. Champion, G., Journal, p. 19.
5. C.A. 22 July 1837.

her husband 'does not give her any money or support her in any way, but spends his wages in drinking'[1]. Evidence given at the Davy trial showed that although Mrs. Davy had told her husband she 'had no means' of obtaining his dinner, she gave him 3d. to buy brandy[2].

It seems clear, therefore, that many people tended to drink to excess - Moodie claimed that 'few of the working people escape falling into this ruinous habit'[3]. Quantification is impossible, but it is likely that secondary poverty did result on a wide scale from the diversion of money from essentials to drink.

Conclusions.

In 1840 the Advertiser claimed that 'destitution is rare, and can be traced in almost every instance to the visitation of Providence ...'[4]. This appears to be true: at no time during 1840 did the number of people in the Pauper Establishment reach 100 and the total number of people passing through it was about 170 - less than 1% of Cape Town's total population[5]. The memorials in the Colonial office volumes[6], which are the most fruitful source of detail about individual cases,

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1. C.O. 3973 Item 14.
2. Z.A. 18 November 1831.
3. Ten Years in South Africa, p. 53.
4. C.A. 23 May 1840.
5. Calculated from the Returns of the Pauper Establishment 1840, C.O. 490 Item 158 and the Population Table, Appendix 3.
6. Use has been made of Nos. 3942-4007.

contain almost no instances of hardship not related to accident, illness, insanity or death.

One must, however, bear several points in mind. Firstly, not all cases of destitution were dealt with by the Pauper Establishment - relatives, friends or charitable bodies coped with many people not able to care for themselves[1]. Also, very little official sympathy was forthcoming for those who were not 'a fit object' (of charity)[2]. People were therefore unlikely to send memorials to the governor unless they felt they had acceptable grounds for asking relief; and such grounds would have been illness or accident, not unemployment or the inability to earn enough money. They also had to be in a position to write to the governor themselves[3] or to pay someone to write a memorial for them[4] and to be aware of the sort of help for which they could ask. The memorials are hence not likely to reflect all the possible reasons for hardship in Cape Town.

A further point is that contemporaries did not distinguish

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1. C.A. 20 March 1841.
2. C.O. 481 Item 88. The Director of the Pauper Establishment requested authority to discharge a woman and her children because she had brought them up 'in lewd, vicious habits ...' and they were, 'by no means, objects'; 'they surely are of some sort or other', scribbled the Secretary to Government! Ibid Item 86.
3. As did Doortjie Sebastian - C.O. 3982 Item 125.
4. C.O. 4006 Item 82.

clearly between poverty and destitution and had no definition of poverty. Frequent contradictions in the Advertiser's comments are an example of this. It could write of 'the great body of the fixed inhabitants - we mean the poor - of Cape Town' on one occasion and assert that 'we have no able bodied poor' on another[1]. It could claim that if 'the labouring poor ... ever fast, it must be, like Falstaff "immediately after dinner",' between saying that 'The poor of Cape Town are poor indeed!' and describing 'A crowded population' feeding on a 'coarse and poor diet ...'[2]. Examination of the relationship between wages and costs as well as other evidence suggests that there were probably many families - labourers, coolies and fishermen are three large categories which would have included some of them - whose incomes were barely sufficient for their needs or were not sufficient.

Relating the occupational structure of Cape Town to wages suggests that many people at the bottom levels were coloured and there is other evidence which supports this . It seems also that freed slaves were particularly vulnerable. But the poor were not exclusively coloured - there were unskilled Europeans whose earnings were low and who in times

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1. C.A. 23 May 1840 and 20 March 1841.
2. C.A. 1 January 1840, 6 April 1839 and 27 May 1840.

of difficulty became destitute. There is also evidence that poverty was more extensive than it might have been because many people spent money they could not afford on alcohol - this must have impaired their earning power as well as absorbing their wages.

Charles Booth described 'the poor' of his survey in the 1880s as follows:

> 'Though they would be much the better for more of everything [they] are not 'in want'. They are neither ill-nourished nor ill clad, according to any standard that can reasonably be used. Their lives are an unending struggle and lack comfort.'[1]

How far this description fits the poor of Cape Town in the 1830s is difficult to ascertain, but the rather contradictory evidence suggests that it might be reasonable.

1. Quoted by E.P. Hennock in 'Poverty and Social Theory in England ...' in Social History, No. 1, p. 73.

Section 2 - Living Conditions and the Implications of Poverty in Cape Town during the 1830s

'A very ancient and fish-like smell'
(Shakespeare, The Tempest)

Section I was intended to establish the existence of poverty in Cape Town in the 1830s and to indicate what sort of people were likely to be poor, by establishing a standard of minimum family expenditure and examining those whose incomes failed to meet it. This section attempts to show what the conditions of life were like in Cape Town, not just for those who fell below the 'poverty line', but for the population as a whole, and especially for the mass of 'the poor' - those who were 'neither ill-nourished nor ill clad ...' but who lacked 'comfort'[1]. It is intended to go beyond definitions and examine the implications of poverty at that time.

PART I: Sanitary Conditions and Health in Cape Town during the 1830s.

Living Conditions.

An inescapable fact of life in Cape Town throughout the 1830s and early 1840s was that the town was, generally and consistently, filthy.

In the days of the Burgher Senate town cleaning seems to have been haphazard. In December 1826 the Superintendant of Police found the town 'so extremely dirty that I call'd upon the Burgher Senate to point out to them the absolute necessity of having it thoroughly cleansed ...'[2]. In 1827

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1. See above, *Introduction p. iii*
2. C.O. 301 Item 1.

the Medical Committee observed 'many of the Ditches about the Town to be in a very dirty state ...' and a 'large deposit of filth and dirt which seems to have been forming for a long time and is very likely to be a source of disease' [1]. The Commissioners of Enquiry recommended that these 'ditches' be filled as 'Their State in dry weather is such as to create reasonable suspicions of their insalubrity'[2].

On the dissolution of the Burgher Senate in 1827[3] the Superintendant of Police took over responsibility for providing facilities for the removal of 'Dust, Ashes, Soil, and Filth'. But the public too bore a measure of responsibility - 'all private Avenues, Passages, Yards and Ways' were supposed to be 'kept clean by the Proprietors or Occupiers thereof, so as not to become a public nuisance ...' and people were forbidden to 'cast any Filth, Soil, Earth, or Rubbish ...' into the streets or canals, the penalty being a fine of up to £5.0s.0d.[4].

The evil persisted despite these changes. In January 1829 the Superintendant of Police protested about 'The serious nuisance produced by filth tubs belonging to the Great Barracks being emptied into a gutter communicating with the Ditch round Caledon Square ...' causing 'a serious nuisance to this quarter of the town'[5]. A correspondent to the Advertiser wrote in

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1. C.O. 322 Item 27.
2. 'Report' in Theal R.C.C. Vol. 35 p. 194.
3. Ordinance 34, 1827.
4. Ordinance 48, 1828, pp. 7-8.
5. C.O. 368 Item 2.

1832 that 'The present state of the streets in Cape Town is abominable ...'[1] and an editorial suggested the need to clear up the town, adding that 'The Musquitoes have ... been preaching purification to the dwellers near the ditches during the whole summer ...'[2].

The Shambles, those 'receptacles of nastiness'[3], were a particular problem. The butchers disposed of unwanted offal etc. by throwing it out of the back door into the sea at high tide, but when the tide dropped this refuse was washed onto the shore. This resulted in an accumulation of 'filth and refuse' which was 'offensive'. The problem was aggravated by the fact that 'a great deal of the refuse of the slaughter was bought by the poor, who selected what they wanted from it and dumped the remains - 'quite filth enough ... to cause a serious nuisance during hot weather'[4].

According to a correspondent to the Zuid Afrikaan filth was widespread throughout Cape Town:

> 'That there is not some pestiltential or malignant fever in the Town, must certainly be owing to causes as yet unexplained; for the filth which pervades many parts, and the nuisances to be found in others, whether from putrid skins, or dead whales, or tanners pits and last not least, the fish market, are quite sufficient to bring on disease, or certainly to prevent it being stopped ...'[5].

A letter to the Advertiser in 1834 complained of piles of

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1. C.A. 24 March.
2. C.A. 17 March 1832.
3. Z.A. 28 February 1834 (letter).
4. C.O. 3961 Item 79.
5. Z.A. 28 February 1834.

rubbish, 'consisting of dead cats, rats, and filth of other descriptions, which a person so constantly passes in his peregrinations about town'[1]. One such 'receptacle of rubbish' on plots of vacant land was complained of in 1836 by people living in the area of the Buitenkant and Roeland Street[2]. In 1837 the inhabitants of the Heerengracht and Wale Street complained that the 'extreme offensiveness' of the canal had reached a point, 'beyond which forbearance can no longer endure'[3]; and the Superintendant of Police wrote that the state of the town was a 'perpetual source of vexation' to him but he could do nothing about it. He complained that the regulations of Ordinance 48 were ineffectual in preventing people from 'casting filth' into the streets and canals 'whenever a favourable opportunity offers by day or night' because no one would inform against offenders. In cases where houses were 'inhabited by various families' prosecution was even more difficult because of the problem of picking out the culprit. Also, 'heaps of filth' were 'rendered a still greater nuisance by the impossibility of preventing Poultry from being at large, owing to the difficulty of catching them for the purpose of being impounded ...'. The Shambles remained 'a very serious nuisance to this Town ...'; overall, 'more effectual regulations ...' were the only way to preserve 'the cleanliness of the Town ...'[4].

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1. C.A. 13 September.
2. In the same area as the pile of filth observed by the Medical Committee in 1827 - C.O. 3985 Item 25.
3. C.O. 3992 Item 128.
4. C.O. 462 Item 39.

In 1839 the sections of Ordinance 48 'applicable to the preservation of due order and cleanliness in the Streets, etc., in Cape Town ...' were republished as a Government Advertisement since many of the provisions were 'being disregarded ...'[1]. The outbreak of measles in that year give new impetus to concern about the state of the town[2] and to attempts to improve it[3]. Much more extensive concern followed the revelation of a smallpox epidemic in 1840. The Advertiser described the poorer areas, with their 'filth, crowding, and suffering' as 'a magazine of death in which the torch is always smouldering ...'[4]. It wrote of:

> 'the filthy state of the town ... /with/ The stench of the public ditches, public streets and alleys; - of the heap of horrors on the beach behind Strand street; of the carcases of dead animals on the grounds near the Amsterdam Battery, and elsewhere, /which/ deadens the sense of smell or reconciles it to the effluvia of what is pernicious to health.'[5]

A public meeting was held at which it was stated that the regulations about street cleaning were 'neglected and confused' and that 'the Streets, the common sewers, the fish and vegetable markets, the butchers' shambles bear most distressing marks of gross neglect'. Moreover, 'There is a refuse of pestilential filth at almost every door in Cape Town, and fish, dead dogs, cats, dead rats and poultry are suffered to remain and impregnate the air with their putridity', while the ditches 'are a most intolerable nuisances (sic)'. The meeting

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1. Government Advertisement 7 January 1839.
2. E.g. C.A. 6 April 1839.
3. E.g. C.O. 483 Item 14.
4. C.A. 15 April 1840.
5. C.A. 6 May 1840.

attributed these ills in part to the fact that street cleaning was done by convicts 'who may have leisure from other work', agreeing that it should be carried out daily and that convict labour was inadequate for the task[1].

Not even the ravages of smallpox made a lasting impact - it was hardly over when, in November 1840, there were again 'offensive proofs' that the town was 'unclean'[2]. This was despite a massive cleaning-up operation undertaken to combat smallpox and enforced by government proclamation[3], during which labourers were hired to remove nuisances and clean streets[4]. In 1840 the newly formed Cape Town Municipality took over control of the town and were empowered to draw up new regulations for 'preventing and abating public nuisances ...'[5]. These were more detailed than those of Ordinance 48 but the aims were the same: to prevent people throwing rubbish of various sorts into streets and waterways and to oblige them to keep their own premises clean[6]. Nevertheless the Advertiser was driven to announce in 1841 that 'Many of the Streets are fortunately no longer endurable - a change is therefore at hand as things are clearly at the worst ...'[7].

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1. Report of a Public Meeting in Z.A. 1 May 1840. It seems possible that convict labour was less likely to 'have leisure' in the summer than at other times because it was mainly used for road maintenance which was done then. C.O. 419 Item 45.
2. C.A. 14 November 1840.
3. Dated 29 April 1840.
4. C.O. 493 Items 27 and 39.
5. Ordinance I, 1840, p. 5.
6. Regulations of the Municipality of Cape Town - Almanack, 1842, p. 166.
7. C.A. 14 April 1841.

Complaints were now made to the Municipality, but they continued - in 1842 they included one about the 'abominable state' of the Heerengracht ditch and another of a heap of rubbish near Stal Plein with an 'offensive smell' which had been 'lying there now upwards of 2 years'[1]. Things had not changed.

Although Cape Town as a whole was dirty, matters were particularly bad in the poorer areas, as the reports of the Special Wardmasters, appointed to examine the town in 1840, show. One report stated that 'the streets generally, but in particular the lanes or "steegs" /were/ in a very neglected and dirty state' and these were where the poor lived[2].

One reason identified by contemporaries for the generally filthy conditions was the lack of an adequate water supply. In his report, The Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population, (1842), Sir Edwin Chadwick devoted a whole section to supplies of water, pointing out that habits of cleanliness depended to a significant extent on the convenience or otherwise of obtaining water for cleaning. The members of a poorer family who were 'of strength to fetch water are usually of strength to be employed in profitable industry ...', he wrote, and it was 'a serious inconvenience, as well as discomfort ...' for working people to have to fetch water, especially in bad weather[3]. People would be reluctant to use more than necessary because of the effort involved in fetching more and

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1. I/C.T. 1/1/5/5 Items 233 and 157.
2. C.O. 490, Item 159, especially Reports for Wards 2 and 8.
3. Chadwick, E., Report, 1842, pp. 141-2.

so water brought from a pump in a bucket would be left to stand and stagnate[1]. The same truth was recognised in Cape Town in 1840, when the Special Wardmasters stated that the lack of adequate water supplies contributed to the generally dirty conditions in which so many people lived[2].

In the early 1830s domestic water requirements were supposed to be met by water collected from public fountains, or the pumps that were gradually replacing them to prevent waste[3] - there were about 63 'dispersed over the town'[4] - but these were not convenient to everyone. In 1832, applications for fountains or pumps were received from the inhabitants of the lower end of Bree Street, those in the area of Rose Street and property owners in Sir Lowry Road, all on the grounds of distance from the nearest existing pump[5]. The Superintendant of Waterworks was anxious to minimise expenditure and so such applications were sometimes met by taking a pump from one place to erect it in another[6]; the inhabitants of Sir Lowry Road had to wait until 1840 before getting their pump, previous applications being turned down because there were not enough houses to justify the expense[7].

The Waterworks Department was also anxious to avoid any waste of water which could give rise to inconvenience to the public. The Department complained about people opening the

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1. Finer, S.E., Sir Edwin Chadwick, 1952, p. 219.
2. C.O. 490 Item 159, especially reports for Wards I and 8.
3. C.O. 425 Item 231.
4. Webster, W.H.B., Narrative of a Voyage to the Southern Atlantic Ocean ..., Vol. 2, p. 244.
5. C.O. 3955 Items 86, 143 and 146.
6. E.g. C.O. 445 Item 30.
7. C.O. 3969 Item 74 and 3994 Item 6; C.O. 487 Item 204.

pumps to fill small containers because of the wastage although obviously a bottle was lighter to carry than a bucket[1]. There was a regulation that 'small vessels' used to collect water should be broken, but the Chairman of the Water Committee thought that this 'if put into execution, wd ... be attended with much inconvenience to the poorer (?) Class of people ...'[2]; when the police did break people's bottle it was 'always attended by gross abuse, squabbling, and Assaults may be the consequence'[3]. In 1837, the Superintendant of Waterworks had the pump in Rose Street closed because he thought water was being wasted; the 'poor Persons' living in the area thought this 'v. hard'[4] and an investigating sub-committee recommended that it should be re-opened because the area was 'a populous part of the Town'[5].

For the sake of convenience people washed 'fish and Cloaths' at the pumps although this was against the regulations of Ordinance 48 of 1828. (The Superintendant thought that they should 'carry the Water in Pails to their Houses when required for this purpose'[6].) They also washed 'their persons', linen, scrubbed and scoured their kitchen utensils and emptied coffee grounds and tea leaves; they cleaned meat as well as fish, mason's pails and even 'the soil tub'. On top of this carts

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1. C.O. 456 Item 14.
2. Ibid.
3. C.O. 467 Item 55.
4. C.O. 3992 Item 115.
5. C.O. 456 Item 29.
6. C.O. 467 Item 55.

took water from the pumps for brick making and building, and sometimes two or three carts were waiting for water. The pumps were the scenes of drunkenness, 'indecent conduct, and obscene language' and the disturbance was often 'like the confusion of Babel'[1]. The pumps obviously attracted large numbers of people. They were said to be a 'continual resort of servants'[2] and an 'unfortunate Householder complained of the 'large collection of individuals ... assembled during the greater part of the day at these pumps ...' and the 'disgusting behaviour, profane language, quarrelling, and actual fighting, which are the constant consequences ...'[3]. A Cape Town resident described the pump in Wale Street 'at which often ten or twelve men and women at a time were waiting their turn to fill their buckets ...'[4]. It would appear that a trip to the water pump could be time consuming and even perilous, which helps to explain - along with the fact that water is bulky and heavy to carry - why many people made scant use of it.

Edwin Chadwick urged that it would be 'a good economy' to lay on direct water supplies to labourers' homes for domestic use[5] but in Cape Town in 1830 this was unthinkable. At that time private water leadings were granted only to businesses and a request for one intended 'for domestic purposes' was refused as others had been in the past[6]. Over the next few years

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1. C.A. 23 March 1833 (letter).
2. C.A. 21 April 1830 (letter).
3. C.A. 20 March 1833 (letter).
4. Steytler, J.G., 'Remembrances from 1832-1900' in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 22; see also picture, Sheet C.
5. *Report*, p. 142
6. C.O. 374 Item 31.

'Pump at the top of the Heerengracht' by Sir Charles D'Oyly, 1833
(Fehr Collection, B 72)

official attitudes changed - by 1836 some 'first class' houses had 'water laid on'[1] and by 1839 the Superintendant of Waterworks was positively enthusiastic about private grants for domestic use. He had found that those who had them were very careful 'in dread of having them stopt ..., and be driven to draw their daily supply from the fountains ...'[2]. Grants of private water leadings were made only to the well-to-do, however, benefitting ordinary people only in so far as they took the servants of households with their own water supplies out of the queues at the public pumps. The poorer people who still had to fetch it presumably continued to use water sparingly

The Special Wardmasters of 1840 were appalled by the fact the poor had apparently allowed filth to accumulate and were seemingly 'callow of its presence'. One case was found of 'quantities of rotten Fish Human excrement ec. ec. - the accumulation we may say of months, in the very Sleeping apartments'[3]. The problem must often have been, what to do with refuse apart from contravening regulations by chucking it into the nearest canal[4]! A simple example is the problem of what to do with 'night soil'. Carts were sent round the town to collect refuse, but only on 'certain Days in every Week'; this meant that refuse had to be stored for some period of time, in summer as well as winter, in even the smallest and most

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1. C.O. 445 Item 116.
2. C.O. 487 Item 206.
3. C.O. 490 Item 159, reports of Wards 4 and 6.
4. Ordinance 48, 1828, Section 35 and C.O. 462 Item 39.

crowded house[1]. Some people paid coolies to take away their 'night soil' for them[2] but obviously the very poor would not have done so. Another problem was that the carts came round between 4 and 6 a.m. in summer and 5 and 7 a.m. in winter and people were required to take their rubbish to them [3]. Since most people seem to have started work at 6 a.m.[4], these times can hardly have been convenient. Furthermore, the carts were required only to 'pass through the Town', not to visit every lane and alley, so that people might have had to carry their refuse some distance to a cart. But for those who wished to dispose of rubbish between the visits of the carts, or who could not get their rubbish to the carts and needed an alternative method of disposal, the only place that refuse could legally be dumped was on the beach between the Amsterdam and Chavonnes Batteries[5], a long way from many parts of the town. Dumping it anywhere else was liable to result in a £5.0s.0d. fine with the alternative of a week in prison[6]. Possibly it was easiest to dump rubbish surreptitiously on the nearest heap, which may explain 'the want of cleanliness which prevailed in all the narrow streets and lanes ... occupied by the very Poor'[7] and the generally filthy state of Cape Town as a whole.

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1. Ordinance 48, 1828, Section 31.
2. I/C.T. 8/4 Item 295.
3. Ordinance 48, 1828, Section 31.
4. C.O. 3946 Item 224.
5. Ordinance 48, 1828, Section 32.
6. E.g. C.O. 3992 Item 10.

An aspect of the general problem of uncleanliness in Cape Town in the 1830s was the prevelance of livestock in the streets. Poultry has already been mentioned[1] but a greater nuisance were the wild dogs which roamed 'at large' throughout the town[2] and especially in the area of the sea-shore[3]. The police were empowered to kill 'unowned' dogs after due warning, but the coloured people particularly protected them by locking up in their houses 'an almost incredible number of the most useless curs, and turning them loose again when the danger of their being destroyed has ceased'[4]. Pigs also tended to 'prowl (?) about the streets ...'[5] and so did goats[6]. Even cattle occasionally escaped from the shambles[7] or their owners[8] creating a direct risk of injury as well as adding to the general filth in the streets!

The conditions under which food was handled and sold were another area of uncleanliness. The state of the shambles has already been described - their refuse was left rotting on the very door step. Moreover the poor 'carried behind the Shambles ...' that is, into the area where this refuse had accumulated - the pieces of meat they brought cheaply 'for the purpose of cleaning and selecting what they liked best'[9].

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1. See above p. 60
2. Ordinance 14 of 1836.
3. Steytler, J.G., 'Remembrances ...' in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vo. 25, No., p. 26.
4. C.O. 451 Item 60.
5. C.O. 3962 Item 41.
6. Eg. in I/C.T. 8/4, 1844.
7. C.A. 11 August 1830 and C.O. 3992 Item 25.
8. Z.A. 17 January 1834.(advertisement).
9. C.O. 3961 Item 79.

The water for cleaning the shambles was taken, not from the public pumps, but from a nearby canal[1] and there is evidence to suggest that the state of the canals was dubious[2]. Yet all butchering had to be done at the shambles[3] and 'everybody had to send there for their meat'[4].

The state of the Fish market was also bad[5] but apparently it was hardly used. Instead, fish was landed on the beach, 'amongst an accumulation of the most disgusting filth ...', and sold there[6]. The conditions in which vegetables, fruit and other produce were sold seems to have been similar. In 1834 the Advertiser described 'the wretched exhibition of rags and slovenliness, called the Green Market in Market-square'[7]. In the New Market beyond the castle conditions were particularly bad during rainy weather - the place was not properly drained and 'cramps, and rheumatism and lame sickness hold their carnival there'[8].

Overcrowding.

The general problem of uncleanliness in Cape Town was exacerbated by extensive overcrowding. Just how extensive it was, was revealed by the house-to-house inspection of Cape

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1. C.O. 479 Item 138.
2. See above p.58
3. Ordinance 48, 1828, Section 18.
4. Steytler, J.G., 'Remembrances ...' in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 23.
5. Report of a public meeting in Z.A. 1 May 1840.
6. C.A. 30 January 1830.
7. C.A. 1 February 1834.
8. C.A. 1 July 1837.

Town carried out by Special Wardmasters during the smallpox epidemic of 1840. Their reports provide an invaluable picture of living conditions and housing among the Cape Town poor at that time. They are clear evidence of overcrowding on a wide scale[1]. But before going further, it is necessary to discuss what 'overcrowding' is.

It is possible to measure 'occupation density', using a fixed scale, in order to assess whether or not a house is overcrowded. It is, however, necessary to know certain details about the household being measured. First, one needs to know whether any members of the household are children of less than 10 years old; secondly, how many rooms are used for sleeping, since this is a figure required to calculate occupational density[2]. The calculation is performed as follows: every person of 10 or more is counted as one equivalent person, a child of 9 or less as half an equivalent person; only rooms used for sleeping are considered.

Up to	2½	equivalent persons	require	1 room
" "	3½	"	"	2 rooms
" "	5	"	"	3 rooms
" "	7½	"	"	4 rooms
" "	10	"	"	5 rooms
" "	12½	"	"	6 rooms
" "	15	"	"	7 rooms
" "	17½	"	"	8 rooms
" "	20	"	"	9 rooms

E.g. 2 rooms are being used for sleeping by 5 persons. The scale allows 2 rooms for 3½ persons:

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159.
2. I am indebted to Dr. Blanche de Wet of the Institute for Child Health, Red Cross Hospital, Cape Town, for giving me details of the scale, originally worked out by Professor E. Batson, for measuring occupational density, which is being used in research undertaken by the Institute.

$$\frac{5}{3\frac{1}{2}} \text{ of } 100 = \frac{5}{1} \times \frac{2}{7} \times \frac{100}{1} = \frac{1000}{7} = 144\% \text{ Occupational Density}$$

A score of 100% would indicate that, though not ideal a house is not overcrowded. 144% occupational density shows some degree of overcrowding[1].

Although some of the Special Wardmasters' reports contain details of the number of rooms and inhabitants per house for the houses in their wards, they do not provide all the information needed for the above calculation. Other isolated examples give more information about the composition of individual households but do not provide full details[2]. It is therefore possible to estimate roughly the degree of overcrowding in parts of Cape Town and in particular households, but no more.

The Special Wardmasters were men of substance and respectability - they included a 'member of council', merchants and at least one slum land-lord[3]. They were given powers 'to demand entrance into any Building or Habitation ...' to find out if anyone was suffering from smallpox and not being treated; and also 'to ascertain whether in such Building or Habitation there be so many Inmates crowded together as shall evidently expose them to the ... disease ...'[4]. It was this second task which led many of them to comment on overcrowding as such.

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1. I am grateful to Dr. Blanche de Wet for this example.
2. See below p.78
3. Government Advertisement, 29 April 1840 and Almanack, 1840 (no pagination); J. Tromp, Wardmaster of Ward 10, owned 'Diacony's alley' - 3/C.T. 7/1/2/1/1, District 5 Ward 18 and below p.74
4. Government Proclamation, 29 April 1840.

There were 12 wards within Cape Town itself[1] and the Colonial Office volumes contain reports from all of them[2]. Some are very detailed, others brief summaries, but over all they convey an appalling picture. Only one report - for Ward 7 - stated that 'No house was found crowded by so many inmates' that it needed referring to the authorities. Seven of the reports describe conditions of general overcrowding in at least some parts of their wards and two more contain specific examples of overcrowding[3]. Table 4 shows that in five wards there were average occupational densities in excess of 100%. Examination of the house-by-house details contained in the Ward I report suggests that up to 87% of the houses were overcrowded[4]. There are many examples of an extraordinary degree of overcrowding: there are cases of 8 and 10 people in single rooms in the Rogge Bay area of Ward I[5]; and in Hitzeroth's cellars in Riebeek Street the 'number of Inhabitants /was/ guessed, being a Mass of human beings crowded in dark cellars not fit for human habitation'. In Mossel Steeg there was:

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1. See Map, Appendix 5
2. C.O. 490 Item 159.
3. The Ward 5 report contains no comment and no figures on which an estimate can be based; the Ward 11 report refers to 'the poor' and to a 'want of cleanliness' but does not mention occupational density in any way - C.O. 490 Item 159.
4. Assuming that all rooms are used for sleeping and making no allowance for children.
5. I.e. occupation densities of up to 400% - calculated as above.

Table 4 - Occupation Densities of houses in various parts of Cape Town, according to the Special Wardmasters' reports 1840 (C.O. 490 Item 159)

Ward	Area	Details given	% Occupation Density
No. 1	Streets and lanes from Strand Street to sea, from Jetty to Loop Street.	Number of inhabitants and rooms per house.	111%
No.2	Streets and lanes from Loop Street to outskirts of town between Strand Street and Somerset Road and the sea.	Number of inhabitants per house; houses 2, 3 or 4 roomed.	105% - 225%
No. 4	Area above the Buitengracht and beyond Shortmarket Street, including Walendorp.	Average figure of 9 inhabitants per house - houses 'bad'.	111% - 167% (3 or 4 rooms)
No. 6	From Longmarket to Wale Street, between Heerengracht and Buitengracht.	Number of inhabitants and rooms per house.	55%
No. 8	Keerom, New, Orange and Kloof Streets, Buitencingel and Vredenberg steeg.	Average of 9 people per house - some houses spacious, many small ones overcrowded.	111% (4 rooms)
No. 9	Area above Roeland Street from Stal plein to the Buitenkant	Number of inhabitants and rooms per house - relatively new area.	93%
No.10	Area from Boom Street to Caledon Square between Plein Street and Buitenkant	Number of inhabitants and houses - 'too thickly occupied'.	117% (4 rooms)

Note: The calculations of the percentage occupational densities given in Table 4 are based on the assumption that all rooms were used for sleeping. This may have been true generally but not in every case and particularly not in areas such as Ward 6. The number of rooms is therefore over-estimated.

A reduction of 7.5% has been made to allow for children under 10 years old, based on the assumption that such children comprised 15% of the total population. This is an underestimate. (According to the Population Table, children under 7 comprised 17% of the population between 1840 and 1842 - see Appendix 3) but the Ward I report states that, owing to 'the very gt. difficulty Experienced in making the occupants give up Children and Lodgers as inhabitants of the house....'[1] , their population figure is 'considerably under-rated' and this may also have been true elsewhere. It is hoped that the two discrepancies may balance each other out to some extent, but obviously the percentages given cannot be regarded as precise.

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159

> 'a Store divided upstairs and down, into numerous rooms by wooden partitions, some of these rooms have no window, and are altogether in a crowded and unventilated condition ... (each room is let seperately to a family, the whole having one common kitchen)'.

Ward 2 contains examples of occupational densities of up to 300% and in Ward 3, 10 people lived in one room in Castle Street - up to 400% occupational density.

The Ward 6 report could

> 'not help noticing ... a place called the Jaconies Gang ... /where/ on a space of about 3000 Square feet, we were told ninety one human beings live, but from what we saw we shd. say that double that number was much nearer the truth ...'.

In one house in 'Jaconies Lane', 16 people lived in 2 rooms, an occupation density of up to 457%, and one of the five inhabitants of a room in nearby Long Street was 'a White Horse'! Elsewhere in Ward 6 there were houses with occupation densities of over 200% and this area was, as the Wardmasters themselves pointed out, 'the very centre of the Town'. The Ward 8 report stated that

> 'In the many minor Streets, alleys or "steegs" ... many instances have been found of Twenty or more people being crowded into a habitation which with any degree of comfort to the inmates, or view to cleanliness and decency, can hardly accomodate five'.

In Ward 9 there were 'numbers herded together' in the area round Tuin 'Plain' and Hope Street and in Ward 10 'the habitations were generally too thickly occupied, tho' perhaps not so bad as in other parts of the Town'. Even so, 'a house of very moderate size' in Barrack Street was occupied by 'upwards of 50 Inmates', another held 45 people and another 34. Ward 12, which encompassed the Heerengracht and Church Square - one of the best parts of the town - contained a house 'occupied

by 10 Distinct Families together 30 Individuals ...'[1].

In these overcrowded conditions, the implications of the lack of adequate water supplies and sewage disposal facilities became very serious. Fourteen houses in Ward I were simply designated 'Dirty holes'; 'The whole of the Houses of Meyer's Gang' were in a 'Grievous and filthy condition and another lane, Faure's Gang was 'in a Crowded and Unwholesome state'. The Ward I report stated that the 'Habitations (Houses would be an improper term for a considerable number of them) ... especially those ..., chiefly "Hire houses",' in the area below Strand Street 'are in a dirty crowded and unventilated state, hung around inside and out with drying fish .... The drains in the Gangs or "steegs" - the more crowded situations - are filled with putrid masses of filth, to wch. the neighbourhood appears accustoms'; it attributed this in part to the problem of bringing water from 'the distant public pumps' and considered 'a better supply of water ... imperative'. In Ward 2, narrow streets and lanes were

> 'suffered to remain in the most neglected state; = piles of putrid filth, in every stage of decomposition, lay heaped up in the corners of these streets, the exhalations from which were indescribably offensive, ... In general, there are no channels cut for the conveyance of the water thro' the street or alley, and it therefore either remains a Stagnant Pool, or meanders across the path, forming little puddles here and there, both alike offensive and unhealthy.'

The Ward 3 wardmasters wrote that they 'cannot too strongly express the dirty filthy and unhealthy state of some of the

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1. All examples from C.O. 490 Item 159.

abodes of the poor classes ...' and similar comments were made in the reports for Ward 6, 8, 9 and 11.

Several further reasons were put forward by the Special Wardmasters for these disgusting and crowded housing conditions. One explanation was that often housing was badly designed and constructed. The Ward I report stated that 'some Municipal regulations are required to prevent the improper construction of dwellings ...' and those of Wards 2 and 11 suggested the appointment of 'some officer' to inspect plans for new houses, to ensure that they were of an adequate size and properly ventilated. Bad ventilation in poorer houses was criticized in the reports for Wards 4 and 8; and the Ward 9 report echoes that of Ward 11 in suggesting 'The necessity of a Building Ordinance ...' to lay down minimum widths for the alleys between houses and for streets, as a means of ensuring adequate ventilation. The Ward 2 report suggested 'either a Municipal Regulation, or ... a Legislative Enactment' making it compulsory for all house owners to provide 'a Proper channel or gutter for carrying off the waste Water from each house - and to Provide a Water closet, or privy, for each house ...'.

The reports for Wards 1, 4, 8, 9 and 11 refer to the apathy, indifference, neglect and want of cleanliness of the very poor inhabitants of the worst areas. This demand for regulations to enforce minimum standards, however, reflected the opinion of most wardmasters that responsibility for the disgraceful conditions they had found lay much less with the occupants than the owners and builders of housing in poorer areas. The landlords 'too generally think only of how much

they can obtain in the shape of rent' said the Ward 2 report. The buildings in Tuin 'Plain' in Ward 9 were described as 'at once a disgrace to the Builder and Proprietor of such Property'. The Ward I report describes how

> 'these "hire houses" for the purpose of yielding to the proprietors the greatest possible amount of Rent, are so crowded together, back to Back that many are without any expedient for draining off the filth ...'.

The Ward 6 report ends with a comment on 'the Avarice and indifference of many of the proprietors ... who so long as the rents are paid care little who, or how many the occupants may be ...'.[1]

'Who', demanded the Ware Afrikaan in a comment on the Special Wardmasters' revelations, 'that beholds how abundant the food of the lower classes and how readily they can procure employment, would imagine that under so fair an exterior so much misery lies concealed.' It went on to attribute the problem of overcrowding to the emancipation of the apprentices, suggesting 'that an immense number of the late slaves have been, ever since their freedom, herding together in idleness and filth ...'[2]. An Advertiser comment on some cases of overcrowding revealed during the 1839 measles epidemic implied the same thing[3]. But although the most systematic evidence and the bulk of the comment about overcrowding is to be found in 1839 and 1840 there are indications that the roots of the problem went back beyond 1838.

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159.
2. 12 May 1840.
3. C.A. 6 April 1839.

It is clear from evidence given at a murder trial in 1830 that a 35 year old slave mother shared her room with her three children and another slave woman - an occupation density of 140%[1] - while a 28 year old male slave normally shared a room with his mother, two brothers and a sister - an occupation density of 200%[2]. These details were reported without provoking any comment which suggests the possibility that such sleeping arrangements for slaves were considered normal. If they had become accustomed to overcrowding in the slave quarters it is less surprising that people should tolerate overcrowded conditions when free.

A similar case in 1831 provides an example of high occupation density among the European poor. What was apparently a five-roomed house in Hardersteeg was occupied by 7 adults, one of whom slept in the kitchen[3], and probably two children[4], possibly three[5] or more[6]. This suggests an occupation density of at least 85%. Again, these details excited no contemporary comment.

An aspect of the housing problem was the use of unsuitable premises as accomodation. In 1840 'even stables, cellars, and

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1. Assuming that all the children were under 10.
2. C.A. 28 September 1830.
3. Z.A. 18 November 1831 - Thomas Davy's trial.
4. The murder victim had two children, one of them aged 7 - C.A. 26 November 1831 and I/C.T. 13/14, 23 November 1831.
5. Mary Roach, one of the occupants, was pregnant in 1829 - C.A. 28 October - and so may have had at least one child.
6. There was another couple living in the house who may have had children which, like Mrs. Davy's, were not mentioned during the trial - Z.A. 18 November 1831.

holes under stoeps ... [were] in many instances let as Human habitations ...'[1] but this was not new. In 1830 a slave couple who lived 'in a cellar in Bree Street' were reported in the press, not because of that but because the wife had stolen some washing[2]. In 1832 an area 'behind the R.C. Chapel ...' (i.e. the Constitution Hill area) was 'covered with hovels ...'[3]. A group of people was found in 1829 'sleeping (as is their habit) near one of the Batteries', because of 'their being without home or employment'[4]. There are examples of people who could find no shelter at all - 'deaths from cold and exposure during the night, were numerous ...' and around Cape Town in the winter of 1836[5]. John Fairbairn, who as Chief of the Special Wardmasters must have been well-informed on the housing problem by May 1840, wrote of the poor,

> 'Their habitations are overcrowded. This probably arises from the want of suitable houses for the poorer classes. They cannot build, and capitalists have not yet built proper houses for them. They are, therefore, apparently from necessity, crowded in dozens into cellars, back courts, and cavern-like holes.'[6]

Compounding the housing shortage was the cost of rent. There was no restriction on what a landlord might charge and the Special Wardmasters' reports show that they often asked as much as they thought they could get. These factors may

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159, Ward 6 report.
2. C.A. 28 August 1830.
3. C.O. 3958 Item 112.
4. C.A. 4 July 1829.
5. C.A. 8 July 1837.
6. C.A. 23 May 1840.

explain 'the Practice ... of "sub-letting" ... [whereby] Houses comprising 3 or 4 rooms, are often let and sub-let, to 5 or 6 families or persons: 2 or 3 distinct parties frequently occupy one small room ...'[1]. Again this was not new. At least two of the occupant's of Thomas Davy's house were lodgers[2] and an ale-house keeper 'admitted' subletting part of his store 'to lessen the rent ...'[3]. According to one writer some Malays deliberately used to 'form themselves into gangs, and take a large old Dutch house, and live together, ten or a dozen families ...' to save money[4].

Although there is some evidence of a housing problem in Cape Town throughout the 1830s it seems probable that it became worse after emancipation in 1838. There is evidence that in Cape Town former slaves left their owners' homes and found their own and that other ex-slaves came into the town from other areas[5]. They seem to have preferred their own homes, however overcrowded. It was observed in 1840 that 'no colored domestic servant will at present remain at night with his master, though he be offered airy and comfortable accomodation'[6]. This was probably because the former slaves especially wanted to be able to escape wholly from their employers' control during leisure time, after the constant accountability of slavery.

The lack of building controls meant that the existing

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159 Ward 2.
2. Z.A. 18 November 1831, Thomas Davy's trial.
3. C.O. 3963 Item 63.
4. Hemming, J., 'Communication', p. 38.
5. See above p.*16*
6. Report of a public meeting, Z.A. 1 May 1840.

problem of cramped, dark, badly ventilated buildings was being perpetuated at the end of the 1830s. Much of the slave compensation money was spent on house building, some of it for rent. An example is the 'cottages', which were 'constructed apparently for the purpose of proving by direct experiment, that pure air, light and cleanliness are not necessary to health in this climate ...'. These 'seminaries of disease' were intended only to 'secure a good return of their money ...' to the builders[1]. In 1840 a new house fell down 'when nearly finished and almost ready for the reception of tenants ...' and another had to be demolished. The need for a 'Public Surveyor' to ensure that new buildings were properly constructed, was already being expressed before the smallpox epidemic[2]. The Special Wardmasters added the demand that this official should also ensure that new buildings were fit for people to live in.

Because so much of old Cape Town has been demolished and rebuilt, it is difficult to see for oneself what sort of housing ordinary people were living in at this time. The areas below Strand Street and between Barrack and Roeland Street have been considerably altered. Not just the buildings but many of the lanes have disappeared - in the foreshore area only Visch Steeg, or Fish Lane, remains to show how narrow and cramped they were. The area round Selkirk Street, above Sir Lowry Road, was being newly built in the

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1. C.A. 1 May 1839.
2. C.A. 1 February 1840.

1830s - it is now a waste land. When the present writer visited it in 1976, only two of the original houses remained and both were due for demolition. There are some houses dating back to the 1830s or before in what is now the 'Malay Quarter', but much of that area was not built at that time, and much of what was has been destroyed; for example, the lower part of Berg Steeg has been demolished, and the upper part is derelict. One must therefore piece together what evidence there is of what poorer houses were like and attempt to relate it to what is left.

Three 'hire houses' in kromme-Elleborg were sold in 1834 - one consisting of two rooms only, another of two rooms a kitchen and a backyard and the third of three lower and two upper rooms and a yard[1]. The Special Wardmasters' report for Ward 2 states that most houses there had 'only 2, 3 or 4 rooms' and the average number of rooms per house in Ward I was 2·6, which suggests that a three-roomed house might have been average in the poorer areas of Cape Town. On Sheet D there is a diagram of a three-roomed house which may have been in use during the 1830s[2] and pictures of other housing dating back to that period. These give some impression of the size of poorer houses and what they looked like.

They do not convey an impression of what it was like to live in such houses in overcrowded conditions. Visitors

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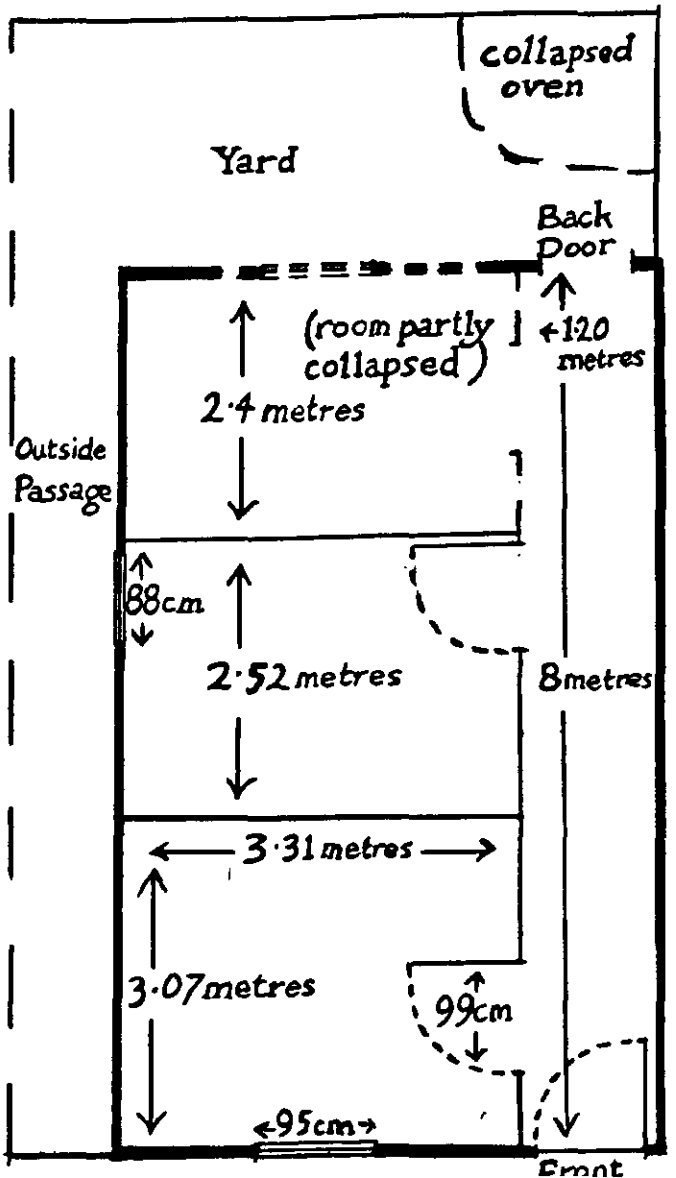
1. Z.A. 21 November 1834.
2. House numbers up to 25 Berg Steeg are included in the 1830 street directories, Almanack, p. 310.

SHEET Da

Coffee Lane, Cape Town c. 1909
(Cape Archives, Elliott Collection No. 7979)
Although this is a relatively modern picture it gives an impression of what Coffee Lane was like in the 1830s. The lane would have been the same width and the houses on the right probably existed then. These buildings have since been demolished.

Above - nineteenth century houses in Hilliger steeg (from Du Plessis, I.D. and Luckhoff C., The Malay Quarter and its People, No. 26).



Left - ground plan of No. 24 Berg steeg.

found that it meant 'a great proportion of our population ... sleep in beds, several persons in one, which rarely know cleanly changes ...' which resulted in 'the total unfitness of hundreds of our people for performing a good days' work ... at any manual labour whatever'. Further, 'whole families' were found 'occupying a single narrow apartment, which must answer at once the ends of parlour, kitchen, bedroom and hospital ...'[1]. In the cellars and holes where there were no chimneys 'the smoke finds its way out - either through the Door - or the flooring of the room above'. When houses were 'without any expedient for draining off the filth ...' it might be 'left to putrify' in a yard or allowed to 'meander' across the street[2]. Although there were people who managed to keep their homes 'in a very clean and wholesome condition', often there was filth outside and 'the inside of the habitations of the poor were also found proportionately filthy ...'[3]. Under these conditions many inhabitants of the poorer areas developed a 'confirmed apathy and apparent indifference'[4] which is perhaps understandable.

A final consideration is who were 'the poor' who inhabited such areas. The population of Ward I, possibly the worst area in Cape Town, was 'generally of coloured people who are principally fishermen ...'. The Ward 6 report refers to 'the

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1. Report of public meeting, Z.A. 1 May 1840.
2. C.O. 490 Item 159 Reports for Wards 6, 1 and 2.
3. Ibid Reports 1 and 8.
4. Ibid Ward 4 Report.

Houses, Cellars - or we may almost say Dens - of the Coloured population ...'[1] and 'Jaconies Gang', which they describe, was wholly occupied by coloured people[2]. Not all coloured people lived in squalor - the houses of 'the better class of Malays ...' were often 'kept very clean ...'[3] - and there were Europeans living in the narrow lanes below Strand Street and elsewhere[4]. It does seem, however, that the worst accomodation was occupied largely though not exclusively by poor coloured people.

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159.
2. 3/C.T. 6/2/1 - Surveyor's Return 1835 - 40, fragment.
3. C.O. 490 Item 159 Ward 1.
4. Ibid and Almanack 1830 - analysis of street directory.

Disease and Death in Cape Town in the 1830s.

The publication of Chadwick's report, The Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population, the 'immediate value' of which lay in proving the influence of filth and overcrowding on health[1], lay in the future, but commentators in Cape Town in the 1830s were aware of the connection. Before 1840 attention had been drawn to the risk of disease arising from the generally filthy state of the town[2]. In 1839 the Advertiser, remarking on the 'squalid poverty' of poorer measles victims, warned of the 'danger to which ... their crowded and destitute condition' exposed them, should 'a visitation of a more deadly character, pestilence, small-pox, or cholera ... fall upon us ...', a warning borne out by the smallpox epidemic the next year.

The Special Wardmasters' report repeatedly linked a high incidence of smallpox with the narrow, filthy lanes in which poorer people lived. The Ward 8 report states that 'tho' the general average of cases of smallpox ... seems to have been as ... 20 p Cent, the proportion of those afflicted, amongst these lanes, alleys and narrow streets ...' (previously described as 'in a very neglected and dirty state ...') has been, from 33 to 40 p Cent ...'. Ward 10's report said, 'The greatest number of ... cases of infection and death was of course found in the narrow lanes and alleys' . It is significant that in Ward 13, which was outside the town, and where the houses were newly

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1. Finer, S.E., The Life and Times of Sir Edwin Chadwick, pp. 216-217.
2. E.g. C.A. 17 March 1832, Z.A. 28 February 1834.

built with 'very few narrow passages and lanes' and generally clean, only 5% of the population caught smallpox and 0.6% died. In contrast, at least 34% of the population of Ward I caught smallpox and at least 3% died[1].

Disease in Cape Town during the 1830s.

In order to discuss medical history effectively it is necessary to have not just some medical knowledge but also an understanding of how medical terms were used at a given period. The present writer has no detailed knowledge of either and so suggestions made in this section are tentative.

The sources of information about disease in Cape Town at this time are very limited. The South African Medical Society published reports in the Almanacks in a number of years[1]. These reports, however, are descriptive, not statistical, and based on limited material - that for 1837 is based on 'the notes of one individual practice'[2]. One may also question how wide a section of Cape Town's society the Medical Society's members served. Doctors did provide 'Medical Advice to the Poor gratuitously ...'[3] and so presumably there was some demand for such advice. During the 1840 smallpox epidemic, some people in the poorer areas were found to be receiving treatment from a doctor before the one appointed to provide treatment in their ward went round[4].

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159 - see also Wards 2, 4 and 11.
2. Viz. report for 1830 in Almanack, 1831, p. 143; 1832, p. 222; 1838, p. 144; 1839, p. 205; 1840, p. 277; 1842, p. 324.
3. Almanack, 1838, p. 144.
4. C.A. 5 January 1831 Advertisement.
5. C.O. 490 Item 159, e.g. Ward 1.

In 1830 the doctors complained that the existing fixed rate of charges prevented them from adjusting their fees to the poorer patient[1]. All this suggests that doctors did have some contact with the poor. Much of their time would nevertheless have been spent on the well-to-do, a point to be borne in mind when looking at the Medical Society reports.

The Somerset Hospital certainly contained poor inmates. Its fees were reduced or dispensed with in the cases of people who could not pay for the treatment they required[2] and the Resident Surgeon claimed that he never turned away anyone who needed the hospital's care[3]. The Hospital's records, however, appear to be missing. The correspondence in the Cape Archives deals only with routine matters and is not a source of information about disease.

In the absence of other material, the Medical Society reports, inadequate though they are, are the most comprehensive contemporary source available on disease in Cape Town as a whole at this time. They provide an indication of the state of public health, but that is all. There have been recent attempts at a medical history of South Africa but they are too superficial to be of any value at all[4]. Table 5 is a breakdown

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1. And to the rich! - C.O.3946 Item 229
2. C.O. 371 Item 11 and above p.33
3. See above p.33
4. A recent work is Laidler, P.W. and Gelfand, M., South Africa, Its Medical History 1652-1898, a Medical and Social Study 1974. The authors make very little attempt to interpret contemporary usage of medical terms in modern terms and do not relate illnesses to the conditions in which they flourished. The book is muddled, superficial and contains elementary mistakes and misleading references which completel undermine any value it might have as a contribution to Cape Town's medical history. It has therefore not been used as a source for this work.

Table 5 - Indication of diseases present in Cape Town during the 1830s, derived from the reports of the South African Medical Society.

Year and Almanack comment	Almanack description of disease		Possible modern term (see also Appendix 4)
1830: a year of 'unusually fatal and continued sickness, particularly among children'.	'continued and remittent fevers', especially among children.	=	malaria, typhus, typhoid, T.B. (see also Hectic fever).
	'Opthalmia'	=	eye infection, possibly resulting from gonorrhoea.
	Consumption - some cases fatal	=	pulmonary T.B.
	Hepatic and dysenteric complaints	=	possibly hepatitis; general bowel complaints.
	Cholera	=	food poisoning; Not cholera
	Diarrhoeas with catarrh	=	stomach upset as a result of indigestible food.
	Severe rheumatic affections	=	rheumatism, rheumatic fever, gonorrhoea.
	Mild form of scarlet fever	=	Scarlet fever; possibly second stage syphilis.
1831: 'throughout generally sickly'.	Hooping cough	=	whooping cough
	Cholera - 2 cases fatal	=	severe food poisoning
	Bowel complaint	=	T.B.
	Scarlet fever	=	Scarlet fever
	Rheumatic fever	=	rheumatic fever
	Catarrhal fever		?
	Sore throat	=	pharyngitis, mild diphtheria, scarlet fever
	Croup	=	croup, mild diphtheria
	'Opthalmia'	=	gonorrhoea, general eye infections possibly developed from gonorrhoea.
	Peritonitis, esp. among females - several fatalities	=	

Table 5 (Continued)

	Convulsion cough	= rickets, worms, laryngismus stridulus
1837: 'on average rather healthy'.	'Continued fever of a low type'	= T.B., typhus, typhoid
	Glandular suppurations	= T.B., result of irritant or wound - see Appendix 4, Glandular.
	Scarlatina	= Scarlet fever
	Bronchitis - many fatalities.	= acute bronchitis
	pleuritis) among pneumonia) children	= pleurisy accompanying = pneumonia accompanying T.B. or rickets
	'Opthalmia'	= eye infection, possibly resulting from gonorrhoea.
	Erysipelas	= erysipelas
	Peritonitis	= peritonitis, secondary to T.B.
	Sore throat, often ulcerated	= syphilis (2nd stage), scarlet fever, diphtheria, pharyngitis
	Diarrhoea among children and enteritis	= T.B., rickets, gastro-enteritis
	Unknown disease attacking children	= severe diphtheria (Burrows, p.129)
1838: 'nothing peculiar'	Sore throat (same type as in 1837) - some cases fatal.	= diphtheria, pharyngitis syphilis (2nd stage), scarlet fever
	Bilious fever	= T.B., rickets (in children), blackwater fever
	Remittent fever	= Malaria, T.B. (see also Hectic fever)
	Mild cholera	= food poisoning
	Diarrhoea	= gastro-enteritis, dysentery, T.B.
	Dysentery	= dysentery

Table 5 (Continued)

	Hepatitis	= infectious hepatitis, general bowel complain
	Rheumatism	= rheumatism, gonorrhoea
	Catarrh	?
	Pleuritis	= pleurisy accompanying T.B.
	Pneumonia	= pneumonia
	Bilious cholera, esp. among children, leading to dysentery	= T.B., food poisoning
1839:	Measles epidemic	= measles
	Dysentery following measles	= dysentery
	Diarrhoea especially among children	= gastro-enteritis, T.B., rickets, food poisoning
	Fever from irritation	= gonorrhoea, T.B.
	Inflammatory complaints	= gonorrhoea
	Rheumatism	= rheumatism, gonorrhoea
1841:		
'nothing interesting' - the year was 'one of the healthiest on record'.	Puerperal fever	= puerperal fever
	Erysipelas	= erysipelas
	'an occasional or slight epidemic'	?

of the Medical Society reports into items, with a suggested modern interpretation of the term used, in the 'possible diseases' column. This table is intended only to give an impression of the kind of illness prevalent in Cape Town during the 1830s. It should be borne in mind that contemporaries used medical terms in a symptomatic way - 'hepatic' for instance would mean something to do with the liver rather than hepatitis as we understand it today. Also, there may be any number of medical explanations for the symptoms described by contemporaries by no means all of which are included as 'possible diseases'.

W.E.B. Lloyd, discussing the problem of identifying disease in early nineteenth century England, points out that vague medical terminology, such as 'intermittent and remittent fevers' obscures the presence at that time of diseases such as typhus and malaria[1]. He points out, too, that whereas epidemics, such as cholera in England during the 1830s, caused a considerable stir (there were fears that it would come to Cape Town[2]) the toll levied continuously by more insidious diseases did not excite such attention. Applying this to Cape Town, the upheavals caused by measles in 1839 and smallpox in 1840 should not be taken to indicate an absence of disease, including infectious illness, in other years. Many people in England at that time were 'never really well'[3].

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1. A Hundred Years of Medicine, 1968, pp. 45 and 46.
2. C.A. 17 March 1832.
3. R.H. Mottram, Section III, in Yonge, G.M., (ed.) Early Victorian England 1830-50, 1951, Vol. 1, p. 204 and Harrison, B. - see below p.103

This was accepted as part of life but that acceptance obscures both the incidence of disease and types of disease which were prevalent, and also the effects these illnesses had on people at that time. Table 5 is an attempt, no more, to penetrate this obscurity.

There are certain diseases whose presence in Cape Town is indicated by sources other than the Medical Society reports. One of these is venereal disease. It was reported that 'nearly One Hundred' cases of venereal disease were admitted to the Somerset Hospital in one year[1] and since 'the expense incurred for the cure of Prostitutes infected with Venereal disease ... /was/ a very heavy burthen upon Government ...' it was suggested that the women should be committed to the House of Correction 'that by their labour they make some return for the expense[2]. Not everyone was cured, however[3]. Another was malaria - 'certain narrow streets, lanes, and ditches ...' were described as 'pregnant hot-beds of malaria'[4]. The link between malaria and mosquitoes was not proved till 1894[5] separate references make it clear that mosquitoes flourished in Cape Town's ditches during the summer[6]. There were also cases of leprosy. A child in the government slave lodge developed the disease in 1827[7] and a 'leprous woman' was

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1. 1829 - C.O. 368 Item 10.
2. C.O. 380 Item 3 and enclosure.
3. C.O. 368 Item 10.
4. C.A. 6 April 1839.
5. Thomson, A.R., Black's Medical Dictionary, p. 529.
6. C.A. 17 March 1832 and 28 November 1838 (letter).
7. C.O. 322 Item 12.

found in a house in the Waterkant in 1840[1]. It is impossible to know how many cases of leprosy originated in Cape Town, since coloured lepers were brought to the Somerset Hospital from other parts of the colony for despatch to the leper hospital when there were enough of them to warrant the hire of a wagon[2] and white lepers were confined to their homes[3]. These two cases suggest though that leprosy did exist within Cape Town itself.

Other diseases which seem to have existed in Cape Town, although contemporary medical terminology is more obscure, are tuberculosis, diphtheria and typhus or typhoid, or both. What was called 'consumption' was probably pulmonary tuberculosis and there are references to it apart from those in the Medical society reports[4]. A 'very dangerous disease' which prevailed among children in 1837[5] was subsequently identified as diphtheria[6]. The occurence of that outbreak increases the likelihood that it was continuously present in a mild form during this period and that at least some of the 'sore throats' were attributed to it. The link between bad sanitation and 'sore throats' in England at this time has been pointed out[7]. Typhus was also mentioned[8] but in Europe at this

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159, Ward I report.
2. E.g. C.O. 481 Item 27.
3. Burrows, E.H., History of Medicine in South Africa, 1958, p. 103.
4. E.g. that of a woman 'labouring under the last stage of consumption' - C.O. 424 Item 52.
5. C.A. 6 September 1837.
6. Burrows, op. cit. p. 129.
7. By Peel, C.S., Section II, in Yonge, G.M. Early Victorian England, vol. I, p. 85.
8. C.O. 393 Item and following the smallpox epidemic - C.A. 25 April 1840.

time, typhus fever was giving way to typhoid[1] and so some cases of fever may have been that. The continuing prevalence of tuberculosis and gastro-enteritis among Cape Town's poorer population suggests the likelihood that these diseases were present in Cape Town 150 years ago[2] with very severe effects.

To a considerable extent the prevalence and morbidity rate of any disease will depend on the resistance to it of the population. This will in turn depend on the feeding, housing and cleanliness of that population. Tuberculosis, typhus, syphilis, leprosy, gastro-enteritis, are all to a considerable extent 'social diseases'. Black's in fact calls T.B. a 'social disease', 'commoner among the ill-fed and the badly housed ...'[3] and states that 'Poverty, with its consequences in privation, overcrowding and filth, is the chief predisposing cause ...' of typhus[4]. But any infectious disease is likely to spread more rapidly among an overcrowded and illnourished population, and an abundance of filth is bound to result in food-poisoning and associated disorders.

It is arguable that diseases associated with poverty and insanitary conditions were prevelant in Cape Town in the 1830s. The presence of such diseases reflects the existence of bad living conditions. It seems likely that, like English people, many Capetonians were 'never really well'.

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1. I am indebted to Miss Margaret Pelling for this information.
2. Miss Pelling was kind enough to point this out.
3. Black's Medical Dictionary, p. 851.
4. Ibid p. 734.

Death.

Reliable figures of the number of deaths in Cape Town during the 1830s are nonexistent. According to Ordinance 48 of 1828, all deaths had to be reported to the Superintendant of Police who had to keep an 'Annual Registry' of them[1]. It was obvious to contemporaries that this was not being done. The Advertiser described the registers as 'so defective as to be entirely useless'[2]. The Secretary to the Cape Town Board of Commissioners reported in 1842 that 'a great irregularity Exists in reporting Births, Deaths and removals within this Municipality ...'[3]. Failure to report a slave's death entailed a £100.0s.0d. fine, but in November 1829 the authorities had to introduce an amnesty to try to bring their records up to date[4].

It is obvious from looking at the records - which after 1834 took the form of death notices filled in by the next-of-kin or a householder - that they are incomplete. For example, according to the death notices filed for 1840, 207 people died in Cape Town that year[5] whereas the 1840 Blue Book gives the number as 973. Further, 108 of the death notices are for whites and 99 for coloureds, although the Special Wardmasters' reports make it clear that smallpox affected the coloured people

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1. Section 19.
2. C.A. 2 May 1840.
3. 3/C.T. 1/1/1/6, p. 11.
4. Government Advertisement, 26 November 1829.
5. M.O.O.C. 6/9/19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

more than the white[1]. There were 153 deaths in the special smallpox hospitals[2], but only one is recorded among the death notices - a further indication of their unreliability.

The death notices are supposed to reflect the entire of Cape Town's population, which other sources do not. There are some church burial registers, such as St. George's and the 'Dood Lysten' of the Dutch Reformed Church, but these include few coloured people. The Dutch Reformed Church register records 294 white deaths in 1840 but only 69 coloured, which suggests that although more deaths came to the notice of churches than the authorities, the discrepancy between white and coloured was even greater than in the death notices files[3]. The St. George's register is even less representative of the population as a whole, listing only 4 coloured deaths in 1840, out of 89[4]. Attempts to locate the death registers of churches with larger poor and coloured congregations were unsuccessful. Neither the Cory Collection at Rhodes University nor the Methodist book room in Cape Town had any knowledge of the whereabouts of the records of the Sidney Street Chapel, which was situated in 'a district of town in which many poor Irish and coloured people reside ...'[5]. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, which actively recruited coloured members

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1. C.O. 490 Item 159.
2. C.O. 490 Items 160 and 161.
3. Dutch Reformed Church Archives, vol. 15/3.
4. Acc. 1939, 1/3/1
5. Backhouse, J., Narrative of a Visit ..., p. 86.

from 1838[1] has a record of baptisms going back to its inception, but no death registers. The Mahomedan priests claimed a following of nearly 6,500 people (apparently in Cape Town - there were overwhelmingly coloured people) in 1839 but apparently have no available death records[2]. Therefore, although coloured people comprised almost half of Cape Town's population[3] and the number of coloured deaths must have been at least proportionate, information about them is limited.

A further difficulty is the lack of a consistent primary series of death figures for the 1830s[4]. The total number of deaths recorded in the offical register for 1830[5] corresponds almost exactly with the Blue Book figure, which the later death notice numbers do not. This suggests inconsistency in the official records. The St. George's register was only started in 1838. There is no coherent death list for 1830 in the Dutch Reformed Church registers, but two lists for 1842 and 1835, one more complete than the other[6].

The material available is therefore limited, especially in respect of the poorer and coloured elements of the population. Nevertheless, the conclusions suggested by examination of what records are available are sufficiently

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1. St. Andrew's Letter Book - Summary of St. Andrew's Mission (no pagination).
2. I am indebted to Robert Shell for this information.
3. Population Table, Appendix 3.
4. The Blue Books give death figures but it is not clear on what they are based.
5. M.O.O.C. 6/3.
6. Dutch Reformed Church Archives 15/4 and 14/8, 1842; 15/5 and 14/6, 1835.

startling to warrant inclusion, in the hope that at some time a more systematic survey of Cape Town's death statistics may be carried out.

Table 6 shows the average age of death in Cape Town in the years 1830, 1835, 1840 and 1842. (The 1840 figures are abnormally high because of smallpox and so 1842 is included to balance them). This table shows the considerable discrepancy between information in the official records in 1830 and after 1834 and between official and church records. It does suggest, however, that the records reflect to some extent what was actually happening - in all three records, the average for 1840 is below that of other years, which corresponds to the fact that the death rate was abnormally high that year.

What is immediately striking about these figures is the low average age of death, particularly in the Church registers and the official register for 1830[1]. These registers contain more child and infant deaths than the death notices files, which brings their averages down. This discrepancy possibly arises from a feeling on the part of anyone professing Christianity that a child should have a Christian burial, which would show in the Church records, but that there was no need for official notification of a child's death. It has already been pointed out that the 1830 official register was apparently more accurate than the death notices - people may have been more conscientious about reporting child deaths only

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1. M.O.O.C. 6/3.

Table 6: The Average Age of Death in Cape Town

Source / Year	M.O.O.C.	D.R.C.	St. George
1830	19·7	-	-
1835	49·2	31·6	-
1840	40·8	25·5	22·6
1842	48·5	30·0	23·9
Average	39·5	29·0	23·2

These averages are broken down in Table 7 - see next page.

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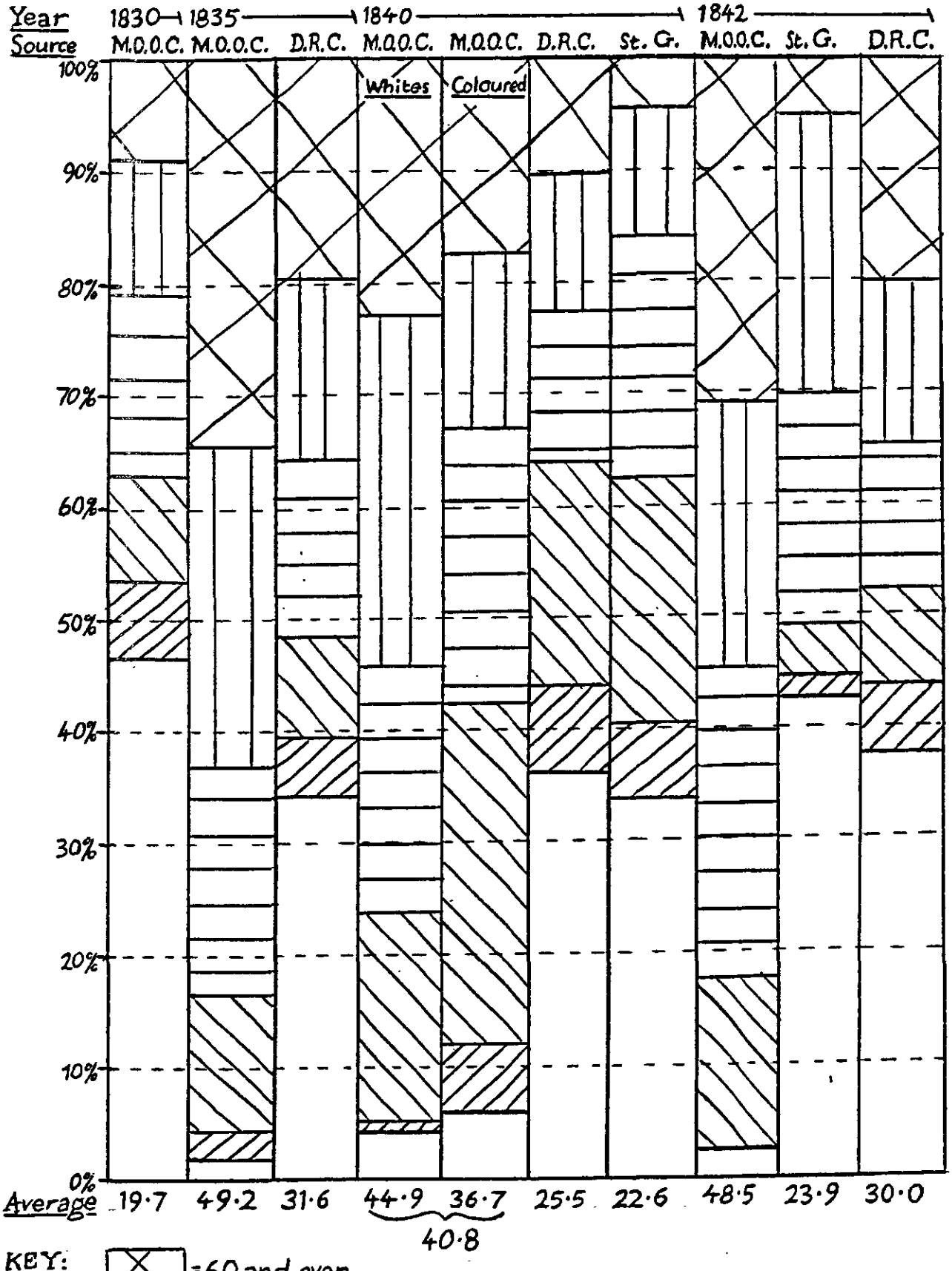
1. Figures for Tables 6 and 7 are based on the following:
   M.O.O.C. 6/3: 1830
   M.O.O.C. 6/9/4-7: 1835
   M.O.O.C. 6/9/19-23: 1840
   M.O.O.C. 6/9/25-28: 1842
   Dutch Reformed Church Archives 14/6 and 15/5: 1835
   D.R.C. 15/3: 1840
   D.R.C. 17/8 and 15/4: 1842
   Cape Archives A.C.C. 1939 1/3/1

Table 7 : *Breakdown of average ages of death into age groups*



two years after the implementation of Ordinance 48 than they later became. This suggests that the high rate of child deaths recorded in the church registers may be representative of the situation in Cape Town as a whole.

In Table 7 the figures from the various registers are broken down into age groups. These show where a low average age of death is caused by a high proportion of infant deaths, and, conversely, where the average age of death is relatively high because few infant deaths are recorded. The 1840 death notice figures have been divided into white and coloured sections but this had not been done with the other figures.

If there was a high rate of infant mortality it does not seem to have provoked comment. John Fairbairn, who in 1840 lost his wife Eliza and a month old daughter[1], makes no comment about infant mortality in the Advertiser, which he edited, at any time during this period. There are announcements of the deaths of young children in the newspapers though, and also advertisements of healthy wet nurses to let, without a child[2]. Bird thought that the number of female slaves born would be 'greatly reduced by death ...' before they reached 18, although slave children were valuable and so well cared for[3]. A slave couple had 'got twelve children; of which no more but two ...' had survived, one 10 and one two years old[4]. Another had

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1. St. George's Burial register, Acc. 1839 1/3/1.
2. Wet nurses are also advertised with children, which suggests that the children of those without had died - egs. Z.A. 31 January 1834.
3. State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822, pp. 77 and 71.
4. C.O. 3955 Item 17.

'procreated ... Ten children, of six are still alive'[1]. The Supreme Court Usher had eight children in 1834 and only six in 1836, but makes no comment on this loss[2]. This sparce evidence suggests that the child mortality rate was high during the 1830s, as the registers indicate, but that people accepted it as a matter of course.

There are comments which support the suggestion that the average age of death itself was low, at least among some groups. Describing the working conditions of the 'Mozambique porters' a visitor wrote, 'strong though these men are, they seldom live beyond thirty years with this sort of labour'[3]. Other remarks in the press associate premature death with excessive drinking - the case of a 28 year old policeman 'who died of Brandy' is an example[4] - and travellers' accounts suggest the same thing[5].

Given the lack of reliable sources conclusions must be tentative. But it does seem that the infant mortality rate was high at all levels of society. If it was high among the seemingly prosperous congregation of St. George's, it seems likely that it would have been worse among poorer people living in bad conditions. The mortality rate appears lower between the ages of 5 and 14 years; at what point after that it began to rise is difficult to tell. The average age of

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1. C.O. 3965 Item 21.
2. C.O. 3974 Item 53 and 3990 Item 32.
3. Alexander, J.E., An Expedition of Discovery ..., Vol. 2, Appendix 3, p. 9.
4. C.A. 7 and 11 January 1832.
5. See above p.*51*

death appears to have been low - between 25 and 30 years at best - although obviously many people survived beyond their 30s.

Cape Town's average age of death seems to have been comparable with that of Manchester, which was 25 years at about that period[1]. There were, however, considerable differences between Cape Town and Manchester. Whereas Cape Town in 1842 had a population of 22,543 and a population increase over the previous decade of about 6.5%[2], Manchester's population in 1841 was 217,056 and between 1821 and 1831 its population had increased by 44.9%[3]. The city of Melbourne provides an example, for comparison, of the fact that a high incidence of disease and death could result from insanitary conditions even in a favourable climate. In the 1880s Melbourne was 'without any intense overcrowding with a population well fed and well clad ...' had a death rate in its suburbs which was greater than London's. But a contemporary wrote that when he 'saw the flagrant disregard of the simplest laws of health ... I often wonder that we are not worse off'. The city earned the name 'marvellous Smelbourne' and when at last a metropolitan sewerage scheme was put forward an official remarked that 'it was not a question of how much the scheme was going to cost in money but how much it was going to save in the lives of the citizens'[4]. Possibly a similar

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1. Chadwick, Report, p. 223.
2. Calculation based on the Blue Book figures for 1830 and 1840 - see Population Table, Appendix 3.
3. Briggs, A., Victorian Cities, 1963, p. 81.
4. Ibid, pp. 291-292.

situation existed in Cape Town. Nevertheless that there should have been any comparison between the average age of death in Cape Town, with its temperate climate and relatively small, stable population, and Manchester, nearly ten times its size and experiencing very rapid growth, is appalling.

Conclusions.

Overall, it seems that for many people Cape Town was not a pleasant place to live. The town itself was consistently filthy, particularly the poorer areas; there was ahousing shortage and many people lived in dreadfully overcrowded conditions. Resulting from this were apparently high rates of disease and infant mortality and a low average age of death. Such circumstances were bound to have more than purely physical effects.

PART II: Poverty, Drunkenness and Crime - Aspects of Social Deviance in Cape Town in the 1830s.

Drunkenness.

'If memory fails me not a little
There are Five Reasons why we tipple; -
Good wine, an old companion by;
Because I am, or may be dry; -
Or any other Reason why.'[1]

The connection between poverty and drunkenness has already been discussed in terms of how expenditure on drink contributed to secondary poverty[2]. But drunkenness may be seen as a manifestation of bad conditions as well as a cause of them. Brian Harrison, in a study of English nineteenth century drinking and the temperance movement[3], points out that there were many reasons for people, especially the poor, to drink in the early part of the century[4] which may have been true in Cape Town as well as England. Given the fact that there was drinking, and drunkenness, in Cape Town, an attempt will be made to examine some of the reasons for it.

A primary reason for drinking alcohol in early nineteenth century England was to quench thirst at a time when water supplies were scarce and their purity questionable[5]. Cape Town seems to have been fortunate in that her water came straight from Table Mountain and was relatively pure,

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1. Ascham, quoted in C.A. 2 April 1836.
2. See above p.48
3. Drink and the Victorians - The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872, 1971, hereafter referred to as 'Harrison'.
4. See especially Chapter 2, 'Drink and English Society in the 1820s', pp. 37-63.
5. Harrison, p. 37.

although the quality may well have deteriorated during the summer and there were continual fears of scarcity[1]. Even so alcohol was probably more readily available than water. There were 'about sixty-three water cocks' in Cape Town in the 1830s[2]. By comparison, 71 licenses were issued to retail outlets for alcohol in 1840[3], to say nothing of the numerous 'smuggling houses in all parts of Cape Town ...' where people could buy drink when licenced premises were closed, 'more especially on Sundays'[4]. Whereas a person might have to walk some distance to a pump, alcohol sold in almost every street[5] with no tiresome regulations about the type of 'vessel' to be used to collect it. Another advantage might have been that alcoholic drinks kept better than water, which would tend to stagnate if left for a while, and they tasted pleasanter!

Another consideration was the lack of alternatives to alcohol as a thirst quencher when water was scarce or unpleasant. Some people in Cape Town kept cows or goats which would have provided milk[6] and some milk was brought in from Rondebosch for sale[7]. But at 3d. a quart, milk cost

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1. E.g. C.O. 445 Item 176.
2. See above p. 64
3. Government Gazette, 7 and 14 February 1840.
4. C.O. 502 Item 63, Enclosure: 'Report on Smuggling Houses in Cape Town ...'.
5. Champion, G., Journal, p.7
6. 'STRAYED FROM TOWN - ... a black spotted Milch Cow ... lately ... seen on the road to the country'!. - Z.A. 17 January 1834; there are numerous convictions of people who allowed goats to stray, contrary to Municipal Regulations - I/C.T. 8/4.
7. Z.A. 24 January 1834 (letter).

about as much as wine[1] and would have been more difficult to keep. Further, milk can carry disease, including T.B.[2]. Tea, at 2s.8½d. a pound[3] was expensive - it would be a possibility if water tasted unpleasant but not if water was scarce. Coffee was cheaper but must have been difficult to make.

Apart from their easy and constant availability, alcoholic drinks had another definite advantage in the eyes of contemporaries - they were thought to 'impart physical stamina'[4]. This is why they were thought necessary for convalescents, for example the people recovering from smallpox in 1840[5]. Alcohol was also important as a pain-killer. Harrison states that 'few working people were ever completely fit at this time ...'[6] and this may well have been as true of working people in Cape Town as those in England[7]. Also, 'the poor tended to regard pain not as a symptom of disease, but as the disease itself', and so relief from pain was the all important thing; this alcohol could temporarily provide. A common cause of pain among the poor was indigestion, because of bad or adulterated food, which spirits, in particular,

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1. Average Prices, Almanack, 1840 (no pagination).
2. See *Appendix 4*
3. Average Prices, Almanack, 1840 (no pagination).
4. Harrison, p. 39.
5. C.A. 25 April 1840.
6. Harrison, p. 41.
7. See above p.92

were thought to cure[1]. Again this is likely to have been as true in Cape Town as in England, and Cape Town poor are likely to have used alcohol for these reasons. Alcohol could also be used to quiet children - teething babies, for example - an important consideration in overcrowded living conditions where whole families shared a room.

A further inducement to drinking could have been the relationship between drinking houses and employment. Harrison describes English drinking houses as 'embryo labour exchanges'[2] and it is possible that for Cape Town's unskilled casual labourers, too, the local drinking house was a place where jobs might be heard of. It was certainly used as a convenient meeting place between employer and work man on pay day. Ordinance 93 of 1832 enacted that employers of 'Journeymen, workmen, servants or Labourers' who paid or caused payment to be made 'in or at any House, Premises, or Place, in which any ... Liquors shall be or are to be sold' would be liable to a £5.0s.0d. fine, and the wages so paid would be 'null and void'[3]. Obviously men who had to go to drinking houses for their pay would be under pressure to drink[4] and this ordinance suggests that the practice of paying work people in drinking houses - and possibly consequent drunkenness - was sufficiently widespread to cause alarm. How effective Ordinance 93, Section 23 would have been is open to question,

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1. Harrison, p. 41.
2. P. 54.
3. Section 23.
4. Harrison, p. 57.

since the police during the 1830s were not renowned for their efficacy and apparently were themselves fond of drink[1]. A problem was that drinking houses were the only available meeting places, particularly in bad weather, apart from someone's home and the Commercial Exchange - neither practical for poorer people.

Drinking houses also provided places of recreation, apparently for women as well as men[2]. People could drink and talk, play billiards (on premises with the appropriate licence) or skittles[3], or gamble, illegally, on other people's games[4]. Attempts by the authorities to stop skittles in drinking houses because of the risk of gambling led to a protest that people 'should be deprived of every opportunity for amusement during their few hours of leisure ...'[5] and the assertion that 'the melancholy, brooding, over-legislated, over-taxed, working population of this impoverished capital ...' needed some form of recreation[6]. Anyway, it kept them off the streets[7].

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1. Z.A. 24 October 1834, 22 June 1838 and C.O. 4000, Item 94; C.A. 7 and 11 January 1832. The murderer, Thomas Davy, was an ex-policeman - Z.A. 18 November 1831.
2. See below p.109 and picture, Sheet E.
3. C.O. 3970 Item 14.
4. C.A. 3 July 1833 (letter) and Z.A. 17 October 1834 (microfilm frame sequence was muddled).
5. C.O. 3970 Item 14.
6. C.A. 10 July 1833 (letter).
7. C.O. 3970 Item 14.

SHEET E

1. 

'Hottentot outside a canteen' by C. Webb Smith, circa 1838 (in Gordon Brown A., An Artist at the Cape of Good Hope 1837-1839, No. 69).

2. 

'Hottentot Woman' by C. Webb Smith, circa 1838 (in Gordon Brown, A., An Artist at the Cape of Good Hope 1837-1839, No. 68).

Above all alcohol provided an escape from the unpleasantness of every day life. An attempt has been made to show that living conditions for many people in Cape Town were dreadful. The town was insanitary, the poorer areas were particularly squalid and accommodation was often overcrowded. Many people suffered from long-term diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, which were unrecognised and incurable. Their working hours were long and for some at least, working conditions were bad. Alcohol was relatively cheap, easily available and effectively dulled people's awareness of the circumstances of their lives - therefore, they drank.

'Man is a drunken animal', intoned the Advertiser[1] and wrote of 'the mass of Drunkards, which our canteens nightly vomit forth ...'[2]. Drinking houses, or 'canteens', were described as 'mere receptacles of vice, and dens of theives ...'[3] and 'pigsties' which 'ought not to be allowed to exist'[4]. It was claimed that 'In Cape Town [intemperance] has ruined, and is ruining, hundreds of otherwise well disposed and able labourers and mechanics'[5]; that most of the prevailing illnesses among the government slaves were 'caused by excess of drinking'[6];

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1. 2 April 1836.
2. 17 March 1832.
3. C.A. 6 July 1833 (letter).
4. C.A. 29 November 1834.
5. C.A. 2 April 1836.
6. C.O. 324 Item 12. Examination of W.H. Leys..

and that 'by far the greatest part' of the cases brought into the Somerset Hospital were 'the result of intoxication'[1]. Despite these evils it seems that drinking houses were a necessary component of Cape Town's society and that drinking alcohol was a necessary part of Cape Town people's lives, for practical reasons as well as for a temporary escape into oblivion.

Drunkenness, Poverty and Crime.

It is difficult to make definite statements about convictions for drunkenness in Cape Town during the 1830s. The available records are not complete[1]. Also, changes in the law and fluctuations in the efficiency of the police meant that the basis for arrest and conviction for drunkenness was not consistent during this period. It nevertheless seems that a large proportion of the convictions in Cape Town's courts were for drunkenness, and there is evidence of many other crimes connected with, or committed under the influence of, drink.

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1. The Police Record Books contain details of convictions in the Police Court which appears to have dealt with the majority of offences, but the Cape Archives series covers only the early 1830s and mid 1840s; records for the later 1830s are missing - I/C.T. 8/1 - 4. The Criminal Record Books of the Resident Magistrate for Cape Town contain details of convictions for what appear to be more serious crimes or those of habitual offenders - these are much more complete but the numbers involved are limited - I/C.T. 8/8-10.

Analysis of the Police Record Books for 1832 and 1844[1] suggest that around half the convictions were for drunkenness. In 1832, the proportion was 56.5%. According to Section 22 of Ordinance 93 1832, it was an offence to be 'drunk and lying down from the effects thereof'[2]. The enforcement of Ordinance 93 was apparently a deterrent[3] but it did not enable the police 'to keep the streets clear of Drunkards ...' as a person who was 'staggering' drunk, although potentially more troublesome, was not breaking the law[4]. Although the proportion of convictions for drunkenness in 1832 may be unusually high because of enthusiastic police enforcement of the new law, there must have been many cases of public drunkenness which did not come to court. By 1844 it had become an offence to be 'drunk and disturbing the peace'[5] as well as 'lying down drunk', but the proportion of convictions for drunkenness had dropped to 46%, although the number of convictions was about the same as in 1832. (About 480 and 450 respectively)[6]. This suggests that the overall incidence of public drunkenness had dropped, possibly because of the deterrent effects of the new law and the improved efficiency

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1. Figures for the intermediate years are not available.
2. 1/C.T. 8/4.
3. C.A. 12 September 1832.
4. C.O. 502 Item 38.
5. 1/C.T. 8/4.
6. 1/C.T. 8/1, 8/2 and 8/4.

of the police[1]. Nevertheless, these figures suggest that drinking brought a substantial number of people into conflict with the law. It is interesting to note how large a proportion of these people were white - 46% of those convicted in 1832 and 49% in 1844[2]. If drunkenness was related to unpleasant living conditions, this suggests that there was a considerable number of whites among Cape Town's poor.

Related to drinking were the crimes of disturbing the peace - 18% of the convictions in 1832[3]- and assault. For example, Michael Diamond was accused of 'making a great noise' while drunk in 1830[4], and Klaas, a habitual drunkard[5] was frequently convicted for disturbing the peace and assault, as well as drunkenness[6]. One crime apparently closely connected with drinking was prostitution. The conviction of 'Thomas Smith of Cape Town' for keeping what was obviously a brothel[7] suggests that there was organised prostitution in the town, but there was also a great deal of apparently unorganised soliciting. An area near the Barracks was 'The resort of a gang of Female Hottentots, and other persons of color, many of whom occupy that station day and night, at all seasons of the

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1. They had been re-organised in 1840 under a Metropolitan police inspector - W.A. 25 August 1840.
2. 1/C.T. 8/1, 8/2 and 8/4.
3. 1/C.T. 8/1 and 8/2.
4. C.A. 28 July 1830.
5. See above p.30
6. 1/C.T. 8/1, 8/2; 8/4 - N.B. note August 1844.
7. 1/C.T. 8/9 No. 82.

year', spending 'a great portion of their time in a state of intoxication' and frequently exposing themselves 'in a state of nature to the Public gaze ...'. The area was described as a 'favourite resort of disorderly and abandoned women ... the facility of meeting the soldiers - combined to the Class of public house ...' being the probable reasons[1]. Although the Superintendant of Police claimed that 'the greater proportion by far' of such women were 'Bastard Hottentots'[2] and Irishwoman, Abigail Diamond was convicted at least twice for practising 'public prostitution'[3] in addition to her many convictions for drunkenness[4]. As well as soliciting drunkenly in the streets, prostitutes seem also to have gone into drinking houses, although this could render the licencee liable to prosecution[5] - there are examples of landlords being convicted for allowing 'notorious prostitutes' onto their premises[6]. There does, therefore, seem to be a link between drinking and prostitution at that time.

The possibility that prostitution was directly related to poverty was suggested by the Report of the Commissioners of Enquiry. This stated that prostitutes 'generally consist of Hottentots who arriving with Farmers from the Country Districts

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1. C.O. 4000 Item 94.
2. Ibid; see also picture, Sheet E.
3. I/C.T. 8/8, 1830 and 1832.
4. See Appendix 2.
5. Ordinance 93, 1832, Section 21.
6. C.O. 3963 Item 63; I/C.T. 8/8 Nos. 358 and 374.

are thus thrown without protection into all the temptations of a large Town' and condemned the practice of expelling them to the Cape Flats as 'a cruel aggravation of suffering to the Individuals ...'[1]. It is possible that poorer women with no skills to enable them to work in domestic service or as needlewomen and no facilities to enable them to do washing[2] would have been forced to turn to prostitution for want of an alternative.

Serious crimes were also in some cases linked with excessive drinking. A number of murders were committed by people who were drunk. Among them were the Davy murder[3] and two murders of men by their brothers, one because he was 'always quarrelling, with me when we were drinking'[4]. In all three cases the evidence suggests that the killings stemmed from the fact that the people involved had been drinking. Another case of a capital offence being attributed to drink was that of a seventeen year old boy sentenced to death for rape. His mother suggested that he had 'perhaps drunk too much liquor ...' before being 'enticed' to commit the crime[5].

The restrictions on the sale of alcohol created another area of 'crime'. Alcohol could be sold only by licence[6]. At the Cape opening hours for licensed premises were from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and from 1832 the sale of alcohol on Sundays

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1. Theal, R.C.C. vol. 35, p. 159.
2. Washerwomen needed somewhere to dry clothes - C.O. 3993 Item 71.
3. Z.A. 18 November 1831.
4. Z.A. 2 September 1831 and 28 November 1834.
5. C.O. 3976 Item 16.
6. Ordinance 93.

was completely prohibited. The publicans considered these hours were too limited to cater for the needs of Cape Town's working population and because of the restrictions people turned to 'smugglers'. These were people who sold alcohol - among other things - illegally, without the obligation of keeping order[1]. Anyone could smuggle - all it required was a room, some 'earthenware basins and tin pots ...' and the money or credit to buy half an arum of wine[2]. The high costs of licences to sell wine and spirits meant that few drinking houses made enough money to cover the cost of having one, and so took out beer licences, while 'the wine and spirit retail trade /was/ thrown chiefly into the hands of the smugglers ...'. Even some of the drinking houses with general licences made 'their principal profit by supplying the smuggling houses themselves'[3]. In the 'upper part' of the town there were only three or four licenced houses, but the area as a whole abounded with smugglers[4]. The smuggling trade flourished particularly on Sundays, when the seamen aboard the ships in Table Bay were allowed on shore. If they had not already been contacted by the boatmen plying between the

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1. C.O. 3946 Item 224.
2. C.O. 502 Item 63 - 'Report on the Smuggling Houses in Cape Town.'
3. Ibid.
4. C.A. 18 February 1835 (letter).

ships and the shore during the week, they would be directed to smuggling houses by soldiers waiting as they came ashore, in return for payment in kind[1].

Some people seem to have made smuggling a full-time occupation - two people released after serving prison sentences went straight back to their 'old trade' of smuggling[2]. But probably it was often a way of making extra money, as in the case of a labourer convicted for selling alcohol on a Sunday[3]. The penalties for smuggling were severe, to the extent that they were self-defeating. The smugglers were 'generally of the lowest and worst class of Society'; they could not pay the fine of up to £50.0s.0d., had not 'five shillings worth of property ...' which could be seized to meet it, and cared 'very little' for the month's imprisonment they incurred in default of payment. It was in any case very difficult for the police to prosecute[4] and so the incidence of smuggling is not reflected in the criminal record books.

Among the smugglers were some of the licence holders themselves. They broke the law by selling alcohol out of hours[5] or by selling drinks other than those for which they had a licence. A publicans' petition claimed that the

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1. C.O. 502 Item 63.
2. Ibid.
3. C.O. 3994 Item 65.
4. C.O. 502 Item 63.
5. Egs. C.O. 3956 Item 9, C.O. 3982 Item 171 and C.O. 3994 Item 156.

'Beer Shop' licence was 'a mere Cloke for vending other liquors'[1]. Poorer licencees must have been under considerable pressure, financial and social, to break their recognizances and sell drink illegally in one or both of these ways. Another way to make money illegally was to sell short measures - one Johannes Wirgo 'had not a single assized Measure in his canteen ...', which was, moreover, 'one of the lowest and worst conducted drinking houses in this Town'[2].

According to Ordinance 93 the holders of licences for the sale of alcohol had heavy responsibilities. These included preventing tippling and drunkenness on their premises, along with gambling and the assembling of 'notorious' men and women. They also had to keep 'good rule and order' at all times, but apparently many did not. There were complaints about noise and fights in 'low' drinking houses[3] and several licencees were heavily fined for failing to keep order[4]. In 1839 a Government Advertisement stated that since 'an unnecessary number of Drinking Houses' had been licensed and more were being built, no new licences would be issued for six months, in order to abate 'the public nuisance occasioned by a super-abundance of those fruitful sources of Debauchery and Crime ...'[5].

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1. C.O. 3992 Item 107.
2. C.O. 3983 Item 162.
3. E.g. C.A. 25 September 1833.
4. E.gs. C.O. 4006 Item 34 and C.O. 3968 Item 8.
5. 2 May 1839.

It is clear that in the opinion of the authorities there was a link between drunkenness and public disorder[1] for which they held licencees at least partially responsible[2]. To an extent publicans accepted this. One wrote that 'it will prove to be an incontravertible fact that much of the morality of low-life can by no act, no act of power, be taken out of the Publican's influence ...'[3]. But their position did make licence holders liable to come into conflict with the law.

Although drinking was connected with crime, the factors which led to drinking were also condusive in themselves to anti-social or criminal behaviour. The demolition of the hovels and the 'whole range of houses at the back of Strand Street ...' (probably the worst area in the town) was recommended because

> 'It is from these places that the disturbers of the peace issue; that the hospital is supplied with cases of broken heads, broken bones, cuts and stabs; that the prison is furnished with theives, housebreakers and murderers. It is in such places also that stolen property and criminals are concealed'4.

The lack of comprehensive sources on crime in Cape Town for this period make a more detailed study of the relationship between poverty, drunkenness and crime very difficult, but the evidence suggests that they were connected.

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1. Government Advertisement, 7 January 1839.
2. Above and C.O. 3946, Item 224 - pencil annotations.
3. C.O. 3964 Item 1
4. C.A. 27 May 1840.

The Poor and the Due Processes of Law.

The Charter of Justice of 1828 (confirmed in 1832) and accompanying legislation, of which Ordinance 50, 1828, was a part 'entrenched the technical equality of all before the law courts'[1]. Coloured people and whites were to be dealt with on the same basis in the courts. Even the slaves, although their position was obviously different, were given protection of law in cases such as assault and theft, and were held responsible for their own criminal actions and liable to the same penalties as free people. Thus a white man was imprisoned for stealing from a slave[2] and a respectable merchant was fined for assaulting another slave[3].

Nevertheless, it is clear that the law did not function equitably in Cape Town during the 1830s. At all levels, involvement in legal processes cost money, which put poorer people at a disadvantage which was sometimes very serious. People accused of criminal offences had to pay for their own defence, which could be a tremendous expense. One man and his family had to sell their property and clothing to pay for his defence against a charge of receiving stolen goods[4]. Another man who had been acquitted in a Cape Town court wrote

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1. Sachs, A., 'Enter the British Legal Machine: Law and Administration at the Cape 1806-1910', in University of London Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers on the Societies of Southern Africa ..., Vol. 1, October 1969 - March 1970, No. 10, p. 11.
2. Michael Tromp, 1832 - 1/C.T. 8/8.
3. James Hutton - 1/C.T. 8/8 1830.
4. C.O. 3995 Item 59.

that he would probably have been convicted had he not been in a good enough position to be able to afford a defence counsel[1]. Those who could not raise the money had no defence at all. The husband of a slave convicted for receiving stolen goods said that at her trial she was 'deserted altogether in as much as no man gave her any advice, and noman (sic) made any defence for her ...'. He cited the example of a Mr. Volkwyn who had been acquitted on a similar charge, despite evidence of guilt, because of 'the cleverness of the barrister, whom he was able to fee handsomely, and who made his defence ...'[2].

The result of the lack of a proper defence could be a serious miscarriage of justice. A slave, Alida was convicted and sentenced to death in 1837 for the attempted murder of a child. The sentence was commuted to transportation for life and in 1840 she was still in the House of Correction and used to nurse Prize Negroes suffering from smallpox. Her kindness to them, good conduct and previous good character led to a review of her case. Mr. Justice Menzies commented that at her trial, no motive had been shown for the attempted murder and that if she had admitted to giving the child vitriol in an attempt to cure it, as she had done before under the direction of her mistress, she would probably have been acquitted. Alida was given a free pardon[3] but her inability to pay for legal advice and defence could have cost her her life.

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1. C.O. 3964 Item 1.
2. C.O. 3961 Item 36.
3. C.O. 4004 Item 6.

To an extent the sentence for a given offence seems to have been standard at any particular time , rather than being adapted by the court to the circumstances of a particular person. The same sentence, however, had very different effects on different people. Whereas one ale-house keeper was apparently able to pay a fine of ₤20.0s.0d.[1], another was ruined when, as a result of his not immediately paying a ₤20.0s.0d. fine, 'all his little property ...' was seized and publicly sold, realizing ₤1.19s.6d. and leaving him with ₤18.0s.6d. still to pay[2]. A term of imprisonment was often specified as the alternative to a fine, but frequently people who could not afford to pay the fine could not afford the loss of earnings resulting from a week or a month in prison either[3]. In some cases the imprisonment of one member of a family could mean hardship or destitution for the rest - a 'very poor woman saddled with 5 small children and in expectation of a 6th ...' appealed for mitigation of her husband's sentence of seven years' transportation. A report on the application acknowledged 'the distress brought on the Prisoner's large family ...' but it was nevertheless turned down[4]. The sentences passed by the

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1. C.O. 4005 Item 153.
2. 'Let him go poor Devil' scrawled Governor Napier on his memorial - C.O. 4006 Item 34.
3. E.g. C.O. 4004 Item 22.
4. C.O. 3993 Item 15 and above, p.28

courts were therefore harsher in their effects on the poor than on the more prosperous.

Ironically the poorer people who were sentenced to imprisonment, and particularly hard labour, were relatively more fortunate than other sorts of people. As in England at that time, the authorities had a problem in making conditions in penal establishments bad enough to involve a lower standard of living for prisoners than they had outside, without actually killing them in the process[1]. The Zuid Afrikaan claimed that prisoners, 'not only slaves, but free people of color, are much better off than those who are at large, who evidently envy the convicts having sufficient food and clothing afforded them, while they do not perform so much work ...'[2]. The men sentenced to hard labour in a road gang 'were but little removed from a state of perfect freedom ...'. As a result of 'Finding conviction both profitable and agreeable, they too frequently insured a re-conviction by committing fresh crimes as their sentences expired ...'[3]. One man occasioned suspicions of insanity by asking a court to condemn him to work in irons for a long period, but was 'satisfied' with 21 days imprisonment[4]. Road gang prisoners were kept manacled all the time and were accommodated in the Amsterdam Battery, where, with 'scarcely any provision for sleeping or sitting ...',

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1. For comparison, see English Historical Documents, ed. A. Aspinall and E.A. Smith 1959, Vol. 11, 178-1832, p. 359.
2. Z.A. 28 January 1831, see also C.A. 5 December 1829.
3. Newman, W.A., Biographical Memoir of John Montagu ... 1855, p. 122.
4. C.A. 2 September 1829.

they had to 'kennel where they can find a place'[1]. There was also an 'overpowering smell'[2]. That it could be seriously suggested that prisoners held under these conditions were better off than people who were free, and deliberately had themselves reconvicted so that they could continue enjoying these facilities, says a great deal about conditions of life for Cape Town's poor.

Conclusions.

Despite the technical equality of all before the law, the poor were at a disadvantage. It has been suggested that because of the circumstances of their lives they were more likely to come into conflict with the law. They came into the courts as the result of drink, either because they consumed too much of it or because they sold it illegally to others. Poverty thus led indirectly to crime but it may also have been a direct cause in some cases, for example, those of the prostitutes and also the men who committed crimes to escape into the relative security of the road gangs.

In court the poor were less likely to be able to provide themselves with a defence against the charges and so more likely to be convicted, rightly or wrongly. The likelihood was that sentences, especially fines, would be more likely to cause distress to poor people and their families, since they were not

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1. Champion, G., Journal, p. 20.
2. Newman, W.A., Biographical Memoir of John Montagu, p. 123.

adapted to the circumstances of the individual. Imprisonment could mean the loss of a poor family's bread winner, although for the very poor prisoners, conditions under sentence might be preferrable to those they experienced when free.

Overall Conclusions.

Cape Town does not appear to have been a particularly pleasant place to live during the 1830s and early 1840s. It was dirty and smelly[1], especially in the areas where poorer people lived. Sewage and water facilities were inadequate, especially in the summer. Because of these factors Cape Town seems to have been unhealthy, despite its relatively favourable position and climate. Again, as the mortality during the smallpox epidemic showed, it was the poor who suffered most. This was partly because many of them lived in cramped, overcrowded conditions which made sanitation a considerable problem and also meant they were more likely to pass infections on to one another.

It is suggested that the unpleasant circumstances of their lives, reinforced by other, practical considerations, led poorer people to drink, which both contributed to their poverty[2] and to a good deal of anti-social and criminal behaviour. Poor people brought into conflict with the law, either as the direct

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1. Above and Polson, N., A Subaltern's Sick Leave ..., 1837, p. 77.
2. See above p.48

result of poverty or indirectly through drink, were at a disadvantage in the courts and more likely to suffer as a result of the sentences inflicted, although prison sentences could be a boon.

The implications of poverty in Cape Town were, therefore, a relatively short, not very healthy life in disgusting and overcrowded conditions, enlivened only by periodic bouts of drunkenness and the possibility of a spell of imprisonment.

Section 3 - Social Relations in Cape Town during the 1830s

The implications of poverty may vary according to the nature of the society in which it exists. Although it may not mean very much to many poor people, there is a difference between poverty within a caste society - where social and economic status are clearly related and rigidly defined and a person born poor will ipso facto remain poor - and a more fluid society in which social mobility is possible. The period dealt with in the present work is too short to allow for an examination of social mobility, or the lack of it. But it is possible to attempt to look at social relations within Cape Town's society to see what social divisions there were, on what they were based and how rigid or fluid the social structure was.

Colour or Class?

From a twentieth century standpoint the most obvious basis for distinguishing groups in Cape Town society is racial. Such distinctions were made by contemporaries. Boyce considered that 'peculiarity of colour and degraded habits ...' had made coloured people a distinct class and that they could not mix equally with whites because they were not 'socially equal'[1]. Cooper Rose stated that 'there is in this country a distinction founded on colour, which places the black beyond the pale of those feelings which influence our conduct around us ...'[2].

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1. Boyce, W.B., Notes on South African Affairs from 1834-1838, 1838, p. 134.
2. Four Years in Southern Africa, 1829, p. 32.

The Advertiser recognized divisions within the population, among them a division between 'Black and white'[1]. Moodie divided Cape Town's population into six groups, three of them groups of whites and three of coloureds[2]. Finally Fawcett cheerfully identified 'three distinct exhibitions of hatred. First, the Dutch hate the English; next, the Dutch and English hate the natives; and, lastly, the natives hate the Dutch and English'[3].

The problem with any attempt to divide Cape Town's society on racial lines is that by the 1830s there was no clear physical dividing line between blacks and whites. Cape Town's population was composed of innumerable different nationalities[4] and although the Dutch 'Kapenaars' were apparently the largest single group, no group predominated[5]. These different nationalities were of different hue, ranging from north European white, through swarthier southern Europeans, Asians and Hottentots to Madagascan and African blacks. This variation in skin shade had been compounded by a high rate of miscegnation, especially during the eighteenth century, which took place below the slave line[6], although there

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1. 4 November 1835.
2. Ten Years in South Africa, p. 31.
3. Account of an Eighteen Months' Residence at the Cape of Good Hope in 1835-6, p. 87.
4. See above, Introduction p.iv
5. Krauss, F., 'A Description of Cape Town and Its Way of Life, 1838-40', in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 43-44.
6. Elphick, R. and Giliomee, H., 'Racial Stratification and Racial Prejudice in Early South Africa' - unpublished article; I am grateful for the authors' permission to use this material.

were also unions, formal and informal, between free coloured women and white men[1]. Hence, although there were easily identifiable 'whites' and 'blacks' at the ends of the spectrum, there was a large number of people whose skin pigmentation ranged between the two extremes.

Colour does not appear to have corresponded neatly to social position. The bottom rung of the social ladder was occupied, not by the slaves, but by the lighter skinned Hottentots, or 'Bastard Hottentots'. Miscegnation below the slave line had inevitably produced at least some slaves who looked European, such as Fritz, a slave with 'light yellow curled hair ...'[2]. Meanwhile coloured ancestors and coloured wives darkened skins among the well-to-do[3]. It is true that wealth and prestige were largely concentrated in the hands of whites and that many coloured people were poor, but these distinctions were not absolute. Freund suggests that in the early nineteenth century it was difficult to 'ferret out the colour line at the Cape ...' and that society was not primarily divided along racial lines, although by mid-century racial attitudes were hardening[4].

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1. Freund, W., 'Race in the Social Structure of South Africa, 1652-1836', in Race and Class, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1976), pp. 56-59.

2. Z.A. 14 November 1834.
3. Freund, op. cit. and Patterson, S., 'Some Speculations on the Status and Role of Free People of Colour in the Western Cape', in Studies in African Social Anthropology ed. Fortes and Patterson, 1975, p. 178; Dr. J. Heese mentioned during conversation that J. Hamilton Ross, a leading Cape Town merchant in the 1830s, had a coloured wife.
4. Op. cit. pp. 62 and 63.

There is evidence to support the suggestion that during the 1830s divisions in Cape Town's society were based on class, rather than on race, although there was a relationship between the two. One indication is the way the term 'the poor' or 'the poorer classes' was used. The Advertiser referred to 'the poor or coloured population ...'[1], 'the colored classes and poor generally ...'[2] and 'the poorer classes, both black and white ...'[3], which suggest that although poor people were often coloured, the 'poor generally' were not exclusively non-whites. The Special Wardmasters' reports of 1840 also tended to use the term 'the poor' or 'the very poor' as a general category, including coloureds but not necessarily exclusively coloured[4]. A school established for the 'Infant Poor' in 1830 had 54 English and Dutch children on its books, along with 24 free blacks and 75 slaves[5] and the School of Industry was for 'female children of the lower class, whether white or coloured, slave or free ...'[6].

The idea that divisions within Cape Town's society were not primarily racial is re-inforced by an examination of the residential structure of the town. It is extremely difficult to establish an accurate picture of the residential pattern of

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1. 27 January 1830.
2. 2 December 1837.
3. 3 February 1835.
4. C.O. 490 Item 159.
5. South African Infant Schools - First Annual Report, 1831, p. 9.
6. G.H. 26/18, Cole to Murray, 20 March 1830.

Cape Town at this time because of the inadequacy of available sources, particularly the Almanacks[1]. Where additional information is available - for example the Special Ward-masters' reports of 1840 and, even more valuable, the Assessment Roll of 1842[2] - its usefulness is undermined by the fact that Cape Town's street numbering was done on a different system from the one in use now[3] and was chaotic[4]. With very long streets, such as Loop Street, Bree Street and Longmarket Street, it is therefore difficult to know where a particular house number was, and whether there was a concentration of one group in one part of the street and another group further along. Nevertheless the overall pattern suggested by an analysis of the 1830 street directory[5] is one of racial mixing[6]. There are streets which are apparently almost entirely occupied by white householders, and several lanes are occupied only by blacks. But there are white people living even in Ward I[7], and given that the 1830 street directory is not complete, it is possible that there were more coloured people in the white or predominantly white streets than indicated. Certainly, the fact that so many

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1. See above pp. 5-6
2. 3/C.T. 7/1/2/1/1.
3. This is indicated by the report of a numbering system 'as simple in theory, as it is useful in practice. All the odd numbers are placed in succession on one side of the street, and all the even ones on the other ...' - C.A. 7 November 1829.
4. C.O. 490 Item 159, Ward 6 report; 3/C.T. 1/1/1/5 p. 18, 1/1/1/6 p. 13; Almanack 1836, Notice p. 63.
5. Almanack, 1830, pp. 283-316.
6. See Map, Appendix 5
7. C.O. 490 Item 159.

streets in central Cape Town contained some coloured people indicates that those people must have been scattered. It is difficult to see how they can have been concentrated in particular areas in large numbers. Table 7 shows the break down from several sources of two streets containing white and coloured inhabitants. This indicates how incomplete these sources are and how unreliable street numbering was. It also suggests that where there were coloured and white people in the same street, they overlapped. Residence therefore seems to have depended on factors other than race.

The overlap in the occupations of white and coloured people has already been discussed, and it has been suggested that in general coloured people tended to be at the lower end of any particular occupation group. At the highest occupational level there were no coloured professionals except the priests and teachers in the Malay community. At the lowest level there is no record of a white coolie. Nevertheless a skilled coloured man, even though he was at the lower end of the skilled group, was at a higher occupational level than an unskilled white labourer. There is even an example of a slave having a position of superiority over whites - the slave Damon became second attendant at the Somerset Hospital in 1832[1] and as such was superior to the third attendant, who was first Henry Johnson and then John Blair[2]. When Damon left the

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1. C.O. 405 Item 17.
2. C.O. 427 Item 17.

Table 8 - Street Lists from various sources

Castle Street

House Number	Occupant according to the 1830 Almanack	1840 Almanack	Smallpox reports
1	Mrs. Wilson W. Whiley	D.Sapsford J. Kachelhoffer W.Dobie	
2	W. Venables Widow van der Riet	J.Albertus = F.Ruperti	L.Albertus =
3		B. de Ronde = Miss J.Amm	
4	F.Logier Widow Lichtwark *?		De Ronde =
5	L.Zeebouwer	A. and I. Poer	Andries of the C
6	Mannadine of Batavia*		Damon of the Cape Widow Waledorf
7	J.Sullivan		Abdol Jelil* M
8	Widow Scheuble	F. Scheuble	
9	J.Chisholm	J.B. Hoffman F.L.Gaum	
10	R.Clement		
11	J.Groenewald =	J.H.Groenewald =	
12	P.Vander Byl	D.J.Stegman =	
13	F.Schirmer R.Maasdorp		Dirk Stegman =
14	J.Schroder	J.W.Wege	A.P.Herholdt =
15	A. Herholdt =	A.P.Herholdt =	
16	H. Blankenberg		
17	D.Spies =	J.D.Spies =	C.D.Spies =
18	C.Schlosser	J.H.Washington	Van Coveerh
19	J.H. Luyt P. Hart	H.Greybe =	Greevy =
20	H.Stadl		Widow Eberts =
21	J.Salisbury	J.W.Neuhof	R.Ryans
22	H.Killian (N.W.)	Wilhemina Adamse*	Abraham*
23			Isaac*
24	T. McCulloch	A.Hendriksen =	Lewendorf
25		E.Stouffers =	J.Stovers =
26	J.Vigo		Absylon*
27	Mustapha of the Cape*	J.H.Lesar =	J.Lesar =
28	W.Vironi (N.W.)		A.Majset
29	Frans of the Capa* M?	T.Krankoor	Abdol* M
30	P.Oppel*		Carl Pilgrim* M
31	Abdol Washet* M		A.Barrie
32	Rosina Danielse* =		W.Danielse* =
33	R.Muller		Abdul* M
34	J.Frylinck	F.C.Grondeler =	Groendelars =
35	H.Mader M.D. =	H.Mader =	
36			Bloemetje*
37	Truitje of the Cape*		
38	M.Vlotman* ? Widow Keeve =	H.G.Keeve =	
39	Widow Olthoff =	Hamilton Ross & Co. A.G.Olthoff =	
40	H.Heegers		
41	Salie of the Cape*		Abdol Wasie* M Salie*

Table 8 - continued

42			
43	J.Adams	F.Willemse*	
44	Widow van Reenan	A. van der Poel	
45	P.Siegruhn	J. van der Poel	
		Widow D.Muller	
46	Widow Cleenwerk*	Widow N. Orri	
47	Widow Disandt =	Widow Disandt =	Widow Disandt =
48	T. Deane =	T.Deane =	
		G.Wolhuter	
		J.Smith	
		T.Hudson	
50	W.Cooke	Norden and Perry	
un-numbered	Tarief of the Cape*	J.Panter	Hendriks* =
	G.Twycross	J.Norton	Amar*
	P.Ring	Louisa Nelson	Jumant*
		J.Molteno	Coeser*
		H.Kisch	Kriet*
		Widow Eberly =	Carlina*
			W.Naeberge

Riebeck Street

(✓ indicates that the 1840 name is included in the reports)

1	J.Zietman		
	Maria Jacobs		
2	Rozet of the Cape	W.Bamberger	✓
	Assem of China		
3		W.Jurgens	
4			
5			
6	Widow Edwards		
7	G.Poolman =	C.F.Jonas	✓
		L. Fick	✓
		J.F.Pietersen	✓
8			
9	Mietje Muller		
10	Abraham of the Cape	J. Nyman	✓
11	J.Mulder		
12	Davidse		
13	L.Claasen	Rachel Paulse	
14		A.Delport	
15		Widow Heemert	✓
16			
17			
18	Widow Hartslief	J. van Hon	
19	J.Craay-Winkel=		
20	H. Klyholds	C.G.Poolman =	✓
21	A.Benth	W.Arendse	✓
22		Widow J, Craay-Winkel =	✓
23	J.Brown		
24			
25			
26			
27	K. Timmerman		

1. Smallpox reports - C.O. 490 Item 159 *Black or coloured person
(N.W.) = 'Near White'
M = known 'Malay'
= indicates that the same person or family appears in one of the other lists.

hospital Blair was promoted to his position[1]. There do seem to have been 'poor whites' in Cape Town[2] and thre are examples of jobs being available to a white or coloured person. This suggests that although there was a strong correlation between race and economic class, the primary division in Cape Town's society was class rather than race.

This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that where coloureds and whites lived or worked alongside each other they appear to have been prepared to co-operate. A memorial from some people of Wale, Chiappini and Rose Streets and Hilliger Steeg contains the signatures and marks of coloured people as well as whites[3]. The signatures of a memorial from people living 'eastward to the Town Market' were similarly mixed[4]. Among the mostly white signatures on a memorial from some waggon owners is that of 'Soeker van de kaap'[5] and signatures on the memorials from Cape Town's fishermen[6] and night watch[7] are those of whites and coloureds.

The reasoning of the well-to-do with regard to the education of the poor provides an insight into their attitudes. Serious attempts were made during the 1830s to extend the availability of education to the poor. During the decade the South African Infant Schools' Society was established and

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1. C.O. 427 Item 22.
2. See above pp.23-6 and p.126, and below p.147
3. C.O. 3992 Item 115.
4. C.O. 3994 Item 6.
5. C.O. 3946 Item 230.
6. C.O. 4004 Item 159.
7. C.O. 380 Item 122.

set up several schools in Cape Town[1] and the London Missionary Society was running two full-time schools for 'juveniles' and 'infants' by 1839[2]. There were at least eight other mission schools in Cape Town by 1840[3] and the 1840 Almanack listed six educational bodies which did not appear before 1830[4]. These schools were clearly intended as a means of exercising social control over the lower orders, white as well as coloured. The need for infant schools was explained in terms of 'the young idlers', white and coloured, frequenting Cape Town's streets[5]. ' ... by far the greater number ...' of the European as well as the coloured labouring poor were said to remain 'in a state of the most abject ignorance incapable of resisting any temptation which promises the immediate gratification of their animal appetites'[6]. The object of the Infant School was therefore to diffuse 'such principles among the children of our labouring population as may, in after life, restrain them from wickedness and misery, and make them a moral, industrious and happy people'[7]. This was by no means solely for the benefit of the poor. It was observed that 'the comfort, prosperity, and security of all

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1. Annual Reports 1831 onwards.
2. Report of the Stations of the London Missionary Society, South Africa, 1839, pp. 13-15.
3. S.G.E. 17/1 - Register of Apprentices.
4. No pagination.
5. C.A. 27 January 1830.
6. C.A. 15 February 1834.
7. South African Infant Schools Society, 4th Annual Report, 1834, p. 9.

communities are considerably enhanced by a well-ordered, industrious, and intelligent laboring population ...'[1].

The Infant Schools and the School of Industry were racially mixed[2]. The Infant School Society believed that 'This mixture ...' was 'one of the distinguished excellencies of the system'. It claimed that 'no symptom of pride, humiliation, aversion or jealousy, on account of Color, national extraction, or language ...' had been apparent, in class or in the playground[3]. These schools were intended to produce 'useful, industrious and well-conducted Servants'[4] and the Infant Schools Society refuted allegations that the education they provided for the 'lower orders' tended 'to unfit them for their relative stations in life and consequent duties therein ...'[5]. Only once was it mentioned that education might be desirable as a means of social mobility - the Advertiser wrote that 'In every free country it is the privilege of Labor to aspire ...' and suggested that 'in educating the children of the Poor, we are in fact preparing the middle class of the next generation ...'[6]. Otherwise the education of 'the poor', white and coloured, was seen as a method of producing a sober and reliable working class.

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1. South African Infant Schools Society, 3rd Annual Report, 1833, p. 13.
2. See above p.126and South African Infant Schools Society 4th Annual Report, p. 9 and 12th Annual Report, p. 9.
3. 12th Annual Report, 1843, p. 10.
4. Almanack, 1833, p. 143.
5. 6th Annual Report, 1836, p. 7.
6. 15 February 1834.

On a social level there was racial mixing. Bird describes the 'rainbow balls' which brought together slave and free black girls and 'officers, merchants and young Dutchmen', albeit for dubious reasons[1]. Balls at the Commercial Exchange, which one might expect to have attracted a more exclusive and respectable section of the community, were nonetheless 'attended by all nationalities ...' in a 'variegated crowd'[2].

As Freund points out, 'There was little reason to expect the rise of an apartheid society at the Cape in the early nineteenth century[3]. Some contemporaries recognised distinctions, including those based on colour, but seem not to have regarded them as absolute or permanent. The Advertiser wrote in 1836,

> 'In this Colony, besides the usual distinctions which European Society exhibits, we have a variety of languages, colours, legal conditions, and religious creeds radically opposed, which stand in the way of that union which is commonly called amalgamation. Yet in the sense of the phrase in which alone it is practicable and desirable, an union of all Classes is, we think, rapidly approaching; - or rather it exists at this moment in a high degree, and is rapidly increasing.'[4]

Boyce, who commented specifically on the position of coloured people in Cape society and the 'prejudices arising from associations of inferiority and slavery ...' considered

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1. Bird, State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822, pp. 165-6.
2. Krauss, 'A description of Cape Town and its way of life, 1838-1840', S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, p.
3. 'Race in the Social Structure of South Africa, 1652-1836' in Race and Class, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1976) p. 53.
4. C.A. 6 January 1836.

although they were not socially equal, 'when they become so, there will be few obstacles in the way of their gradual amalgamation'[1]. 'We are a mixed people ...' wrote the Advertiser in 1834; time has not yet assorted us .... There is no artificial barrier in the way of talent, ambition or impudence ... The stratification of such a mass must be left to time ...'[2].

It has been pointed out that there was colour discrimination at this time[3] and contemporaries pointed out that people's colour could affect the way that they were treated, for instance in the courts[4]. Between July and December 1844, 45% of those convicted in Cape Town's Police Court were white, but they received only 17% of the sentences of 'Cuts with a Rattan' on the posterior. Coloureds received corporal punishment for a range of offenses, including disturbing the peace, theft (quite often) and fraud[5]. Whites were more likely to be fined or imprisoned on a spare diet[6]. The term 'apprenticeship' had a completely different meaning for whites and coloureds at that time. It is clear from the Almanacks that there were coloured craftsmen in Cape Town who

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1. Notes on South African Affairs, from 1834-1838, p. 134.
2. 18 January 1834.
3. See above p.123
4. C.A. 3 March 1830 and 5 September 1832 (letter).
5. 1/C.T. 8/4, 1844 - earlier records were not used since the conviction and corporal punishment of slaves for desertion would have distorted the result.
6. Ibid.

must have undergone an apprenticeship, but the very few indentures of craft apprenticeships in the Cape Archives are those of European boys[1]. For a coloured child, an apprenticeship generally meant being bound to an employer for a certain period, but without any commitment on the part of the employer to provide a training[2]. Ordinance 50 of 1828 and Ordinance 3 of 1838 expressly provided for the apprenticeship of the orphans of free people of colour, to a relative if there was one, and so very often these apprenticeships were simply a means of providing for destitute coloured children, some of them very young. Usually coloured children, orphans or not, were apprenticed as servants[3]. It is interesting to contrast the treatment of coloured orphans with that of the 'Orphan Boys McCormack'. They were left destitute at the ages of eight and five years[4] but kept in the Pauper Establishment for several years until old enough to be properly apprenticed[5].

The point is that there does seem to have been more inter-racial mixing and more reason to expect 'amalgamation' in the future during the early nineteenth century than later. Freund points out that inter-racial marriages continued into the nineteenth century but dropped noticably after 1838[6] and

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1. 1/C.T. 13/14.
2. 1/C.T. 13/11.
3. 1/C.T. 13/12 and 13/11.
4. C.O. 451 Item 15.
5. C.O. 499 Item 136.
6. Op. cit. p. 63.

by the 1870s there was apparently less residential mixing than during the 1830s[1]. One must ask whether there were any factors present during the 1830s to explain this apparent change.

The Effect of Slavery and Emancipation of the Slaves on Social Relations in Cape Town.

Part of the reason for the apparently increasing racial stratification of the Cape's society may have been slavery and the emancipation of the slaves during the 1830s. The slaves constituted just under a third of Cape Town's total population at that time and about 61% of the coloured population[2]. The effects of changes involving them were therefore bound to be significant.

Slavery in Cape Town was, relatively speaking, not arduous[3]. Owners did not possess large numbers of slaves and so were not entirely remote from them. A visitor remarked that slaves 'In this family ... are treated more like children than servants, I never saw anything to exceed the kindness'[4]. The rate of manumission in Cape Town was

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1. Bradlow, E., 'Cape Town a hundred years ago: A "somewhat ragged" place', Cape Times Centenary Supplement, 27 March 1976, p. 4.
2. Calculations based on figures in Appendix 3.
3. Krauss, F. 'A description of Cape Town ... S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 48, and 'Report upon the Slaves and State of Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope' by the Commissioners of Enquiry, in Theal, R.C.C., Vol. 35, p. 373-4.
4. Hillard, E. (ed.) My Mother's Journal 1829-1834, entry 16 January 1834.

high in comparison to the rest of Cape Colony[1] and some slaves were allowed to live independently of their owners and save towards buying their freedom[2]. There are nevertheless indications that the slaves themselves did not consider their position very favourably. The most common reason for an official complaint by an owner against a slave was desertion[3] and this was also the slaves' most common crime[4]. They often seem to have reacted to their situation by being drunken[5]. Slaves or their relatives were often prepared to make considerable sacrifices to obtain their own or their family's freedom[6]. They were excited by the arrival of Sir Benjamin D'Urban, a new governor, in 1834 because they expected to be liberated 'at once'[7]. When the slaves were finally freed, there were

> 'a number of processions of Coloured people ... parading Cape Town, singing a Dutch song, in which every verse ended "Victoria! Victoria! Daar waai de Engelschen Vlaag." (There the British flag is waving). My mother asked a Coloured girl to go on an errand for her, she said "No, I won't we are free today!"[8]

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1. Henghem, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' p. 13.
2. 'Report upon the Slaves and State of Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope', Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 373.
3. 1/C.T. 7/7 - Complaints by Owners and Slaves.
4. See especially 1/C.T. 8/1 Police Record Book 1830-1832; also S.O. 3/13 p. 274.
5. There are many examples in the Slave Office Records, S.O. 3/6 - 3/13.
6. See above p.46
7. Hillard, E., My Mother's Journal, 16 January 1834.
8. Steytler, J.G., 'Remembrances from 1832-1900' in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, vol. 25, No. 1, p. 25.

Apparently the interest of slaves in discussions about their future prompted some of them to hire people to read newspapers to them. This was taken by some to indicate 'a rebellious spirit growing in the minds of the Slave population ...'[1]. The Zuid Afrikaan meanwhile fulminated about the property rights of slave owners[2], attempted to suggest ways of avoiding a general emancipation of the slaves[3] and objected to the description of slavery as an 'ungodly system'[4]. The slaves picked up the idea that the British government was prepared to free them but their owners were refusing to accept a fair remuneration, and so came to regard the owners as 'their worst Enemies and the only impediment to their liberation ...'[5]. The result of this sort of interaction was that 'The tie which formerly existed between the Master and the Slave seems ... completely severed, the Master does little now for his slave from real regard, and the Slave nothing for his Master from affection ...'[6].

The abolition of slavery in 1834 'had not added one cubit 'to the status of the 'apprentices' in the eyes of their owners[7]; their treatment over the next four years was no better than it had been under slavery[8] and in some respects

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1. Z.A. 21 January 1831.
2. Ibid.
3. 27 May 1831.
4. 26 August 1831.
5. S.O. 3/6 p. 635.
6. Ibid.
7. Hengherr, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' p. 48.
8. Ibid.

it was worse. Whereas the 'slave laws' had been based on the assumption that slaves needed protection from possible ill-treatment, the law now became a 'punitive agency' aimed at enforcing the apprentices' obligations towards their 'employers'[1]. The position of the young children of apprentices was ambiguous; whereas before December 1834 the slave owner had automatically assumed responsibility for the provisions of his slaves' children, this was now not always the case. Some owners took advantage of this ambiguity to force apprentice parents to indenture their children for long periods, often illegally, in an attempt to ensure that they would not be left without servants after final emancipation[2]. This practice was sufficiently widespread to warrant a Government Advertisement warning that 'any person detaining a child ...' under such circumstances was liable to prosecution[3]. The tendency to free children which had existed before December 1834 was reversed[4]. The former slaves' hopes of the abolition of slavery must have been disappointed

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1. Edwards, I.E., Towards Emancipation - A Study in South African Slavery, 1942, p. 178.
2. A clerk in the Police Office was one - he apparently persuaded his ex-slave Dina to bind herself and her four children to him beyond December 1838. The indentures were declared null and void and she was advised to 'walk quietly out of Mr. De Wet's house with her children and go where she pleases' - she had apparently served him for 30 years - C.O. 3996 Item 136.
3. Government Gazette, 4 January 1839.
4. Hengherr, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' p. 72.

under these circumstances; disillusionment and resentment are likely to have been the result. This may partly explain why, when they were finally freed in 1838, the former slaves promptly abandoned their former owners 'as if by arrangement'[1].

The former slave owners also had cause for resentment in the unsatisfactory arrangements over their compensation money, in addition to the ultimate loss of their servants and some vented their frustrations on their former slaves[2]. The apprentices ultimately reacted by leaving their masters as soon as they were free. This, combined with the fact that the former slaves quickly showed that they had entirely different expectations of life from those would-be employers expected them to have[3], helped to bring about 'a growing divergence between the past slaves and the Europeans ...'. In the early 1840s 'the late apprentices were looked upon as a separate caste ...'[4]. Emancipation of the slaves therefore seems to have had an adverse effect on relations between the largely white former slave owners and coloured ex-slaves.

During the 1830s, Cape Town had a large 'free black' population by comparison with the rest of the colony - about 18% of the town's total and between 35% and 40% of the coloured population[5]. The links between this 'free black'

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1. See above p.15
2. Hengherr, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' p. 59.
3. See above pp 16-17
4. Hengherr, E., 'Emancipation and after ...' pp. 84-5.
5. See Appendix 3 - population table.

group and the slaves were very close. Their origins were the same and many (though not all) 'free blacks' were manumitted slaves or the descendants of slaves. There were 'few' slaves 'without some relative who is free ...'[1]. Slave women had formal and informal unions with free men[2] and slave men were involved with free women[3]. There were families in which slaves had free sisters[4] or a free brother[5]. A slave mother had free children[6] and slave children had free parents[7], uncles[8] or grandparents[9].

When slaves lived apart from their owners they occupied the same houses as 'free blacks'; slaves rented rooms in free blacks' houses[10] and free blacks rented rooms from slaves[11]; they even shared the same room[12]. Slaves and free blacks worked together[13], had business dealings with each other[14], argued[15] and committed crimes together[16]. Family ties, social contacts and general conditions therefore gave slaves and free blacks much in common. This may have meant that worsening relations between owners and slaves affected white-coloured relations generally.

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1. S.O. 3/20a, 25 June 1833.
2. Egs. S.O. 3/11 No. 434 and No. 493 and 3/6 No. 22.
3. Egs. S.O. 3/6 Table 4 and 3/8 No. 231.
4. S.O. 3/8 No. 86 and 3/11 No. 531.
5. S.O. 3/13 No. 667.
6. S.O. 3/10 No. 341.
7. S.O. 3/10 No. 363.
8. S.O. 3/12 No. 711.
9. S.O. 3/10 No. 328.
10. S.O. 3/9 No. 299.
11. S.O. 3/13 Nos. 693 and 712.
12. C.A. 5 August 1829 - from evidence given at the preliminary examination in the case of William, the shoemaker, for murder
13. See above pp43-44
14. S.O. 3/10 No. 342.
15. S.O. 3/9 No. 272 and 3/11 No. 485.
16. S.O. 3/10 p. 437 and 3/12 p. 254. The above references are intended as examples, not as a comprehensive list.

The 'Free Blacks' within Cape Town Society.

At the end of the 1820s, changes in the law had given free blacks more in common with whites than they had previously. They could no longer be subjected to any 'hindrance' or compulsory service not imposed on 'others of His Majesty's subjects[1]. Whereas before they had been required to apply for police permission to leave Cape Town for more than a day and to act as the town's firemen[2], they were no longer subjected to these restrictions.

The Commissioners of Enquiry had recommended 'a general understanding that neither the difference of religion nor the religious faith of the Free Blacks is to be a bar to their possession of an allotment of land ...'[3]. During the 1830s, therefore, free blacks began to buy immoveable property, rather than renting it as they had tended to do before[4]. Indeed, some free blacks became considerable property owners[5]. Free blacks also could, and did, own slaves - there seem to have been a significant number of free black slave owners in Cape Town[6]. Where both owner and slave were Mahomedans, theoretically, the slave was

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1. Ordinance 50, 1828, and accompanying legislation.
2. 'Report ... upon the Police ...', Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 147 and 191.
3. Ibid, p. 138.
4. Ibid.
5. See below p. 159
6. The Register of Slaves for the letter 'A' contains the names of 32 free black slave owners out of 101 - S.O. 6/12. Other registers do not contain as many, but some.

Because free blacks were muslim and had names like Abdul, Mohamet etc; all slaves would be

> 'entitled to be considered an equal in his family and cannot afterwards be sold, and at his Master's Death both himself and his Children are enfranchised; at the same time the Slave is allowed to earn the means of redeeming his Freedom ...'[1]

Since a slave belonging to Jan of Bongies, one of Cape Town's imans[2], complained that her owner gave her no opportunity to earn money towards her freedom and asked to be sold to a European[3], obviously the theory was not always put into practice. Freedom from undue legal restraint and ownership of immoveable property and slaves must have meant *free blacks'* interests were closer to those of the well-to-do whites than of the slaves.

Possession of property rights did not mean very much to the majority of free blacks. They did not have the money to take advantage of them. Although the 1830s was the only period in South African history 'when legislation was used to revoke rather than entrench race differentiation', changes in the law served only to emphasise the 'class aspect' of Cape Town's social structure[4]. They did not alter the largely owner-slave, white-black balance.

The fact that the free blacks had so many contacts with the slaves may have meant that employers identified the two

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1. 'Report upon the Slaves and State of Slavery ...' Theal, R.C.C., Vol. 35, p. 367.
2. Almanack, 1836, Street Directory, p. 108.
3. S.O. 3/11 No. 530.
4. Sach, A., 'Enter the British Legal Machine ...', p. 13.

groups together. They certainly do not seem to have been regarded as a threat in the way that American 'free negroes' were. There were some manifestations of ill-feeling, for example agitation for the revival of a regulation that free blacks should carry torches after dark[1]. A job advertisement ending 'No free negro need apply'[2] was, however, more than outweighed by those stating that 'no objection will be made to a colored Person'[3] or that 'A Free Person, whether a European or Native of this colony, will have the preference'[4]. The 'horrible oppression of the Free colored people' of the United States and 'wild' American schemes to repatriate free negroes prompted two critical Advertiser editorials. The American conviction that 'men of different complexions can never live together in the same country under equal laws!' was rejected since 'South Africa' had seen 'the experiment tried and successful'[5].

Two political questions, both subjects of intense interest to the white public, may have marred relations between whites and free blacks during this period. These were the question of a vagrancy law to accompany emancipation of the slaves and the issue of Representative Government.

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1. In 1830 'A Mulatto' recommended a regulation that whites should carry torches as well, 'which would at once raise them to the level of the enlightened man of color ...'! C.A. 7 July 1830 (letter).
2. C.A. 4 May 1831.
3. C.A. 27 August 1831.
4. Z.A. 16 May 1834.
5. C.A. 14 and 18 November 1835.

Ordinance 50 of 1828 was aimed at 'improving the condition of Hottentots and other free Persons of colour ...' and in the absence of a new vagrancy law, it was to apply to the slaves once they were emancipated. Two elements emerged from the discussions about a new law: white apprehensions of a labour shortage following emancipation and fears of the attitude and behaviour of coloured people once they were free to express themselves as they wished. Cape Town expected an influx of former slaves and assuming that they would have to earn a living somehow, was less anxious about a labour shortage than the country districts[1]. But there were 'many sincere alarmists ...' who feared that emancipation would mean a 'multitude ... heathen in its character, acknowledging no religion or moral restraints, and prone to idleness, vagabondizing and plunder ...' being 'thrown loose upon the Community'[2]. Inhabitants of the Gardens area of Cape Town considered that they had 'as much interest' in a vagrancy law 'as other Colonists ...' since they claimed to be 'continually exposed to being robbed ...' by people 'vagabondizing ... about their Gardens and forests ...'. Without a law they looked forward 'with the greatest apprehension and anxiety ...' to emancipation of the slaves[3]. Their fears were reinforced by the behaviour of 'Hottentots' effectively freed by

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1. C.A. 28 November 1838.
2. C.A. 20 December 1837.
3. L.C.A. 6 - Memorial dated 18 July 1834, Item 33.

Ordinance 50. A confidential report on this suggested that many had become vagrants[1]. Many were said to have gathered in the vicinity of Cape Town 'in a state of drunkenness and entire nakedness ... exhibiting scenes the most indecent and disgusting, and the lives of many of them were actually sacrificed from exposure in a state of insensibility from drunkenness ...'[2]. Respectable people were anxious about the effct of this sort of thing on their servants[3] and, one suspects, deeply shocked themselves. The prospect that the slaves, once free, would likewise indulge in 'the debauchery of libidinous liberty ... uncontrolled by any just conception of morality or sound sense of Religion ...' was there, and it was thought doubtful that the police would be able to maintain control in such circumstances[4].

Would-be employers also objected to the reluctance of the 'Hottentots' to work. Part of the complaint against them after 1828 was that they failed to 'understand or appreciate the benevolent views ...' of the government by improving their condition when free to do so. Agitation over the vagrancy laws suggests a profound difference in attitudes to work between the prosperous white employers and poorer, coloured

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1. C.O. 371 Item 88.
2. L.C.A. 6 - Civil Commissioner's Office 23 June 1834: report on the Memorial of Dr. John Philip.
3. L.C.A. 6 - Memorial dated 18 July 1834, Item 33 and also C.O. 3962 Item 41.
4. Z.A. 22 June 1838.

working people. A vagrancy law would have affected poor whites as well as coloured people[1]. Nevertheless, free coloured people who were aware of the discussion must have been particularly resentful of attempts to deprive them of the freedom they had just acquired.

Representative government was well established as an issue by 1830, and one on which there seems to have been substantial white agreement. The Advertiser's desire for 'a Representative System of Government[2] was shared by the Zuid Afrikaan which confidently anticipated the grant of 'the privileges of the Representative and Corporate System ...'[3]. Slavery was an obstacle but the approach of slave emancipation in 1834 renewed hopes of 'great and important changes in our Form of government'[4]. A public meeting of English and Dutch people in Cape Town disagreed violently over a vagrancy law but carried almost unanimously a resolution that 'the Population and wealth of the Colony entitle it to a Representative Legislative'[5]. As Cape Town people were aware, Canada already had a representative government[6], so why not them?

Among the reasons for the British government's refusal to grant representative government to the Cape was that the coloured population would then be unable to protect itself

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1. C.A. 17 May 1834 and L.C.A. 6 Item 47 - Memorial from the Committee for Juvenile Apprentices.
2. 29 April 1829.
3. 7 January 1831.
4. C.A. 1 January 1834.
5. C.A. 11 October 1834 and Z.A. 10 October 1834.
6. Z.A. 7 January 1831.

against a legislature dominated by whites. The 'potential white voters' were considered 'as yet unfit to share their privileges ...'[1]. In 1842 the Colonial Secretary expressed fears that representative institutions might be 'perverted into a means of gratifying the antipathies of a dominant caste, or of promoting their own interests or prejudices at the expense of other and less powerful classes'[2].

Thus at a time when conflicts between owners and slaves arising from emancipation were already straining relations between the broadly white and coloured elements of the population, there were additional pressures. White people were resentful of the behaviour of certain elements of the free coloured population and apprehensive about what final emancipation of the slaves would bring. In addition, the coloured population constituted an obstacle to the granting of the representative government which many people in Cape Town very much desired.

The 'Poor White' Population of Cape Town.

The fact that there was a white element among the poor of Cape Town has already been pointed out. There were cases of white people suffering hardship and destitution[3]. Whites

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1. Trapido, S., 'The Origins of the Cape Franchise Qualifications of 1853' in Journal of African History, vol. 1 (1964) p. 37.
2. Quoted in Thomson, L.M., The Cape Coloured Franchise, 1949, p. 4.
3. See above pp23-6 and C.O. 397 Item 70.

lived in the lanes and alleys of Cape Town, in Ward 1, the poorest area of the town[1], and elsewhere, alongside poor coloured people[2]; sometimes they shared the same house[3]. Like poorer coloured people, whites worked as labourers[4] and domestic servants[5]. The Advertiser considered that qualifications for the vote for a legislative assembly would have to be 'sufficiently low', not just to include 'Malays and free colored people ...' but also 'the English, Irish and Scotch ...'[6].

Noticeable among the poorer whites are the Irish. That part of Cape Town was called 'Irish Town'[7] suggests that a substantial number of Irish people lived there[8]! This is confirmed by Backhouse's description of the Sidney Street chapel area as 'a district of the town in which many poor Irish and coloured people reside'[9]. Some of these people had formally emigrated to the Cape. A Mr. Ingram brought out a batch of emigrants, at least some of whom were Irish, in 1823 and they were 'chiefly employed about Cape Town ...'[10]. A further batch of 220'Irish Emigrants' arrived in 1840[11]. Some

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1. Egs. the Davy household and the Diamonds, both in Hardersteeg - Z.A. 18 November 1831, and Almanack 1836, p. 73; J.Williams in Mossel steeg - Almanack 1830.
2. See C.O. 490 Item 159, reports for Wards 2 and 6.
3. Eg. C. Cook and Fortuin of Batavia of 50 Keerom steeg - Almanack 1830, pp. 289 and 292.
4. Eg. Thomas McDonald and Hugh Montgomery - 1/C.T. 8/1, 1830 and T. Pearson - Almanack 1830, p. 305.
5. Eg. Abigail Diamond - see Appendix 2, Mary Fagan - C.O. 3970 Item 15 and W. Laurence, a coachman - Almanack 1830, p. 300.
6. 18 October 1834.
7. Government Advertisement, 22 April 1840.
8. See Map, Appendix 5
9. Narrative of a Visit, pp. 85-6.
10. C.A. 19 December 1829 and Z.A. 1 April 1831.
11. W.A. 29 October 1840.

seem to have come individually, for example Ann Curtain who was hired as a servant in Ireland and brought out[1] and Robert Reeve who seems to have come out to investigate before sending for his wife to join him[2]. It is possible that others who came were not counted as immigrants. Cape Town had a garrison[3] and was on the route to Britain's eastern possessions. At this time 'the private soldiers of the British Army were largely Irish ...'[4] and it seems possible that, having joined the army to escape poverty and lack of opportunity[5] some of them took their discharges at the Cape, rather than returning to Ireland[6]. In some cases their families apparently came with them[7].

Some of the Irish were skilled[8] and some had businesses[9]. But others were at the bottom of Cape Town's occupational structure. They worked as labourers in the government quarries[10] and elsewhere[11], as servants[12] and in the not very

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1. 1/C.T. 7/6, 1830.
2. She meanwhile had gone off to Montreal! 4 July 1829.
3. C.A. 29 February 1832.
4. Woodham Smith, C., The Great Hunger - Ireland 1845-9, 1962, p. 28.
5. Ibid.
6. Egs. Dennis Murphy, C.O. 3972 Item 70, J. Oragan C.O. 3988 Item 99.
7. Eg. C.O. 3964 Item 54.
8. Eg. Patrick Road, a cooper and John Sullivan, a shoemaker - Almanack, 1836, pp. 92 and 98.
9. Eg. Patrick Higgins and Daniel Kennedy, Almanack, 1836, pp. 79 and 82; Kennedy was a slave owner - 1/C.T. 8/1, 1831.
10. C.O. 478 Item 124 and 487 Item 101.
11. Eg. C.O. 3988 Item 97.
12. Eg. Catherine Flynn - 1/C.T. 8/10 and Sarah Gallagher, a soldier's daughter - C.O. 3951 Items 50 and 52.

august positions of Somerset Hospital sick attendants[1] and policemen[2]. Irish names crop up quite frequently in the Police Record Books and the newspaper reports of Police Office proceedings often refer to people like 'Mrs. Smith, a rosy faced damsel from the Emerald Isle'[3]. Patrick Reagan was imprisoned at least three times in 1832, for drunkenness and assault[4], and Abigail Diamond must have been about the most notorious woman in Cape Town[5]. That these people were not particularly well-to-do is suggested by the fact that most of the Irish names in the Police Record Books do not appear in the Almanacks[6].

Further research on the 'poor whites' of Cape Town could be valuable in shedding light on the development of relations between whites and blacks in the mid-nineteenth century. The Irish seem to form a substantial and identifiable element within the poor white group and with regard to them the Roman Catholic churches might have useful records[7].

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1. Whose earnings were well below the poverty line - see Table 3, p. 12, Eg. B. Donaghue and Thomas Davie - C.O.376 Items 114 and 115.
2. Eg. 'The Irish Constable Welch' - C.A. 24 October 1829.
3. C.A. 1 July 1829.
4. I/C.T. 8/1 and 8/2.
5. See Appendix 2.
6. See above pp. 5-6
7. There was a Roman Catholic chapel in Cape Town at this time.

The 'Malays'.

During the 1830s contemporaries often referred to 'the Malays' or 'Mahomedans'. One writer described them as 'a large and distinct body ...'[1], and it may be considered surprising that they have not been discussed as such earlier in the present work. There are two reasons why the Malays as a separate group have been left till now. One is, that the lack of any serious attempt to analyse the position of Cape Town's poor and coloured population during the first part of the nineteenth century necessitated a generalised approach. The other is that it may be questioned how far the Malays did in fact constitute a group which was clearly distinguishable from the mass of Cape Town's coloured population at that time.

The term 'Malay' does not seem to have had a precise definition during the 1830s. Technically it refers to people from Malaya, or more broadly, the Dutch East Indies, but by the 1830s the pure Malays had mixed with non-Malay elements in Cape Town's community[2]. By that time 'Malay' had come to have a religious meaning. Imans were generally referred to as 'Malay priests'[3], and there is a description of the fear shown by 'Malays' of beheading, because of the 'scorn and contempt' they believed would ensue in the 'happy regions' - a religious belief[4]. Patterson points out, however, that

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1. Champion, G., Journal, p. 28.
2. Freund, W., 'Race in the Social Structure of South Africa, 1652-1836', p. 61.
3. Eg. Jan of Bongies - Almanack, 1836, p. 108.
4. Webster, W.H.B., Narrative of a Voyage ..., p. 258.

although most of the slaves and others who came to the Cape from the east were followers of Islam, not all of them were. Some held Christian beliefs[1]. Nevertheless in the 1850s and apparently before 'The term "Malay" /was/ ... locally applied to all Mahometans'[2]. The meaning of the term 'Mahomedan', which was spelt in a variety of ways[3], was clearer - generally it referred to the adherents of Islam as such. Even so, one writer referred to 'The Malays or Mahometans ...', which suggests a lack of precision[4].

According to the Imans, there was a total of 2,167 Muslims, slave and free, in Cape Town in 1825[5]. In 1839 the Imans put the figure at 6,492[6]. This was an increase of 300% and the equivalent of just under two thirds of the entire coloured community. Such a vast increase must have been due to the fact that the Muslims were attracting a large number of converts and there is a good deal of evidence that this was so. The Commissioners of Enquiry reported the 'manifest preference' for Islam and the 'increased number' of Muslims among the slaves[7]. The Advertiser also observed that many slaves were 'followers of Mahomet ...' and that most slaves converted from their own ('heathen') religions turned to 'That Prophet'[8]. In the mid-

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1. 'Status and Role of Free People of Colour ...' p.
2. Mayson, J.S., The Malays of Cape Town, 1855, p. 10.
3. Eg. 'Moohummudanism' - C.A. 16 December 1835 (letter).
4. Champion, G., Journal, p. 28.
5. Shell, R., 'The Establishment and Spread of Islam at the Cape from the Beginning of Company Rule to 1838', unpublished B.A. (Hons) long essay, U.C.T. 1974, p. 41.
6. C.O. 483 Item 65.
7. 'Report upon the Slaves ...' Theal, R.C.C., Vol. 35, p.366.
8. 23 December 1829.

1830s a visitor wrote that 'The Muhammadan priests were active, laborious, and successful, in their calling; and converts are constantly being added to the faith ...'[1]. The 'spread of Mahomedanism in Cape Town' was attributed to the 'kindness' of the Imans to coloured people[2].

It seems that large scale conversions had an effect on the Islamic religion as it was practised at the Cape. This is especially likely in view of the relative isolation of Cape Muslims following 'the liquidation of the old V.O.C. [by which] the Cape Malays were denied cultural or intellectual links with Indonesia'[3]. Du Plessis considers that it was 'this isolation' which led to 'a decline in religious practices ...' during the nineteenth century[4]. It was said that in the 1850s many 'Malays' were very uninformed about their beliefs[5]. The huge influx of unsophisticated adherents over a relatively short period of time may have been part of the cause. The suggestion that at least some of the converts were 'pressed by poverty and allured by Mahometan benevolence ...'[6], and won over by kindness and the promise of a proper burial[7], indicates that many of them became Muslims for other than religious reasons. The Imans may not have insisted upon too strict a conformity among their new believers.

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1. Fawcett, J., Account of an Eighteen Months' Residence ..., p. 90.
2. Backhouse, J., Narrative ..., p. 82.
3. du Plessis, I.D., and Luckhoff, C.A., The Malay Quarter and its People, 1953, p. 19*53*
4. Ibid.
5. Mayson, J.S., The Malays of Cape Town, p. 16.
6. Ibid, p. 11.
7. Champion, Journal, p. 20.

It is clear that there were Muslims who did not conform to the precepts of their faith, which among other things forbade alcohol. Not only was 'beer ... freely partaken of in the nineteenth century ...' by Muslims[1] but 'the lower classes' of 'Malay' took to 'improving their malt liquor by an infusion of brandy ...'[2]. Over-indulgence brought Malays into conflict with the law. A 'Malay tailor' was convicted of assault but acquitted of attempting to rape his sister-in-law because he had been 'so much intoxicated that he did not know what he was about'[3]. Another 'Malay' killed his brother during a fight in a canteen after both had been drinking[4]. The Islamic faith also enjoins a measure of cleanliness, but in 1840 the Special Wardmasters found the house of one 'Malay priest', 'in a dirty condition' and that of another 'Dirty and Overcrowded' and 'complained of by the neighbours as a nuisance'[5].

In terms of appearance the 'Malays' are thought to have been easily identifiable. The men in particular wore 'the red handkerchief and conical head dress, the badges of Mahomet'[6]. Whether these were worn exclusively by Muslims may, however, be questioned. The Imans stated that there were those who wore 'the Mahomedan handkerchief' who had never been 'admitted to the Mosques ...'[7]. It was pointed out that the

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1. du Plessis, I.D., and Luckhoff, C.A., op. cit. p. 15.
2. Mayson, J.S. The Malays of Cape Town, p. 22.
3. C.A. 20 July 1836.
4. Z.A. 2 September 1831.
5. C.O. 490 Item 159, Ward I report.
6. Champion, G., Journal, p. 20.
7. 'Report upon the Slaves ...' Theal, R.C.C., vol. 35, p. 368.

'conical hats' were 'very sensible contrivances against sun and rain'[1], and so non-Malays may also have worn them - a 'Hottentot basket vendor' was drawn wearing one[2]. Sheet G is a contemporary drawing of a drunkard with a conical hat - the man could be a 'Malay' who is drunk or a non-Malay with a concial hat. In either case it illustrates that distinctions between the Malays and the rest of the coloured population, in behaviour and dress, were far from clear.

In an age far more spiritually aware than our own, it is not surprising that the 'Malays' should have been singled out because of their alien creed. It was acknowledged that the Imans had considerable influence among their congregations which could be used to good effect[3]. It tended to be assumed, however, that their influence was more likely to be bad. The Imans told the Commissioners of Enquiry that they earned their livings 'from the pursuit of various trades ...' and did not rely for support on their congregations[4]. Despite this, an outbreak of thefts in 1835 was ascribed to the 'Mahometans' - an Islamic festival was approaching and they were said to be stealing to pay a levy demanded by their priests[5]. An

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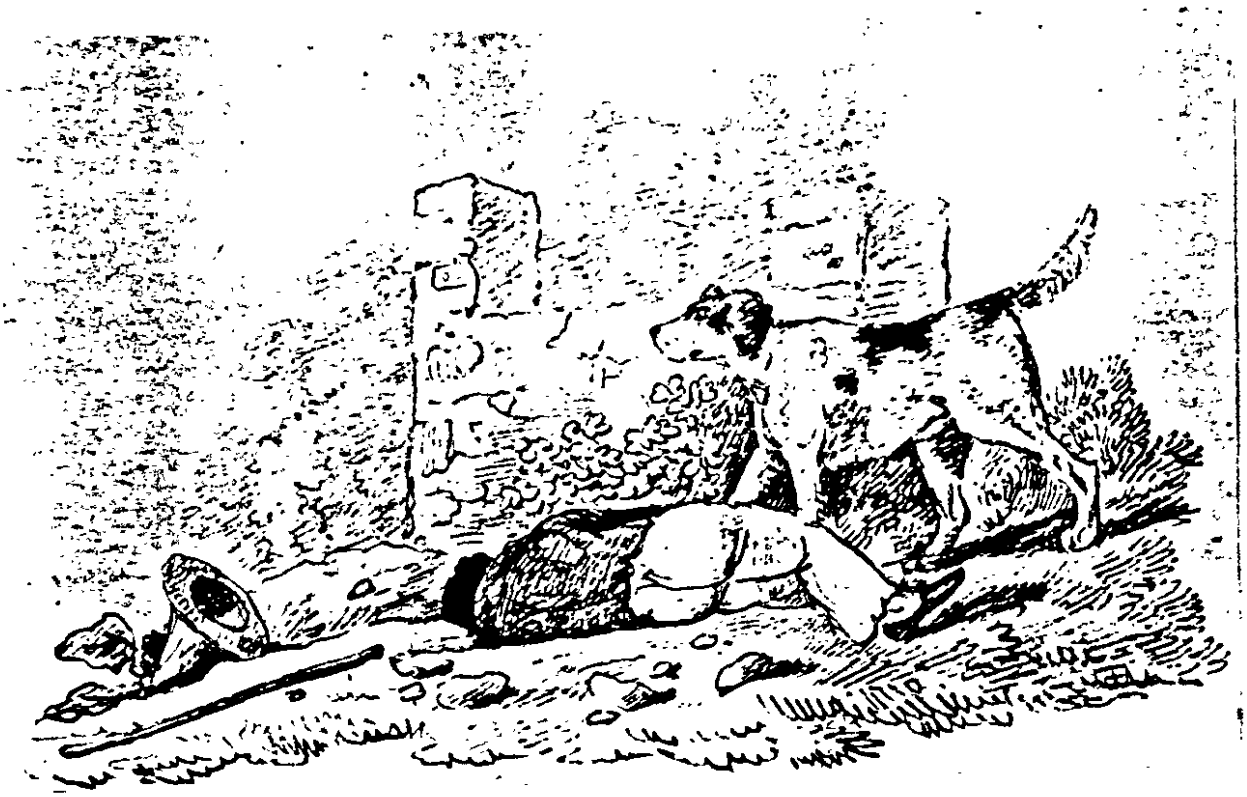
1. Cole, A.W., The Cape and the Kafirs or, Notes of Five Years Residence in South Africa, 1852, p. 29.
2. By Sir Charles D'Oyly - in Pama, C., Regency Cape Town, 1975.
3. During the smallpox epidemic of 1840 the authorities arranged a meeting of the Imans so that Dr. Bailey could explain to them the need for vaccination and request their co-operation - C.O. 493 Item 24 - which was apparently forthcoming - Ibid; the Special Wardmasters found that 'Malays' were willing to be vaccinated - C.O. 490 Item 159, especially Ward 2 report.
4. 'Report upon the Slaves ...', Theal R.C.C., Vol. 35, p. 368.
5. Champion, G., Journal, p. 26.

SHEET F



'The South African besetting sin' by Sir Charles D'Oyly, circa 1833
(in Pama, C., 'Regency Cape Town)

American missionary aired the view that the Islamic faith 'encouraged crime by holding out an easy way of absolution'[1]. Another example of prejudice against the Muslims was the belief in 1840 that smallpox was particularly prevalent among them and they were spreading it to other elements of the community. The Imans told Dr. Bailey that 'the disease does not prevail to the extent, nor anything near it, /among Muslims/ that the rumours of the day would have the Public believe'[2].

Certain writers were apprehensive about the spread of Islam among Cape Town's coloureds because they felt it had wider implications. Colebrooke expressed the view that it:

> 'Must be deemed a political evil. The difference of colour furnishes already but too broad a line of distinction. Add the difference of religion, and the line of demarcation becomes yet wider and deeper ...'[3].

The Advertiser stated that the main distinction within Cape society was religious and that it stood in the path of 'amalgamation'[4]. By that time, however, Islam was firmly established at the Cape - the authorities employed a 'Malay priest' to administer the oath to Muslim witnesses in court[5], over-ruled an official who was apprenticing Muslim orphans to Christians when they had Muslim relatives prepared to care for them[6], and 'avoided interfering with them /Muslims/ or their Customs ...'[7].

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1. Champion, G., Journal, p. 6.
2. C.O. 493 Item 24.
3. Editor's note in Bird, W., The State of the Cape in 1822, p. 349.
4. 6 January 1836.
5. C.O. 372 Item 115 and C.O. 3956 Item 111.
6. C.O. 472 Items 88 and 89.
7. C.O. 493 Item 24.

It can be difficult to judge how the 'Malays' fitted into Cape Town's residential and occupational structure because of the problem of identifying them. Some are obvious - Abdo Cadir and Carel Pilgrim are examples - but not others. It is clear from his will that Frans of the Cape was a Mahomedan[1] but not from his name; in the case of people who did not leave written evidence of their faith it can be impossible to tell who among the coloureds was a 'Malay' and who was not.

It is clear, however, that there was no great concentration of 'Malays' in a particular area of Cape Town in the 1830s. Much of today's 'Malay Quarter' did not exist at that time and much of what did seems to have been occupied by a mixed population[2]. According to the Abstract of a census taken in 1842, none of the twelve districts of Cape Town was overwhelmingly 'Malay'. The area with the greatest proportion of Mahomedans was District 4, where they constituted 46% of the total population[3]. But even there the Mahomedans were more than half the total population in only one ward - 56% in District 4 Ward 15[4]. It seems that, as with the rest of Cape Town's population, the Malays' choice of where to live depended on economic rather than racial or cultural considerations. Table 7[5] gives some indication of how they were

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1. M.O.O.C. 7/1/230 No. 73.
2. See Map, Appendix 5
3. Almanack 1844 - 'A Synopsis of the Population ... of Cape Town' (no pagination).
4. 3/C.T. 1/1/5/8 Item 1045.
5. See above p.128

It has been claimed that the 'Malays' were the most valuable of the Cape slaves and they they constituted the artisan class of Cape Town[1]. It is clear, however, that by the 1830s Cape-born slaves resulting from white-slave unions were more highly valued than pure Malays brought in from the East[2]. Some commentators were unimpressed by Malay skills. For example, they were described as 'tolerable carpenters for rough work ...'[3]. Since so large a proportion of the coloured population seem to have been converted to Islam by 1839[4] and the term 'Malay' was applied to them, it seems unwise to generalise about their place in the occupational structure apart from the coloured population as a whole. Analysis of the 1830 Street Directory shows that some obvious Malays were apparently skilled self-employed[5], some were skilled in the sort of craft where they are likely to have been employed[6], some had their own businesses[7] and some were unskilled[8].

There are two reasons, apart from the religious aspect, why significance has been attached to the 'Malays' as a group. One is that some 'Malays' though apparently not all, did

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1. Shell, R., 'The Establishment and Spread of Islam at the Cape ...' p. 51.
2. Bird, W., State of the Cape in 1822, p. 73; and Krauss, F., 'A Description of Cape Town and Its Way of Life, 1838 -40', in S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 47.
3. Alexander, J.E., An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, 1838, Vol. 2, p. 286 - see also Hemming, J., 'Communication', p. 38.
4. See above p.152
5. Eg. Abdolwashet, a tailor.
6. Eg. Abdolsoeker, a mason.
7. Eg. Janpakan of Batavia.
8. Eg. Willem Abdol of the Cape, a labourer - Almanack, 1830, pp. 284, 297 and 315.

adhere to the tenets of their faith and were, possibly as a result, sober and reliable work people and servants. A second point is that there were among them various people who were successful and even rich. A list of coloured property owners in Cape Town in the 1844 Almanack is called 'List of the names of Mahomedans, and other Free Blacks, who are Proprietors of landed Property ...'[1] and many of the names are easily identifiable as Malay, or those of known Malays[2]. In fact the successful among the coloured people seem to have been overwhelmingly Muslims. One must ask whether this was because of their culture and religion or other factors.

It was beyond the scope of the present work to undertake detailed research into the lives of prominant Muslims in Cape Town, to discover why they were successful. Some details were available about two of them, however, which are of interest. One of the most successful of the Cape Town Malays was Abdol Wasie. In 1844 he occupied a house, the appraised value of which was £1,000.0s.0d[3] and was thus one of the small number of men, white or coloured, to qualify for election as a Commissioner of the Cape Town Municipality. The point about him is that he arrived at the Cape in 1792 as a free man[4]. Another reasonably successful man was Abdol

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1. Underlining mine (no pagination).
2. Eg. Frans of the Cape, see Appendix 2.
3. A considerable sum - a small house would be valued at £60-£80. Almanack 1844, 'List ...'.
4. See Appendix 2.

Garisch, who qualified as a municipal voter in 1840[1]. He also came to the Cape a free man, in 1798[2]. It is a possibility that the wealthier 'Malays' were well-to-do not so much because of their religion as because they were free throughout their working lives to accumulate capital and take up opportunities. Unlike former slaves they had not spent time working for the benefit of someone else and had not had to save up for, or pay off a debt for, their freedom[3]. Within this context, it is unfortunate that the wealthiest of Cape Town's Muslims, who, moreover, was apparently born at the Cape, should be comparatively elusive. His name was Frans van de Kaap[4], which was ordinary enough to have been shared by other coloureds, and he seems to have been a shoemaker[5]. It would be of value to know more about him in order to understand what opportunities there were for Cape born coloured people to achieve prosperity at that time and how significant their adherence to Islam was in this respect.

Another explanation for the apparent success of Muslims in particular is put forward by Patterson. Pointing out that 'Money whitens', she suggests that those successful coloured who were able to, joined white society. The 'Malay elite'

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1. 3/C.T. 10/1.
2. C.O. 3956 Item 111.
3. See above, p.46
4. Which denotes that he was born here - Armstrong, J.C., 'The Free Black Community at the Cape of Good Hope in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' draft of a paper delivered at the Dusquesne History Forum, November 1973, p. 13.
5. See Appendix 2.

remained as 'a havan or niche for many upwardly mobile Asians or non-Asians who were not light enough or otherwise equipped to pass into the burger community'[1].

There is some evidence of moves among successful coloured people to lighten the skins of succeeding generations. Krauss stated that:

> 'Many a one, through diligence and hard work, has acquired a small fortune, and through uprightness the respect of his fellow-citizens, living to see his daughter married to a white man'[2].

There are also examples of well-to-do Muslims married to European women. Mayson mentions one[3]; another is Samsodien, an apparently prosperous fisherman who was married to Elizabeth Wrankmore, the daughter of a 'private Gentleman' from Devon[4].

Both Freund and Patterson suggest that the 'Malays' probably did not constitute a distinct and intermediate group between white and black in Cape Town society, at least during the first part of the nineteenth century[5]. Clearly, more research is needed into their relationship with the rest of the community, particularly the coloured population. It would seem vital, however, to avoid the trap, scathingly particularised by Patterson, of dealing with the 'Malays' 'patronizingly' as a 'separate, exotic, conservative community,

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1. 'Status and role of free people of Colour ...' p. 196.
2. 'A description of Cape Town ...' S.A.L. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 48.
3. The Malays of Cape Town, p. 12.
4. See Appendix 2.
5. Freuend, W., op. cit. p. 61 and Patterson, S., 'Status and Role of Free People of Colour ...' p. 197.

given to colourful weddings, journeys to Mecca, Khalifah ceremonies, and amok-running'[1]. They need to be kept in perspective.

Conclusions.

It would seem from this rather general study that, although whites occupied the higher levels of Cape Town society and the lowest levels were very largely coloured, there was a good deal of overlap in between. There was an awareness of colour distinctions and examples of discrimination because of colour, but coloured and white people also lived and worked alongside each other and had interests in common at various levels.

During the 1830s, however, the nature of social relations seems to have begun to change. The new freedom acquired by coloured people as a result of Ordinance 50, 1828 and the final emancipation of the slaves, and their failure in the eyes of some white people to take advantage of their new opportunities led to resentment. This was compounded by white fears of what final emancipation would bring and frustration at the obstacle the slaves and coloureds presented to the grant of representative government. Disillusionment and resentment on the part of the slaves at their treatment while 'apprentices' and technically free (between December 1834 and December 1838), which may have caused their general abandonment of their former owners

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1. Patterson, S., 'Status and Role of Free people of Colour ...' pp. 196-7.

would have been increased by their awareness of increasing white hostility, exemplified by the increasing harshness of the law[1]. This may help to explain the apparent lack of co-operation of the former slaves with would-be employers after 1838[2]. This sort of inter-reaction may have been responsible for the widening gulf between the white and coloured elements of Cape Town society which seems to have been developing by the mid-nineteenth century.

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1. See above p.138
2. See above p.139

CONCLUSION

> 'So the last word of the historian is not some fine firm general statement: it is a piece of detailed research. It is a study of the complexity that underlines any generalisation that we can make.' [1]

It has been beyond the scope of this thesis to do more than scratch the surface of the complexities of Cape Town society and life during the 1830s. There is much, more detailed, research which could be done. For example, examination of family earning power and expenditure over a period of time by a qualified person would show much more clearly the extent and nature of poverty in Cape Town. It would be possible, also, to investigate much more closely the residential structure of Cape Town and how it changed using the Almanacks in conjunction with other sources. It might be possible to build up something approaching a house-by-house picture of the town, (this would probably best be done by a group of people, rather than an individual, and would require time and facilities) to show when residential segregation on a racial basis began. Another area needing specialised research is that of medical history. The apparently low average age of death and almost stagnant population of Cape Town need explaining by an expert.

The most important conclusion of this thesis is, therefore, that despite problems with sources, there is enormous scope for detailed and specialised research into Cape Town's history. This could be of value both as a point of comparison with the present-day situation in which Cape Town society finds itself and also as part of the explanation of how that situation developed. Properly directed, such research work could be very exciting.

Some generalisations can be made on the basis of the research done by the present writer. It seems that in absolute terms there was poverty in Cape Town during the 1830s and that the lives of the poor were unpleasant. Given an apparently high infant mortality rate and the filth and overcrowding in poorer parts of the town, poorer people were

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1. Butterfield, H., The Whig Interpretation of History, 1973, p.57

probably particularly likely to die young. If they survived to adulthood, they faced the prospect of a life of more or less indifferent health in squalid, cramped living conditions. Those able to obtain a training seem to have reasonably good job prospects. The unskilled, although there was a demand for labour, did not have particularly high earning power and may have been subject to seasonal fluctuations in employment. Both groups were vulnerable to misfortune, in the form of illness or accidents, which could reduce them and their families to destitution. The final misfortune was old-age which for those with no other resources meant a seemingly dreary existence in the Pauper Establishment.

Initially apart from all this were the slaves who were the responsibility of their owners. Slaves managed to become free, however, and some made strenuous efforts to do so. Finally, in 1838, they were all liberated and, as a group, the slaves seem to have been particularly vulnerable to misfortune.

The escape from unpleasant living conditions and an uncertain future was drink - excessive drinking was indulged in on a wide scale. It contributed to secondary poverty in Cape Town. It also seems to have brought many people into the courts, either directly as a result of drunkenness or indirectly through crimes resulting from drunkenness or the illegal sale of drink. In court, the poor were at a particular disadvantage, unable adequately to defend themselves and judged according to the standards of another class.

It is clear that the poor of Cape Town were largely coloured people, but there were poor whites and well-to-do coloureds. Although there was a good deal of what Freund calls 'racial snobbery', distinctions in Cape Town society were, at the beginning of the period, primarily based on class rather than colour.[1] It seems, however, that the 1830s saw changes in the nature of social relations in Cape Town. The abolition of slavery and emancipation of the apprentices seem to have reinforced, rather than broken down, the racial character of the class structure of Cape Town and increased hostility between people of different colours. This combined with the rapid spread of Islam

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1. Freund, W., Race in the Social Structure of South Africa, 1652-1836 in Race and Class, Vol. 18 No.1

among the coloureds, which added a fundamental religious difference between white and coloured people, may help to explain the hardening of racial attitudes apparent by the mid-nineteenth century.

The picture of Cape Town was deliberately painted black, but some areas have come out much blacker than anticipated. They include the mortality rate, the squalor, the overcrowding. It is chastening to realise that for much of greater Cape Town's population today, things have not changed very much.

Living Costs and Wages

1) Estimate of the minimum living costs of a Cape Town family in the early 1830s

The estimates contained in Table I are based on the following sources:

Food - Quantities required are based on food rations given to Government slaves and to prisoners in the town gaol, according to W.Bird's The State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822, page 79 and The Blue Book and Statistical Register for 1840. Costs are based on prices given in the Advertiser on 2 January 1830 and a list in Colonial Office correspondence - Volume 371 Item 11. No allowance is made for seasonal fluctuations in prices. Since the slaves' and prisoners' ration did not include any form of drink, milk has been included - sources for the price are the same. There is no allowance for salt.

Fuel and lighting: Quantities needed have been based on the rations allowed to the Book-keeper of Somerset Hospital, with a reduction to allow for the fact that his food rations are in excess of the minimum requirements and so it is likely that the allowance for wood and candles would have exceeded the minimum too. The Book-keepers monthly allowance is given below. Costs are based on tenders for the Somerset Hospital in C.O. 376 Item 123.

Rent: It is assumed that more than one family would normally share a house and the rent would be divided. Cost is based on the following sources: Advertisements for 'hire houses' in the Advertiser, 10 December 1831 and 2 July 1834 and Zuid Afrikaan 21 March 1834; C.O. 3993 Item 71; M.O.O.C. 8/43 Item 35; S.O. 3/13 Item 712.

Clothing: The type and cost of clothing is based on information about clothing for lunatics in the Somerset Hospital, given in the Government Gazette, 2 April 1830, and for two orphans in the Pauper Establishment - C.O. 458 Item 53. Only one new outfit per year per person has been allowed instead of two.

Additional information:

Monthly allowance of the Book-keeper of Somerset Hospital and his daughter, from the Ware Afrikaan 25 August 1840

Meat	90 lbs.
Bread	90 lbs.
Rice	15 lbs.
Candles	12 lbs.
Potatoes	30 lbs.
Soap	12 lbs.
Wood	600 lbs.
Salt	12 lbs.

Also, daily, barley and vegetables for soup.

Further items available in Cape Town in the early 1830s

Item	Price	Source
Apples	about 3d. - 3¾d. per lb.	C.A. 2 January 1830
Butter	" 9d. - 1s.3¾d. per lb.	"
Cheese	" 4½d. - 9d. "	"
Suet or tallow	" 5¼d. - 6d. "	"
Soap	" 4¾d. - 6d. "	"
Tobacco	" 3¾d. - 3¼d. "	"
Sago	" 9d. "	C.O. 376 Item 123
Tea	" 3s.11¼d. "	C.O. 371 Item 11
Sugar	" 4¼d. "	"
Wine	4½d. per bottle	C.A. 27 June 1832 (letter)
Ale	4½d. per pot	"
Beer	5½d. "	"
Cape Brandy	6d. per pint	Z.A. 18 November 1831

2) Sources of information about wages in the early 1830s

Government and professional

Occupation	Source
Senior government officials	Almanack 1830 p.193
Cashier	" p.182
Clerk	" pp.181 and 187
Book-keeper	" p.182
Teacher	C.O. 3964 Item 54 and Z.A. 25 March 1831
Town overseer	C.O. 380 Item 11
Tide-waiter	Almanack 1830 p.180
Messenger	" pp. 180 and 181
Watchman	C.O. 380 Item 122
Government Hospital overseer	C.O. 371 Item 13
Sick Attendant	C.O. 376 Item 114

Domestic Servants

Coachman	S.O. 3/11 No.495
Cook	C.A. 7 February 1829 and 26 May 1833
Servant	C.A. 7 February 1829 and 26 May 1833
Wet nurse	C.O. 3986 Item 35
Groom	C.A. 1 September 1830

Craftsmen and Artisans

Carpenter	C.O. 370 Item 43 and C.O. 376 Item 135
Compositor	Almanack 1830 p.187
Mason and assistant	C.O. 370 Item 43, 376 Item 135 and 380 Item 88
Plumber	C.O. 374 Item 219
Sawyer	C.O. 370 Item 43 and C.O. 376 Item 135
Smith	C.O. 374 Item 55
Saddler	S.O. 3/7 No.130
Waggon maker	S.O. 3/10 No.333

Unskilled and others

Storekeeper	Hattersley, op.cit p.101
Garden assistant	C.O. 370 Item 45
Labourer	Ibid Item 43 and C.O. 376 Item 135
Coolie	C.O. 301 Item 3 and Almanacks
Laundress	S.O. 3/7 No.124

Earnings are calculated on the basis of a month of 28 days, made up of 24 working days and 4 non-working days. In the case of workers paid on a daily basis it is assumed that the 4 non-working days would be unpaid. The monthly earnings of those paid a monthly wage or whose earnings are given on a yearly basis have been recalculated, so that they are worked out on a 28 day month, not a calendar month.

In the case of earnings derived from the Slave Office records, adjustments have been made to allow for the discrepancy between 'hire money' and actual earnings, but they are, even so, less reliable than the other estimates.

Abdol WASIE: Abdol Wasie was apparently born on the island of Bali, in the Dutch East Indies[1]. He came to the Cape as a 'free servant' at between 20 and 30 years old. He earned his living as a tallow chandler. In about 1810 he became an iman and also kept a school for 'malay' children. In 1830 he owned three slaves, whom he was allowing to buy their freedom by instalments. Abdol Wasie tried to obtain the grant of a free deed of Burghership in 1830 by pleading poverty, but his plea was found to be 'not consistent with truth'.[2]

In 1842 Abdol Wasie was one of the few men wealthy enough to qualify for election as a Commissioner of Cape Town[3]. At that time, he owned and occupied a valuable house, No.52 Castle Street[4]. Abdol Wasie died in 1847 aged 86.[5]

Abigail DIAMOND: 'A Diamond from the Emerald Isle....' seems to have attracted public notice for the first time in 1829, when her 'truly Hibernian accent and manner, excited considerable merriment....' in the Police Office and was reported in the Advertiser.[6] The previous year, however, she had spent more than eight months in Somerset Hospital; she was charged the maximum rate of 2s. 3d. per day, which indicates that she was not considered particularly poor - she did not apparently pay her bill![7] She was married, possibly to Michael Diamond, a cooper[8], who like her tended to be convicted for drinking.[9] In 1831 she was an indentured servant; her employer made three official complaints against her in that year for desertion.[10]

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1. M.O.O.C. 6/9/44 No.9227
2. C.O. 3949 Item 344
3. 1/C.T. 11/84 Folder 5 - 'Alphabetical list of Persons qualified to be elected Commissioners of the Municipality of Cape Town'.
4. 3/C.T. 7/1/Z/1/1 - Assessment roll, District 3 Ward 11; Almanack 1844 - 'List of the Names of Mahomedans, and other Free Blacks, who are Proprietors of Landed Property in Cape Town' (no pagination)
5. M.O.O.C. 6/9/44 No.9227
6. C.A. 18 July 1829
7. C.O. 371 Item 11
8. *or Dimond*-Street Directories, Almanacks 1830 p.290 and 1836 p.73
9. C.A. 28 July 1830 and 1/C.T. 8/1 1832
10. 1/C.T. 7/6 Folder 2 - Complaints between Masters and Servants

Mrs. Diamond's first court appearance was for drunkenness[1] and she subsequently appeared in court many times on the same charge.[2] In 1833 she was described as an 'incorrigible' drunkard.[3] By this time she was also working as a prostitute and was convicted for indecency,[4] 'public prostitution' [5] and on one occasion 'carnal connection' on the Grand Parade with a slave.[6] She is not mentioned in the criminal record book for 1844 although other familiar names reappear [7] which may indicate that she was dead by then.

Other women in Cape Town were convicted for drunkenness, including European women, [8] and for indecency. It seems that there were other European prostitutes in Cape Town, such as Helena Folmer [9] and possibly Mary Hamilton.[10] There was even another European woman - Jane Bloomfield - convicted for 'carnal connection' with a coloured man - this time in the Buitenkant.[11] Abigail Diamond stands out because since her name seemed to crop up more often than those of others, it proved possible to find out a little more about her; and because she serves to show that the bottom rung of Cape Town social ladder was not exclusively occupied by Hottentots and coloureds.

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1. C.A. 18 July 1829
2. e.g. 1/CT.8/2 1832
3. C.A. 23 March and 10 July 1833
4. C.A. 15 December 1832
5. 1/C.T. 8/8 1830 and 1832
6. 1/C.T. 8/9 1832
7. 1/C.T. 8/4 and 8/10
8. Hannah was also described as 'incorrigible' - C.A. 10 July 1833 and Rose McCoy was convicted for drunkenness - 1/C.T. 8/2 1832
9. 1/C.T. 8/8 1830
10. She was mixed up in a fight with Thomas Smith, who was subsequently convicted of keeping a brothel - 1/C.T. 8/9 1832; she was also convicted for disturbing the peace - 1/C.T. 8/12 1832
11. 1/C.T. 8/9 1832

2. Frans of the Cape: It is clear from the 'List of Free Black landed proprietors in the 1844 Almanack that Frans of the Cape, or van de Kaap, was the wealthiest coloured person in Cape Town. He owned nineteen separate properties, with a value, according to the Municipal Assessment, of £2,700.[1] The five most valuable houses were in Strand Street - he occupied No.56 himself and let out the others to three European and one coloured tenants.[2]

Because his name is so common it is difficult to know how Frans of the Cape made his money. The 1830 Almanack lists a 'Frans, of the Cape', living at 29 Castle Street, who was a tallow chandler[3] and the 1836 Almanack lists a shoemaker living at 39, Strand Street and a mason living in Spin Steeg.[4] Frans of the Cape owned houses in Strand and Castle Streets, but not those house numbers.[5] There was a Frans of the Cape who must have been well-to-do in the early 1830s. He owned slaves[6] and hired out a waggon to the town authorities.[7] Later he also rented a quarry, which he presumably exploited for his own profit.[8] If this is the same man, whatever his initial trade was he obviously diversified and was ready to take up business opportunities where they were offered.

A 'Frans van de Kaap alias Abdol Ragman', who to judge from his Will was a prosperous man, died in 1856.[9] The Will unfortunately does not contain sufficient detail to establish definitely that it was that of the same Frans of the Cape who was wealthy in the early 1840s.

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1. 'List of the Names of Mahomedans, and other free Blacks, who are Proprietors of Landed Property in Cape Town' (no pagination). The value according to the 1842 Assessment Roll is higher - 3/C.T.7/1/2/1/1, District 4 Ward 16
2. 3/C.T. 7/1/2/1/1, District 4 Ward 16
3. p.292
4. p.107
5. He did own Numbers 27 and 28 Castle Street - 3/C.T.7/1/2/1/1 District 4 Ward 16
6. C.O. 3963 Item 22 and S.O. 6/19
7. C.O. 301 Item 3
8. C.O. 490 Item 99
9. M.O.O.C. 7/1/230

William Lucus Marquis, or Marcus: In 1830 W.Marquis was a butcher, living in Dorp Street.[1] He was described as a 'free black' in the Slave Office records. He owned slaves, but was in pecuniary difficulties by 1832 as a result of which he had mortgaged them.[2] He seems to have given up butchering in 1832 and become a beer-house keeper.[3] The next year he had a lodging-house[4] but these changes do not seem to have solved his problems. In December 1834, he applied for a grant of a piece of land on the Cape flats.[5] He does not appear to have got it straightaway and in 1836 he was a fruiterer living in Keerom Street.[6] By 1838 he had obtained his land[7] but he remained a poor man, in his own eyes at least.[8] He died, propertyless, in the 1880s at the house of a Malay in Wynberg.[9]

It could be interesting to know why this man failed to establish himself as a business-man in Cape Town - Cape Town's leading butcher, G.N. Mechan, had a large-scale business at that time.[10] Part of the reason may have been that he had a large family - he was the father of twelve children.[11]

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1. Almanack 1830 p.302
2. S.O. 3/10 No.338
3. C.O. 3957 Item 157
4. C.O. 3965 Item 81/1
5. C.O. 3972 Item 100/6
6. Almanack 1836, p.110
7. C.O. 3998 Item 3
8. C.O. 4006 Item 3
9. M.O.O.C. 6/9/206 No. 8182
10. 1/C.T. 13/5 and 13/6, contracts of hire and C.O. 374 Item 16
11. C.O. 3957 Item 157 and C.O. 3994, 7 November 1837

Elizabeth WRANKMORE: Elizabeth was the daughter of Richard Wrankmore, who had been born in Exeter [1] and kept a lodging house in Burgh Street.[2] Her mother, Anna, had been born in Batavia, the daughter of Marthinus and Anna Bierens.[3] Elizabeth herself was born in England. She first married a Mr. Bridge[4] by whom she seems to have had a daughter, Annie.[5] After his death she married Samsodien 'according to the Mahomedan form', by whom she had two more children, Thalaba and Jobaier. She died in 1855.[6]

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1. M.O.O.C. 6/9/1 1834
2. Almanack 1830 p.315
3. M.O.O.C. 6/9/40 1846
4. M.O.O.C. 6/9/40 - death notice of Anna Wrankmore
5. M.O.O.C. 6/2/72 No. 3387
6. Ibid

Appendix 3

Table to show the Population of Cape Town according to the Blue Books and Statistical Registers, 1827-1842

Year	Whites (not troops) Male	Whites (not troops) Female	Free Blacks Male	Free Blacks Female	Slaves Male	Slaves Female	TOTAL Male & Female	Remarks
1827 & 1828	4319	4486	1611	1658	3338	2884	18296	
1829	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
	Whites (and Free Blacks)		Slaves		Totals			
1830	6326	6777	2963	2875	9289	9652	18941	
1831	6410	6949	2921	2906	9331	9855	19186	
1833	6634	7046	2858	2704	9492	9750	19242	
1834	6682 (6722)	7122 (7217)	'Apprentices' 2885 (2861)	2722 (2689)	9543 (9607)	9906 (9844)	19449 (19451)	Numbers in brackets pencilled in.
	Whites and non-whites		Apprentices					
1835	6722	7217	2885	2689	9607	9906	19513	
1836	6772	7269	2971	2731	9743	10000	19743	
	Whites		Coloureds					
1837	4864	5565	4481	4855	9345	10420	19765	
1838	4929	5631	4535	4921	9464	10552	20016	
1839	5110	5486	4969	4961	10079	10177	20256	
1840	5081	5703	4672	4725	9753	10428	20181	N.B. Measles and smallpox epidemics
1841	-	-	-	-	9168	9552	18720	Children under 7 not included
1842	-	-	-	-	11074	11469	22543	

Alphabetical list with notes of the diseases included in Table 5

(see Note on sources, at the end)

Black water fever - can develop from malaria; can involve fever, rigor, nausea, bilious vomiting, jaundice (possibly present in Cape Town in 1838).

Bronchitis - a) Acute: the most serious form is capillary bronchitis which can cause death, especially in the very young or old, within 48 hours; also dangerous to those 'addicted to intemperance' or with T.B. (1837)

b) Chronic: contributing factors include exposure to irritants, e.g. dust; bad housing; recurring respiratory infections, particularly among older people. Can become acute. (1837)

Cholera - see food poisoning.

Convulsions - a nervous reaction in children; can be caused by irritations because of colic or worms. (1831)

Croup - a group of diseases among children; always potentially dangerous and can be fatal. Takes the form of an infection of the larynx with a harsh cough and laboured breathing. It can include diphtheria, which used to be a common cause. (1831)

Diarrhoeas - can show presence of dysentery; it is a usual feature of the early stages of tubercular ulceration of the intestine. There are various types, including

a) Catarrhal: can be caused by indigestible food, or in severer forms by food poisoning or the effects of substances (e.g. arsenic) used to adulterate food. (1830, 1838)

b) in infants, i.e. gastro-enteritis: used to be known as 'summer diarrhoea'. This can kill. Very infectious - can result from insanitary conditions. (1837, 1839)

Diphtheria - can be conveyed by direct contact or in milk. Can resemble croup or take more severe forms - the worst of these is 'gangrenous', which is fatal. (Mild form possibly present in 1830, 1831 and 1838; severe epidemic among children in 1837.)

Dysentery, bacillary - this is spread by flies, direct contact or pollution of water. Epidemics are encouraged in overcrowded and insanitary conditions. Can be prevented by proper sanitation and sewage disposal. (1830, 1838, 1839)

Enteritis - infection of the intestines, caused by irritants, poisons, etc. (1839)

Erysipelas - acute bacterial infection of the skin; highly infectious. It can be mild or very severe and, in women, lead to virulent puerperal fever. (1837, 1841)

Fevers - 1) Intermittent: a term for fevers which continue for a time, subside completely, then return.

2) Remittent: a form of fever in which, during remissions, the temperature falls, but not to normal. (1830, 1838)

Food poisoning - the term 'cholera' has been applied to a number of acute diarrheal diseases of short duration. It is 'not unlikely that in the past food poisoning..... was classed as simple cholera'. (See Note). There are three types -

1) from metals

2) from bacteria which develop in animal foods and products derived from them, e.g. milk, or possibly because of infection of food by rats or mice

3) from staphylococci from humans introduced into food during handling.

Food poisoning usually takes the form of vomiting, diarrhoea and pain. (1830, 1831, 1837, 1839; severe outbreak especially among children 1838).

Glandular enlargement and suppuration - commonly the result of a wound, etc., near a gland - e.g.irritation behind the ear because of lice or eczema can cause swelling of the glands behind the ear and down the neck. Suppuration is a complication and is treated as an acute abscess. (1837) (See also under 'Tuberculosis')

Gonorrhoea - can lead to inflammation of the internal organs and joints - 'rheumatism' effects are very intractable and can lead to permanent stiffness; may also lead to blood poisoning and abscesses and to ophthalmia. In women it can also lead to peritonitis. (1830, 1831, 1837, 1838, 1839)

'Hectic fever' - this can occur in T.B. or septic poisoning and is remittent in its course. (1830, 1838)

Hepatitis, acute infectious - this may or may not be accompanied by jaundice. Exists in sporadic or endemic form throughout the world but its frequency increases in overcrowded and insanitary conditions. Can become chronic because of poor nutrition, lack of rest, use of alcohol or other infection. Leads to headaches, nausea, fever, respiratory complaints, diarrhoea and abdominal pain. (1830, 1838)

Inflammation - defined as the reaction of tissue to injury; it can also result from damage due to irritation. (1830, 1839)

Laryngismus stridulus (spasmodic croup)- takes the form of attacks during which children have great difficulty in breathing; generally occurs in children suffering from rickets. (1831)

Leprosy - 'a chronic, mildly communicable disease....'; incubation is from one to up to 20 years. 'Poor nutrition, filth and squalor are relevant factors in the spread of the disease'. There are three types:

1) tuberculoid - less serious, but may lead to marked deformities of the skin, extensive ulceration and skin discoloration.

2) lepromatous - can lead to gross deformity and death

3) intermediate form, which is a combination of the other two. Children are more susceptible than adults.

Malaria - occurs in temperate climates in summer and autumn if other conditions are suitable; the presence of pools of surface water, rank vegetation and a poorly fed population are important factors. Symptoms are a recurring cycle of 'cold', 'hot' and 'sweating' stages, between which a patient feels quite well. A person may recover completely; or to the extent that the parasites in the blood-stream are overcome but not entirely destroyed, in which case he is liable to relapse. Rallies and relapses may continue for years, especially if a person leads an exposed, laborious life or is poorly nourished; anything which depresses vitality - e.g. a chill - can cause a relapse. May lead on to blackwater fever. The association between malaria and mosquitoes was not proved until 1894. (1830, 1838)

Ophthalmia, neonatorum - occurs in infants, due to the infection of the eyes with discharges, usually gonorrheal, from the maternal passages. It used to cause almost 50% of child blindness in Britain. (1830, 1831, 1837)

Peritonitis - can result from perforation of the appendix or of an ulcer, the bursting of an abscess or cyst in the abdomen, or, in women, the extension of gonorrheal infection of the uterus. Chronic cases are often tubercolous in origin, and are secondary to tubercular disease of bones, joints, etc. It also affects the bowels. (1830; especially among women 1831; 1837)

Pharyngitis - inflammation of the throat. This may be due to infection (the common sore throat), or to derangement of the digestive organs, or irritation due to the use of highly spiced food or spirit drinking or excessive smoking. (1830, 1831, 1837, 1838)

Pleuritis, i.e. Pleurisy - caused by inflammation of the membrane round the lung, or excessive fluid in that area. The chronic form is usually tuberculous in origin. (1837, 1838)

Pneumonia - there are 4 types:

1) Primary - caused by virus, cocci etc. that go for the lung - usually occurs where resistance is already low

2) as part of a system of infection - e.g. tuberculosis, rickettsial etc.

3) result of damage to the lung caused by debility etc.

4) caused by dust, allergy etc.

Old classification included 'croupous' and 'catarrhal'. (1837, 1838)

Puerperal fever - the infection of some part of the female genital system following child birth; very infectious. Occurs as the result of unhygienic surroundings during child birth. Leads to peritonitis or septicemia. Usually fatal before 1935. (1841)

Rheumatism - 1) non-articular: a common predisposing factor is exposure to cold or damp. (1830, 1837, 1839)

2) fever - apparently connected in some way with streptococcal infections (1830, 1831)

Rickets - found chiefly among ill-fed children. Symptoms: marked alimentary and digestive disorders, lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea; bronchitis is a common early symptom and, in infants,

convulsions can also be a symptom. (See Laryngismus Stridulus). It is unusual in breast-fed children and can be prevented by general hygiene, fresh air, sunshine and warm clothing.

Scarlet fever - also called scarlatina. Very infectious, especially among children and pregnant women. Can lead to complications which include soreness of the throat.

Syphilis - usually occurs more frequently in seaports than inland cities. The first stage is often hardly noticeable; the second stage can involve fever and a slight rash, also ulceration of the mouth and throat; the third stage can be fatal. (1830, 1837, 1838)

Tuberculosis (T.B.) - very infectious, more common in overcrowded conditions and among the ill-fed. It is spread by

1) Inhalation of bacilli sneezed or spat out by an affected person, which may be floating in the air or blown about with dust. (The bacilli will dry and last for months, except in sunlight). This leads to pulmonary tuberculosis.

2) Ingestion, e.g. from milk. Any part of the body can be affected, particularly the bowels and genito-urinary tract.

Since people can contact T.B. and recover without realising it, other factors are involved in cases which become serious. Among these are:

1) Age - children are especially liable to T.B. affecting the bowels and surrounding glands.

2) Atmosphere - those living and working in ill-ventilated rooms are at a disadvantage. The amount and nature of dust in the air is also important.

Symptoms in the early stages can include pleurisy, sickness and diarrhoea or constipation. There is a high death rate in infancy and the death rate among unskilled workers is higher than among the skilled. Chronic abscesses, e.g. of the glands, are often tuberculous in origin. (There is evidence of its possible presence in Cape Town in all years except 1841)

Typhus (also called 'putrid fever') - various types including:

1) epidemic typhus - transmitted by the louse

2) Murine typhus (also called 'flea typhus' or 'gaol fever') - found where people are living in overcrowded, insanitary and rat infested conditions. Carried by rats but can be transmitted from person to person by lice.

Note: Only such information on these diseases as was considered relevant to Cape Town has been included so that descriptions are not exhaustive. The chief source used was Black's Medical Dictionary, 13th edition, London 1974 but reference was also made to Pears Medical Encyclopedia, Illustrated, London 1965 and the Encyclopaedia Britannica, London 1957.

Appendix 5

KEY

1 Guase steeg
2 Boom steeg
3 Blinde steeg(1)
4 Nieumeester steeg
5 School steeg
6 Korte steeg
7 Hertzog lane(?)
8 Hermans lane(?)
9 Kromme-elleborg
10 Spin steeg(?)
11 Vredenberg steeg(?)
12 Vredenberg street
13 Wale steeg
14 Van Baalens steeg
15 Keerom steeg
16 Noordkaper steeg
17 Bloem steeg
18 Brinke steeg(?)
19 Dorp steeg(?)
20 Blinde steeg(2)
21 Pentz street(?)
22 Diaconies gang
23 Berg steeg
24 Hout steeg
25 Schmidtsberg steeg(?)
26 Matfield steeg
27 Rose steeg
28 Oester steeg
29 Meeuwen steeg
30 Harders steeg
31 Kreefte steeg
32 Linde street
33 Krabbe steeg
34 Mossel steeg
35 Rogge Bay
36 Klipvisch steeg
37 Visch steeg
38 Assurance street

Key:

= White
= Mainly white
= Mixed
= Mainly coloured
= Coloured
} According to the Street Directory, Almanack 1830

= Mainly coloured - Almanack 1840

= Ward boundaries
= Mainly black areas
} 1840 Smallpox reports C.O. 490 Item 159

Ward 14
Ward 11
Ward 10
Ward 12
Ward 13
Ward 8
Ward 7
Ward 6
Ward 5
Ward 4
Ward 3
Ward 2
Ward 1

ROELAND STREET
CONSTITUTION HILL
CALEDON SQUARE
BREIZERS GRACHT
GRAND PARADE
Commercial Exchange
SIR LOWRY STREET
NEW MARKET
Chapel Str
New Market Str.
Selkirk Str.
Mure Str.
Sidney Str.
Mount Str
Princess Hill
Canterbury Row
Bridge Row
Harington Str
Caledon Str.
Barrack Str.
Boom Str.
Stal Str.
Bouquet Str.
Loeyers plein
Govt Slaves
Orange Str.
Hof Str.
Rhode Str.
Kloof Str.
Buitengragt
Wandel Str.
St. Johns Str.
HOPE STREET
Zieke Str.
Spin Str.
Church Sq.
Longmarket street
Green Str.
Bloom Str.
Pepper Str.
Leeuwen Str.
DORP STREET
WALE STREET
Church Str.
(Berg Str.)
MARKET SQUARE
HOTTENTOT SQUARE
Longmarket
Shortmarket Str.
Hout Str.
Castle Str.
STRAND STREET
Caledon Str.
Prince Str.
Heeren Str.
Burg Street
St. George's Str.
Gaol
Justice Str.
Fish market
WATERKANT Str.
Riebeek Str.
Prestwich Str.
Somerset Road
Somerset Hosp.
Valendorp
Hilligers str.
Rose Str.
Chappini Str.
Hudson Str.
Dixon Str.
Signal Hill
Table Bay

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