European impacts on the Seacow River valley and its hunter-gatherer inhabitants, AD. 1770 - 1900

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volume 1

Submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Town, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Archaeology.

IN TWO VOLUMES

1996

The financial assistance of the Centre for Science Development (HSRC, South Africa) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the Centre for Science Development.
Funding was also provided by the Foundation for Research and Development (FRD).

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Nicolette,

who has been my firmest supporter and

my loving friend - thank you.

ABSTRACT

When Europeans first began to move into the central portion of the interior of southern Africa in the late eighteenth century, they encountered Bushmen hunter-gatherers who were already occupying the land. The impact which these Europeans had on one geographical region, the Seacow River valley in the north-east Karoo region, and on the hunter-gatherers living there, form the basic theme of this thesis. The aim is to place the Seacow River valley and the events that transpired in that region between 1770 and 1900 in a documented context, in order to use this context to make sense of the archaeological data pertaining to this Post-Contact period.

The expansion of European farmers into the Seacow River valley was gradual, and through the eighteenth and nineteenth century this gradual expansion affected not only the large herds of game grazing on the Karroid vegetation, but the vegetation itself. A wide spectrum of documentary sources shed light on the nature and timing of the extermination of valley game animals and provided clues to the effect which the European presence had on the environment.

Bushmen hunter-gatherers living in the region responded to the Europeans in various ways. Although some Bushmen may have moved ahead of the colonial frontier, or were destroyed by it, many Bushmen survived by adopting different roles in colonial society. The degree in which valley Bushmen retained their identity, subsistence patterns and material culture was largely dependent on their relation to the colonial presence in the form of farms, mission stations and towns. Some Bushmen lived independently from these centres, while others were related to these centres in different ways. The documentation of this differing response to the colonial presence not only provides a context for the accumulation of Post-Contact archaeological deposits, but allows some light to be shed on the context of individual archaeological sites.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank Professor Garth Sampson for his constant support and supervision. He provided me with an interesting and challenging field of study and without him this thesis would not have been possible. His guidance through the Deeds Office and State archives is also appreciated. The use of his unpublished archaeological diagrams in this thesis has helped me tremendously. A special thank you to Bea Sampson for her support during the last two years.

Dr Martin Hall from the UCT Archaeology Department's assistance has been invaluable - thank you. Antonio Malan gave me a lot of positive input for which I thank her.

Thank you too, to the South African Museum, especially Dr Graham Avery, for providing me with a work base and the necessary resources to conduct my research. Thank you to Mike Wilson for his help and advice, and thank you to Vivienne for her patience.

The staff of the South African Library has proved extremely helpful during the course of my studies, with a special thank you to Karel Schoeman of the Special Collections Department for his enthusiasm. Thank you to Peter Traut and the rest of the staff at the Deeds Office who also contributed to this project. The staff of the South African Archives has also been of much-appreciated assistance.

Thank you too, to all my friends who have continuously supported me. To my parents and sisters - a big thank you - your support has been wonderful and to my other parents, my in-laws, thank you too for your faith in me. Thank you Nicolette for your unwavering support. Lastly, thank you to the Lord Jesus, who has led me thus far.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AL	-	Cape Almanacs
CA	-	The Colesberg Advertiser
COL.	-	Colesberg
CWMA	-	Council for World Mission Archives
EMMC	-	Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle
ENMA	-	The Era and North Midland Advertiser
GRH	-	The Graaff-Reinet Herald
HAN.	-	Hanover
IBB	-	Imperial Blue Books
J	-	Tax records (*opgaaf rolle*)
LBD	-	Reports upon land
LMS	-	London Missionary Society Reports
M	-	Maps
MG	-	Middelburg Gazette
MID.	-	Middelburg
NOU.	-	Noupoort
PH.	-	Philipstown
RLR	-	Oude Windschutte Boeken
RICH.	-	Richmond
SASA	-	South African State Archives
S.G.	-	Surveyor-General's Office (Deeds office)

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

PART 1 - GOALS, STRATEGY AND SOURCES

"On our journey from the Snow Mountains hither, we left a very remarkable tract of land to our right, which, among all the country inhabited by white men, has remained the least altered from its original state, and is inhabited by numerous flocks of wild beasts, together with several hordes of the ... aborigines of the country, as well as the new settlers; - I mean the neighbourhood of the Sea-cow river" wrote Henry Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II:47) in 1803. This thesis will consider the manner in which these 'settlers' (Europeans) 'altered ... the original state' of this - 'remarkable tract of land', the Seacow River valley; the wild animals living on the land and the Bushmen hunter-gatherers resident there.

1.1. THE SEACOW RIVER VALLEY

The Seacow River valley is a small segment of the upper Karoo stretching about 100 kilometres from the Sneeuberg mountains behind Graaff-Reinet in the south to the banks of the Orange River in the north. The catchment of the Seacow (also Zeekoe or Seekoei) River includes the Bo-Seekoei, Zoetvlei, Elandskloof and Klein Seekoei tributaries which rise in the Sneeuberg (about 60 km across) and converge in mid-valley. From here, the watershed narrows gradually to the confluence of the Seacow and Orange Rivers. The small village of Hanover is located inside the watershed and four others are on the valley rim (see Figure 1-1). The N1 passes diagonally through the valley between Richmond, Hanover and Colesberg, and the R57 follows its eastern edge between Middelburg, Noupoort and Colesberg.

1.2. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEACOW VALLEY

The valley was strategically vital to European expansion beyond the Cape Colony. It provided a narrow but habitable corridor for the Dutch trekboers to move north between the hyper-arid interior to the west and the hostile Bantu tribes to the east. Having probed the full length of the Great Escarpment for a loophole by which they could reach the grasslands across the Orange river, they threw the full weight of their migration against the Sneeuberg in an attempt to break through (Van der Merwe 1937:6-7). The early maps of John Barrow (1797), Lichtenstein and Gottholdt (1815) and Arrowsmith (1805; 1817) all have the Seacow River pointing north away from the colony, to the Orange River and beyond. Indeed, in 1798 Van Plettenberg's Beacon in the middle of

the Seacow River valley was proclaimed the most northerly point to which the colony extended in the eastern part of the subcontinent.

This attractive, relatively fertile corridor was, however, not empty, but was occupied by bands of hunter-gatherers who were initially opposed to the expansion of Europeans into the region. "Why do you not remain where the sun sets, where you first were?" enquired a Bushman of a Sneeuberg farmer in the 1770's - "What are you doing in my territory? You occupy all the places where eland and game are." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:81). Although this farmer pleaded for peace, the Bushman replied that he did not want to leave the area of his birth and would as a result kill the shepherds of farmers and drive them all away - "people would see who would win" he concluded (ibid.).

1.3. ZEEKOE VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

The middle and particularly the upper reaches of the Seacow have been subjected to intensive archaeological study over the last 17 years. The Zeekoe Valley Archaeological Project (ZVAP), led by C. Garth Sampson, has mapped most of the surface archaeology (Sampson 1985) and has subjected the younger maps to spatial analysis (Sampson 1984a; 1984b; 1986a; 1988a; Sampson and Bousman 1985). ZVAP has also studied native ceramics from surface sites in the upper valley (Sampson 1988a; Hart 1989; Ridings and Sampson 1990; Bollong *et al.* 1993; Sampson and Vogel 1995), and ceramics from several rock shelters (Hart 1989; Sampson *et al.* 1989, Bollong 1994). The rock shelter excavations also yielded abundant mammalian fauna (Avery 1991; Plug 1993; Sampson and Plug 1993) and stone artefacts (Hart 1989, Bousman 1991; Pease 1993; Wallsmith 1990; 1994). Meanwhile, vegetation changes over the past millennium have also been investigated in the upper valley (Sampson 1986; Scott and Bousman 1990; Avery 1991; Hubbard and Sampson 1993; Bousman and Scott 1994).

One unexpected by-product of these excavations was the discovery of copious European goods and livestock associated with the stone tools, native ceramics and non-domestic fauna in the upper levels of most rock shelter sequences. This pointed to a terminal phase of relatively intense interaction between the resident Seacow River Bushmen and the incoming European colonists who took their land from them. It further suggested that the valley was not simply 'cleared' of Bushmen, as was commonly believed, but that pockets of Bushmen had survived in a relatively independent condition well into the 19th century. The whole episode of land seizure lasted about 130 years, from AD. 1770 to AD 1900, during which time the indigenous Bushmen were stripped not only of their land but also of their ethnic identity and craft traditions, although the population itself was never exterminated. These discoveries spawned a whole new ZVAP program to examine the historical circumstances surrounding the accumulation of European objects in upper valley rock shelters.

1.4. TERMINOLOGY

The term 'Bushmen' has been used throughout this thesis to describe the category of people usually referred to as 'Bushmen' or 'Bosjesmen' in the historical literature. The use of the term 'Bushmen' to describe these hunter-gatherers has at times been objected to on the basis that it is considered racist and sexist (Guenther 1986:27; Gordon 1992:5). The term 'Bushman' was seen as obscuring the ethnic identity of those whom it labelled and a vernacular term, derived from the language of the Bushmen was deemed preferable (Guenther 1986:27). The term 'San' has, as a result, gained prominence in the twentieth century as a 'politically-correct' and 'safe' term with which to describe these people. Recently, however, several authors have questioned the appropriateness of using 'San' instead of 'Bushmen' as a descriptive label.

Mathias Guenther has, for example, argued that 'San' was a Hottentot or Khoikhoi term, referring mainly to those Khoikhoi people (and to other racial groupings) who were regarded as of a lowly, deprived and despised status. Khoikhoi therefore looked down on those referred to as 'San' or 'Soaqua' (ibid.:30). Megan Biesele (1993:xix) has also recognised that the term 'San' was pejorative in the Khoikhoi language.

Both Biesele (ibid.) and Guenther (1986) therefore prefer the use of the term 'Bushmen'. Guenther illustrated that the term 'Bushman' has meant different things at different times since the early use of the term in the seventeenth century, when 'Boesmanneken' had a non-ethnic (non-human) designation and when 'Bosjesman' or 'Soaqua' was a mistaken ethnic designation given to Khoikhoi (or Hottentots)(1986:36 - chart). In the eighteenth century, the term 'Bushmen' or 'Bosjesman' had a non-ethnic designation and was applied to those on the periphery of colonial expansion - marginals or outlaws. Only in the late eighteenth century did the use of the term 'Bushmen' reflect the correct ethnic designation, for non-Khoi, whom the colonists encountered when they advanced north beyond the colonial frontier after 1770 and penetrated what was then commonly referred to as "Bushmanland" (ibid.:33). The hunter-gatherers of the Seacow River valley were therefore 'Bushmen' in this 'ethnic' sense. Guenther (1986:38) also argued for the continued use of the term 'Bushmen' because it was the term used to refer to those hunter-gatherers heroically defying colonial expansion. Gordon (1992:6) noted that he used the term as he felt that it was important to "make social banditry respectable again" as "for all the southern African people exposed to the colonial onslaught, those labelled 'Bushmen' have the longest, most valiant, if costly, record of resistance to colonialism." Indeed, the hunter-gatherers both in and north of the Sneeuberg mountains in the upper Seacow River valley were the principle actors in this 'record of resistance to colonialism' after 1770, and should, following Gordon (1992), therefore be termed 'Bushmen'.

Ed Wilmsen (1989:xv; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990:490) has, on the other hand, pointed out the difficulties of using either term, recognising the danger of studying categories ('invented categories') such as 'San' or 'Bushmen' rather than the people themselves. "In concept and practise, the components of the category to which San is applied and the peoples assigned to that

category have changed little from those that defined Bushman." (ibid.). Wilmsen (ibid.) has therefore advocated that the term used by the people to refer to themselves be used. As these people have no collective term for themselves (Guenther 1986; Gordon 1992; Biesele 1993) academics have often resorted to using the language group (e.g. !Kung, /Xam) or the names ascribed to by smaller groups of these people (e.g. Ju-/wasi, Hai-//omn) (ibid.). The terms which hunter-gatherers residing in the valley applied to themselves at the time of European expansion into that region were, however, rarely documented. In 1777 Robert Gordon encountered Bushmen in the Sneeuberg who called themselves 'Oesjswana' or 'Saana' (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:79-80) and in the valley who were termed 'Sun ei' (ibid.:89). Not one of these terms is however satisfactory, as, apart from further confusing the identity of the hunter-gatherer inhabitants of the area, they were never mentioned again in the historical literature pertaining to the valley.

Recognising the shortcomings of the term 'Bushmen' and the problems inherent in its use, 'Bushmen' is, however, used throughout this thesis in preference to any other label, following the example of the recent use of the term by Gordon (1992) and Biesele (1993). Although both authors recognise that the term 'Bushman' is a colonial construct, both advocate the use of this term in preference to the use of the term 'San', which, as illustrated above, suffers from many of the shortcomings of the term which it sought to replace.

Finally, another reason for my use of the term 'Bushmen' is similar to that inspiring Gordon in his analysis of Namibian Bushmen: "The focus is not so much on the Bushmen/Kung/Ju-/wasi/San or whatever one might like to call them, but on the coloniser's image of them and the consequences of that image for people assumed to be Bushmen." (1992:4). Dutch and English inhabitants of the valley, government officials and visitors to the valley generally used the term 'Bushmen' or 'Bosjesmen' to describe the original occupants of the valley. Through time, the terms 'Bushmen' or 'Bosjesmen' came to have different meanings to the people of the valley. As one of the main aims of this thesis is to consider the context of those termed 'Bushmen' in eighteenth and nineteenth century society, the use of any other term would be both self-defeating and confusing.

1.5. VALIDITY OF THE ETHNIC GROUPING 'BUSHMEN' AS APPLIED TO THE REGION BEYOND (NORTH OF) THE SNEEUBERG MOUNTAINS

Having decided on the label Bushmen for the hunter-gatherer occupants of the valley, it is important to recognise that this label designates a group which is not necessarily timeless, isolated or indeed, limited to within the bounds of the Seacow River valley. Revisionists in the so-called 'Kalahari debate' have argued against such notions of 'pristinity' and for the situation of these people within wider regional economies, polities and histories (cf. Wilmsen 1989; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990) while others have argued that these revisionists have gone too far "imputing links where none existed and assuming that where evidence exists for trade it implies the surrender of autonomy" (Solway and Lee 1990:187). Sampson has however already demonstrated that the Bushmen occupants of the Seacow River valley were not isolated from other groups and that

prehistoric herders (Khoi) for example intruded within the valley environment, particularly the southern parts well before the first colonists arrived (Sampson 1984b; 1986). Ceramic evidence has for example suggested that herders were present in the valley after AD.900 (Sampson *et al.* 1989). The length of this occupation is unclear, but 500 years later, in AD. 1400 the presence of Khoi ceramics again indicates the presence of herders in the valley, probably for another century (ibid.).

The Bushmen of the Seacow River valley were therefore neither isolated nor timeless and indeed, with the influx of Europeans into the colony, it can be assumed that refugees from other groups found their way into the valley well before the advance of Europeans into this region.

1.6. THESIS GOALS

The central goal of this thesis is to pin-point on the valley map as many instances of Bushman/Colonist interaction during this period as the data will allow. Documented sightings of such events are organised around four central themes. First, there is the sequence of land seizures and the shrinking patches of landscape still accessible to independent Bushmen. Secondly, there are the records of game sightings which trace how the Bushmen's food base was gradually whittled away by European gunfire. Thirdly, there is the varied array of terse comments about the Bushmen themselves. These partly reveal changes in the Bushmen response to a European presence, how they dealt with the depletion of their traditional food-base, with the appropriation of their lands and the disintegration of their social structure.

The documents will show how they took on various new roles within the rapidly evolving frontier society and how they came to occupy a broad spectrum of niches in that society. At one extreme, typically, there was the lifelong and trusted household servant while at the other was the hunter-gather and stock thief who avoided contact with Europeans at almost any cost. Between these two extremes were several grades of Bushman dependency on the farms. Documentation of these roles is crucial because they offer the best opportunity to explain the variability in the composition of European goods from one shelter to the next. Mapping of all documented sightings is also crucial because events did not unfold evenly throughout the valley and the shelters are distributed over a very large area.

1.7. SOURCES

The widest possible range of resources have been used to attain these goals, with however a noticeable bias towards documents. Although travellers accounts and newspaper reports yielded most of the information used below, archival and deeds office resources also proved helpful. The nature of each of these documentary sources is briefly discussed below while archaeological sources are discussed separately (see 1.9).

1.7.1. Travellers' accounts

Thirty six individuals recorded details of their journey through the Seacow River valley and it is these individuals which I hereafter refer to as 'travellers'. These individuals did not however all travel alone and occasionally several members of a travel party wrote about their experiences, bringing the number of documented excursions through (or close to) the valley down to thirty. These travellers included government officials, soldiers, farmers, naturalists, churchmen, traders, missionaries, doctors and local townsmen among their number. All of them recorded details of what they observed along the way, the particular nature of these details often depending on the reason for their journey and their particular backgrounds and professions.

Travellers writing about the Seacow River valley at the end of the eighteenth century were usually government officials, and included Adriaan van Jaarsveld (1775), Robert Jacob Gordon (1777), Governor Joachim van Plettenberg (1778), David de Villiers (1786) and John Barrow (1797). In 1803 Governor Janssens' diarist, Paravicini Di Capelli, Henry Lichtenstein and Dirk Gysbert van Reenan all detailed their experiences of one exploratory expedition through the valley. Colonel Richard Collins and Andries Stockenstrom, also government officials sent to report on the condition of the interior, passed through the valley in 1809 followed in 1812 by William John Burchell, the renowned traveller. Several missionaries including Erasmus Smit and William F. Corner (1815) and Reverend John Campbell also moved through the valley in the second decade of the nineteenth century. George Thompson (1823), a merchant and traveller, and Reverend John Philip (1825), another missionary, were the only travellers to leave a record during the 1820's.

A large number of travellers journeyed through the valley in the 1830's, including the naturalists Andrew Steedman (1830) and Dr. Andrew Smith (1834 & 1835); the missionary Eugene Casalis (1832); Captain William Cornwallis Harris (1836 & 1837), the hunter and trader; and James Backhouse (1839), a Quaker minister. George Nicholson (1843 & 1844), a farmer turned hunter; R. Gordon Cumming (1844), another hunter and trader; Alfred W. Cole (1848) an ex-solicitor turned traveller; and Thomas Baines (1848), an artist and explorer; all described their journeys through (or close to) the valley. Joseph M. Orpen farmed in the valley for a while (1847 - 1850) and he was soon joined by his father Charles E.H. Orpen, a churchman (1848 - 1850), whose Anglican parish at Colesberg was visited by Bishop Gray, the first Anglican Bishop of Cape Town in 1848 and 1850. Between these same years a hunter named James Leyland travelled through the valley three times, recording what he observed along the way. In 1856 a lawyer, H.A.L. Hamelberg, also wrote about his experiences in the valley. James Lycett is included among these travellers as he wrote detailed letters to his family in England, describing to them the nature of the countryside over which he travelled as a mounted policeman, first in the Middelburg and then in the Colesberg districts. Towards the end of the century the number of people describing journey's through the valley had decreased markedly, including only Jerome L. Babe (1870), an American salesman; Dr. Emil Holub (1872 & 1879), a naturalist and collector; the writer S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner (1880 & 1881) and finally the editor of a local newspaper, M. Weakley, included here as he published a journal of his travels through the valley in 1892. These travellers are dealt with in much more detail in Chapter 3 where the routes they took through the valley are mapped. In making use of their accounts, I have

tried to use primarily the details recorded by them while within the bounds of the valley, so that the positions on their routes where these observations were made can be pinpointed.

1.7.2. Newspaper accounts

By the second half of the nineteenth century the quantity of travellers accounts noticeably decrease, mostly because travellers were no longer drawn to record details of the Seacow River valley, but were more interested in new, unrecorded observations further afield. Newspaper accounts are therefore useful in filling the gap in documentary references to the valley. The towns on the rim of the Seacow River valley - Graaff-Reinet (established in 1786), Colesberg (est.1830), Richmond (est.1843) and Middelburg (est.1852) - only started to produce their own newspapers long after their foundation - in 1851, 1861, 1870 and 1876 respectively. Unfortunately, no local newspaper was published in Hanover (est.1854) during the nineteenth century. The table below (Table. 1-1) illustrates the large number of newspapers published, providing the dates between which the newspaper appeared and its name.

The large number of available newspapers necessitated that I be selective in which newspapers I studied. I therefore concentrated on the Graaff-Reinet newspapers published between 1850 and 1860 (The Graaff-Reinet Courant and the Graaff-Reinet Herald) as these were the earliest newspapers available pertaining to the valley. I next considered the Colesberg Newspapers as these were not only the earliest newspapers relating to the town and its environs, but the Colesberg Advertiser was also the most complete newspaper in the entire sample. I therefore studied all the issues of this newspaper dating from January 1861 to December 1900. Although other newspapers, from both Richmond (The Era and Midland News) and Middelburg (Middelburg Gazette) were also studied, most of the information recovered came from the Colesberg Advertiser, primarily because the editor was the most socially conscious of all the newspaper editors and because the newspaper was generally longer (between four and twelve pages) than the rest (on average four pages).

Colonial newspapers at the time shared a common layout - the front page usually contained government notices, advertisements and personal announcements (often in both Dutch and English). The second page (usually in English) included an Editorial, other government notices such as Pound Notices, minutes of Town Council meetings, Magistrates court records and a section titled 'Local and General news' which listed the primary news items of the district and the Cape colony in either short paragraphs or sentences. Local events such as bazaars, Church picnics, etc. were also advertised in this column. Ever so often other articles of interest were dealt with separately, usually under their own headings. A small column of 'Correspondence' was often also included on this page. The Dutch half of the newspaper (the third page) usually followed a similar pattern and often repeated the content detailed above, although generally in a different order. Articles of particular interest to farmers not included in the English section were often featured here, and the Correspondence section was a more regular feature and was usually longer. The fourth page (in both English and Dutch) was also filled with advertisements.

This format was retained, even when the size of the newspaper was increased, either through the addition of a single sheet (often containing more advertisements), or through the addition of four more pages (in which case particularly the 'Local and General News' section was longer). Both the English and Dutch versions of these newspapers were studied owing to the different kinds of information represented by each. Several different Grahamstown newspapers which appeared before the middle of the nineteenth century were also studied to determine the value of the information contained in them, but they were generally in such poor condition and so lacking in relevant detail, that no further effort was made to study them. References to newspapers as used in the text are generally prefixed with the first letters of the newspaper, so, the Colesberg Advertiser is for example referred to as CA (see Table of Abbreviations for the full list).

TABLE 1-1: Newspapers published during the nineteenth century in towns close to the valley

Graaff-Reinet (est. 1786)	**Colesberg** (est. 1830)	**Richmond** (est. 1843)	**Middelburg** (est. 1852)	**Hanover** (est. 1854)
1851 - 1853 The Graaff-Reinet Courant	1861 - 1961 The Colesberg Advertiser	1870 - 1925 The Era and North Midland Advertiser / De Richmond Era	1876 - 1885 Middelburg Gazette / Middelburg Getuige	none
1852 - 1884 The Graaff-Reinet Herald	1861 - 1883 The Colesberg Herald	1885 - 1889 De Richmonder	1886 De Middelburg Opmerker	
1857 - 1859 The Midland Province Banner	1866 The Border News		1885 - 1902 De Niewe Middelburger	
1860 - 1932 Graaff-Reinet Advertiser	1871 - 1873 De Boeren Courant voor de Noordelijke Distrikten			
1885 - 1886 The Graaff-Reinet News	1882 - 1883 De Afrikaansche Boerenvriend (absorbed by CA)			
1885 - 1886 De Graaff-Reinetsche Courant	1884 -1885 De Colesberger			
1885 - 1902 De Graaff-Reinetter				
1886 - 1887 The Cape Farmer				
1892 - 1950 Ons Koerant				

1.7.3. Archival sources

A wide range of archival sources from the South African State Archives (SASA) were also utilised.

Veldwachtmeesters'/Veld cornets' quarterly reports (prefixed 1/GR 12/#) provided useful information concerning the activities and locations of primarily Bushmen in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These reports were either in the form of letters or diary-type descriptions of campaigns carried out by commandos against marauding Bushmen. Lists "explanatory of the relations between the Colonists of the Cape of Good Hope and the Independent Native Tribes"

published by Moodie in 1836 were particularly helpful in tracking down the relevant records. Moodie's book *The Record* (1838) also provided reports of a similar nature.

Several documentary sources were helpful in identifying the historical names of farms and their owners, information which was particularly pertinent when plotting traveller's routes. These include Oude Wildschutte Boeken (prefixed RLR) which detail late eighteenth century farm and owner names; tax records, commonly referred to as *opgaaf rolle* (prefixed J) which list not only the farmers' names by district and sometimes the name of the farm, but also details of the size of the land, the amount of stock and the number of people living on the land. Reports upon land (LBD 29-37) and Registers of land rent (LBD 83-84) were also useful in finding out the names of farms and farm-owners.

Useful information was not forthcoming from court records as these records often failed to distinguish between Bushmen and other ethnic groups and they dealt exclusively with farms closest to Colesberg and not farms further afield. Huge gaps were also discovered in the surviving records. Court records were thus deemed totally unsatisfactory for the purpose of this thesis (George Silberbauer pers. comm.) and they are therefore not included here. Details of Court cases as reported upon in local newspapers did however provide some useful information.

1.7.4. **Deeds Office**

Invaluable information was also obtained from Deeds Office sources referred to throughout the text by the prefix 'S.G.' standing for Surveyor-General. Quitrent records (S.G.Q.#) for the numerous farms within the valley provided information concerning farm ownership while the second copies of survey diagrams (SG.dgm.#) for individual farms (the original copy having been given to the farm owner) were useful for the plotting of European expansion into the valley (cf. Sampson & Sampson 1994a; Sampson *et al.* 1994), the valley's wagon track system (Neville *et al.* 1994) as well as the analysis of particular traveller's routes.

1.7.5. **Other sources**

Further sources utilised include missionary records, such as the London Missionary Society's yearly reports (LMS), reports published in *The Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* (EMMC) and the published diaries of the two missionaries, Erasmus Smit and William Corner, who set up mission stations close to the valley (Steytler 1956a; 1956b). A rich source of information was the Imperial Blue Books, volume 50 of 1835 in particular. The latter volume was entitled *Papers relevant to the treatment of Native inhabitants of Southern Africa within the colony of the Cape of Good Hope or beyond the colony, Part 1. Hottentots and Bosjesmen, Caffers, Griquas.* Innumerable other secondary sources were also used.

1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THESE SOURCES

Those writing about the north-eastern Cape in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did so within intellectual, social, economic and political contexts all very different from our own. Consequently, we cannot now read their texts as if we are participants in the events described. They must be approached with due caution, always recognising the inherent limitations of the viewpoints which we, as modern readers, are forced to occupy. Various scholars such as C. Schrire (1984), J.M. Coetzee (1988) and M.L. Pratt (1992), to name a few, have pointed out that the most important misinterpretations of texts arise from not adequately taking into account (a) the social identity of the writer, (b) the context in which he wrote the text, (c) the aims of the writer, and (d) the validity of what was written. These caveats apply with special emphasis to travel writers and those writing newspaper reports.

2.8.1. Travellers' accounts

What early travellers recorded of their journeys through the Cape was influenced by their personal views, experiences, beliefs and expectations. These factors combined to form a particular framework into which each traveller attempted to fit that which he observed, to order those observations and to understand them. Coetzee (1988) gives the apposite example of 'the Hottentot' widely represented by travel writers as 'idle' or 'lazy'. In the intellectual climate of the times, all human societies were amenable to systematic description within a common framework, and could be divided into categories and sub-categories (diet, religion etc.). All that was observed could be pigeon-holed into one category or another. Inevitably, observations could be deformed to fit into a preconceived grid, a grid usually shaped by notions such as the Protestant work ethic. Thus 'the Hottentot' became endowed by writers with "an impoverished set of differences to inscribe in the table of categories" because "where he ought to be generating data for the categories, he is merely lying about" (Coetzee 1988:23). Many examples of this distortion will emerge in the chapters which follow.

As in so many other regions, travellers who described their journeys through the Seacow River Valley were white males. They were government officials, hunters, explorers, botanists, naturalists, missionaries, farmers, doctors and soldiers (among others). With one exception (the Negro William Corner), they were all Europeans, educated and fully literate, they were with very few exceptions members of the middle or upper classes. Like so many others, they perceived the subjects of their writings either as "the rest of the world" (Pratt 1992:5) or merely as "the other" (Gellner 1991:1; Voss 1990:59). Most were at least aware of the works of Linneas and of the growth of Natural History as an intellectual pursuit. It was appropriate that they participated in the business of systemizing nature through global exploration and "the construction of global scale meaning through the descriptive analysis of natural history." (Pratt 1992:5). Their encounter with

alien (i.e. non-European) habitats was to be converted into a 'natural history' which became what Pratt has called the "narrative scaffolding" (ibid.:38) of their texts.

Another common preoccupation of the times was the Great Chain of Being, which, together with the doctrine of Progressionism, postulated that all life was created in a single instant, with man at the pinnacle of creation (Schrire 1984). Apes and Man were close together in the Chain, and all humans were patently not equal. Human types encountered by travellers were used to fill the gap in the Chain between 'civilised' (i.e. European) men and apes. These other 'uncivilised' humans included the 'noble savage', as an element of curiosity (ibid.:3). In the nineteenth century such romantic labels were replaced by more systematic studies of indigenous peoples with the aim of classifying the different races on the basis of physical characteristics. After evolutionary theory was laid out in Darwin's book *The Origin of Species* (1859) hunter-gatherers such as the Bushmen were increasingly perceived as 'living fossils' or representatives of early man. This concept of indigenous people with a changeless past and without a history prevailed into the 1930's.

The writing of John Barrow (1806) illustrates how these conceptual frameworks affected both what he described and what he omitted. He was a young career diplomat in the employ of the British Governor to the Cape (Earl Macartney) at the end of the eighteenth century. The Governor appointed Barrow as his representative to the interior and Barrow undertook several lengthy journeys with the aims of exploring the grievances between settlers and company officials, establishing a sense of the British presence among both the Dutch and indigenous inhabitants and documenting the "face of the country" (in Pratt 1992:59). Pratt (1992:58) views Barrow as travelling officially "in the name of a Eurocolonial territorial enterprise." who employed the rhetoric of legitimising the British take-over of the Cape. He and his travelling companions are chiefly present in the text as "a kind of collective moving eye" according to Pratt (ibid.:59) and their own presence on the landscape is minimised and largely uncontested (ibid.:60). Barrow wrote as a naturalist, geographer and ethnographer and his narrative style illustrates his preoccupation with natural history. Barrow's narrative consists primarily of landscape and nature description, that which Barrow describes as "the face of the country" (in Pratt 1992:59). A sequence of sights and settings is therefore described (ibid.:59) and Pratt argues that these descriptions often presuppose "a transformative project embodied in the Europeans", that the European presence can in some way transform the situation for the better (ibid.:61). The potentials of the Eurocolonial future are thus predicted on absences and lacks of African life in the present (ibid.). The landscape is thus often depicted as 'empty' and indeed, Barrow's account to a great extent separates Africans from Africa, minimising the human presence on the landscape (ibid.).

Barrow's chief ethnographic interest, the Bushmen, are thus also separated from the narrative proper and discussed in the form of an ethnographic portrait (ibid.). In this portrait, the Bushmen people are homogenised into a collective *they* and even further into an iconic *he*. The actions and reactions of the Bushmen which Barrow encounters are then contextualised as repetitions of 'his' normal activities and habits and those Bushmen are thereby fixed as existing in a timeless present (ibid.:64). Pratt (ibid.) concludes that not only are indigenous people abstracted

away from the landscape by this form of writing, but that they are also abstracted away from the history that is being made.

Barrow's accounts of his travels were therefore to a large extent accounts of the natural history of the region and as such reflect the dominant paradigms of the day. Pratt (ibid.:65) notes that towards the end of the eighteenth century Bushmen in the Cape began to be perceived not as the 'savage', but rather as 'childlike victims' in European writings. Barrow's description of the Bushmen at a camp which he raided at Toverberg (see 3.6.) illustrates these changing ideas: after raiding the Bushmen camp, only the women emerged from the surroundings to receive tobacco although eventually a Bushman approached the Europeans - "he approached us in the utmost agitation, half-laughing, and half-crying, with trembling and trepidation, and conducting himself like a terrified child." (1806,I:229).

The above example not only illustrates that travellers accounts were affected by the prevailing intellectual frameworks of the day, but that the traveller recorded only what was deemed relevant for the purpose of fulfilling his aims - in Barrow's case, the legitimisation of British colonial rule. Reverend Philip (1828,II), for example, discussed the Bushmen in terms of a scathing attack on the prevailing colonial attitudes to missions in the first quarter of the nineteenth century; while Nicholson (1848), a valley farmer, illustrated the problems associated with farming (and hence labour relations) in the Cape Colony. Thus, not only the prevailing conceptual frameworks, but the aims of the travellers' journey as well as the travellers' own personal beliefs and experiences affected what was recorded. Some of the travellers were also writing for the benefit of the eighteenth and nineteenth European public, who were the consumers of their narratives, and thus partly determined their content.

Undoubtedly theorists like Coetzee (1988) and Pratt (1992) are correct to point out the problems inherent in travel literature and the lacks and absences resulting from the traveller's discursive context. However, although some of the conclusions which these travellers have therefore drawn concerning the subjects of their study are questionable, the actual descriptions of people, places and events have been recognised as based in fact, rather than being fabrications of the traveller's mind. These descriptions were generally the side-product of the traveller's narrative and it is these seemingly trivial descriptions which thus form the data for this thesis. The travellers listed above did all travel close to or through the valley and I have been able to track most of them across the valley landscape through the details which they provide. That these geographical details could be mapped, and so confirmed in this manner, indicates that other details recorded along these routes are similarly based in fact. Possible exaggerations or absences are not however ignored, but are discussed where and when they seem apparent.

Therefore, although travel writing as a source does have limitations and should be used with caution as a result, the details described by those travellers are useful for providing information which can be utilised in academic discourse, as I do in this thesis.

1.8.2. **Newspaper accounts**

Newspaper accounts share many of the limitations listed above. Colonial newspapers were usually edited by white males living within the particular context of what they described. Often, one person, the editor, was responsible for what was published and described in the newspaper accounts. What newspapers recorded was therefore to a degree based on the mindsets, prejudices and experiences of the editor, but what he wrote was largely determined by what was deemed worthy of comment by the newspaper's consumers, the colonial public. The editor was therefore constrained by the facts as he was answerable not only to those who owned the newspaper, but to those who bought the newspaper and thereby paid for his upkeep. The nature of this form of media does however preclude that certain facts, either spectacular or relevant to the interests of the (largely European) readership, were recorded while other, less relevant or more mundane details were not. Newspaper accounts are thus used with caution, recognising the limitations resulting from the particular contexts in which they were written.

1.9. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND TO THE VALLEY

Nine rock shelters in the upper valley (see Figure 1-2) have yielded European items in association with Later Stone Age artefacts and fauna, all accumulated after AD 1770 when the first Dutch trekboers settled there. Few site reports are available (Hart 1989) but several published sources describe specific items. The European goods include glass trade beads (Saitowitz and Sampson 1992), clothing attachments (Crass and Sampson 1993a), glass and metal artefacts (Crass and Sampson 1993b), earthenwares (Moir and Sampson 1993). smoking pipes (Sampson 1993), gun parts and ammunition (Westbury and Sampson 1993). Livestock of European origin are also associated with these materials (Voigt et al. 1995). Studies of the indigenous artefacts have concentrated on the pottery (Sampson et al. 1989) and to a lesser extent on stone tools (Pease 1993); there are no accounts of bone-working or ostrich eggshell beads. Analyses of the non-domestic fauna are still incomplete, but include inventories for some sites (Avery 1991, Plug 1993), a review of bone midden densities (Sampson & Plug 1993) and of ostrich eggshell (OES) density in the deposits (Sampson 1994). There is also a comparison of Pre- and Post-Contact faunal lists (Plug & Sampson in press), but descriptions of the abundant reptile, amphibian and bird inventories have not yet appeared. Very brief summaries of the salient features of each site are summarised below:

1.9.1. **Volstruisfontein rock shelter**

This shelter is on the farm Vogelstruisfontein, 3.3 km from the farmstead and not far from the Bo-Seekoei river channel. It is a relatively large, exposed shelter with a steep talus that makes it unsuitable for use as a stock kraal (see Figure 1-3). A single row of stones was placed along the dripline, behind which Post-Contact deposits were exposed in a small (3 square meter) trench, especially towards the back wall. Here, the deposits have built up to a depth of 25cm, but there is

some burrowing disturbance and a small firepit, both of which have locally churned the layering. There are two groups of European items, one at depth in the churned, rear area, and another in the superficial dust under the stone line at the front (see Figure 1-4). The older group includes glass beads dating between the 1850's and early 1890's, and earthenwares of post-1850 and post-1860 date. Pale green drinking glass fragments must date to the same period. The white ash in the small pit yielded lead grapeshot of 1840-1885 dating range. A lower lens of livestock remains contained ten bone fragments representing at least one sheep or goat. Non-domestic fauna decreased in density in this layer, reflecting a true decrease in the rate of bone accumulation during this short time span. At the same time the rate of OES deposition accelerated while stone tool production decreased. Pottery is all grass tempered ware, decorated only with rocker-stamp impressions.

The superficial lens in the surface dust group included a clear bottle fragment that post-dates 1893 and another that could be of similar age. There is also a copper ribbed percussion cap dating to 1890 - 1910. Eight fragments of livestock from the upper lens also represent one sheep or goat. Two molar fragments from cattle were also recovered. Density of both non-domestic fauna, OES, pottery and stone tools decreased drastically, and it is uncertain which items are in situ and which are churned up from below. Although backed microliths are entirely absent, the whole lithic sample is so small that this may have no meaning.

1.9.2. Haaskraal rock shelter

This north-facing shelter is equidistant (about 4km) from Haase Kraal and two neighbouring farmsteads. It is at a small sheep and cattle post of Haase Kraal. Set back in an alcove of dolerite boulders, it overlooks a large stock kraal and shepherd's hut. The stockmen evidently made little use of the shelter, although a dry-stone wall, originally about 1.5 meters high, closed off most of the overhang (see Figure 1-3). An L-shaped excavation inside this wall exposed about 25 centimetres of Post-contact deposit concentrated in the rear, and overlying substantial pre-Contact layers. Burrowing activity at the very back has locally disturbed layering, but the stratigraphy is otherwise intact, and three superimposed clusters of European items can be discerned (Figure 1-5). The lower two groups overlie a thick OES lens on the east side. The small, discontinuous lower layer can be tied to the base of the dry-stone walling. It contains oyster white glass trade beads and a dark navy bead dating to the first half of the nineteenth century. The next layer also has glass beads, including dark marigold, robin's egg blue, candy pink and black varieties of mid-nineteenth century age range. All other European items come from the topmost layer of murid droppings They include iron sheet fragments and a wire fragment, which must be of late nineteenth century age because they are sealed in place together with a .577 calibre lead bullet that post-dates the late 1850's. There is also a clay smoking pipe fragment of uncertain date from the interstices of the dry-stone wall.

Livestock remains in the lowermost lens are separated from deeper patches of prehistoric livestock by a well-defined layer of stock-free deposits. This is also discernible at Volstruisfontein. The lowermost post-Contact lens at Haaskraal is dominated by sheep and cattle, but there are also

rare chicken, turkey, horse and donkey remains. The middle lens is smaller and patchy with only sheep and cattle, while the topmost lens has sheep, cattle and chicken. Some of these may have been brought in by raptors after the shelter was abandoned. Ovicaprine body parts reflect more forelimbs in the lower layer, with other parts of the skeleton more widely represented in the upper two layers.

Again, there is a decline in the density of indigenous items through the post-Contact layers, but not as pronounced as at Volstruisfontein. The pottery is once more exclusively grass tempered rocker-stamped ware, including most pieces of a complete cooking bowl. Most stone tool types persist to the end. Although backed microliths are present in the topmost layer, it is unclear which, if any, were churned up from below. A unique feature of the lithics at this site is that local sandstone was increasingly used in preference to hornfels which had to be fetched from more distant quarries. This may suggest that the foraging range at Haaskraal was also shrinking through post-Contact times.

The density of non-domestic fauna decreases only slightly in the post-Contact levels and the actual bone accumulation rate accelerated sharply during this short time span, with almost no loss of species variety up to the end of the sequence.

1.9.3. Bloubos Overhang

The small Bloubos overhang is adjacent to Driekoppen shelter (see below) on Drie Koppen. The only European item recovered from a 1 meter square test pit was a hook-and-eye clothing attachment, perhaps of early nineteenth century date. However, its context (too deep in the deposit) is suspect since it may have dropped from the pit wall. Consequently its stratigraphic relation to livestock and indigenous items is uncertain.

1.9.4. Driekoppen rock shelter

This very large, exposed, north-facing site is 1.1 kilometres from Drie Koppen, a relatively recent farmstead established late in the 19th century on former Crown Land. The shelter (see Figure 1-3) faces into the prevailing winds and is a dusty and uncomfortable place to live, with a steep climb up a 150m high talus slope. The walls are profusely painted and notched, with several polished patches, hinting at intensive ritual activities. Its odd setting, the extensive level surface, the huge bonfire accumulations in its deposits, and copious evidence of trampling and deflation all point to Driekoppen as an important trance-dance centre on remote Crown Land, relatively far from European settlement.

Excavation (6 X 2 meters) of the most accessible deposits produced European items in three stratified units (see Figure 1-6). The lower two are disturbed by burrows and firepits. The uppermost is in lagged roof fragments with OES and bleached bone fragments. First, there is a layer with oyster white glass beads and a bright navy bead associated with lead grapeshot dating to an 1810 - 1840 range. A small transfer printed earthenware cannot be dated. The second layer is a

dark humic lens on the west side with a few black and bright blue beads, mixed with oyster whites, possibly churned up from below.

The lagged surface layer yielded a four-hole button commonly found in mid- to late-nineteenth century contexts, and a cotter pin in the same dating range. A whiteware porcelain sherd has a post-1850's range while two drinking glass fragments cannot be dated. There are also a few glass beads, probably derived from lower in the sequence. Fauna is badly fragmented, probably due to trampling. Wind-lagging has deflated the faunal and overlying OES lenses into each other. All three layers contains sheep/goat remains, but no cattle. There is a marked shift from head & feet in the lower layer to forelimbs in the upper levels.

Native pottery is again all grass tempered, rocker stamped ware, but broken into exceptionally small pieces. Stone tool density actually increases, but some of this may be due to lagging by wind and dancing activities. The full range of microlith subtypes continue unabated up to the youngest levels.

Non-domestic fauna is also very fragmented. Again, there is almost no loss of faunal density or species range in the post-Contact levels, and the rate of non-domestic bone accumulation actually accelerated, with a marked gain in species variety. If the site was used as a dance platform, then lagging by wind coupled with trampling could have created this effect.

1.9.5. Abbot's Cave

Abbot's Cave is about two kilometres from Droefontein, facing east towards the homestead of the original Zaay Fontein, which is visible from the cave. The site and its neighbour, Lame Sheep shelter, overlook a wetland on the edge of the Klein Seekoei tributary. Abbot's Cave was used as a stock enclosure and had a low dry-stone wall across its mouth (see Figure 1-3). Excavations (roughly 4 X 4 meters) show the usual burrowing disturbances, traced by displaced items. The stratified, Post-Contact deposit is almost 0.5 meters thick because it is capped with 25cm of sheep dung (see Figure 1-7).

The lowermost unit, mostly in a dense layer of OES, yielded glassware, buttons, beads, percussion caps, lead sheeting and a French gunflint at the base of the layer dating to an 1810 - 1840 range. A bone smoking pipe comes from the same level. However, the other material fits a mid- to late-nineteenth century dating range, and there is probably some local disturbance. A peach pit and two glass beads probably come from this unit, but were burrowed into underlying pre-Contact levels. The next group in the sequence comes mainly from the dung. There are galvanised iron and copper sheet fragments, fragments of containers, household fittings, cutlery, a glass bead, and a Brandon gunflint datable to the late-nineteenth century. A carriage bolt, datable to after 1865 and a black bead have been carried downwards by burrowing activity.

The dung surface yielded rubber tire parings (probably from shoe sole repairs) and a small piece of green canvas. The earliest possible date for the rubber is about 1910. The lower unit contains sheep remains and some fragments of goat. The second unit has both plus rare traces of

cattle, as does the overlying dung. Ovicaprine body parts emphasise head and forelimb parts in the lower and middle layers, but wider distribution without heads in the uppermost unit.

The usual fibre-tempered, rocker stamped ware is supplemented by rare small spatulate decorations (stab & drag). Stone tool production declines, with a marked drop off in microliths. Churning makes it difficult to gain a precise picture of when stone artefact production truly ceased. A unique feature of Abbot's Cave is the proliferation of flaked dolerite grindstone fragments in the post-Contact sequence. These were being substituted for hornfels cores as lithic tradition began to decline.

Non-domestic faunal preservation is outstanding, including abundant micromammals. Species changes in the latter demonstrate massive loss of grass cover during the post-Contact period, hinting at overgrazing and loss of local vegetation cover from ploughing up lands for planting wheat. Although there is a massive drop in the density of wild fauna, the declines in species variety and accumulation rates are quite modest. There is patterning in the sequence in which species disappear from the record. Items which should have disappeared by the time of the sheep dung accumulation are still present in the dung itself, and must have been churned up from below.

1.9.6. **Lame Sheep shelter**

This scree-laden annex of Abbot's Cave (see Figure 1-3) is connected to it by a side passage. A major roof fall caused it to be abandoned before post-Contact time, during which thin, superficial deposits accumulated. These overlie deep prehistoric deposits. The 2 X 6 meters excavation behind a low dry-stone wind-break, produced from the superficial dust only a piece of twisted wire and an iron wire pin probably of the late-nineteenth century (see Figure 1-8). Another wire pin was recovered from a burrow fill at depth in the prehistoric levels. Although two lenses of Post-Contact livestock were distinguishable, they were not clearly separated and the lower lens could even be prehistoric. It is all ovicaprine material, with a strong focus on the hind limbs and feet.

Although the boundary between the base of this superficial unit and the underlying prehistoric levels is poorly defined, it nonetheless represents a large gap in time. Consequently it is uncertain whether any of the pottery or stone artefacts in the surface dust are really of post-Contact date.

1.9.7. **Leeuhoek rock shelter**

This large shelter in the side of the Roodeberg overlooks the farmstead of Leeuw Hoek only a few hundred meters from the shelter. It is however shielded by a dry-stone wall built almost to the ceiling, with a narrow slit at the top providing a commanding view of old wheat lands at the foot of the shallow talus (see Figure 1-3). The 5 x 2 meter excavations revealed a very shallow (25cm deep) undisturbed deposit rich in European artefacts in the upper levels. Two Post-Contact layers can be distinguished (see Figure 1-9), a lower unit interspersed with hearths and OES lenses,

underlying the stone wall, and a loose surface layer which ties into the base of the stone wall and is banked up against the outside of this wall on one side.

The lower unit has glass trade beads, metal items, gun flints and earthenwares (transfer printed, annular and hand-painted) tied firmly to the 1840 - 1860 dating range. Two drinking glass fragments are associated with these. Items from the overlying surface layer include wine bottles, window glass and earthenware (unpainted ironstones, whitewares, oriental ginger jars) attributable to an 1880 - 1910 dating range through associated ammunition and metalwork. An escutcheon plate recovered from the base of this layer may slightly predate this range.

Lenses of livestock remains were associated with each of these layers. The lower contained few sheep, a goat and many fragments of ovicaprines. These recur in the upper layer together with rare fragments of cattle and chicken. Ovicaprine elements stress both haunches in the lower unit, but more head and hind limb parts in the upper unit.

Stone tools production did not decline in post-Contact times, but microlith production did decrease. The usual pottery is supplemented by rare large spatulate (stab & drag) decoration. Dense OES lenses were particularly associated with the lower layer, but the density of OES had decreased drastically by the 1880 - 1910 accumulation. Non-domestic fauna is too scarce and fragmented to assess.

1.9.8. **Van Zyl's Rus shelter**

This small, south-facing overhang is 2,5 kilometres east of Zaay Fontein homestead and about the same distance, although over rougher terrain, from a neighbouring homestead. Dry-stone walling forms a windbreak across the deepest part of the overhang (see Figure 1-3). The uppermost hill-wash ties in with the base of the stone wall (see Figure 1-10). Under this, a black-brown layer interlaced with lenses of OES fragments and charcoal was excavated. The hill-wash layer has an iron wire underwear supporter, datable to about 1895. The older layer yielded a single kaolin clay pipe bowl fragment, with a stamp impression of such wide dating range that precision is impossible, although such pipes became increasingly scarce after the mid-nineteenth century. A boot grommet and an iron farrier's spike were also undatable.

A small patch of sheep remains at the same level as the farrier's spike provides the earliest trace of domesticates at this site. Just above is a more extensive sheet of sheep remains and some less diagnostic ovicaprines (only one piece can be firmly attributed to goat). Elements stress fore and hind limbs.

The few sherds of indigenous pottery were all grass tempered, and decorated with rocker stamp impressions. The density of pottery as well as the OES fragments had decreased drastically in the upper, hill-wash layer. Stone tools are too few to permit an evaluation.

Species diversity among the non-domestic fauna increases during the post-Contact levels, and the rate of accumulation probably accelerated as well in this short period.

1.9.9. Boundary shelter

This small, south-facing overhang is 1,9 kilometres from the farmstead on Hartebeestfontein bordering the Roodeberg (see Figure 1-3). There is a ruined stone stock kraal at the foot of the steep talus, but no walling in the shelter mouth. For once, excavation revealed no signs of churning. Two stratified groups of European artefacts were recovered from the upper levels (see Figure 1-11). The lower group comes from a hearth and the upper group is in OES lenses and a smaller hearth. The lower group consisted of a brass button or stud from the base of the hearth, datable to either late in the eighteenth or early in the nineteenth century, and a glass bead of early nineteenth century date. There is no livestock. The upper group has only metal artefacts datable to the late nineteenth century. Rare fragments of sheep and goat remains came from the same unit.

Native artefacts do not decline sharply in density through the post-Contact levels, and all tool types persist to the end. Pottery is restricted to the usual fibre-tempered cooking ware with rocker stamping on the exterior. Non-domestic livestock also declines by about one third of richness and diversity of the prehistoric ratios, with related increases in ostrich eggshell densities.

PART 2 - THE CONTEXT

1.10. TIMELINE OF MAIN EVENTS

1.10.1. The Cape Colony

The history of the Cape colony in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be broadly categorised as falling into four main periods: the Dutch occupation of the Cape (1652 - 1795); the first British occupation of the Cape (1795 - 1803); the rule of the Batavian Republic (1803 - 1806) and the second British occupation (1806 - 1910) (after Walker 1968).

The Dutch had established a replenishment station at the Cape for the benefit of the fleet of the Dutch East India Company (or VOC) trading between Europe and India in 1652. By the eighteenth century colonists had expanded from this station based at Cape Town and had established themselves on land further north. The VOC still attempted to keep some degree of order in this rapidly expanding colony, but by the early 1790's, the VOC's popularity among the colonial inhabitants had decreased markedly owing to their failure to provide these colonists with adequate security (against marauding Bushmen or Xhosa groups) and enough scope for free enterprise (Freund 1989; Walker 1968). The British therefore encountered little resistance when they captured the Cape from the Dutch in 1795, ostensibly to prevent their enemies, the French, from doing so (ibid.). The British had little interest in transforming the Cape and indeed British official opinion was divided on the advisability of retaining the Colony. Towards the end of 1802, the British returned the Cape Colony to the Dutch (referred to as the Batavian Republic after the demise of the VOC) by the Treaty of Amiens (Smith 1976; Walker 1968). The Commissary General, J.A. de Mist, installed

Janssens as Governor General of the Cape Colony. Both men, like the British before them, were opposed to any further expansion of the colony (Van der Merwe 1937). In January 1806, British forces again landed at the Cape and Janssens was forced to hand over the Colony to the British, who ruled the Colony with varying success for the remainder of the century (Walker 1968).

1.10.2. Important events in the history of the Seacow River valley

1.10.2.1. *1700 - 1770: Expansion of Dutch colonists into the interior*

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Dutch East India Company (VOC), and ultimately the Netherlands, had firmly ensconced themselves in the southernmost regions of the Cape Colony. Soon, Dutch colonists began to expand past the boundaries of the Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Drakenstein districts (Van der Merwe 1937). Initially farmers moved west along the coast as their progress to the east was blocked by the extensive lands owned by the Dutch East India Company in the vicinity of the Hottentots Holland mountains (ibid.). When Willem Adriaan van der Stel was recalled to the Netherlands in 1707 (Theal 1922, II), the colonists took over much of his land and colonial expansion to the east and north began in earnest (Van der Merwe 1937). These colonists were largely *trekboers*, Dutch farmers who relied for their livelihood on the products generated by their domestic stock or the sale thereof.

By 1730, the colonists moving east between the Zwartberge and the Indian Ocean had reached the Groot Brak River near Mossel Bay (ibid.). The Gamtoos River was reached in 1765 and by 1768 the first colonists had turned to the north and were farming on the plains south of the Sneeuberg mountains, in the Camdeboo. Those farmers heading north reached the northern side of the Roggeveldberge by 1840, but their progress further north was halted by the arid conditions which they then faced (ibid.). Many farmers sought better grazing to the east and therefore proceeded between the Roggeveldberge and Zwarteberge to the Karoo plains south of the Nieweveldberge, which were reached by 1760 (ibid.). By 1770 the *trekboers* had attained the Sneeuberg mountains and mingled on the Camdeboo plains with the colonists advancing from the coastal regions in the south (ibid.).

1.10.2.2. *1770 onwards: Expansion into the Sneeuberg*

Extending from west to east, the Sneeuberg mountain range separates the plains of the Camdeboo from the higher lying plains of the interior. Although these mountains, by their very nature, appeared to form a barrier to any further movement by the *trekboers*, numerous colonists began to settle in the many valleys lying between these often snow-capped mountains. The Sneeuberg mountains, particularly in the winter months, would have appeared very unwelcoming. Cornwallis Harris for example remarked that: "the rude and bold features of nature were for miles unmingled with any trace of human works, beyond the beaten track that we were following along steep acclivities. But for this, and an occasional wreath of smoke, ascending from the bosom of some sunken valley, no man could have supposed that the abode of man was to be found in a

region, apparently so deserted and inhospitable." (Harris 1838:31-32). Indeed, many visitors to the region commented on the bleak nature of the Sneeuberg. Di Capelli in 1803 wrote that "the hills all around are totally bare and stony but with high grass among the farm buildings in this season." (De Kock 1965:256).

Rather than being daunted by the seemingly uninhabitable Sneeuberg, however, the early colonists recognised the advantages which living in the mountains held. First, the altitude of the Sneeuberg was much higher than the surrounding plains and the rainfall levels in the mountains were thus much greater (Van der Merwe 1937). Numerous rivers, including the Sundays River and the Seacow River, originate in these mountains. The abundant rainfall also ensures that fountains are plentiful and strong. Secondly, the many valleys lying between the mountain peaks offered not only suitable ground for the stock to browse upon, but fertile, cultivable land besides (ibid.). Robert Jacob Gordon alluded to the good quality of the pasture within the Sneeuberg range when he noted that "most of the inhabitants make a living from sheep which here grow fatter than cattle" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:81) and he also pointed to the potential for cultivation in the mountains, noting that several of the farms grew moderate amounts of wheat (ibid.). Thirdly, horse sickness was hardly evident in the Sneeuberg mountains. This factor made the keeping of horses and the use of them in the defence of the farmers' property much easier than in other districts (ibid.). Lastly, the influx of farmers into the Camdeboo made the occupation of the Sneeuberg both beneficial and (within a few years) necessary.

Official records in the form of the Oude Wildschutte Boeken indicate that the first loan farms within the Camdeboo as well as the Sneeuberg were registered in 1768 (Newton-King 1992). Susan Newton-King (ibid.:88) observed that the "spread of settlement in the region as a whole was remarkably rapid" and that by the end of 1774, "256 loan-farms situated within the future district of Graaff-Reinet had already been formerly registered". The majority of these loan farms were located within the Nuweveld, the Sneeuberg and the Camdeboo (ibid.). Nigel Penn (1995) also points to the rapidity of the colonial influx into the region. Studying the loan-farm records, he found that between 25 May 1770 and 5 August 1773, 109 farms located within the Sneeuberg and the Camdeboo had been granted. The latter farms therefore formed the largest portion of the 192 farms "granted in the northern frontier zone as a whole." (ibid.:218).

1.10.2.3. *1770 - 1798: Bushmen opposition to colonial expansion - the Bushmen war*

The Bushmen were established inhabitants of the areas into which the colonists were now moving (see Chapter 6). The Bushmen residing on the Camdeboo plains, in the Sneeuberg mountains and on the plains north of these mountains (the Seacow River valley) were not amenable to the settlement of the farmers both on land and at waterholes where, until then, they had had total primacy.

The early Cape *trekboer*, when settling on a piece of land, would generally situate his residence close to a spring or fountain. In close proximity to the house would have been one or several kraals in which the farmers' stock would have been enclosed each evening. During the day,

this stock would have moved freely about the plains surrounding the residence, feeding on the low shrubs and grasses available. The theft of this stock by the Bushmen was one of the earliest indications of conflict between the Bushmen and the *trekboers*.

Among the first evidence of tension was the theft of thirty-four cattle from a Sneeuberg farmer, 'Casper Schols' in 1770 (Newton-King 1992). Veldcorporaal Adriaan van Jaarsveld, who at that stage resided in the Sneeuberg, reported that a commando was sent after the thieves - six of the 'Hottentots' were killed and the slaughtered cattle were recovered (ibid.:141). From that date on, the documentary record abounds with reports of thefts by Bushmen from farmers throughout the Camdeboo, Sneeuberg and Seacow River valley as well as of commandos sent out after the thieves. The ensuing warfare between the two parties created great instability in the region until the end of the eighteenth century.

This instability and the details of the conflict between the Bushmen (of the Sneeuberg and the Camdeboo) and the colonists as well as the precise nature of that conflict has been variously described by Van der Merwe (1937), Marais (1944), Smith (1976), Marks (1972) and Legassick (1989). More recently, historians such as Nigel Penn (1995) and Susan Newton-King (1992) have provided valuable new ideas concerning the nature of the relationship between early Dutch farmers and the Bushmen. It is not, however, my intention to focus on the conflict in the Sneeuberg between the Bushmen and the farmers. Rather, my aim here is to provide enough general detail of the arena of conflict to place the Seacow River Bushmen in their proper context, and to adequately investigate the relationships existing between the people occupying the Seacow River valley and the events transpiring there.

1.10.2.4. *1786 - Establishment of the Drostdy of Graaff-Reinet*

On 19 July 1786, a proclamation was published defining the boundaries of the new district of Graaff-Reinet (Pitman 1986:7). Two loan place farms on the Sundays River were chosen as the site for the new town owing to the abundance of available water, and soon a Drostdy was established there, with the first Landdrost M.W.O. Woeke taking up his position in October that year (ibid.). Before 1786, the level of Government control over the events on the colonial frontier had been minimal, with the entire area east of Stellenbosch, including the Camdeboo, the Sneeuberg and the Seacow River valley, falling under the auspices of the Landdrost at Stellenbosch (Smith 1976). The establishment of the Drostdy at Graaff-Reinet was an attempt to correct this situation and to establish greater governmental control over the events on the frontier. The northern boundary of this district had, however, not yet been fixed as the Bushmen presented a barrier to expansion in that direction (ibid.). Earl Macartney's Proclamation, several years later, remedied this situation, seriously diminishing this Bushmen 'barrier' and defining the northern boundary.

1.10.2.5. *1798 - Earl Macartney's Proclamation - Pacification of the Bushmen*

Policy of livestock subscription

In 1798, two veld-cornets, Visser of the Roggeveld and Louw of the Hantam and Onder Bokkeveld, made representations to Earl Macartney, who was then British Governor at the Cape, proposing that livestock be collected from local farmers and distributed to Bushmen in their areas (IBB 1835:115). It was hoped that the Bushmen opposition to the colonists through the theft of their livestock would thereby be curtailed. On 24 July 1798, Macartney therefore issued a Proclamation authorising them to carry out their proposal and he encouraged other farmers in the area to do likewise. This policy of livestock subscription soon became common practise, encouraging more peaceful relationships between farmers and Bushmen, and thereby reducing conflict and making it easier for farmers to occupy land within the valley.

The colonial boundary defined

Macartney's Proclamation also defined the northern limits of the Colony - a beacon erected by the Dutch Governor, Joachim van Plettenberg, on the farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98) in 1778 formed the most northern point of this boundary and the mid-point of a line drawn between the Zuurberge (south-east of the valley) and the Great Table Mountain (south-west of the valley) (IBB 1835:115). Macartney forbade "every one of the inhabitants of this colony from either settling themselves, or permitting their cattle to pass beyond those limits" (ibid.). Anyone found crossing this boundary without prior permission faced the prospect of the confiscation of all their cattle as well as banishment from the Colony. This boundary was however very poorly defined and therefore often ignored.

1.10.2.6. *1814 - 1818 - The mission stations of Toverberg and Hephzibah*

The only colonists permitted to settle beyond the colonial boundary were Christian missionaries who established mission stations from which they attempted to 'reach' particular people groups with the gospel. The Bushmen were targeted by the London Missionary Society early in the nineteenth century and two such mission stations were soon established north of Van Plettenberg's beacon. The first, Toverberg, was established in 1814 and administered by Erasmus Smit and later William Corner, and the second, Hephzibah, was only established in 1816 and was administered by William Corner and Jan Goeyman (Schoeman 1993). By the end of 1818, both mission stations had been abandoned.

1.10.2.7. *1822 - 1824: The expansion of the colonial boundary to the Orange River*

The boundary as fixed by Macartney in 1798 was very general and the actual position of the border line was difficult to place. Consequently, from the early 1820's, correspondence between the seat of the colonial Government in Cape Town and Government officials in the region

(particularly Stockenstrom, the Graaff-Reinet Landdrost) began to discuss the need for a more well-defined boundary. R.S. Donkin, an official of the colonial office, visited Graaff-Reinet in 1821 and wrote from there that "It is a matter of colonial importance to have the boundary line alluded to [that for the northern border of the Colony] well defined, which will perhaps be best done by taking a large stream running about north-west into the Orange River as one boundary line, and the Great Desert to the north-west as the other boundary for that particular part." (IBB 1835:121). In August 1824 Stockenstrom wrote to the colonial office that he had examined the land in question and that "this examination, added to previous knowledge of the country, confirmed my opinion ... that the Groote River and ... the Desert form the natural boundary of the colony on the north." (IBB 1835:122). The Orange River was therefore fixed as the boundary of the Cape Colony in this region.

1.10.2.8. *1834 - The emancipation of slaves*

Slavery at the Cape was formerly ended on 1 December 1834, although slaves were still to be apprenticed to their owners for a further four years, ostensibly to allow them to be prepared for life as freedman (Armstrong and Wordon 1989). This period was however little different from the earlier years.

1.10.2.9. *1830 - 1860: The establishment of the first towns on the rim of the valley*

The population of the Cape Colony had been gradually increasing as more and more people emigrated to the Colony and were born there. Soon, farmers had occupied much of the land within the limits of the Colony and towns began to spring up, both as a location where church services (baptisms, funerals, communion etc.) could be held and from which farmers could buy necessary provisions. Several towns were therefore established on the rim of the valley.

1830 - Colesberg

In 1830 the site of the Toverberg mission station was chosen as a central and desirable location for the building of a Dutch Reformed Church, the cost of which was to be covered by the Field Cornices of Upper and Lower Seacow River, Hantam, Zuurberg and Middenveld, formerly attached to the Drostdy of Graaff-Reinet (AL 1841:397). Sir Lowry Cole, the Governor of the Cape Colony at that time awarded the church with 18 000 morgen of land and the village was consequently named after him (Fransen and Cook 1980:427). The Dutch Reformed Church then allotted land to whoever they saw fit.

1843 - Richmond

Richmond was founded in 1843 on a portion of the farm Driefontein to the west of the valley (Fransen and Cook 1980:424). Like with Colesberg, the primary reason for the establishment

of Richmond was to provide the people of the district with a church within a reasonable distance of their homesteads (ibid.).

1852 - Middelburg

In 1852 the town of Middelburg was laid out on the farm Driefontein in the Rhenosterberg district (Fransen and Cook 1980:438). The situation of the town south-east of the valley between the Rhenosterberg and Agter Rhenosterberg mountains placed it in an advantageous position midway between Colesberg and Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg and Cradock (ibid.).

1854 - Hanover

Hanover was founded in 1854 and laid out on the farm Petrusvallei within the valley (Fransen and Cook 1980:426). The first sale of property in this town had taken place as early as 1851 (AL 1855:242).

1.10.2.10. *1860 - 1900 Other important events*

Since the first quarter of the nineteenth century, colonists from the Cape had been moving beyond the Colony into what became the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic. The discovery of diamonds at Kimberley and on the banks of the Orange River in the late 1860's and early 1870's (Walker 1968) increased the flow of emigrants, many of whom passed by Colesberg or other valley towns *en route* out of the colony. In the 1870's and 1880's gold was discovered at what became the Witwatersrand, which led to a further stream of emigration. In October 1883, the completion of the railway line from Cradock to Colesberg further exposed Colesberg to the world at large (CA 1883:23,2064).

1.11. EXPANSION OF EUROPEAN SETTLERS INTO THE SEACOW RIVER VALLEY

Aspects of the timing of European settlement of the Seacow River valley have been discussed by Sampson and Sampson (1994) and Sampson *et al.* (1994), so what follows is a brief summary of the most salient processes.

Today, the surface of the valley is divided up into a large number of farms as reflected on two 1:250 000 Topo-Cadastral maps (3124 Middelburg; 3024 Colesberg). These maps reflect the positions and names of valley farms as well as the borders of Magisterial districts as they were in September 1989 when the maps were published. The valley then fell within six Magisterial Districts: Richmond, Middelburg, Hanover, Noupoort, Philipstown and Colesberg. Farm names used throughout this thesis are based on these district boundaries and on the farm names appearing on the above maps. To ensure consistency and to facilitate a clear understanding of the processes at

work within the valley, farm names mentioned in the text are usually followed by several letters and a number contained in brackets. The letters refer to the Magisterial district (i.e. RICH., MID., HAN., NOU., PH., and COL. respectively) while the numbers refer to the number of that farm on the Topo-Cadastral map. For example, COL.98 refers to farm ninety-eight in the Colesberg district - Quaggas Fontein. For simplicity, only these bracketed references are included in Figure 1-12 detailing all the valley farms. The farms to which these references occur can be cross-checked by referring to the adjoining table which lists the farm names (organised alphabetically) alongside these bracketed references.

The movement of Europeans into the Sneeuberg mountains in the late 1760s and early 1770s has already been discussed (see above). This expansion was not, however, restricted to the southern flanks of the Sneeuberg, but extended through most of these high lying areas. Indeed, early in the 1770's the first farms were granted (in the form of Loan Places) within the Seacow River valley. The Oude Wildschutte Boeken record that the farm "Sneeukuyl: Sneeuberg" (certainly Sneeuwkuil - RICH.124) was registered on 11.09.1770 (SASA RLR 21/1 p.169). In 1771 Paarde Valley (MID.62), Winter Hoek (NOU.118) and Vergelegen (RICH.123) were occupied (SASA RLR 21/1 p.267/161; SASA RLR 21/2 p.311/190 and SASA RLR 21/2 p.305/186).

In 1772 the tempo of farms occupied increased and five valley farms, namely Cephanjes Poort (MID.143); Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120); Nooitgedacht (RICH.130), Welgelegen (RICH.14) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121) were registered (SASA RLR 22/1 p.171; RLR 22/2 p.259/159; RLR 22/1 p.212; RLR 22/1 p.119 and RLR 22/2 p.271/167). No farms were registered in 1773, but in 1774, several more farms were added to the Wildschutte Boeken. After 1774 the number of farms occupied decreased drastically and until the 1780's no more valley farms were registered in the Oude Wildschutte Boeken. Indeed, the latter source makes it clear that many of these farms were abandoned again within a very short time. This fall-off in farm occupation was a direct result of the conflict between the *trekboers* and the people already utilising the land into which the colonists moved - the Bushmen.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, farmers began to reoccupy many of these farms, although they still lived in fear of the Bushmen (Sampson *et al.* 1994). Barrow (1806,I) in 1797, for example, visited four families living together for safety at Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). After the policy of subscription advocated by Earl Macartney started to bring about a measure of peace between Bushmen and European settlers, many more farms, particularly in the middle reaches of the valley were occupied (Sampson *et al.* 1994). In 1798 Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) was occupied and twenty four new Loan Places, mainly in the middle valley, were requested between 1802 and 1804 according to an archival list of new Loan Place requests (ibid.:78). By 1808 a minor land rush had occurred between the Sneeuberg and the border of the Colony at Van Plettenberg's beacon and a list of Loan Place requests dated to that year includes twenty new requests, in addition to many requested in the earlier list (ibid.). All of these farms still fell within the colonial boundary as defined (somewhat loosely) by Earl Macartney in 1798.

On 6 August 1813, the Cradock Proclamation gave the right to Loan Place holders to apply for their lands to be held in Perpetual Quitrent and Provision 13 of the Proclamation required that survey diagrams be prepared and attached to the new documents of ownership (ibid.). The authorities were however far too short staffed to survey all the farms being requested and it was only in the 1820's after the Surveyor General's office was set up that Government surveyor's began to survey the numerous valley farms (Sampson & Sampson 1994). The composite picture which emerges from mapping the dates of these surveys onto a map of the valley illustrates the timing of European expansion into the valley. However, as farmers often occupied farms before they were surveyed, this mapping only illustrates the official picture and thus represents a confirmation of land occupations which had often already occurred by the date of the survey. Farmers were, for example, already living at fountains on land beyond the colonial boundary before this boundary was moved from van Plettenberg's Beacon to the Orange River after 1822. In 1820, Campbell, for example, visited two such farmers living at 'Dash Port' (probably Bosch Duiven Kop - PH.123), roughly 50 kilometres beyond the colonial boundary (1822,II:313).

Maps indicating the land surveyed do however illustrate the general picture, as a map of the farms surveyed during the 1820's shows that most of this land was in the middle of the valley, just south of van Plettenberg's Beacon (see Figure.1-13). Stockenstrom commented in 1826 that already "there is not even a stagnant pool that keeps rain water for any length of time which is not regularly occupied; so that of course no spring remains vacant" (IBB 1835:118). Although exaggerated, Stockenstrom's statement does indicate the high European presence in the valley even at that early date. By the end of the 1830's a large part of the valley had been occupied and surveyed (see Figure.1-14) although conspicuous gaps were still apparent in the mountainous south-west corner and the massive plain that separated the upper from the middle reaches of the valley (Sampson and Sampson 1994). Land not yet surveyed was generally referred to as Crown Land or Government Land.

Mapping of these surveys proceeded very slowly during the 1840's and 1850's with only a few farms being surveyed (see Figure.1-15). Settlement pressure during these two decades however continued unabated and military maps drawn up during this time indicate farms and kraals on areas of land still clearly designated as government ground (ibid.:6). During the 1860's new regulations pertaining to the disposal of Crown Lands encouraged many of these squatters to apply for title deeds for the land they occupied. As a result, much of the remaining Crown Land (see Figure.1-16) was given out over this time, including most of the above mentioned corridor between the upper and middle valley (ibid.:7). Between 1870 and 1875 most of the remaining, less attractive ground, was occupied leaving only slivers of land on dolerite ridges and between farms (see Figure.1-17).

European expansion into the Seacow River valley was therefore a gradual process which increased in tempo at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the Bushmen were no longer considered to pose a threat. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the land available to the Bushmen, including the gradually shrinking portions of Crown Land, had been taken over by Europeans.

PART 3 - THESIS OUTLINE

European expansion into the Seacow River valley therefore took place gradually over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and it is this gradual expansion which forms the framework for an evaluation of the impact the presence of Europeans had on the Seacow River valley and its hunter-gatherer inhabitants.

Chapter 2 gives a brief description of the valley's topography, climate, geology and soils, and its modern (i.e. surviving) fauna and flora. The aim is to not only provide a background to the landscape through which travellers passed and into which Europeans expanded, but to illustrate the modern environment so as to allow easy comparison with that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Next, the exact routes taken by thirty published travellers across the valley are reconstructed (Chapter 3). These are crucial for the later mapping of individual game, vegetation and Bushman sightings quoted by the various authors.

Chapter 4 surveys the documentary evidence for the destruction of the great Seacow valley game herds following the influx of Europeans into the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Particular emphasis is placed on mapping the timing of this destruction and the effect which this had on the valley as a whole.

The impact of early farming activities on the soil and vegetation is synthesised in Chapter 5 from eyewitness accounts of passing travellers. This impact is considered in terms of a prominent model (that of Acock's) concerned primarily with the impact of livestock grazing on the valley's vegetation. Drought cycles as recorded in documentary sources are also synthesised.

Chapter 6 examines how these documents presented the Bushmen themselves. The earliest sightings of Bushmen material culture items and Bushmen camps are described from late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century sources. Camp sizes and social organisation are also inferred from these text fragments. The manner in which Bushmen procured food during the initial period of European expansion into the region is also considered.

The impact of the first farms and of European material culture on the Bushmen are considered in Chapter 7, with particular emphasis on what happened to Bushmen as they were increasingly incorporated into the colonial economy.

Chapter 8 evaluates the brief but weighty effects of two Bushman mission stations briefly operating on the lower valley rim, both of which were later scuttled by government officials. How the Bushmen reacted to these mission stations is of special interest.

In Chapter 9 the role of the first towns (mainly Colesberg) is considered in absorbing the Bushman population and crushing their ethnic identity in the slums. Not all Bushmen were however

absorbed into these towns and farms and the presence of these unattached Bushmen on the landscape is therefore investigated.

Chapter 10 considers the countryside of the Seacow River valley during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It particularly focuses on the timing of the introduction of fencing and borehole technology into the valley and how these factors gradually pushed more and more of the unattached Bushmen onto farms or into the towns, where they invariably lost their ethnic identity.

In the conclusion (Chapter 11), the European impact on the different aspects of Bushmen lifeways is evaluated and a tentative model is proposed in which the different roles played by frontier Bushmen are mapped in time and space. The model is then tested against the artefact inventories and geographical contexts of the excavated rock shelters.

CHAPTER 2 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

All relevant aspects of the physical environment of the Seacow River valley are detailed below in order to create a foundation for the consideration of the valley within the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The aim of this chapter is to define the area of study, the Seacow River valley, in terms of topography, climate, geology, soils, vegetation and animal life. This depiction of the valley as it is today will then serve as a basis for a consideration of the eighteenth and nineteenth century valley in subsequent chapters.

2.2. TOPOGRAPHY

The Seacow River valley covers a large area in approximately the centre of South Africa generally referred to as the Karoo, based on the small, shrubby vegetation referred to by this name. At its widest in the south, it falls between latitude 24° and 25° 5′ and longitude 31° 45′, and in the north it narrows to latitude 25° and longitude 30° 15′. The extent of the valley has been defined in terms of its drainage and in terms of the prominent physical features, both of which will be considered below.

2.2.1. Drainage

The Seacow River valley takes its name from the Seacow (also Zeekoe or Seekoei) River named after the hippopotamus (in Dutch 'zeekoe') which used to reside in the river in large numbers. The extent of the valley has been defined in terms of the catchment area of this river (see Figure 2-1), that is the area of land from which rainfall would flow down into the Seacow River from higher lying areas. The southern extent of these high lying areas is formed by the Sneeuberg mountain range which rises to approximately 2000 metres above sea level (m.a.s.l.), while in the south-west the Winterhoekberge and in the south-east the modern Agter-Rhenosterberg determine the remainder of the drainage patterns. Water draining north from within these mountains collects into the three main tributaries of the Seacow River; the Bo-Seekoei, the Elandskloofspruit and the Klein-Seekoei rivers (see Figure 2-2), all of which arise at about 1600 m.a.s.l.. The course of these tributaries is determined largely by the distribution of resistant dolerite, and narrow poorts (openings) form where they have cut through prominent dykes or sills (Sampson 1985). The Noupoortspruit arises in the Agter-Renosterberg mountains to the east and flows into the Klein-Seekoei River just before it converges with the other two tributaries at roughly 1300 m.a.s.l. to form the Seacow River proper.

From there, the valley slopes gently towards the north-east, and the Seacow River meanders slowly through these relatively level areas. This central portion of the valley has minimal relief with only a few koppies standing out on the open plains. The western part of the central valley is dominated by a large plain, known locally as *Die Ou Vlak* but never mapped as such, while smaller plains and basins abound to the east. The Elandsfonteinspruit, flowing from the east, joins up with the Seacow River in the central valley (see Figure 2-2). In the lower valley, the course of the Seacow River is again determined by these dolerite intrusions and it flows through a series of low mountains stretching across the valley, after which it is joined by the Gansgatspruit, before forcing its way through the higher mountains lying at the confluence of the Seacow and Orange Rivers. The point at which the Seacow River joins up with the Orange River is approximately 1200 metres above sea level.

The Seacow River and its tributaries are seasonal and thus do not flow throughout the year. During dry periods the Seacow River becomes restricted to a long chain of pools, commonly referred to as 'zeekoegaten' (or hippopotamus wallows), because it was in these larger pools that hippopotamus were previously found. Today a series of weirs built below spring eyes in the river bed further restricts the flow of this river. The larger of these weirs retain water even during periods of drought. Many catchment dams have also been built, including the large Zoetvlei (on Zoete Valley - RICH.115), Kriegerspoort (Kriegers Poort - HAN.125) and Haasfontein (Welgelegen - RICH.74) dams, but all these usually dry up during drought years.

2.2.2. **Physical features**

The Seacow River valley is thus a very large, relatively flat expanse extending from within the mountainous region in the south (encompassed by the Sneeuberg Mountains, the Winterhoekberge and the Agter-Renosterberg) across large open plains to the more mountainous terrain bordering on the Orange River. These mountains and particularly the numerous koppies which rise up on the valley floor were generally given names by early travellers (see Figure 2-3). The Sneeuberg Mountains through which most travellers passed *en route* to the interior were variously termed the 'Snow Mountains', the 'Sneeuwbergen' or the 'Sneeuberg' because of the snow which covered most of the high peaks in the winter months. The modern Agter-Renosterberg was generally referred to as the 'Roodeberg' or 'Roodebergen'. A distinctive peak in the Sneeuberg rising to an elevation of 2502 metres above sea level, the Kompasberg, was either termed 'Spitzkop', 'or 'Compassberg' because of its great height and visibility from all directions. Koppies referred to by name included 'Klein-Tafelberg' (Klein Tafel Berg - RICH.118); Cephanjes Poort (MID.143); 'Wonder Heuvel' (Wonder Heuvel - NOU.140); 'Carolus Poort' (Carolus Poort - NOU.166) and Schuilhoekberg (Schuil Hoeck - HAN.81) in the upper and central valley. Landmarks recorded further north by travellers included 'Keerom', 'De Mosquee', or 'Sjineeshoed' (Taaiboschfontein - COL.58); 'Toverberg', 'Wrath Mountain', 'Toorn Berg' or 'Tower Berg' (modern Cole's Kop near Colesberg); 'Eerste Poort (De Eerste Poort - COL.39) and 'Tweede Poort' (COL.32).

2.3. CLIMATE

The Karoo region falls well within the latitude range of the southern hemisphere's subtropical high pressure belt which is characterised by dry, upper air. Being far from the sea, another dominant feature of Karoo climate is the lack of moderating oceanic influences hence the tendency for the Karoo climate to produce extremes. Because the interior plateau is generally at a high elevation, Karoo mountain ranges tend to have an exaggerated influence on local temperature and rainfall regimes (Venter *et al.* 1986). All three of these features are highly apparent in the Seacow valley's climate.

2.3.1. **Rainfall**

This is a typical summer-rainfall, semi-arid region, with most precipitation arriving in thunderstorms. Hail is a common feature, but there are seldom heavy falls and very large hailstones are extremely rare. Light, steady soaking rain is uncommon and there are often long dry spells between storms. In a good year, rains begin in November (coll.: 'Spring' rains) which are crucial to the growth of the coming year's pasture. December is normally a dry month and the larger proportion (coll.: 'General' rains) may start in January or February, tailing off in April.

In mid-winter, whole months go by without a drop of rain. However, there are some falls in winter, and a few of these turn to sleet, snow flurries, and occasional snow falls. In the valley flats these are seldom more than a few centimetres deep, and they usually thaw after a day or so. More snow falls in the mountains, as the name Sneeuberg Mountains indicates. During severe falls, snow often drifts into deep patches and closes mountain passes.

The nearest meteorological station is at Grootfontein College at Middelburg, a few kilometres from the south-eastern edge of the valley. Although valley farm records have been collated by staff of the station, no synoptic data for the valley have been compiled (Mr J. Pollock pers. comm.). Given these limitations, the easiest way to portray rainfall variability within the valley is to interpolate minor isohyet lines between the major, mapped intervals for the north east Karoo (Venter *et al.* 1986). Using this method (see Figure 2-4) mean annual rainfall on the western rim of the valley is interpolated at about 300 mm while the central and south-easterly portions, receive about 350 mm. By the same method, the Sneeuberg Mountains at the south end are interpolated to get about 400 mm of rain annually. At least 70 percent of this rain falls within the summer months (October - March). Of the remaining 30 percent, more rain falls in autumn than in spring. Again, interpolating from intervals given in Venter *et al.* (1986) the excess of autumn over spring rain increases as one moves across the valley from the south-east (10 percent) to the west (20 percent) as shown in Figure 2-5.

Karoo rainfall is notoriously unreliable. One measure of reliability is to compute the number of years with rainfall greater than or equal to 85% of the mean annual rainfall. Measured in these terms, rainfall reliability across the Seacow valley follows the same trend seen in the decrease in

spring rainfall already shown. Again, interpolating between the major intervals mapped by Venter *et al.* (1986), we see (Figure. 2-6) that there is a slightly increasing chance for a year's rainfall to approach average values as one moves from the north west (with 64% reliability) to the southern parts of the valley (with 69% reliability). Thus areas with a greater proportion of the spring rains also have slightly more reliable overall rainfall chances.

The above plots mask another overriding feature of Karoo rainfall patterns namely quasi-cyclic, long-term droughts during which huge areas of the valley may receive as little as 12 mm per year for several years in a row, with disastrous consequences for grass cover carrying capacity (e.g. Hoffman *et al.* 1990). There are good instrumental data for 20th century cycles (Tyson 1986), and cycles have been reconstructed from 19th century eyewitness accounts for the eastern Cape region in general by M. Vogel (1988). Recovery of anecdotal data on drought cycles for the Seacow valley is one aim of this thesis.

2.3.2. Temperature

No modern farms in the Seacow valley maintain temperature records and Grootfontein College is the nearest instrumental source. Interpolated isotherm values, using the Venter *et al.* (1986) intervals as markers, show that the mean annual temperature for the valley is approximately 15 °C (Figure 2-7), however, it has proved difficult to plot temperatures in the Sneeuberg with any precision. In any case, the extreme values are of more interest. As in most of the Karoo, there are severe seasonal differences in temperature, with about sixty days in summer reaching over 30 degrees Celsius and about sixty nights in winter months below freezing. Consequently there are normally one or two snowfalls in the valley every year, on the rare occasions when it does rain in the winter months. Snow falls more frequently on the crest of the Sneeuberg, and lower daytime temperatures prevent it from melting. Patches of snow persist for weeks in permanently shaded patches, and Compassberg may retain its snow cap for over a month at a time. Local opinion has it that the headwater valley of the Klein Seekoei is considerably colder than the other headwater valleys, but this has not been demonstrated with instruments. Diurnal temperatures can also change drastically from midday highs near 30 degrees C. to well below freezing at night. Such short term swings occur more often in late autumn. Sampson (1988b) has published daily minimum and maximum ranges for a single year (Figure 2-8), showing that June is the coldest month and February is the hottest. This diagram also shows for end-March a highly characteristic plunge with no recovery of the daily maximum, marking the abrupt end of the hot weather.

2.3.3. Winds

High winds are a prominent feature of Karoo weather; affecting temperatures, evaporation rates, and even surface erosion. Wind also pervades the existence of all living creatures. Sampson (1988) synthesised older wind data from Grootfontein into a two-velocity wind rose (Figure 2-9) which demonstrates the prevalence of very high velocity north-westerlies, within a broader range of

strong northerlies to westerlies. These increase in frequency starting in April, and reaching a crescendo in the dry, cold months of August and September (Figure 2-10) when the air is filled with dust for most of the day and individual gusts can knock one to the ground. Velocities usually pick up after midday, then diminish rapidly at dusk. The frequency of these winds drops sharply in October before the Spring rains, and the calmest time is during the dry hot spell in December-January before the General rains have begun.

There is also a significant proportion of strong south-easterlies (Figure 2-9). Mean monthly wind roses derived from the same data show the latter to be summer winds, usually bringing relief from the heat. On the rare occasions when they blow in winter, they produce bitterly cold weather (Figure 2-11). Freezing, low-velocity northerlies are also a feature of winter nights in this region (Figure 2-12).

2.4. GEOLOGY

The Seacow River valley is underlain by late Permian (ca. 250 mya) sedimentary rocks primarily of the Middle Beaufort Series, belonging to the Karoo sequence (Broquet 1993, Le Roux 1994, Visser 1986). The Beaufort group is exposed over an area of 200 000 square kilometres attaining a maximum thickness of 3000m in the eastern Cape and a minimum thickness in the northern Cape of 1000m (Tankard *et al.* 1982). The Beaufort beds are horizontally dispersed and most are fine-grained, varicoloured sedimentary rocks which contain a distinct group of reptilian vertebrate fossils. The country rock has been intruded by Jurassic (ca. 180 Ma) Karoo dolerites in the form of sills and dykes.

2.4.1. **Subdivisions of the Beaufort Group**

The Seacow valley overlies part of what has been termed the Central Karoo Trough (Tankard *et al.* 1982) or Basin (Visser 1986) and is primarily underlain by rocks of the Balfour formation within the Adelaide subgroup. The Balfour formation is composed of mudstone interbedded with sandstones, reflecting a complex braided stream system dissecting mud flats. In their palaeontology, they belong to the Middle Stage of the Beaufort group, characterised by the highly distinctive zone fossil *Lystrosaurus* (Haughton 1969), one of the mammal-like reptiles.

The stratigraphy to the south and west of the valley is somewhat more complete owing to more extensive exposures in the Sneeuberg (Visser and Loock 1979). A section between Graaff-Reinet and De Aar, passing the west rim of the Seacow valley, shows a thinner Merriman Formation underlying the Balfour. The Merriman Formation is 90 percent greyish and maroon mudstone with calcaerious nodules and rare interbedded fine-grained sandstones. The Sneeuberg range due south of the valley (Visser and Dukas 1979) has exposures of the Middleton Formation (equivalent of the Merriman Formation) under the Balfour. Middleton lithology included typical point bar and flood plain deposits of meandering rivers. Overlying the Balfour in the high Sneeuberg is the Katberg Formation,

two hundred meters of predominantly sandstone and greenish mudstone deposited by ephemeral braided streams.

2.4.2. Sedimentary processes in the Balfour Formation

Most of the valley floor has exposures of the Balfour formation. Typical of the Beauforts, it is the depositional product of mixed-load, moderate to high sinuosity (meandering) streams and semi-arid flood plains (Broquet 1993:3). At the time of deposition, drainage from mountains to the south-east, south-west and north-east flowed in meandering and braided streams across the deltaic beds of the Karoo basin and into the shallow lake which dominated the basin (Visser 1989).

The Geological Survey refuses to release their 1:250,000 maps of the valley to the public. However, a detailed study by Broquet (1993) of a small area (170 square kilometres) in the south west corner of the valley (Figure 2-13) provides a window on the depositional processes at work. Four recurrent depositional cycles emerged in this area. They include overbank or flood plain deposits, typical levee stringers, small channel fills with crevasse splay endings and larger stream channel fills with fast flow. The latter three facies invade a succession of siltstone facies. Palaeocurrent directions change abruptly between beds, and even within beds every few hundred meters along channel exposures. The whole system dips very gently southwards, with local disruptions around intrusions.

2.4.3. The Dolerite Intrusions

Dolerites intruded into joints and fractures in this system in 130-190 mya (Visser 1986) during the crustal movements associated with the breakup of Gondwanaland. Dolerites sills and dykes are very common at the surface, and are dominated by a group of NNW-trending set of fractures (large dyke ridges) and related sills (e.g. Figure 2-13). These intersect another set of very large concentric ring dyke fractures, possibly of a different age. Localised hot contacts have baked the surrounding sediments into thermally metamorphised hornfels patches (e.g. Figure 2-13). In the lower reaches of the Seacow valley a thick and extensive sill is exposed at the surface.

2.4.4. Andrew Wyley's Account

Andrew Wyley (1859), Geological Surveyor to the Cape Colony, in 1858, described the country between the Seacow river and Colesberg vividly: "The country passed through today was of a broken character; its chief characteristic being the great numbers of kops or insignificant hillocks of greenstone [dolerite] scattered about over the flats. ... The rocks in the neighbourhood of Colesberg, and as far as the Zekoe River, show more sandstone and less shale than those to the westward. They have the same intruded masses of greenstone, sometimes breaking through vertically, but more frequently forcing their way horizontally, between the beds. When the upper beds of sandstone have been cut away by denudation, this horizontal band of greenstone will be

seen, lying like a thick table on the mountain summits, or, if it should occur at a lower level, will be found sprawling over the plain, taking the form of small kops beneath which the underlying beds of sandstone and shale may usually be detected ..." (Wyley 1859:37-39).

2.5. SOILS

The Seacow valley soil types and their distribution are determined mainly by the bedrock geology and landform relief, and less by climatic factors which are more evenly distributed (see above). As elsewhere, Seacow valley soil types dictate variations in the ground's water holding capacity, hence its vegetation cover and its carrying capacity. Ellis and Lambrechts (1986) recognise five soil 'patterns' (types) in the valley, which have been mapped at 1:250 000 scale in the Land Type Series printed by the Soil and Irrigation Research Institute. The map in Figure 2-14 is derived from two sheets in this series (3024 Colesberg; 3124 Middelburg). The most widespread soil type is distributed in the vast plains of the central and upper valley flats. Termed 'Prismacutanic/Pedocutanic with Red B horizons', this is a typical Duplex soil. These also fall within the 'Unit F' soils of Ellis and Lambrechts (1986:31-32), namely soils having more than twice as much clay in the B (lower) horizon as they have in the topsoil (A horizon). They have a massive to platy structure, and are coarse to medium textured, i.e. they are loamy sands to loams. The A horizon is relatively pale, overlying a moderately to strongly structured, red B horizon (ibid.:30). These soils contain very high amounts of potassium, copper and boron, but low zinc values. Typically, such Duplex soils tend to develop on level or near-level terrain over sodium rich Karoo shales, receiving slightly more than 300 mm per year of rainfall. Today, they are only good for extensive grazing. The map in Figure 2-15 shows several subdivisions of this type, which refer to minor differences in surface slope and erosional potential (e.g. Da5d).

The second soil type is found in steep, eroding slopes of the rugged north-west part of the valley and again in the foothills of the Sneeuberg mountains to the south. Defined as 'shallow soils of pedologically young landscapes' they are typified by rocky, thin upland soils and thin, recent alluvial deposits on bottomlands. Also termed 'Unit M and N' soils in the Ellis and Lambrechts (1986) classification, their profiles display highly characteristic stratigraphic forms known as Glenrosa and Mispah profiles, both of which have poorly developed C horizons rich in Calcium Carbonate (caliche). Such soils are usually shallow with sandy loam or sandy-clay loam A horizons rich in most plant nutrients. The B horizon is lime dominated but thin, and most of the caliche is between the solum or underlying rock debris. These, too, are only good for extensive grazing. The map again shows various subdivisions based on slope angle and erosional potential.

The third soil pattern, termed Unit L by Ellis and Lambrechts (1986), closely resembles the previous type, but has a more fully developed B horizon. Not surprisingly, they occur only in low-lying positions, generally valley bottoms where the profile has had time to mature further. This type has formed along the apron and drainage bottoms of the Agter Renosterberg (formerly Roode berg) on the south-east rim of the valley. The fourth type occurs only on the upland flats which border on

the valley. It is described as 'apedal, red, freely drained soil with high base status' and falls within the 'Unit B' class (ibid.:22). It is highly variable according to local landform, with patches of yellow soils, termed 'Clovelly', comprising up to 10% of the area. The thickness varies and water tables never rise into the profile. They are coarse textured (sands to loamy sands) overlying reddish brown hardpans. In spite of appearance, these soils are generally rich in plant nutrients and are generally used for extensive grazing. The fifth type occurs in mountainous areas. Grouped into 'Unit T' they are highly variable and occur as patches between areas of exposed country rock, stones and boulders. Like the others these soils can only be used for very extensive grazing.

Clearly, differences between these soil types are relatively minor since all of them have potential only for extensive grazing. As will be shown, the second type carries a more diverse plant cover than the rest, and the fifth has a very low carrying capacity dictated by the dominant montane grass species. Overall, soils are shallow, highly prone to erosion and are therefore quickly impacted by overgrazing. Although inherently nutritious, their structural weakness played a pivotal role in the 19th century destruction of this landscape by European stock farmers.

2.6. VEGETATION

The plant cover of the valley is a low, semi-desert Karoo scrub mixed with seasonal grasses. Unpalatable tussock grass grows year round in the higher mountains. In his pioneer classification of South African veld types, Acocks (1988) placed all of the Seacow valley (except the Sneeuberg Mountains) within his False Upper Karoo plant community. He regarded this cover as 'broken' (i.e. eroded and altered) by overgrazing so that its original composition was now concealed, except for relict patches. His explicit assumption was that this entire zone had formerly been grassveld, hence his use of the label "False" before the arrival of European stock farmers. While recognising the extreme sensitivity of this cover to overstocking, Acocks may have under-stressed the role of drought in generating and maintaining this mixed and changeable plant cover (Roux 1966). Current thinking is that there is nothing "False" about this plant community and that it is still a reasonably accurate reflection of its historical composition.

2.6.1. **Karoo scrub species**

Small woody shrubs (coll.: 'bossies') are a dominant feature of Karoo veld. They form the main base of the food chain, and all living things in the Karoo draw their energy from bossies. They are perfectly adapted to both the geology and to highly variable rainfall patterns of the Karoo. Most species have a single, deep tap root that penetrates the sedimentary rock to draw on ground water. The head of the root is encircled by a halo of very fine rootlets that spread out horizontally in the shallow soil, only a few centimetres below the surface. These are designed to capture moisture derived from the dew dropping from the shrub's branches near sunrise. These shrublets grow generally less than 30 cm high, although some will grow taller if grazing pressure is removed from

them entirely. After rain, leaves are tiny, bright green and succulent, capable of swelling and storing moisture for long periods.

Most species are highly nutritious, and provide astonishingly high protein and phosphate values in good seasons (du Toit *et al.* 1940). Many have bright and colourful flowers which appear irregularly and transform the otherwise drab appearance of the veld. Prolonged droughts reduce most bossies to withered grey sticks with a few leathery leaves distributed in ragged order along the main stems. Twigs dry up and eventually drop off, but the plant itself can survive for years with minimal rain. Consequently browsers able to reach leaves near to the ground will be able to find sustenance in the worst drought conditions, and their trampling helps to remove dead wood, preparing the stem for future growth. Most species thrive on rapid, intense browsing and trampling, with prolonged rests in between. Continuous, light browsing produces a crown of dead branches which do not recover when it rains, thus the plant cannot develop complete leaf cover.

Plant spacing is wide, with up to a metre between individual bossies, however spacing also depends on the species, the local rainfall regime and to some extent the slope and drainage of the terrain. Overall, Karoo bossies seldom provide more than about 5% of ground cover. Although they retain very large seed banks in the shallow soil, seed cases are extremely hard and new growth is very difficult to induce. No systematic species maps of the valley are available, although unpublished plant maps of some modern farms are on file at Grootfontein. Dozens of different species are present (Werger 1978), with one or two usually dominant in any one place. They also vary widely in palatability, the best being *Pentzia* spp., *Salsola* spp., *Walafrida* and *Felicia* spp..

Although a large variety of bossies grow in the valley, some of the most common are *Eriocephalus ericoides, E. spinescens, E. pubescens, Pentzia globosa, P. incana* as well as several other *Pentzia* species; *Plinthus karooicus, Nenax microphylla, Pteronia* spp., *Nestlera* spp., *Felicia muricata, Chrysocoma tenuifolia, Pegolettia retrofracta, Salsola* spp., *Gnidia polycephala, Moraea polystachya, Osteospermum leptolobum*, and *Sutera* spp. (Werger 1978:288). Shrubby vegetation which usually occurs on valley flood plains are the species *Lycium* spp. and *Rhigozum trichotomum*. Acocks (1988:71) listed several other species as occurring in the region (see Table 2-1).

TABLE 2-1: Additional shrubs listed by Acocks (1988)

SCIENTIFIC NAME		
Pentzia spinescens	*Felicia ovata*	*Sutera halimifolia*
Rosenia humilis	*Linetum aethiopicum subsp. aethiopicum*	*Lightfootia tenella*
Rosenia oppositifolia	*Gnidea polycephala*	*Drosanthemum liquet*
Rosenia glandulosa	*Moraea polystachya*	*Felicia filifolia*
Chrysocoma ciliata	*Homeria pallida*	*Osteospermum scariosum*
Tetragonia arbuscula	*Geigeria ornativa*	*Sceletium spp.*
Kochia salsoloides W	*Osteospermum spinescens W*	*Rhus burchellii*
Suaeda fruticosa W	*Helichrysum lucilioides*	*Helichrysum pentzioides W*
Lycium prunus-spinosa W	*Hermannia multiflora*	*Othonna pavonia W*
Lycium cinereum W	*Microloma massonii*	*Protasparagus stipulaceus*
Phymaspermum aciculare	*Sutera pinnatifida*	*Euphorbia aequoris*
Salsola glabrescens W	*Sutera atropurpurea*	*Lessertia pauciflora var. schlechteri*
Thesium hystrix		

2.6.2. Grasses

Spaces between these dwarf shrubs are often filled by numerous species of grass, the abundance of which varies with the amount of rain. Common grass species include: *Eragrostis lehmanniana*, *E. obtusa*, *Aristida diffusa* var. *burkei*, *A. congesta*, *Stipagrostis obtusa*, *S. ciliata*, *Enneapogon desvauxii*, *Fingerhuthia africana* and *Digitaria eriantha* (Werger 1978:288). Werger (1978) added that different grass species dominate different substrates. The vegetation is dense along flood plains and drainage lines with a few species of *Eragrostis* and *Sporobolus* being most important (ibid.).

2.6.3. Trees

Indigenous trees are very scarce in the middle and upper reaches of the valley, due mainly to the severe winter frosts and unreliable rainfall. Consequently construction timber has to be imported and firewood is always scarce. Some native trees have been planted in the vicinity of springs, windmills, dwelling houses and other farm buildings along with larger stands of imported poplars, gums and tamarisks. Native transplants are mostly willows and karee trees, with some sweet thorn on farms in the lower reaches of the valley, where frost is less severe. Acacias cannot grow naturally much beyond the confines of the confluence with the Orange River where elevation is critically lower. Here, large stands of willows can also be found. Naturally occurring willows are also found along the banks of the lower Seacow channel, but most others on the banks higher upstream have been planted.

Using Palgrave's (1977) distribution maps of southern African trees, the valley falls within the distributions of species listed in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: Tree species found in the Seacow River valley (after Palgrave 1977)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Salix mucronata	Cape Willow	*Tarchonanthus camphoratus*	Camphor bush
Acacia karoo	Sweet thorn	*Cadaba aphylla*	Leafless cadaba
Clutia pulchella	Warty-fruited clutia	*Acacia robusta*	Splendid acacia
Rhus lancea	Karee	*Rhus erosa*	Broom karee
Rhus undulata	Kuni-bush	*Rhus pyroides*	Common taaibos
Maytenus heterophylla	Common spike thorn	*Rhus viminalis*	White karee
Putterlickia pyracantha	Bastard spike thorn	*Maytenus polyacantha*	Kraal spike thorn
Ziziphus mucronata	Buffalo-thorn	*Pappea capensis*	Doppruim
Grewia occidentalis	Cross-berry	*Rhoicissus tridentata*	Bitter grape
Cussonia spicata	Cabbage tree	*Scolopia zeyheri*	Thorn pear
Euclea coriacea	Mountain guarri	*Heteromorpha arborescens*	Parsley tree
Euclea undulata	Common guarri	*Euclea crispa*	Blue guarri
Diospyros lycioides	Blue bush	*Diospyros austro-africana*	Fire-sticks, jakkalsbos
Buddleja saligna	Witolienhout	*Olea africana*	Wild olive
Ehretia rigida	Puzzle bush	*Buddleja salviifolia*	Sagewood
Rhigozum obavatum	Karoo rhigozum		

Many of these are really tall shrubs rather than trees, and none of them is much use as timber. They do, however, provide the only firewood available. Nearly all of them grow on the better drained slopes of boulder-strewn dolerite ridges and hills where their roots obtain better anchorage. The most common are the species of Rhus and Diospyros, with Tarchonanthus and Buddleja as lesser occurrences, the others are relatively patchy. Mountain valleys also harbour dense patches of shrubs but only the fire sticks (col.: 'jakkalsbos') manage to adapt to the high mountains in a dwarf form which molds itself to the cliff faces. The sandstone and shale flats are devoid of trees and tall shrubs.

2.6.4. Other Plants

A wide variety of smaller plants make up the residuum, concentrated mainly on the dolerite ridges and stream banks. There are a few aloes, some bulbs and tubers, and rare succulents. On the flats the most visible bulbous plants are *Homeria pallidida* and *Moraea polystacha* which form large colourful stands after good rains. The deeper and more enduring pools around spring eyes in the stream channels support dense patches of reeds dominated by *Cyperus marginatus* and *Phragmites australis*. There are also dozens of small flowering *Chenopods* and *Aizoaceae* which thrive on damp ground for a few months at a time then disappear entirely. Overgrazing, particularly continuous grazing, can open up opportunities for invading weeds (coll.: 'opslag') to get the upper hand. *Lycium* spp. is the most prominent of these invaders, often growing to over a metre tall in eroded or cleared areas (Brooks 1992). Other good markers of overgrazed and damaged veld include the less visible *Tribulus terrestris* and, according to season, *Arctoheca calendula*, *Salvia verbenaca*, *Oxalis depressa* and *Iffloga paronychoides*. Interestingly, these flourish on many abandoned Bushman camp sites where the veld cover has been seriously stripped away and has not yet recovered (Sampson 1986b).

2.7. ANIMALS

It is the aim of this section to introduce the wide diversity of creatures occupying various niches within the Seacow River valley in order to illustrate the nature of the faunal activity in the valley at present. As one of intentions of this thesis is to consider the impact which Europeans had on the game herds within the valley, these animals receive the most attention. Micromammals, small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, aquatic creatures, birds and insects are however also dealt with briefly.

No single published source has as its main purpose the illustration of such diversity within a specified geographical region like the valley. Lists of animals known to occupy the valley environment have therefore been culled from a wide range of sources, with emphasis not only on animals occupying the Karoo, but on animals occupying this particular area of the Karoo. Where

possible, these lists were then checked against animals known by first or second hand experience to occur in the valley.

2.7.1. **Mammals**

Mammals occurring within the Seacow River valley can be classified into three basic classes: micromammals, small mammals and large mammals; all of which will be considered below.

2.7.1.1. *Micromammals*

Thanks to its mixed cover of Karoo shrubs and seasonal grasses on its plains, and the extensive rocky terrain of its dolerite ridges and hills, the valley supports a relatively wide range of micromammals. The following inventory was culled from published species distributions in Skinner and Smithers (1990). Brief notes follow on all species with nation-wide distributions that include the Seacow valley. Because no systematic field observations are available, these animals should be viewed as potentially present within the valley. However, the presence of several species during the last millennium or so is confirmed by Avery's (1991) study of the Abbot's Cave micromammal remains. Those species confirmed in the archaeological record will be marked with an asterisk (*) indicating that they occur in the recent archaeological record of the valley.

Three Insectivores are present: the Reddish-grey musk shrew* (*Crocidura cyanea*), the South African Hedgehog (*Atelerix frontalis*) and Sclater's golden mole (*Chlorotalpa sclateri*). Both the Musk shrew and the Golden mole can be found on the rocky hillsides and koppies of the valley, where they hide among the rocks and scrub. The South African Hedgehog is more widespread and occurs where dry cover such as scrub and grass is available for resting and for nests. Like all members of their Order, they eat mainly insects, but the Hedgehog also feeds on plants. Similarly adapted are three species of Macroscelidea which also feed on insects, but mainly on ants and termites. They include the Round-eared elephant shrew* (*Macroscelides proboscideus*), Smith's rock elephant shrew (*Elephantulus rupestris*) and the Rock elephant shrew (*Elephantulus myurus*). The Round-eared elephant shrew occurs in open country with a shrub bush and grass cover and would thus occur on the valley plains. In contrast, both Smith's rock elephant shrew and the Rock elephant shrew are confined, as their names suggest, to the habitat of rocky koppies, rocky outcrops or piles of boulders. They only occur in such locations where sufficient holes and crannies provide shelter and safety. Archaeological field crews have on occasion sighted elephant shrews during their work (G. Sampson pers.comm.) but species cannot be confirmed.

Although commonly sighted around modern farm houses and orchards at dusk, bats (Chiroptera) may have increased with the coming of European settlement. This applies especially to the Straw-coloured fruit bat (*Eidolon helvum*), although three other insectivorous bats are also present: the Egyptian free-tailed bat (*Tadarida* (*Tadarida*) *aegyptiaca*), the Cape serotine bat (*Eptesicus capensis*) and the Common slit-faced bat (*Nycteris thebaica*). The Straw-coloured fruit bat is known to occur in more arid regions like the Seacow River valley, but cannot be classified as a true resident of the valley. Such arid regions are only temporary stops in the migratory route of

these bats which occur wherever there is an availability of plentiful food. All three insectivourous species share a wide habitat tolerance. The Egyptian free-tailed bat is mainly associated with areas where water can be obtained such as waterholes and boreholes. Both the Cape Serotine bat and the Common slit-faced bat can be found in areas of darkness such as in the roofs of houses. The Common slit-faced bat also has a tolerance for living in rock fissures and caves.

Rodentia make up by far the widest range of micromammals. The rocky crevices of dolerite ridges and hills are home to the insectivorous Spectacled dormouse* (*Graphiurus* (*Graphiurus*) *ocularis*) of the Family Gliridae. There are also 14 species of Muridae in a wide variety of niches. The more grassy hills and ridges harbour both the Striped mouse* (*Rhabdomys pumilio*) and the Pygmy mouse (*Mus minutoides*), both of which are opportunistic omnivores; the Pygmy mouse, for example, feeds on grass seeds as well as on insects and termites. Koppies with less grass also serve as ideal habitats for other mouse and rat species such as Slogget's rat (*Otomys sloggetti*), the Karoo bush rat* (*Otomys unisulcatus*), the Namaqua rock mouse* (*Aethomys namaquensis*) and lastly Grant's rock mouse (*Aethomys granti*).

The open plains with more sparse scrub cover support Brants' whistling rat (*Parotomys brantsii*), a herbivore, which inhabits areas covered with a dry sandy substrate. A similar substrate is also preferred by the omnivorous Pouched mouse (*Saccostomus campestris*), which is common among scrub bush. More eclectic feeders are the Short-tailed gerbil* (*Desmodillus auricularis*) and the Hairy-footed gerbil (*Gerbillurus paeba*), both gramnivores, which occupy areas covered with either grass or shrubs.

The Vlei rat* (*Otomys irroratus*) occupies moist habitats associated with damp soil in vleis or along streams or rivers, and certainly inhabits the banks of the Seacow drainage. The Common molerat (*Cryptomys hottentotus*) commonly digs burrows into sandy soils, from which these vegetarians forage for roots.

The Large-eared mouse* (*Malacothrix typica*), potentially occurs throughout the valley as it occupies habitats with a mean annual rainfall of between 150 and 500 mm. The Multimammate mouse (*Mastomys coucha*) could occur here also but this would only be in good seasons. The House mouse (*Mus musculus*) may be an historic intruder, as it is confined to areas of human occupation, such as farm houses, stores, and barns. In the valley's towns they abound in dwelling areas and railway yards where they feed on foodstuffs stored within these buildings.

2.7.1.2. *Small mammals*

Today, small mammals are among the most frequently observed wildlife in the valley. As with the micromammals, species listed in Skinner and Smithers (1990) having distributions that overlap with the Seacow valley are discussed briefly below. Those species confirmed in the recent archaeological record of Abbots Cave by Plug (1993) and by Plug & Sampson (in press) for several other upper valley rock shelters are marked with an asterisk (*) against their common names.

Of those small mammals most commonly seen in daylight, hares are among the most frequently spotted. Three hares are present: the Cape hare* (*Lepus capensis*), the Scrub hare* (*Lepus saxatilis*) and Smith's red rock rabbit* (*Pronolagus rupestris*). The Cape hare's presence is uncertain, as it needs more palatable bush and grass than the others. The Scrub hare is distributed on the plains. Although it will feed on the stems, leaves and rhizomes of dry and green grass, which also provide some cover, this hare depends mostly on the tiny leaves of Karoo scrub bushes, as its name implies. Smith's red rock rabbit is confined to areas of krantzes, rocky hillsides and boulder strewn koppies. Less fleet footed than the Scrub hare, this species depends on its rocky habitat to slow down quadrupedal predators. Although they prefer grasses which have started to sprout after fire, they will also survive on Karoo shrub leaves.

Among the larger rodents the most commonly seen nocturnal species on the flats is the Springhare* (*Pedetes capensis*). Its large burrows are a common occurrence, easily identified in the daytime. It feeds almost entirely on grass, preferring compact sandy soils in which to dig its burrows. By contrast, more broken rocky terrain is preferred by the nocturnal Cape Porcupine* (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*) which is very rarely seen as it has been hunted to local near-extinction. Its diet of bulbs, tubers and roots made it a direct competitor with the Bushmen for local plant foods. Well known for its need to gnaw on bones, it prefers more open terrain with sparse bush cover, where carcass scavenging opportunities are greater. Burrows are impossible to distinguish from those of Springhares, except for very rare scatters of spines. The Cape Ground squirrel* (*Xerus inauris*) lives in very extensive, easily spotted burrow colonies where compact ground overlies a rocky or calcareous substrate. This species feeds on plants as well as insects.

Two carnivorous families inhabit various niches within the Seacow River valley. The Honey Badger (*Mellivora capensis*), belongs to the first such family, the Mustelidae, and feeds on the larvae of bees as well on honey and fruit. It shelters primarily in crevices in rocky areas, although Honey badgers do on occasion dig holes or use existing burrows. Like the Honey badger, the Striped Polecat* (*Ictonyx striatus*) also occurs in rocky areas where shrubs provide some sort of cover. They feed on insects and mice and may search for food outside their preferred niche. The African Weasel (*Poecilogale albinucha*) may occur in those moister regions of the valley, such as the mouth of the Seacow River at the Orange River. Having a diet of rodents, this carnivore prefers areas having an annual rainfall in excess of 600mm, but could occur in the valley in wetter seasons.

Four species of the Carnivore family, the Viverridae, occur primarily on the valleys' open plains. These are the Small-spotted Genet (*Genetta genetta*), the Suricate* (*Suricata suricatta*), the Yellow mongoose* (*Cynictis penicillata*) and the Small-grey mongoose* (*Galerella pulverulenta*). The Small-spotted genet requires cover in the form of scrub or holes in the ground from where they prey on insects, murids, spiders, birds and reptiles. The suricate feeds primarily on reptiles and also requires cover, in this case usually in holes dug in harder or stony ground. Preferring a softer, sandier substrate, the yellow mongoose feeds primarily on invertebrates, with a marked preference for termites. Insects form the major component of the diet of the Small-grey mongoose, which have a much wider habitat tolerance than the above species, and would thus occur in a variety of niches throughout the valley. Two further species of Viverridae also occur in the Seacow River valley.

These species however prefer wet or well watered habitats. The White-tailed mongoose* (*Ichneumia albicauda*), an insectivore, is associated with savannah woodland in well watered areas, and could thus occur in the valley to the extreme north along the banks of the Orange River and the mouth of the Seacow River. The Water mongoose* (*Atilax paludinosus*) shares a preference for water, occurring in streams and permanent water such as farm dams. The Seacow River as well as numerous farm dams could thus be home to this species which feeds on other small mammals, birds, fish and frogs. A further small mammal occupying valley waters is the Cape Clawless Otter (*Aonyx capensis*) which occur in rivers and dams where they feed primarily on crabs and frogs. Their shell-filled scats and Mussel meat remains are quite common along stream banks (G.Sampson pers. comm.). The Cape Clawless otter is known to move across land from smaller streams or pools when these dry up to more permanent waters.

The scrub plains of the valley are home to a further Order of small mammals, the Tubulidentata. The Aardvark (*Orycteropus afer*) is the only species of this Order which occurs in the valley and they are associated with sandy ground where their primary item of food, Formicid ants, is found. This species avoids rocky terrain which is the preferred home of the last small mammal species occurring in the valley, the Rock dassie* (*Procavia capensis*) (Order Hyracoidea). This dassie occurs where there are outcrops of rock in the form of krantzes, rocky koppies, rocky hillsides or piles of boulders. Finding cover among the bushes of this environment, these mixed feeders feed on specific plants in different seasons of the year.

2.7.1.3. **Large Mammals**

The number of species of large mammals occuring naturally within the Seacow River valley has changed drastically since 18th and 19th century times. At present examples of three Orders of animals are known to occur within the valley. Species of these orders: Primates, Carnivora and Artiodactyla; were identified as potentially occuring within the valley by reference to Skinner and Smithers' (1990) distribution maps for mammals. As for the Small mammals, Large mammal species identified by Plug (1993) as occuring in the recent archaeological record of Abbot's cave are marked with an asterisk (*) against their common names.

Often spotted among the rocky krantzes and koppies of the valley, the Chacma baboon* (*Papio ursinus*) belonging to the Primate Order feeds on invertebrates as well as on fruit and leaves. This primate is often killed by valley farmers owing to its destructive feeding habits among the farmers' crops. Members of two families of Carnivora are found within the Seacow River valley, namely the Felinae and Canidae. Of the Felidae four species occur. The first and most notorious of these is the Leopard which is a menace to particularly the small-stock of valley farmers. Described as occurring only in the more southern coastal areas of southern Africa by Skinner and Smithers (1990), Leopard* (*Panthera pardus*) are still notorious as predators of stock, particularly small stock, among Seacow Valley farmers (G. Sampson pers.comm.). Leopards are tolerant of a wide variety of environments although they are generally associated with areas of rocky koppies, rocky hills, mountain ranges and forests. The many rocky koppies and rocky hills of the valley thus

provide the ideal habitat for this large cat. The second Feline species is the Caracal* (*Felis caracal*) which flourishes in karroid areas, feeding on small- to medium-sized prey including the young of larger antelopes. The third species, African wild cats* (*Felis lybica*) feed primarily on murids amongst the rock covered koppies and expansive plains of the valley. The Small spotted cat* (*Felis nigripes*) is the fourth Felidae species, which, like the African wild cat, feeds primarily on murids.

The second Carnivore family to have species occurring within the valley are the Canidae. The species belonging to this family, prefer open country where they feed on prey ranging in size from small to large (particularly mammals), as well as on insects. Thus, the following species could be found upon the extensive shrubby plains of the Seacow River valley: the Bat-eared fox* (*Octocyon megalotis*), the Cape fox* (*Vulpes chama*) and the Black-backed jackal* (*Canis mesomelas*).

The third Order of mammals which occur in their natural state in the Seacow River valley according to Skinner and Smithers (1990) are the Artiodactyla. Three species of the Family Bovidae occur naturally in the valley, although one of these species the Blesbok (*Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi*) has to some extent been reintroduced in recent times. Blesbok are grazers who inhabit mostly grassland areas and would thus be associated with the more grassy hills of the valley. The second naturally occurring species, the Steenbok* (*Raphicerus campestris*) are mixed feeders which inhabit open country. The last of these species, the Grey Rhebok* (*Pelea capreolus*) are associated with the rocky hills and mountain slopes of the valley where they browse amongst the karroid shrubs. Two other species, the Black wildebeest* (*Connochaetes gnou*) and the Springbok* (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) no longer occur naturally in the valley, but have been reintroduced in the twentieth century, where they are kept in fenced areas. The Black Wildebeest was recently reintroduced on the farm Sneeuwkuil (RICH.115) in the Seacow River valley (G. Sampson pers.comm.). This species favours grassy or karroid shrub plains and they are predominantly grazers although in the cold winter months they browse on karroid bushes. Springbok, the natural habitat of which is open grassland, occur on many farms within the valley. In the harsher, winter months, these summer grazers browse on the shoots and leaves of karroid bush or on the leaves of shrubs or trees.

The last on-the-ground survey of the ungulate species within the Magisterial districts of Colesberg, Hanover and Middelburg, all of which encompass the Seacow River valley, was undertaken by Bigalke and Bateman who published their results in 1962. This survey was carried out by means of questionnaires completed by farmers within the different districts. In each questionnaire, the farmer noted the number or presence of ungulate species on his land. This allowed for a district by district calculation of the ratio of species occuring on the farms in the area. High percentages of Steenbok* (*Raphicerus campestris*) and Springbok* (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) were thus recorded for the valley, with much lower percentages of Blesbok (*D.d. phillipsi*), Vaal ribbok* (*Pelea capreolus*), Rooi ribbok* (*Redunca fulvorufula*) and Klipspringer* (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) occurring. Comparing these findings to those listed above (from Skinner and Smithers 1990), it is evident that either the latter three species, Vaal Ribbok, Rooi Ribbok and Klipspringer, are no longer present in the area or that they were missed by the later (1990) analysis. Bigalke and Bateman (1962) show that the Black wildebeest was not present in the valley at the time of their survey which agrees with the findings described above.

Thus, the number of large mammals which are known to occur within the Seacow River valley at present is minimal. The movement of most of the species discussed is heavily curtailed by the existence of barbed wire fencing between farms. The grazing or feeding areas of these species is thus severely limited.

2.7.2. Amphibians

Although a semi-arid shrubland, the valley harbours a surprising variety of amphibians in its main watercourses year round. Like so many other life forms, no systematic study of valley frogs and toads has been conducted, so the inventory was culled from the nation-wide distribution maps of Passmore and Carruthers (1979). Common valley species include the Common Platanna (*Xenopus laevis*), the Karoo toad (*Bufo gariepensis*), the Cape River frog (*Rana fuscigula*), and the Bullfrog (*Pyxicephalus adspersus*). Rain-filled depressions and small seasonal vlei lands across valley may also bring up the Pygmy toad (*Bufo vertebralis*), the Tremolo sand frog (*Tomopterna cryptotis*), the Common caco (*Cacosterum boettgeri*), but these are much less commonly seen.

2.7.3. Reptiles

A large number of reptiles inhabit the valley's waters, soils and rocky areas. These species have been inventoried by checking the distributions given in Branch's (1993) guide to the reptiles of Southern Africa (see Table 2-3).

TABLE 2-3: Reptile species occurring in the Seacow River valley (from Branch 1993)

REPTILES	SPECIES		
Snakes	Cape Cobra (*Naja nivea*)	Spitting cobra (rinkals) (*Hemachatus haemachatus*)	Cross-marked grass snake (*Psammophis crucifer*)
	Dwarf beaked snake (*Dipsina multimaculata*)	Common egg eater (*Dasypeltis scabra*)	Delande's Blind snake (*Typhlops delandei*)
	Cape Wolf snake (*Lycophidion capense*)	Common slug eater (*Duberria lutrix*)	Mole snake (*Pseudaspis cana*)
	Sundevall's Shovel-snout (*Prosymna sundevallii*)	Rhombic Skaapsteker (*Psammophylax rhombeatus*)	Rhombic night adder (*Causus rhombeatus*)
	Karoo Sand snake (*Psammophis notostictus*)	Coral snake (*Aspidelaps lubricus*)	
Skinks	Cape skink (*Mabuya capensis*)	Variegated skink (*Mabuya variegata*)	Striped skink (*Mabuya striata*)
Old World Lizards	Burchell's sand lizard (*Pedioplanis burchelli*)	Namaqua sand lizard (*Pedioplanis namaquensis*)	Spotted sand lizard (*Pedioplais lineoocellata*)
Plated lizards	Yellow-throated plated lizard (*Gerrhosaurus flavigularis*)		
Girdled lizards	Cape girdled lizard (*Cordylus cordylus*)	Karoo girdled lizard (*Cordylus polyzonus*)	Cape Crag lizard (*Pseudo-cordylus microlepidotus*)
Leguaans	Rock monitor (*Varanus albigularis*)		
Agama	Southern Rock agama (*Agama atra*)	Ground agama (*Agama aculeata*)	
Geckos	Bibron's gecko (*Pachydactylus bibronii*)	Spotted gecko (*Pachydactylus maculatus*)	Marico gecko (*Pachydactylus mariquensis*)

The Marsh terrapin (*Pelomedusa subrufa*) is commonly sighted within the Seacow River, and occasionally in seasonal vleis. Three species of tortoise (Family Testudinidae) also occur, namely the Greater padloper (*Homopus femoralis*), the Leopard tortoise (*Geochelone pardalis*) and the Tent tortoise (*Psammobates tentorius*).

2.7.4. **Aquatic creatures**

The river and its tributaries are home to a number of freshwater fish, some of which proliferate seasonally in weirs and dams, depending on rainfall and drainage. Eight fish species have a distribution which include the Seacow River drainage according to species distribution maps published by Skelton (1993. These include: the Chubbyhead barb (*Barbus anoplus*), the Smallmouth Yellowfish (*Barbus aeneus*), the Moggel (*Labeo umbratus*), the Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and the Sharptooth Catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*). Other species of the Orange-Vaal drainage, which can be expected to enter the lower reaches of the Seacow River, are the Largemouth Yellowfish (*Barbus kimberleyensis*), the Orange River mudfish (*Labeo capensis*) and the Rock catfish (*Austroglanis sclateri*). Freshwater mussels (*Unio caffer*) occur in shallow water along the Seacow River, principally along those channels which carry water throughout the year. There, they feed on small aquatic plants and animals. Crabs (Genus Potamon) also occur in many of the stream beds, dams and weirs of the Seacow River valley, where they feed on small aquatic animals and plants.

2.7.5. **Birds**

In spite of its bleak appearance, the valley's habitat supports an immensely rich bird life, especially around the seasonal bodies of standing water provided by artificial dams and weirs. Even before such developments, the valley supported a wide range of avian species. Winterbottom (1978:964) has estimated that 21 bird species are so widely distributed in the Karoo that they are thought to be endemic. There are also 12 species whose range is either confined to the Karoo or to the Karoo and the adjacent fynbos region. Bird population densities vary according to terrain and rainfall. The Central Upper Karoo (of Acock's subdivision) has an average of 486 birds per 100 hectares. However, unpublished figures for the False Upper Karoo (which includes the Seacow River valley) show that the density can become very much higher than this after good rains (ibid.). The large number of species (roughly 283 species) present on the landscape are however too many to enumerate here.

2.7.6. **Insect life**

No systematic survey of the insect life of the Seacow River valley has to date been carried out. The general complexity and multiplicity of insect species has led entomologists to specialize in genera or families, rather than in the natural history of regions. A systematic field survey would probably take years, as would the necessary research into documentary sources (V.B. Whitehead pers.comm.). As such endeavours are beyond the scope or goals of this thesis, this section is

limited to one insect Order which had a considerable impact on the valley inhabitants, namely locusts.

The most well known family of the Order Orthoptera are the locusts (Acrididae). The Brown Locust (*Locustana pardalina*) is endemic to the semi-desert karroid areas of the Cape, western Orange Free State and southern Namibia (Annecke and Moran 1982). This locust is regarded as a national pest by the South African authorities owing to their destructive feeding habits. They are polyphagous feeders which devastate a wide variety of natural pastures and crops, but they seem to have a preference for grasses. A significant characteristic of this species according to Annecke and Moran (1982), who describe this species in detail, is that two forms or phases are recognised within a single species.

There are typical grasshoppers (belonging to the phase *solitaria*) which lead a solitary life, and there are individuals that aggregate and swarm as typical locusts (these are the phase *gregaria*). The *solitaria* hoppers are relatively small and cryptically coloured (green or brown), while the adults are also small. Both hoppers and adults are sluggish, more sedentary and anti-social. In contrast, in the *gregaria* phase, the eggs are small and drought resistant. Eggs of locusts in this phase usually hatch within 14 days if the soil is wet and the temperature sufficiently high. If these factors are not present, these eggs may remain dormant for up to 3.5 years, hatching only when conditions are right. The hoppers are large and brightly coloured (black and orange) while the adults are large. Hoppers and adults are very active and socially oriented and move together in large swarms.

The particular phase which the Brown locust in an area is in depends not so much on the climate or the vegetation or even the soil type, but more on the number of *solitaria* phase locusts in a region. This process is summarised by Annecke and Moran (1982:289) who write that - owing to various processes - "the numbers and densities of solitary locusts rise steadily over several seasons until they are subjected to extreme overcrowding, ... aggregation and transformation into the gregaria phase [follows]." The locusts in this phase then usually swarm and destroy large amounts of vegetation.

2.8. CONCLUSION

The Seacow River valley is therefore a very large area defined in terms of interrelated aspects of the physical environment. The topography of the valley is determined by the geology and the soils which make up the valley floor, while these three factors along with the climate all affect the vegetation and animal species living on this landscape. Eighteenth and nineteenth century documentary sources provide valuable clues to what this landscape looked like during that period, both in terms of the animal life and the vegetation. In order to adequately map details of the latter aspects of the valley, the routes which the travellers making these observations followed are first mapped in the chapter that follows (Chapter 3).

CHAPTER 3 - THE TRAVELLER'S ROUTES

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, thirty published accounts of journeys across the Seacow valley in the late-18th and 19th centuries are fitted to historical maps, modern topographic maps, original title deed information and archival sources on land ownership. The goal of this exercise is to pinpoint all routes as precisely as possible so that travellers' individual sightings of game, people and events (to be analysed in later chapters) can be accurately located.

Very few traveller's accounts were published with their own route maps, and of these, even fewer were reasonably accurate. Most routes must be reconstructed by matching place names given in their narratives with the names marked on historical and modern maps. Furthermore, many travellers entered only farm owners' names which, of course, cannot be matched with maps which portray only farm names. To reconcile farm names with owner's names requires extensive searches of historical title deeds and archival documents.

The foundation for the route maps to be presented here is the sequence of 19th century wagon track maps for the Seacow valley. These were compiled from original farm title deed survey diagrams, and from contemporary military maps. How the valley's growing wagon track network was reconstructed is described elsewhere (Neville et. al 1994) and is not part of this thesis. Common sense dictates that well known wagon tracks between farmsteads, outspans and other watering places would have been followed by all travellers. On very rare occasions when a traveller took to the open veld, this was invariably mentioned in his narrative.

Distances between stages were seldom quoted, but the hours travelled were commonly given. The conversion scales used in this study are those of Burchell (1824,I) printed on his own route map. Burchell presented: "a Geographical scale (of English statute miles); a Travelling scale (of miles as measured along the road); a scale of Hours for travelling with waggons (drawn by oxen, adapted to the Travelling scale); a scale of Hours for travelling on horseback; and scales for a days journey with the waggons and a days journey on horseback" (ibid.). Applying these scales, a traveller on horseback would have taken one hour to cover about 7.5 kilometres or 4.25 miles, while an ox-wagon could cover 3.5 kilometres or 2 miles in the same time.

The following procedures were used for mapping each route. Names of staging points (and/or farmers) were listed, with travel times between them, and the names of natural landmarks (e.g. mountains, koppies, river channels) noted along the way. Farmers' names were then converted to farm names (see above), and travel times were converted to distances. Next, each segment of the route between named stages was traced over 1:50 000 scale maps, following the shortest available main wagon track (Neville et al. 1994). All segments were then plotted on to 1:250 000 Topo-Cadastral maps (3224 Graaff-Reinet, 3124 Middelburg, 3024 Colesberg) and joined. This

complete route map was then reduced to A4 size. Individual maps accompany the reconstructed routes. These are ordered chronologically and are bound in a separate volume.

3.2. ADRIAAN VAN JAARSVELD (AUGUST 1775)

The earliest recorded expedition into the Seacow valley (see Figure 3-1) was a punitive raid against local Bushmen by Dutch trekboers. In 1775 Adriaan Van Jaarsveld, then Field Corporal for the Sneeuberg in the Graaff-Reinet district, reported to his superior about a commando which he had led through the Sneeuberg range into the Seacow River valley to the north. The original account was first published by Moodie (1838), a source quoted by literally dozens of subsequent authors as a particularly violent example of commando tactics during the Bushman War.

Between April and August of 1775, several Sneeuberg farmers had livestock stolen by 'Bosman Hottentots' thought to be based in the Seacow valley, and Van Jaarsveld's commando was intended as a counter-raid. Thus on 1 August, "...46 Christians and 31 Hottentots" (Moodie 1960,III:44) congregated at Van Jaarsveld's house on the farm Zoete Rivier (SASA RLR 23/1 p.95). Although no further record of this farm has survived in the sources, the modern farm Groene Valy (GR.37) in the Sneeuberg best fits the description as it is not only situated on a small river, the Bloukranspruit, but is the only suitable farm not recorded as being owned by anyone else at the time. A wagon track also leads directly across this farm and the adjoining one (Krugers Kraal - GR.36) in the direction of the valley (S.G.Dgm.567/1839). Here, they prepared their mounts for a "great commando" (Moodie 1960 III.:43) and set out the next day accompanied by several wagons. Evidently they were already well acquainted with the valley's terrain, and some wagon roads must have been in place by this date. However, no written accounts of Seacow valley travels earlier than Van Jaarsveld's commando have been recovered.

From Groene Valy the commando took a day to reach Isaac van der Merwe, who was on the farm Sneeukuyl (SASA RLR 21/1 p.169), now Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124). Although a hard day's riding (27 km), they could have accomplished this by climbing north east over the rump of the Muishoekberg and heading straight for the narrow pass at Nuweberg no doubt following the wagon track mentioned above. Here they would have met a well marked wagon road at the point where it crested the Sneeuberg and turned NNW along the upper drainage channels of the Seacow's central tributary. Any alternative route, although easier riding, would have taken them more than a day to complete.

On 3 August Van Jaarsveld "went with the commando north east-wards ... as far as Tafelberg" (Moodie 1960 III.:44). This was undoubtedly Klein Tafelberg. If they rode about the same distance as the previous day (over much easier terrain) following the central (mod. Elandskloof) tributary channel, this would have brought them at least to where the modern farm Leeuwen Fontein (HAN.129) abuts Bock Fontein (HAN.130) on the north east flank of Klein Tafelberg.

On the 4th they continued to the north-east and reached what Van Jaarsveld calls "the higher part of Seacow River" (ibid.). This 'higher part' was almost certainly the juncture where the two tributaries of the Seacow River, the Elandskloof River and Bo-Seekoei River came together. After fruitless negotiations with a lone Bushman, they turned north-west down the main Seacow River channel to a place then called 'Eylands Drift' (ibid.). This cannot be identified with any certainty, but there is a place of this name listed in the Oude Wildschutte Boeken (SASA RLR 23/2 p.355/194) in 1778 which could be the same. Assuming that they travelled a full day this would have brought them to near the modern farm Elands Gat (HAN.77) where a river crossing still exists.

From here, Van Jaarsveld took a smaller party the following morning (6 August) to "Ronde Kop, lying on the same river" (ibid.:44). By riding hard across the flats in a north easterly direction they must have cut across a large bend in the Seacow channel. They could have watered about midway at the fountain at modern Drie Koppen (HAN.49) and reached the Seacow channel again near its confluence with the Noupoortspruit, having ridden some 25 km that day. Klip Kop is a suitably round koppie, shown on the original survey diagram (S.G.Dgm.No.652/1837) of the farm of the same name (HAN.147). Given the distance travelled and the locations of subsequent actions, this is almost certainly Van Jaarsveld's 'Ronde Kop'.

Here, Van Jaarsveld shot a hippopotamus in the river, for local Bushmen to consume. On the next day 16 more Bushmen approached the party "from the mountains to the south." (Moodie 1960 III:44). These were the Schuilhoekberge at some 20 km distance. The commando again shot several hippos in order to entice more Bushmen. Leaving the carcasses behind, they rode down the river and halted at "the Blauw Bank" (ibid.). This was probably the bend in the Seacow River on the farm Klip Kraal (COL.104) where blue-green Karoo shale beds are exposed in the river bank (G. Murray pers. comm.). Here, they shot 12 more hippos on the following day, after which the rest of the commando (left behind at Eylands Drift) caught up with the advance party at sunset.

On the 9th several Bushmen approached them at Blauw Bank, but again little came of the encounter and the Bushmen slipped away during the night. Shots fired at fleeing thieves by the farmers were heard in the dark.

On 10 August, Van Jaarsveld moved two hours downstream with his entire party to a place which he called "Keerom (Turn Back)' (Moodie 1960 III:44.). Two years later, Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) may have mapped the 'Keerom Bergen' as being near the place where both he, and Van Jaarsveld before him, had turned back. His sketch of the 'bergen' can be reasonably matched with the pointed koppie now called Sjineeshoed (on Taaiboschfontein - COL.58) as illustrated in Gutsche (1968:11).

From his Keerom position, spies were sent back to Blauw Bank, and at midnight they reported many Bushmen at the hippo carcasses. The whole commando rode back, divided into two groups, and at daybreak on the 11th they "overthrew the robbers there" (Moodie 1960 III:44) in one of the most notorious massacres of the Bushman War. They left 122 dead, 21 were taken, and only five escaped by swimming across the hippo pool. Two Bushman skulls with bullet holes, very probably victims of this raid were collected on the adjacent farm Groot Half Akker (COL.100) in the

1820s, and are now housed in the Colesberg Museum. In this one-sided battle, only five commando members were struck by non-fatal arrows.

Van Jaarsveld then sent a party north-east. They reported back that cattle remains were seen beyond the Keerom. Hoping at first to follow "the continuation of the ossen spoer " (ibid.:45) they decided against this because of low provisions, and turned instead towards the south-east.

On 12 August five scouts were sent from Keerom, south-east to the Roode Berg; that night the commando followed, outspanning at 'Schuyl Hoek' now Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81). On the 13th, the scouts arrived back there with reports that they had seen many fires lit by Bushmen. Nine more scouts were sent out, and another six set out that evening. At daybreak the following morning (14 August) the latter group returned and reported that they had again seen signal fires lit by Bushmen. That evening, the commando departed from Schuil Hoeck and travelled south-east to Carolus Poort, still of that name (NOU.166). On 16 August, three groups of six scouts each were sent out from Carolus Poort. During the day, two Bushmen caught spying on the commando camp were sent with a party of *trekboers* to show them the location of their people. Soon after these men had departed, some of the other scouts returned with the news that they "had found a kraal on one side of the Roode Bergen, about an hour and a half northward" (ibid.:45). This Bushman camp must have been at the foot of an outlier of the modern Agter Renosterberg in the vicinity of the modern farm Falsefontein (NOU.165).

That night, Van Jaarsveld marched on the camp. At daybreak on 17 August, they surrounded it and opened fire, killing 15 Bushmen and taking eight children, with none able to escape. They returned on the 18th to Carolus Poort where the men who had been sent off with the captured Bushmen had returned with no useful information. Seven more scouts were sent off with the two captured Bushmen spies, who however refused to co-operate and were shot. The commando then followed the trail of fugitives into the Roodeberg and tracked them down to "a cavern" (ibid.). Although this could have been Blydefontein Shelter (on Blydefontein - NOU.168), the narrative gives neither direction nor distance, so the location cannot be verified. However, Blydefontein is the only cavity in this region large enough to qualify as a 'cavern' and it has no historical deposits in its upper levels, signifying that it was abandoned at the time of European Contact (Bousman 1991). It is thus the most likely spot.

That evening the commando got near this place and in the morning "fired upon them in their caverns, so that not a single one escaped." (ibid.), killing 47, and capturing seven children. The plural 'cavern(s)' would fit the Blydefontein setting which has Meerkat Shelter opposite. The commando then rode "back some distance to the Windhoek" (ibid.:46). This 'Windhoek' was probably on the farm now known as Winter Hoek (NOU.118), slightly north of the Carlton Hills. This would have been a typical day's journey (26 km) from Blydefontein.

Two large parties of spies were sent out on the 21st, and that evening the commando rode "to the Riet River"(ibid.) where they met up again with one scouting party the following morning. It is unlikely that the party travelled very far that evening. 'Riet River' was possibly the probably the

river now known as Ludlowsloot which flows over the farms Twee Fontein (MID.11) and Wolve Kop (MID.12). Unfortunately no historical maps indicate the name of this river.

On 23 August the commando "moved back to the south-west from the place above mentioned to Rhenosterberg" (ibid.) - thereby moving out of the valley.

3.3. ROBERT JACOB GORDON (NOVEMBER 1777)

The next surviving record is by R.J. Gordon, newly appointed captain of the Cape Garrison, who led an expedition in search of the 'Great River' (Beyers 1981,V:190) in late 1777. Throughout his narrative, Gordon uses the term 'Hottentots' probably a contraction of the term 'Bushman-Hottentots' used by Dutch clerks at the Cape Town Castle to describe the valley's inhabitants in the Oude Wildschutte Boeken. Gordon's party reached the Sneeuberg Mountains on 11 November and climbed into the southern part of the range. For reasons that are unclear, V.S. Forbes (1965:map 16) mismapped their descent down the north slopes into the Klein Seekoei tributary, with an exit from the mountains through Cephanjespoort. In fact, they can be shown to have followed roughly the same path used by Van Jaarsveld's commando (see Figure 3-2).

After passing through many named farms within the Sneeuberg, Gordon reached the farm of Tjaart van der Walt. The Oude Wildschutte Boeken list him as the occupant of Drooge Rivier in 1777 (SASA RLR-22/1 p.219), which most authors assign as the later farm Zuurplaats (GR.35), although this cannot be adequately documented. However, it is a reasonable assumption because the party then travelled northward for three hours "with twists and turns" to the farm of 'Willem Burgers' (ibid.:82) shown as 'Barend Burgers' on Gordon's own map. This was certainly the farm Vergelegen (RICH.123) occupied by Barend Johannes Burgers (Shalksz) in 1771 (SASA RLR-21/2 p.305). At this point, Gordon does not seem to have noticed that they had crossed the watershed into the Seacow drainage and were descending along the Elandskloof tributary. After three hours delay, they departed and they passed in four hours "through a marshy valley." (ibid.) which would have been the vlei areas of the modern farm Dasses Fontein (RICH.117). Gordon's own map shows 'Schanse kraal' on the right of their path, in the correct position. After nightfall they arrived "at the last farm, which belonged to Stefanus Smit, Drie Fonteinen Aan De Crane Valey" (ibid.). This farm is now named Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). Its proprietor was indeed Stephanus Christiaan Smit (SASA RLR-22/2 p.259), and the farm occupies "a very extensive valley" with the Kleine Tafelberg "half an hour to the WNW" (Raper & Boucher 1988,I:82). Thus its identity is beyond doubt.

Gordon's movements on 16 November are difficult to read from the information which he gives in his written account and in his map. Early in the morning Gordon (ibid.:83) rode to "the mountain SSE, at a distance of an hour, to a camp called De Schanse Kraal" from which Hottentots had been driven. Remains of this stone built kraal can be identified on Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) opposite rock paintings which G. Sampson (pers. comm.) reports as matching Gordon's published

hand-painted copy (Raper & Boucher 1988,I:82:84). He then returned to the wagons which had presumably remained at Smit's place.

At 1 pm, the party departed in a north-easterly direction and traversed a "large, level plain" over which they rode, descending gradually downhill (ibid.:83.). This was the east side of the huge plain known today as *Die Ou Vlak*. They would have traversed land now known as Coetzees Kraal (MID.64). After six hours, they arrived at the 'Champagnes River' shown on Gordon's map as 'Champagnes Poort River,' and which Gordon said rose in the Sneeuberg and flowed north into the 'Zeekoey River' (ibid.:85). Most authorities identify this as the Klein Seekoei since it flows out of Cephanjes Poort. However, 'Wonder heuvel' is mapped by Gordon on its left bank whereas the koppie known as Wonderheuwel is actually on the right bank. This is probably a mapping error by Gordon (see van Plettenberg's route below). They camped that night at the river, probably close to the northern boundary of what is now the farm Paarde Valley (MID.62).

On 17 November, seven of the party set off on horseback to "see the battlefield of June last year where Van der Walt had been killed." (ibid.:85). No document of this encounter has been found. Gordon (ibid.:85) described the place as "a rocky hill where they had concealed themselves" which "lay an hour out of our way." This spot has not yet been identified in the field, although a journey of an hour by horse from Paarde Valley probably took Gordon to the foot of the Roodeberg at Loskop on the farm Leeuw Hoek (MID.61), a distance of five miles. The location of this abandoned camp could tally with the location of the Leeuw Hoek rock shelter, above the modern homestead of that farm. This shelter has been excavated by Garth Sampson (see 1.9.7. above). The only other potential site of this camp is Wonder Heuvel, five miles to the north-east, but the slopes of this koppie are too steep to have provided much refuge to the Bushmen and that koppie is not "out of our way" as Gordon (ibid.) stressed. After doing some hunting, the party arrived back at the wagons that afternoon, then proceeded four hours (about 10 miles) N by NE across a "very featureless, gradually descending, level plain, sometimes rocky, with a few stony hills in places" (ibid.:86). That evening, they probably rested on the plains close to a lesser tributary of the Klein Seekoei River at Elandsheuvel (NOU.146).

The party set out on the 18 November in a north-easterly direction, coming at roughly 12 a.m. to a "pleasant spring" (ibid.:87). This was probably either on the farm Droogefontein (NOU.85), or Allemans Fontein (NOU.83) based on the distance travelled. At five o'clock that afternoon, the party arrived at a brackish spring where they were forced to remain on account of the good grass. A pool of better water was discovered nearby (ibid.) at a place called De Shuilhoek (ibid.:87) now known as Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) south-west of the Schuilhoekberg.

On 19 November, Gordon (ibid.:88) set out in a northerly direction for an hour and a half "over level terrain and over some low ridges" which would have placed them on the modern farm Flaauwe Kop (COL.106). From there, they descended across a level plain for two and a half hours (roughly 6 miles) whereupon they "came to a river where it was hilly" which Gordon (ibid.:88) named 'Plettenberg's River' (the Seacow River). Many deep, wide pools formed this river which at this stage was nearly dry according to Gordon (ibid.). The distance travelled would have brought the

party alongside the river on the modern farm Klip Kraal (COL.104) where some low hills border the river to the north. Gordon mentioned seeing several Hottentot skulls where they had been "killed ... by a commando" (i.e. Van Jaarsveld's commando described above) two years before. The identification of Klip Kraal (COL.104) as the party's camp is further confirmed by Gordon's Map which places the camp at a sharp bend in the river, a bend which is clearly identifiable on the latter farm.

On the 20th he "went about three hours NE down the river" which he described as flowing deeply and having many bends (ibid.:91). Assuming that they travelled on horseback, they may have covered about ten miles in this time, taking into account the bends of the river and the frequent stops to shoot hippopotamus. This would have brought them to the modern farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). After shooting many hippopotamus, Gordon returned to the wagons at Klip Kraal (COL.104). Following the hunting of more hippopotamus they "spent the night at the place where we had shot the first hippopotamus" (ibid.:92) by which he probably meant the place at Klip Kraal (COL.104). At some stage Gordon had crossed the Seacow River "at a place where there was a defeated Hottentot village where several skulls lay" (ibid.:91-92). This does not seem to be the residue of Van Jaarsveld's actions, and may cover a subsequent raid for which the records have been lost or which was never recorded. The only clue to the locality of his crossover point and the defeated village is the statement: "in and around this river it is full of rock sills" (ibid.:92). A long dolerite dyke extents on either side of the Seacow River at a point direct in line with the farmstead on the farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). This dyke could have been the "rock sills" which Gordon (ibid.) mentioned. In addition, it was probably easy enough to cross the river on horse at this point as a modern farm track passes the homestead on Quaggas Fontein and crosses the river there. Gordon again rode "NE further down the river" on the next morning, 21 November, in search of Hottentots (ibid.:92), hunting hippo along the way. On the 22nd, Gordon observed that: "to the NNE of and beyond this Plettenberg's River is a mountain extending about six hours E and W which is not high, like all the mountains around here. Our hunters named it Gordon's Mountain." (ibid.:95). This low mountain was probably the range of hills extending over the farms Bovenste Fontein (COL.34), Schiet Fontein (COL.35), Rammekraal (COL.36), Hollefontein (COL.38) and the northern portions of Onverwagt (COL.56) and T'zamenkomst (COL.57) which are beyond the Seacow River if viewed from both Klip Kraal (COL.104) and Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). These hills extend for fifteen miles from east to west which comes close to the fourteen miles which a wagon could cover in six hours. Gordon's map labelled the most prominent peak 'De Mosque' which can be identified as the present day Sjineeshoed (Raper and Boucher 1988,I).

Gordon rode "to and fro" (ibid.:95) at the base of these mountains in search of Hottentots. He had possibly again crossed the Seacow River and ridden across the flats on T'zamenkomst. He however failed to persuade his companions to go further. Therefore, towards afternoon, the party "departed SSW, having been further into this region even than any commando" (ibid.). Gordon's map labelled 'Gordon's Mountain' as the 'Keerom bergen' which indicates that this was the spot at which they turned back.

That afternoon, the party rode slightly uphill for five hours (approximately 12 miles) over the veld until they arrived at a deep spring containing brackish water (ibid.95). They named this spring 'Gordon's Fountain'. Although a modern farm, Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) shares the above name, it is too distant to have been the spring described. It is more likely that a spring on the farm Dwaal Fontein (HAN.29) which is approximately 12 miles from Klip Kraal was the one referred to by that name. Gordon added that the "Rodeberg range extends here in hills called De Schuilhoek, on the western side of which flows a small river into which the above-mentioned spring flows." (ibid.). Gordon's companions named this river after him. A tributary of the Seacow River, the Noupoortspruit flows west of the Schuilhoekberge, and this was no doubt the river then termed 'Gordon's River'. The fountain close to the homestead on Dwaal Fountain (HAN.29) drains into the latter river. 'Gordon's Fountain' was thus undoubtedly this fountain.

On the following day, they departed in a south, south-westerly direction on the route of their outward journey, but "far to the right" (ibid.:96). They arrived at a "pleasant copious spring" which Gordon named 'Princess Wilhelmina Fountain' (ibid.:96). The party then continued to the 'Champagnes Poort River' where they spent the night not far from their previous resting place (ibid.) - this appears to have been on the southern boundary of the farm Oude Kraal (HAN.123). A day's journey by wagon was approximately 18 miles, a distance which would have placed Gordon on the banks of the Klein Seekoei River close to where they had previously camped. 'Princess Wilhelmina Fountain' was probably the modern Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) which is to the right of their previous route.

On the 24 November Gordon left his camp at dawn and headed south by south-west and travelled for five hours to the farm of Smit (Kraanvogel Valley - RICH.120). They then rode for four hours (about 10 miles) south, south-west to the farm of Andries Peter Burgers (ibid.). This could possibly have been the farm Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124) which is about 10 miles from the former farm and could have been owned by family of the owner of Vergelegen (see above). Late that evening, having left the Seacow drainage again without comment, the party arrived at the farm of Tjaart van der Walt who had accompanied them on their journey (ibid.). If this was the farm now called Zuur Plaats (GR.35) it would certainly fit with the distance. They "had ridden hard all day long, so that some horses became weak" (ibid.:96).

3.4. GOVERNOR JOACHIM VAN PLETTENBERG (SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 1778)

Joachim van Plettenberg took up his post as Governor of the Cape Colony in 1775. To observe conditions in the interior and border regions, he mounted an expedition in 1778, guided by R.J. Gordon and accompanied by a large entourage. The Governors' expedition diary (Godee-Molsbergen 1916), penned by a secretary who accompanied him, and Gordon's journal (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) agree on most points along the route through the Seacow valley (see Figure 3-3).

Having reached the Camdeboo at the end of September, they entered the Sneeuberg, led by Gordon who had been through there the previous year. On Tuesday 29 September they halted at the farm of "Johannes van der Walt" (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II:74) at 1:30 p.m. This was Drooge Rivier (modern Zuur Plaats - GR.35), actually owned by Johannes' brother Tjaart (SASA RLR-22/1 p.219). After visiting there "een groot half uur"(Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II:74), they proceeded to the farm of "Barend Burgers" (ibid.) where they arrived at 4:45 p.m. This was Vergelegen (RICH.120), then owned by Barend Johannes Burgers (SASA RLR-21/2 p.305). Gordon's journal confirms this route with the comment that "between Burger's place and Van der Walt's is the division of the waters, one flowing to the Camdeboo, and the other, being the headwaters of Plettenberg's River, to the N." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:179).

Next morning, in bitterly cold conditions, Gordon (ibid.) and Van Plettenberg (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II) left Burgers at 6.30 a.m. while the diarist left with the wagons at 8:15 am. In a few hours the two horsemen came to the farm of Stephanus Smit at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) which was "the last farm in the colony" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:180). Here they waited for the wagons which came up at 1:30 p.m. Another four hours brought them to a spring "overgrown with reeds" (ibid.) which they named 'Van Heiden's Fountain' after a German officer in the party. (ibid.). They must have travelled about ten miles that afternoon. The most likely position of this spring is on Paarde Valley (MID.62) or in a pool of the Klein Seekoei River. While at this spring, the men went to fetch wood from "some rocky hills" (ibid.) which would fit such a location, but does nothing to confirm it.

Waking early on 1 October, the party moved off and after three hours (about 7 miles) crossed 'de Champagne poortsrivier' (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II:76), which sounds like the Cephanjespoort River (modern Klein Seekoei River), but Gordon says they crossed the '*little* Champagnes Poorts River' [emphasis mine] (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:180). This was almost certainly an (unnamed) side stream running from the Roodebergen, through the modern farm Mooi Plaats (NOU.121) into the Klein Seekoei. Forbes (1965:101) stressed that their camp at 'Champagnes Poort River' was not at the farm with a similar name, Cephanjes Poort (MID.143), and Botha (1926) whom Forbes took this information from, merely noted that their camp that evening was on the banks of the Seacow River. Neither writer identified the exact position of their camp and from the remainder of the journey the identification of this small stream (rather than the Klein Seekoei River) as the 'little Champagnes Poort River' seems more likely. This confusion also probably explains why Gordon's map has Wonder Heuvel, which they had passed on their left, in the wrong position in relation to the Klein Seekoei River (on the right). After a further six and a half hours (about 15 miles), they came to a wetland which they named 'De Wet's Vlei' (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:180) or 'de Wetsfonteyn' (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II:76). This must have been on ground now called Allemans Fontein (NOU.83), since they were seven miles or "three hours' ride by ox-wagon on this side of Schuilhoek." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:180).

On 2 October, they passed Schuilhoek mountain on their right after four and three quarter hours. The party went on to outspan at 1:30 p.m. at 'de Seydsfonteyn', named after the doctor in their party (ibid.:77). This was just half an hour's ride from the banks of 'Plettenberg's River'

(Seacow River) according to Gordon (ibid.). Their day's journey of 17,5 miles would have placed them on the farm Klip Kop (COL.104) on which the original survey diagram (S.G.Dgm.652/1837) has a 'spring' clearly marked at the appropriate distance from the river. On 3 and 4 October, the party rode further down the Seacow River shooting and dressing hippos along the way (ibid.:181). On the afternoon of the 4th, they erected the engraved stone known as Van Plettenberg's Beacon on what is now Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). This was two hundred feet from the banks of the Seacow River, SSE of the prominent hill now called Sjineeshoed, but which van Plettenberg termed 'de Mosque' (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,II:78).

On 5 October the party turned back towards the Sneeuberg. Forbes (1965) has argued that it was the local farmer Johannes van der Walt who dissuaded the Governor from going farther north. Gordon says they "returned along our old route", outspanning for a while at Schuilhoek before proceeding to 'Gordon's or Brakke River' which they reached at sunset. They may have halted briefly on the west side of the Skuilhoekberg, to water at the Noupoortspruit, before proceeding slightly west of their previous route to the vicinity of Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) on another (now unnamed) tributary. Of this stream, Gordon noted "all these rivers flow into Plettenberg's River" (ibid.).

On the following day, the party proceeded on to 'Stef. Smits' (ibid.) at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). If they were near or at Gordon's Fontein at the start of the day, their route would have been across the flats via modern Oude Kraal (HAN.123) and Drie Koppen (HAN.124) on which there were springs. This must have been a long hard day, and they must have overnighted at Smit's. From Kraanvogel Valley, the party appear to have gone back along the same road they had used in coming. Gordon rode ahead of the Governor's party, eventually coming to 'Tjart Hannes van der Walt's' where "the first tributary of the Gaats River comes out of the Compas." (ibid.:183). The above description fits the farm Zuur Plaats (GR.35), as the Gats River arises in the mountains on this farm and flows to the south. From there, the party crossed back through the Sneeuberg before turning east towards the Eastern Frontier (ibid.).

3.5. DAVID DE VILLIERS (JUNE 1786)

Field Corporal David de Villiers led a commando into the Seacow River valley in June 1786. His report of this commando (SASA 1/GR/12/2 pp.32) provides a day by day account of their movements (see Figure 3-4). On 3 June, the commando left De Villiers' farm lying in the Sneeuberg (exact position unclear) and headed north through the mountains along a route to the west of the Winterhoekberge. This brought them out of the mountains at 'Rhenosterfontyn' (Renosterfontein - MUR.50) on 4 June, where the rest of the company were to gather (ibid.).

On the following day, Hendrik Meyer, the provisional corporal for Carel van der Merwe, the Field Sergeant for the Sneeuberg, arrived with five men; while Barend Johannes Burgers (a provisional fieldcornet) of Vergelegen (RICH.123) arrived with more men on the 6th. Their party

now totalled "15 Christenen en 16 Hottentots", a total of 31 (ibid.). Ten spies were sent out in search of Bushmen that same day.

On 7 June, the commando rode to "de eerste Sekoegat boven aan Plettenbergs Rivier" (ibid.) which de Villiers described as the abandoned farm of 'Hendrik Krieger'. Although no record can be found of this farmer, the description of the farm best fits that of Zoete Valley (RICH.115) which Di Capelli termed "Zoetevallei aan Zeekoeygat" a few years later (De Kock 1965:260). This farm was occupied by 'W. Engelbregs' (SASA RLR 78a p.229) in 1777. It is possible that he abandoned this farm shortly afterwards and that it was later taken over by Hendrik Kruger. The spies returned that evening with nothing to report (ibid.).

On 8 June, the party rode on to the abandoned farm of Philip Olivier named 'Welgelegen'. Welgelegen (RICH.14) lies directly adjacent to Zoete Valley to the north-west, but again, no record exists of this farmer. Nothing else is noted the following day, other than that they arrived at 'Paarde Fonteyn'. They possibly halted on the farm Geelbeksfontein (RICH.59) which extends over the foot of a mountain named Perdeberg. Although it seems more obvious that the party would have followed the Seacow River to the adjacent farm Perdefontein (RICH.138), later evidence suggests that the party steered north-west into the mountains where they were more likely to have found their quarry. Neither Welgelegen nor Geelbeksfontein were yet registered in the Oude Wildschutte Boeken, but this account shows they had been settled without official knowledge. While encamped there, the commando saw smoke to their north, and thus sent a number of spies to investigate.

The Saturday and the Sunday were spent in camp, and only on the 12th did they proceed, having heard from their spies that a camp had been discovered in which "een meenigte Hottentot in was" [a crowd of Hottentots resided], one of whom had a gun (ibid.). That evening, the commando rode towards the camp, having left the wagons "aan de vlak vontyn." The best fit with this name is Vlakkefountain (RICH.38), an adjacent farm to the north-west. If so, then the camp itself could have been somewhere on what is now Scheurfontein (RICH.35).

Two koppies would have shielded the commando's northward advance from Vlakkefountain, and the one named Spioenkop may refer to this incident, as de Villiers spied on the camp before dawn, only to discover that it had been abandoned earlier that evening, with the fire having been left burning. De Villiers surmised that the Bushmen had discovered the spoor of the commando's own spies on the previous day. Half of the company was left at the camp where they surprised and killed three Bushmen who were unaware of the commando, and had arrived from another camp (ibid.). De Villiers observed that the camp had been occupied by many 'Hottentots' who had slaughtered "veel beesten .. vars en ook oudt" and had taken six oxen with them (ibid.).

On the following day, 14 June, they left the wagons at 'Poortjes vontyn' and sent spies out from there (ibid.). Since the modern farm Poortjes Fontein (HAN.52) is 33 miles north of Vlakkefountain, this makes a very poor fit, and several other places would fit the description, the similar sounding Kommetjesfontein (HAN.99) being the most likely. They then moved out of the valley in search of other camps.

3.6. JOHN BARROW (OCTOBER 1797)

When the British first took over the Cape, John Barrow was instructed by the new Governor to settle the civil unrest which had arisen in the district of Graaff-Reinet, and to draw up a map of the colony. Barrow possessed both scientific knowledge and equipment which contributed to an exceptionally fine travel record, the first part of which was published in 1801 and reprinted several times. Extracts from the second edition (1806,I) will be quoted below.

On 20 October 1797 his party left the drostdy in Graaff-Reinet and entered the Sneeuberg, coming three days later to "the foot of a large mountain in the Compass Mountain ." (ibid.:196-7). Here Barrow noted that the "surface of the country, on the northern side of the mountain, is at least fifteen hundred feet above the source of the Sunday River." (ibid.:197). This would place Barrow on the farm Kruygers Baaken (MID.146) (see Figure 3-5). He also noted that "the termination of the Snowy mountains is about twelve miles to the north-eastward of Compassberg, and here a port or passage through the last ridge opens upon a plain extending to the northward, without a swell, farther than the eye can command" (ibid.:198).

A journey of twelve miles from Kruygers Baaken (MID.146) would have taken Barrow to Cephanjes Poort (MID.143) in the SE corner of the upper Seacow drainage, and this is designated 'Cephanias Poort' on Barrow's own map. That night, the party encamped eight miles beyond the poort (ibid.), probably on the farm Modder Fontein (MID.66), where they would have stopped to water their horses and oxen.

On the 25th, they travelled north for "about twenty miles, over a level country" and encamped that evening at 'Gordon's Fonteyn', close to which stood "the last Christian habitation" in the colony (ibid.:208). The modern farm Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) is about 22 miles from Modder Fontein and is certainly the habitation' alluded to by Barrow.

On the evening of the following day (26 October), his party, now much enlarged by local farmers, collected at "the commencement of the Sea-Cow river, which was about six miles to the northward of the last habitation." (ibid.:209). The Seacow River and the Klein Seekoei River merge approximately five miles north-west of the Gordons Fontein homestead at a point on the farm Beeste Kuil (HAN.110). Most of the farmers must have known this junction well.

Barrow noted that the large party then moved off on the 27th, covering "twenty miles farther to the northward" to what Barrow termed "the Edel Heer's baaken" (Van Plettenberg's Beacon) close to the Seacow River. Van Plettenberg's Beacon was erected on the farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98), as noted above (3.3). But this is about 40 miles from Beeste Kuil so it is probable that the twenty miles alluded to by Barrow (ibid.) above were only measured on the second day of this leg (28 October), after the party had been hunting in a northerly direction across the valley plains for some time. The label 'Bulhouders Draay' occurs on Barrow's map and this is possibly the point from where the twenty miles were measured, as Beelhouders Draai (HAN.50) is almost exactly

twenty miles from Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). Barrow had also noted that hunting excursions "had daily been made on the plains, at a distance from the river " (ibid.:214).

Scouts were to make a circuit from east to north within a thirty mile radius of the camp at Plettenberg's Beacon to seek Bushman camps. At daybreak on the next day, (29 October) a group reported "that they had discovered from a high hill several fires at the bottom of a narrow defile about twenty miles to the eastward." (ibid.:225). At 2 a.m. on the 30th Barrow reached the hill in question: "we gave it the name of Tower-berg" (ibid.:226). This characteristic koppie was undoubtedly that known today as Cole's Kop, overlooking the village of Colesberg (S.G.FH.1/1/3/1/1827). The scouting party related that Bushmen were "within two or three miles." (Barrow 1806,I:227), but the direction is unfortunately not recorded. Reaching the mouth of the defile at dawn, it was perceived that a hill stretched across the opposite end of the defile "admitting a narrow pass on either side." (ibid.:227). Barrow's map does however provide a clue to the location of this camp as above (north of) his depiction of 'Tower-Berg', he indicates two small hills. Directly above these hills he records 'Bosjesmans horde attacked'. This was probably the site of the modern town of Colesberg which is reached from Cole's Kop through a narrow pass between two hills. The hill now known as Suffolk Hill lies directly behind these two hills. The Bushmen camp was possibly located between the former two hills where Capt. Bonamy's early map (SASA M2/133 - 1822-24) indicates a spring.

On the evening of 30 October, the party rejoined their wagons which had preceded them along the bank of the Seacow River to a section where "it passed through an opening in a cluster of hills, which opening was called the first poort " (ibid.:249). Although this was without doubt at modern De Eerste Poort (COL.39), Barrow does not mention crossing the Seacow River, so they may have passed over modern Kuipersfontein (COL.4). Barrow (ibid.:249) observed that until this stage, the landscape had been relatively level but began to change. They then reached "the second poort or pass" (ibid.:249). The modern Tweede Poort (COL.22) is named after this pass. Not having crossed the river, Barrow was probably forced by the terrain to reach it over modern Weltevreden (COL.21). He noticed that the mountains began to increase in height and that they seemed to form a barrier to the passage of the wagons. None of the party had ever been beyond the entrance to the second poort (ibid.).

Some of the party then rode on horseback into the poort, following the river's course. "The kloof we found to be in general so very narrow, and the river serpentized so much from side to side, passing close under the steep rocky points, that we were obliged to cross the stream at least a hundred times" (ibid.:250). Despairing of ever making progress, the party came upon a well worn track beaten by hippopotamus which they followed to the end of the kloof whereupon they emerged on the bank of the 'Great' or Orange River (ibid.). The party then returned to their wagons and proceeded east around the mountains to the Orange River and moved along it's banks for several days (ibid.).

3.7. GOVERNOR JANSSENS, DI CAPELLI, LICHTENSTEIN AND VAN REENAN (JULY 1803)

Jan Willem Janssens was appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Cape when the colony was returned to the Netherlands (the Batavian Republic) in December 1802 (Kruger 1977:442). In April 1803 he set out from Cape Town with the aim of acquainting himself with the territory over which he presided. Arriving at Graaff-Reinet, he ventured farther north with a large entourage of officials, local farmers and staff on 10 July 1803. The Governor's secretary, Henry Lichtenstein (a German scholar interested in compiling the land's history), Paravicini Di Capelli (a Batavian officer, aide-de-camp to Janssens) and Dirk Gysbert van Reenan (a progressive Cape farmer) all wrote detailed journals, translated and edited by Godee-Molsbergen (1932), Plumptre (1815,II), De Kock (1965) and Blommaert and Wiid (1937) respectively. The latter three editors have successfully linked farmers' names in the narratives to farm names, but not all have been found, and this section attempts to improve on their efforts. Where substantial discrepancies occur between journals, these are discussed and reconciled where possible.

The party left Graaff-Reinet on Sunday 10 July 1803 and headed into the Sneeuberg. They took an easterly road that lead them over a steep pass close to the modern Lootsberg Pass which brought then over the escarpment to the east of the Rhenosterberg range in the direction of modern Middelburg.

We join them (see Figure 3-6) on 14 July when they "had the Roodebergen ahead of us, the Compassberg to our left and (the prominent hill like a tea-pot), the Theebus, on our right." (De Kock 1965:256 and also Godee-Molsbergen 1932). According to Di Capelli, the party passed several farms, some of which were deserted, before coming to the farm "De Drie Fonteinen of Nicolaas van der Walt" (ibid.:256; Godee-Molsbergen 1932) where they lunched. Di Capelli was misinformed that, this farm lay on the watershed "from which rivers both to the south and north have their origin" (De Kock 1965). The farm was on the present site of Middelburg town, and did not extend as the watershed. They then travelled for one hour to the farm 'De Wolwekop' (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) or 'Wolvenkop' (Blommaert and Wiid 1937; De Kock 1965) of Commandant Johannes van der Walt. This farm is today known as Wolve Kop (MID.12).

On the 15th, the party travelled through the Roodebergen (modern Agter Renosterberg), entered the Seacow valley, and arrived at a cattle-farm belonging to Commandant Johannes van der Walt "at the Caroluspoort" (De Kock 1965:257; Godee-Molsbergen 1932), certainly the poort on the farm named Carolus Poort (NOU.166). Plumptre's (1815,II) translation distorts this to 'Charle's Poort'. To get there, they would have travelled from Wolve Kop (MID.12) through the Roodeberg at a point known as Naauw Poort at the farm of that name (NOU.1) first occupied in 1809 (SASA J/131 no.658) and then descended from there onto the valley plains. Di Capelli (De Kock 1965) recorded that he, Van Reenan and Dr. Passet followed a herd of wildebeest across the plains and got lost, finally finding the camp long after dark.

On 16 July, the party rode north. The wagons then had to ride out to pick up eland carcasses, which resulted in the party spending the night at their lunch-time halt, 'Fenter's Fontein' (Blommaert and Wiid 1937) or 'Ventersfontein' (De Kock 1965; Godee-Molsbergen 1932) which was probably the farm Mooyfontein (now Morgenwacht - COL.109) owned in 1809 by Petrus Albertus Venter (SASA J/131 no.713). A less likely option for this stop is modern Ventersfontein (COL.146) in the Roodeberg. This is in hilly terrain (not plains) on the very rim of the valley, and would have been far out of their way. The party had intended to reach Van der Walts fontein just south of modern Colesberg on that day (Godee-Molsbergen 1932).

At 8 a.m. on 17 July, the party "continued to the north-east, descending all the time." (De Kock 1965:257; Godee-Molsbergen 1932). Di Capelli (ibid.) recorded that to the left of their route was mountainous terrain where van Plettenberg's Beacon was to be found and that Toverberg lay directly ahead of them. These mountains were without doubt the same range of hills referred to by Gordon (3.2 above) as 'Gordon's Mountain'. As they were heading towards Van der Waltsfontein, they probably crossed over the plains on the modern farm Kuilfontein (COL.115) and would have passed between the two koppies between this farm and Vaal Kop (COL.114) before crossing modern Drapers Application (COL.117). Di Capelli reported that they stopped at midday at "Van der Waltsfontein" (ibid.:257). Lichtenstein noted that this spring was named after "the deceased Field-Commandant, by whom it was discovered" (Plumptre 1815,II:50). Later maps (S.G.FH.1/1/3/1/1827; SASA M2/133 - 1822-24) show that 'Van der Walts fontein' was situated at the southern foot of the large koppie, Perdekop, just east of modern Colesberg.

Proceeding northwards, the party arrived that evening "at a gateway ... between two high hills, where they found a very fine spring, grown around with large reeds" (Plumptre 1815,II:50). The spring was also noted by Di Capelli (De Kock 1965), Janssens (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) and Van Reenan (Blommaert and Wiid 1937). Although Janssens thought that the spring was "zonder naam [without name]" (Godee-Molsbergen 1932), the reeds surrounding the spring gave rise to the later farm name on that spot, namely Rietfonteinpoort (COL.186).

At 10:30 am, on the 18th, they started on the final stretch to the Orange River. Both Janssens (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) and Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II) record the distance to the river as two hours and Lichtenstein also notes that they arrived on the banks of the Orange River "a few hours distance from the place where it is joined by the Sea-Cow River." (ibid.:52-53). Riding on horseback, the party would have covered no more than nine miles in two hours which would have brought them into the vicinity of Riet Bult (COL.205) on the banks of the Orange River. This farm is about three an a half hours along the Orange River from the mouth of the Seacow River and is also the point where the nineteenth century wagon track reached the river bank. Any other route to the Orange River would have taken much longer and would have led them through much more mountainous terrain. Lichtenstein also noted "considerable hills, both on the north and south side" (Plumptre 1815,II:51), which correspond nicely to the hills flanking both sides of the Orange River along this stretch.

The following two days (19 and 20 July) were spent travelling up and down the river in search of hippos (e.g. De Kock 1965). On 21 July, after a near-drowning and rescue of one of its members (Plumptre 1815,II), the party proceeded south-west "towards the (First) Poort of the Zeekoe River" (De Kock 1965:259, Godee-Molsbergen 1932 and Plumptre 1815,II). They probably camped on the east bank of the river on the modern farm Quaggas Gat (COL.37) which is just south of the first poort. An hour before arriving at their camp, the party had turned off to visit a "Bushman kraal" (De Kock 1965:259). Lichtenstein noted that this was a "little distance from the road" (Plumptre 1815,II:75-76), probably on the plains between the hills on the farm Hollefontein (COL.38), north-west of their route.

The next morning's leg to Plettenberg's beacon took them two and a half hours to cover (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:197). This time span confirms that the south end of the poort was the site of their camp as this is within 2 hours ride of Plettenberg's beacon. The distance from the north end of the poort, on the other hand, would have been at least 18 miles, or four hours travel, and thus too far. Janssens found a courier from the Cape waiting for him at the beacon, with news of the second British invasion. He thus set off for the Cape at once (De Kock 1965), entrusting Di Capelli with the "superintendence of the wagon-train and the direction of the further journey" (ibid.:260). The rest of the party travelled for a further two hours, having increased their speed (Godee-Molsbergen 1932). A journey of two hours down river would have brought them to Klip Kraal (COL.104), their probable overnight halt.

Leaving their camp early on the 23rd, they "came to Boelhouwers draai, the cattle-farm of Commandant Johannes van der Walt, lying in a bend of the Zeekoe River." (De Kock 1965:260). The modern farm Beelhouders Draai (HAN.50) was no doubt this farm. At sunset they reached the farm of Koekemoer (Godee-Molsbergen 1932; De Kock 1965) which Di Capelli (ibid.) noted was on the bank of the Seacow River. De Kock (1965:178) argues that this farm must have been Elands Gat (HAN.77) which is situated on the river bank, but the name Koekemoer cannot be attached to it in any surviving documents. Since the weather was good, they proceeded by moonlight to the farm of Maarten Coetzee where they spent the night (De Kock 1965; Godee-Molsbergen 1932). De Kock (1965:178) correctly identifies this farm as Drie Fontein (HAN.87), only a short distance from Elands Gat.

On 24 July, they departed south-west, "crossing a side-stream of the Zeekoe River and travelling over flat country where only little, low bushes grow." (De Kock 1965:260). This stream was probably a tributary of the Seacow River which flows across Drie Fontein. After three hours ride over a flat road (Godee-Molsbergen 1932), they halted briefly at "Gordons Fontein of Philip Potgieter" (De Kock 1965:260). De Kock (1965:178) notes that the farm Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) was taken over by Phillip Potgieter in May of that year. They trekked on and arrived at 5 p.m. at "Bokfontyn" (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:198) or "Bokfontein" (De Kock 1965:260), a farm abandoned by Petrus Ernst Krieger and then leased to Louw (Godee-Molsbergen 1932; De Kock 1965). The party probably travelled over Oude Kraal (HAN.123) and Drie Koppen (HAN.124) before coming to Bock Fontein (HAN.130). Van Reenan recorded that at "Bokke Fontein", they "were again in the districts that are inhabited by christians" (Blommaert and Wiid 1937:241).

On 25th, the party again travelled in a south-westerly direction, departing that morning at 8:30 a.m. (De Kock 1965; Godee-Molsbergen 1932). Before leaving this farm, both Janssens' chronicler and Di Capelli noted that the farm Hoogmoeds Fountain (HAN.109) was two hours to their right (Godee-Molsbergen 1932; De Kock 1965). According to Di Capelli they approached the mountains of the Sneeuberg and "halted on the farm of Jan Jacobsen named Klipvaley" (De Kock 1965:179). No farm of this name occurs in the valley today, but De Kock (ibid.) suggests that this farm could have been the farm Klein Tafel Berg (RICH.118) which in the past also included the adjacent Witlies (RICH.119). The owner of this farm in 1803 was Johannes Jacobs(e) (ibid.). The writer recording the journey for Janssens noted that this farm belonged to Jan Jacobson and that it was named "de ... Valley" (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:199). In spite of its name, it was devoid of stones, but well supplied with water.

After a further ride of five hours, the main party arrived at the farm or "Zoete Valley aan Zeekoeygat" (De Kock 1965:260; Godee-Molsbergen 1932:199) occupied by 'B. Viljoen' (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) or 'B. Filloen' (De Kock 1965). De Kock notes that the farm Zoete Valley (RICH.115) was placed in the name of Albertus (Bart) Viljoen in November 1803 (ibid.:180). It is probable that Albertus Viljoen had taken over the farm from its previous owner before this date and only officially completed the paperwork involved later that year.

On 26 July, the party travelled slowly uphill to what Di Capelli described as "the northern part of the Sneeuwbergen at the place called Africas Heights" (De Kock 1965:260). Local farmers still use this term for the Winterhoekberge (G. Sampson pers. comm.) although it appears on no known map. With the aid of fresh oxen, they made good progress (De Kock 1965:261). Both Di Capelli (ibid.) and Janssens' chronicler (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) record that after passing through some heights, the party descended to a farm in the valley below which was known as 'De Koude Hoek' and was owned by Willem Sagenaar. De Kock (1965:181) notes that Frederick Willem Sagener owned the farm Nooitgedacht (RICH.130) in that year.

Van Reenan also recorded having crossed through "the African Heights", but merely noted the following about the destination for that day: "Tuesday, the 26th of July, at Bokfontein." (Blommaert and Wiid 1937:241). It is probable that the farm referred to by Van Reenan was Rheboksfontein (RICH.132) which lies in a valley just behind the highest point of the Winterhoekberge. The party therefore probably ascended the Sneeuberg via Nooitgedacht (RICH.130), and were perhaps led through the narrow pass in the "African Heights" by Sagener to the then deserted farm Rheboksfontein. The modern homestead on Nooitgedacht is known as 'Kouenburg' and it is possible that the homestead on the farm Rheboksfontein was known as De Koude Hoek owing to its enclosed position. After spending the night there, the party descended out of the valley to the farm Rhenosterfonteyn (now Kleinefontyn - RICH.133) of 'Piet en Michiel Overholster' (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:199).

3.8. COLONEL COLLINS AND ANDRIES STOCKENSTROM (JANUARY 1809)

The new British Governor at the Cape instructed Colonel Richard Collins, a British officer and commissioner for the eastern border districts, to gain first-hand information about conditions there (de Kock 1968:180). He (Moodie 1960,V) set out in the company of Andries Stockenstrom (later to become the Graaff-Reinet landdrost) into the interior of the Colony in 1809. The young Stockenstrom 's role was "Dutch secretary or interpreter" (Hutton 1887:31).

They reached Graaff-Reinet and set off on 23 January 1809, taking the easterly route (via modern Middelburg), and entering the Seacow valley from the south east (see Figure 3-7). On the evening of 25 January, they arrived at the farm Wolwe Kop (MID.12) of Johannes van der Walt, then veld-commandant of the Seacow District. The organisation of an escort probably took up much of the following day as they only left on the 27th. They passed the house of the commandant's son (a veld-cornet) on the way to "a place called Carolus Port."(Moodie 1960,V:2) which was at a distance of 15 miles. Nicolaas Tjaart van der Walt owned Naauw Poort (NOU.1) at that time (SASA J/131 no.658) and this was on the way to Carolus Poort (NOU.166). Collins account is unclear whether they passed beyond Carolus Poort that day, but they probably did, given what follows. They must have gone a few hours more across the flats to the north, and would have overnighted at the next fountain which is on modern Wild Fontein (NOU.144).

The 28th was a long, hard day. After riding for two hours in the morning, they breakfasted with a farmer "named Fenter." (Moodie 1960,V:2). This was Petrus Albertus Venter of Mooyfontein (SASA J/131 no.713) now Morgenwacht (COL.109). From Wild Fontein, this would have been at least 11 miles, which suggests they were riding hard and light. Continuing onward, the party passed "a piece of land" which a farmer named Joubert was shortly to occupy (ibid.). According to Collins, this was "the last that can be granted on that side within the boundary." (Moodie 1960,V.:2) and was within half an hour's ride from Plettenberg's beacon, which at that time still stood in the veld. This places Joubert on modern Quaggas Fontein (COL.98), at least eight miles from Mooyfontein. Although tax records (*opgaaf rolle*) for 1813 indicate a P.J. Joubert as the owner of a valley farm, the name of that farm is not given. The missionary William Corner, however, confirmed this identification when he visited a 'Mr. Jubeer' on the farm 'Kwagers Fountain', undoubtedly Quaggas Fontein, in 1815 (Steytler 1956b:103). They must have passed close to the position of the modern homestead before travelling for a further 30 minutes to the northern end of the property where the beacon stood. Much later, Stockenstrom stated that "the line running through what is now the town of Colesberg and Plettenberg's beacon then constituted the northern boundary of the Colony, and no colonist was found living permanently beyond it" (Hutton 1887:39).

They then "crossed the country from the baaken" (Moodie 1960,V.:2) and arrived at the house of a farmer named Van den Berg in less than three hours. This was Hartebeestfontein (COL.67) some 14 miles away, located and west of Cole's Kop, and right on the colonial border. It was owned by Gerrit van den Berg in 1809 (SASA J/131 no.694). The narrative states clearly that

they did not stop here, although they had already ridden some 35 miles that day. Instead, they carried on to the house of a farmer called 'Van Sele' who had only been in the region for two years (Moodie 1960,V.:2), thereby moving out of the valley. They then proceeded in a north-easterly direction to the banks of the Orange River.

3.9. WILLIAM JOHN BURCHELL (MARCH 1812)

William J. Burchell, the acclaimed botanist, artist and traveller passed through the Seacow valley twice (see Figure 3-8). The first time was in March 1812, on his return journey from the far northern interior. His wagon entered the south west side of the valley from the Winterveld. On the evening of 18 March his party encamped at a pool which he accurately mapped as 'Pond Station' (Burchell 1824, II: 79). They broke camp early next morning and in less than two miles came to the end of the "bleak plain" (ibid.) over which they had been travelling. There, they found the hut of a colonist, occupied by "two or three tame Bushmen" (ibid.) who told Burchell that the farm was called 'Groote Fontein'. This was the farm Grootfontein Landgoed (RICH.33), and his Pond Station must have been the large pool indicated on the original survey diagram (S.G.Dgm.168/1824), located about 2.5 miles in from the edge of the plain. The survey diagram shows an "old dwelling" near a "strong fountain" hence the farm's name.

From here, Burchell took the rest of the day to cover another 18 miles over open, level Karoo veld "everywhere apparently destitute of water." (ibid.:79-80). Some low hills formed the boundary of this plain, near to which "a few temporary pools" (ibid.:80) occurred. His party must have travelled across the west edge of *Die Ou Vlak*, comprising modern Roode Kop (RICH.34), Salade Fontein (RICH.63) and Perdefontein (RICH.138). Using the well defined wagon track (Neville et al. 1994: fig.6) 18 miles would have taken them to the Seacow River channel. This was probably the source of the temporary pools which Burchell mentions, and the drift was surrounded by low hills. A mile further, they sighted a farm-house into which they were welcomed. 'Krieger's Fontein' - clearly Kriegars Fontein (RICH.73) - was in the charge of the farmer's wife. The "owner Piet Vermeulen ... was at this time absent on the commando ... against the Caffres in the Zuureveld" (Burchell 1824, II.:80). The survey diagram (S.G.Dgm.589/1839), made 27 years later for another owner, shows the house about one mile from the drift. Burchell also sketched this house, and the configuration of the "hill, named 'Kleine Tafelberg' by the colonists ... about a mile and a half distant from the farm-house" (ibid.:84) can be readily identified in the drawing.

At about 2 p.m. the party left Krieger's Fontein. That afternoon they covered 11.5 miles, with "many parts of our road ... covered with water, and but just passable" (ibid.:85) due to heavy rains. When they came "to the highest, and principal, branch of the Zeekoe rivier " (ibid.), it was too swollen to cross. A colonist named 'Nieukerk' who lived near their attempted crossing invited Burchell to spend the night so as to give the river time to subside. The exact position of Nieukerk's place is somewhat unclear, but all indications point to it being Dasses Fontein (RICH.177). The Elandskloof tributary passes through this farm; also, the early 19th century wagon track from

Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) to Dasses Fontein is 11 miles (Neville et al. 1994). The adjoining farm Vergelegen was, according to the opgaaf Rol of 1812 (SASA J/139 no.1613), owned by the farmer Coenraad Frederick Heerhold and his wife Anna Dorothea van Nieukerk. Burchell's host was probably a relative of Heerhold's wife.

On the following morning, 21 March, Burchell records that the mountains of the Sneeuberg take their rise immediately on the opposite side of the river, which also fits this interpretation. He had joined "a road much frequented, which led to the northernmost limits of the colony, and, as I was informed, to the southern banks of the Nugariep," (ibid.:88). He had joined the main road out of the Sneeuberg leading to Kraanvogel Valley and on to Wonder Heuvel and points further north (Neville et al. 1994). From Dasses Fontein "we kept gradually ascending, after having, at the distance of about four miles from Nieukerk's, recrossed the Seacow river" (ibid.:88). This matches exactly with reconstructions of this road from early survey diagrams. It recrossed this river because a low hill prevented wagons from continuing along the right bank. Four and a half miles from this second crossing, the party passed another farmhouse occupied by 'Coenraad Herholdt' who owned Vergelegen (see above), the survey diagram of which shows the homestead four miles from the last drift. From the house, the road began to ascend more steeply into "the cold elevated region of Sneeuberg proper." (ibid.:88-89) and they crested the watershed in two hours. The road would have taken them on to Driefontein (GR.10). After 45 minutes they began to descend, and "on our left we sometimes caught sight, between the mountains, of an immense and lofty peak, the highest point of Sneeuberg. This is called by the colonists, Spitskop (The Peak)" (ibid.:89). This was an alternative name for Compassberg, which he would have seen on his descent to Zuurplaats (GR.35). Another few days took the party into Graaff-Reinet.

Burchell remained in Graaff-Reinet until 28 April when he again ascended the Sneeuberg. His men had followed their earlier route across the mountains and were waiting for Burchell at Vergelegen (RICH.123). Burchell himself spent the night of 30 April at the home of Hendrik Lubbe, the son-in-law of Piet van der Merwe's brother. This farm cannot be identified, but the "road on the Snow Mountains had been level and tolerably easy." (ibid.:125). Moving on 1 May from Lubbe's, the road became rougher and more dangerous "leading along the steep sides of mountains, or over very rocky and rugged places." (ibid.) with a full view of the 'Coudveld'. They then "entered the highland track of Sneeuwberg proper." (ibid.), probably passing east of the Winterhoekberg and cresting the watershed at Hartebeest Valley (RICH.128). At sunset, the party reached the residence of "old Jan Viljoen"(ibid.:125-26). This was Johan Hendrik Viljoen, J.zn, d'oude, co-owner of the farms Kook Fontein and August Kraal in 1812 (SASA J/138 no.259). What follows suggests that Burchell probably stopped at Kook Fontein (RICH.126).

On 2 May, Burchell was driven by Viljoen's son on his ox wagon. "As it carried no load, we travelled at a quick rate; although along rugged and steep roads, through the highest and most mountainous part of the Sneeuberg. For a considerable part of the way, our course was directed towards Spitskop; and afterwards, by a very steep descent, we joined my former road, at a few miles southward of Herholdt's, where we arrived before noon." (ibid.:128). They must have crossed

the very high, steep-sided neck immediately to the south of the Meiringsberg and descended north of Drie Fontein, where they linked up with the main road from Graaff-Reinet to Vergelegen.

On the following morning, 3 May, Burchell's main party took the now familiar road from Vergelegen to Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) where Burchell was later driven by horse-drawn wagon after lunch (ibid.:130). At Kriegar Fontein, the travellers "were all received with the same disinterested and friendly treatment as before" (ibid.:130) and met the farmer who had since returned from commando duties.

On 5 May they returned along the same leg from Kriegar Fontein to Groote Fontein where they "took up our quarters in the unoccupied farm-house" owing to the cold weather (ibid.). They exited the valley the following morning via their earlier halt, 'Pond Station'.

3.10. ERASMUS SMIT AND WILLIAM F. CORNER (1815)

Erasmus Smit was a Dutch missionary assistant employed by the London Missionary Society (the L.M.S.)(Schoeman 1993). In February 1814 he was sent from Bethelsdorp with his young wife to establish a missionary station at 'Tooren Berg' (the modern day location of Colesberg), north of the colonial boundary, among the Bushmen. After first spending some time in Graaff-Reinet, Smit set off in September 1814. No record of his route has survived.

Although he lived in relative peace with the Bushmen at 'Tooren Berg' (henceforth the more popular Toverberg) for a few months, tensions soon arose and he fled back into the colony and then to Graaff-Reinet. While there, he was joined by William F. Corner, who agreed to accompany Smit back to Toverberg. Corner was a Negro from Demerara in the West Indies (Schoeman 1993), sent to southern Africa by the L.M.S. to assist their missionaries. He arrived in Graaff-Reinet on 12 May 1815 (Steytler 1956b). Preparations were made to leave Graaff-Reinet for the mission, with oxen, provisions and staff donated by local farmers. Both Smit (Steytler 1956a) and Corner (Steytler 1956b) described aspects of this journey (see Figure 3-9). On 2 June, Smit left Graaff-Reinet and Corner caught up on horseback the following day. At 3 p.m. the party arrived "at Van der Merwe" (ibid:94), probably on Zuurplaats (GR.35) which was at that stage owned by Petrus van der Merwe (SASA LBD/83 no.404). This farm could have been reached after two days travel and was on one of the most popular routes into the interior.

They preached on Sunday and "arrived at P. Vermeulen." on the 5th (ibid.:95). P. Vermeulen, according to Burchell (1824, II:80), was 'Piet Vermeulen' the owner of the farm Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73). They evidently took a wrong fork in the road at Dasses Fontein (Neville et al 1994) and rode far out of their way from Zuurplaats. The next day they had to return to the fork and go on to "one Jacobs place" (Steytler 1956b) which was Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) owned by Johannes Jacobsz' in 1809 (SASA J/131 no.169).

On the evening of 7 June, they arrived "aan de Wonderheuvel" (Steytler 1956a:75). This was Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), where the owner was away and they had to spend the night in an

old hut, out of the hail and snow which had begun to fall. On 8 June, the oxen were inspanned in driving snow which covered the wagon track. By afternoon the wagons had strayed from the now invisible road and a milk cow had died. They spent the night on "Carolispoort" (Carolus Poort - NOU.166), owned by "Pretorius." (Steytler 1956b). M.J. Pretorius was the owner in 1809 (SASA J/131 no.660). This farmer was also away, and they spent the night in a doorless stable (ibid.).

Neither Corner nor Smit recorded their route for the 9th, but it is possible that they spent the day at Carolus Poort as a result of the poor weather conditions. On 10 June, they went as far as the farm "driefontein op de plaats van de Heer J.J. Pienaar" who Smit (Steytler 1956a:75) indicated was the closest neighbour to "den torenberg" [the Toverberg]. This farm was Driefontein (COL.137) which the Opgaaf records for 1812 indicate was owned by Johannes Jacobus Pienaar (SASA J/139 no.1338). This farm is approximately 10 miles from modern Colesberg. Smit (Steytler 1956a:75) recorded that the existence of the Missionary Station was regarded in a favourable light by Pienaar. Corner and Smit remained there preaching on Sunday 11 and Monday 12 June (ibid.).

On 13 June, the party departed for 'Tooren Berg' and arrived there the same day. Smit remained at Toverberg for three more years until the colonial Government ordered him back inside the colony in 1818 (Schoeman 1993). Corner and another Missionary Assistant, Jan Goeyman, later left Toverberg to establish another Missionary Station at modern Petrusville (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816).

3.11. REVEREND JOHN CAMPBELL (SEPTEMBER 1820)

John Campbell was the director of the L.M.S. in the Cape Colony. In 1820, he passed southwards through the Seacow valley on his return from an inspection of missionary stations in the interior (Campbell 1822,II:308-9). Gutsche (1968) has interpreted his route as starting near the Seacow/Orange confluence, but the case for this is flawed. Campbell (1822,II:308) crossed the 'Cradock River' (Orange River) at the end of August 1820, intent upon visiting the abandoned Bushman Mission station "Hephzibah, or Tkannee," originally set up by Corner (see above). Gutsche (1968:34), on unstated grounds, places Hephzibah on Blaauwkrantz (COL.47), on the Orange River about 15 miles north of the Toverberg mission station (see above).

This is contradicted by the correspondence of J. R. Read, the L.M.S. missionary who travelled to Griquatown (modern Fauresmith) via both Toverberg and Hephzibah in 1816. On his arrival at Toverberg, both Corner and Jan Goeyman were already there (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816). In this letter, dated 17 September 1816, he noted: "I think to settle them at the Rhinosterfountain about three days journey from this towards GriquaTown." (ibid.). Later, Read recorded that he accompanied the above pair to their mission field: "Hephzibah, Bushmen's Land" (ibid.). They left 'Grace Hill' or Toverberg on 18 September and arrived at Hephzibah late on the 21st - a journey of three days, not 15 miles. That Hephzibah was sited at Rhenosterfontein (PH.61), on the outskirts of modern Petrusville is confirmed by an unpublished map drawn by Rawstorne

(SASA M3/2801) in the mid-nineteenth century which indicates 'Rhenoster Fontein Ancient Hexpiba' at this place.

Campbell therefore entered the Seacow valley from the direction of Petrusville, going towards Colesberg, but his narrative describes only scenery and gives no place names (see Figure 3-10). By the morning of September 5, his party could have reached the valley plains at Ventersvalley (PH.129). They then halted at a pass between low hills, probably at Hamelfontein (COL.10), then emerged from the pass and "proceeded ... S.S.E. along the plain" (Campbell 1822,II:314-15), passing several pools soon after which they arrived at the Seacow River before sundown. On this suggested route, the pools would have been on the Gansgatspruit which flows into the Seacow River. They halted on the bank of the Seacow River, perhaps at the northern end of the farm De Eerste Poort (COL.39) which fits Campbell's description of an "inconsiderable" river with "many large and deep pools" surrounded by high, barely vegetated ground. He illustrated a rectangular stone-walled enclosure (probably a boer's kraal) on the slopes of a hill in this vicinity, but this has not been found yet.

The next morning, the party left the Seacow River and passed a "weak fountain," possibly Kuipersfontein (COL.41). At 8:30 a.m. they came upon another fountain where a farmer had "erected a temporary house, around which many cattle were feeding" (ibid.:316) and halted there. This fountain was probably Ketelfontein (COL.52) which has a koppie close by, perhaps the "eminence" which Campbell says he climbed and from where he had an extensive view of hills to the east, and plains "extensive but solitary in the extreme." (ibid.). At 1 p.m. the party set off again and after a while "Toornberg ... was now full in view." (ibid.:317). At 5 p.m., they arrived and outspanned at 'Toornberg Fountain'. He spent the following day there. On 7 September, Campbell left Toverberg and "travelled for some time among numerous heaps of large stones or rocks" (ibid.:320), an apt description of the dolerite intrusions SE of modern Colesberg and 'Vanderwault's Fountain' close by (see 3:6 above), where a farmer had (illegally) "erected five reed-houses, and ploughed some ground" there. The identity of this farmer is unknown since he was not registered. Stockenstrom (IBB 1835:118) had reserved the fountain for missionary work and it was still beyond the colonial boundary.

Campbell then traversed a large plain and "crossed the limits of the colony" at 4 p.m., arriving at 'Pinnar's place' an hour later. This was Driefontein (COL.137) where Smit and Corner (see 3.9 above) had also stopped and consisted of "a substantial farm-house, with barns, slave-houses, and a good garden" (ibid.:320). From Driefontein, Campbell's route becomes more obscure. On 8 September the route "was over a bare, gloomy, and hilly country, until six P.M., when we discovered water by the croaking of frogs." (ibid.:322). What follows suggests that he travelled in a south-westerly direction. Assuming roughly seven hours on the road, they probably covered about 20 miles. This would have brought him to the Noupoortspruit close to the homestead on Carolus Poort (NOU.166).

On 9 September, Campbell headed for Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), but the wagon met with an accident on its way downhill (ibid.:322-323). The only ridge on which this could have happened

would be that which joins Honde Kop to the Roode Bergen. They probably outspanned at Elandsheuvel (NOU.146) that evening and spent the following day (10 September) there, making necessary repairs.

On the 11th, they "passed a conical hill, standing in the middle of a plain, called Wonder Mountain" (ibid.:323). This is the first sure land mark (Wonder Heuvel -NOU.166) since leaving Driefontein. They went on to the Seacow River, halted to water the oxen for a few hours. As they no doubt followed the main wagon track from Wonder Heuvel (Neville *et al.* 1994) they must have crossed the Seacow River at Paarde Valley (MID.62). They then went forward and at sunset passed "a boor's place", almost certainly Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). Then "a little beyond, at another boor's place, where we were on the eve of halting for the night, the oxen of the luggage-waggon took fright , and ran off furiously" (ibid.:323). The second 'boor's place' could only have been Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) which is close to Kraanvogel Valley. From there, Campbell travelled into the Sneeuberg, presumably along the well-trodden road via Vergelegen (RICH.123). After travelling for three days, they arrived in Graaff-Reinet.

3.12. GEORGE THOMPSON (JUNE 1823)

George Thompson, an English merchant and traveller, arrived in Graaff-Reinet in 1823 and set off for the north with the landdrost, Andries Stockenstrom (Thompson 1827,I). Using a horse-drawn wagon, they passed through the Sneeuberg and on June 1 stopped at "a farm-house named Zuur-plaatz" (ibid.:49). This was Zuurplaats (GR.35) then owned by Petrus van der Merwe (SASA J/124 no.1). They "proceeded over the highest part of the Sneeuwberg range" and caught up with their ox-drawn baggage wagons at "the place of the rich boor" in the course of the afternoon (see Figure 3-11) (Thompson 1827,I:49). This must have been Vergelegen (RICH.123), where the farmer's welcome was "so indifferent" that they preferred to continue. At sunset they pitched their tent "in the wilds" (ibid.) somewhere on the road between Vergelegen and Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120), but evidently nowhere near the intervening Dasses Fontein.

The next day (2 June) was a hard day's travel. They set off and passed "a boor's place", which could only have been Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). They had been descending continually since leaving the heights of the Sneeuberg following "the course of the Zeekoe River- as yet only a rill, with scarcely any stream in it." (ibid.:50). The landscape gradually became more open as the well established wagon road took them out across modern Coetzees Kraal (MID.64), then north-east across modern Zaay Fontein (MID.65).

At noon they party overtook their wagons somewhere on *Die Ou Vlak*. The baggage wagons must have started early because "the horse-waggon travels at the average rate of six miles per hour, while the ox-waggon only goes at half that rate, or a little more if the road is good and level." (ibid.:50). What follows suggests that they stayed on the main track which crosses the Klein Seekoei River at Paarde Valley (MID.62) and continued on to Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140). The route

is sketched so roughly on Thompson's own map (ibid.) that only the general direction (NNE) is clear. All the rest has to be inferred. They continued across the open plains and reached "a boor's residence at a place called Elands-Kloof." (ibid.:52), having travelled 40 miles that day. They could only have arrived at Elandsheuvel (NOU.146), a little under 40 miles from Kraanvogel Valley. The farm Elandsheuvel owes its name to the low koppie behind the farmhouse which has rock engravings of eland (G. Sampson pers. comm.). It is uncertain why Thompson misrecorded the name. They found the house empty, the owner having taken his livestock downstream for the winter. They broke into the house (a common practice in winter) where they spent the night.

On 3 June, they stayed on the main track through country "declining towards the north with many insulated hills dispersed over it." (ibid.:53). The hills "appeared so close in front, that there seemed no passage except over a ridge of mountains, yet on approaching, we always found that they stood quite detached, the plain spreading around and between them, while they rose abrupt and separate, like sugar- loaves placed upon a table." (ibid.:53), a description which would fit those on Elands Heuvel and Droogefontein (NOU.85) beyond it. The road would have taken them past Allemans Fontein (NOU.83) and Klip Gat (HAN.80) on to Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) for the noon stop. The latter house was also empty, as no doubt were the others they had passed. The afternoon's journey would have taken them as far as Beeste Kraal (HAN.47), but this, too, was empty, and Thompson does not mention the name. They broke in and spent the night there in the customary manner (ibid.).

On 4 June they passed Plettenberg's beacon and by noon the "boundary [had] long been passed over." (ibid.:54). Evidently they "had hitherto been travelling on the east side of the Zeekoe River, but here we crossed" (ibid.:54) at a point 35 miles upstream from the confluence with the Orange River. The main wagon track crossed the Seacow River about 5 miles north of Plettenberg's beacon (Neville *et al.* 1994) and led to the farm T'zamenkomst (COL.57) owned by Nicolaas Tjaart van der Walt in 1823 (SASA LBD/83 no.305). This was the veld-cornet, 'Vanderwalt' named by Thompson as their host. The party reached his 'hut' at 2 p.m. and decided to remain there for the night (Thompson 1827,I:54). There, "at Vanderwalt's we found a number of the Sneeuberg boors, who retire to this quarter during the winter season." (ibid.:54). That the farmers congregated at this farm at this season and knew to meet the Landdrost there, further confirms the identification of this farm as T'zamenkomst (COL.57) as the farm name translated roughly means 'come together'. Indeed Captain Bonamy's map (SASA M2/133 - 1822-24) which includes the eastern bank of the Seacow River indicates only one farm on the western bank, namely 'Samekomst'.

Thompson left Stockenstrom here to confer with the boers over land matters, and the following morning (5 June) travelled for two hours past 'Biscuit-Fonteyn' (Bischuitfontein - COL.26) and for two more hours to 'Hamel-Fonteyn' (Hamelfontein - COL.10). Although Bischuitfontein is adjacent to Hamelfontein and therefore only one hour separates the two, the entire journey from T'zamenkomst through to Hamelfontein would have taken four hours. At 12 a.m., after leaving Hamelfontein, Thompson rode hard for five hours, reaching 'Rhinoster- Fonteyn' that evening. This farm was certainly Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) which today encompasses the town of Petrusville. Here, another 'Vanderwalt' was the 'principal boor' and indeed a Land Report for 1825 lists Petrus

Jacobus van der Walt as owner of the farm 'Rhenosterfontein' (SASA LBD/83 no.284). On 6 June, Thompson descended into the Orange River gorge, having now travelled "beyond the remotest colonists." (Thompson 1827:58). He then crossed over the Orange River and proceeded into the interior.

3.13. REVEREND JOHN PHILIP (AUGUST 1825)

The Reverend John Philip visited the valley to investigate the fate of the two mission stations at Toverberg and Hephzibah, which had both been closed down by 1818 (see above). He subsequently published a scathing book about the treatment of mission stations in the Colony (Philip 1828). His route (see Figure 3-12) can be inferred in roughest outline from passing comments about the investigation, widely scattered through his book. Some time before August 1825 he talked with a farmer "at the last farm-house, on the former boundary line of the Colony, near Plettenberg's beacon" (ibid.:45). This would have been Gerrit Jacobus Coetzee who took up residence on the farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98) in that year (SASA LBD/83 no.250). Philip's route from Graaff-Reinet was probably the most commonly used one through the Sneeuberg via the Oudeberg and exiting at Vergelegen (RICH.123), then on through Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120), Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) and Mooyfontein (now Morgenwacht - COL.109), and finally Quaggas Fontein. However, his narrative mentions none of these places, nor are there any other hints in the text.

From Quaggas Fontein he went to Toverberg (Phillip 1828.:29-30), probably by the usual road, and he was camping there on 14 August 1825 (ibid.). He then proceeded north towards Philippolis, probably via Bothasdrif, but there are no further details or clues.

3.14. ANDREW STEEDMAN (NOVEMBER 1830)

The route of the English naturalist Andrew Steedman (1835: 131-175) has been reconstructed in detail by Sampson and Sampson (1994) and will be summarised here (see Figure 3-13). His ox wagon left Zuur Plaats (GR.35), paused at Driefontein (GR.10), and outspanned for the night just beyond Vergelegen (RICH.123). Starting late the next morning they passed Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) and made Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) by nightfall. Rain held them there for a day, then they set off across Die Ou Vlak for Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), which they reached that night. After spending the morning there, they rode as far as Elandsheuvel (NOU.146). Next day brought them through Carolus Poort (NOU.166) and they overnighted in the veld somewhere on Hartebeesfontein (COL.145). Making a late start next morning, they passed Riet Fontein (COL.140), Kuil Fontein (COL.115) and arrived at night at the site of Toverberg mission. Next day they did not get away until 3 p.m. and only made Bothasdrif on the Orange River late at night.

3.15. EUGENE CASALIS (1832)

Jean-Eugene Casalis (1889) was a French Missionary who arrived in southern Africa from Paris in 1832. He arrived in Graaff-Reinet from Port Elizabeth and after a few days set off into the Sneeuberg. His narrative lacks all names of farms and farmers, making it exceptionally difficult to trace, with only landscape descriptions as hints. Thus: "hardly had we left ... when we began to mount the steep sides of the Snow Mountains." (ibid.). The climb was "rough" and they feared the wagons would "roll into frightful abysses" (ibid.). This can only have been the ascent up the Oudeberg pass, also described by Smith (Kirby 1939,I) and Leyland (1866). Then: "after reaching the first plateau the ascent was gradual and without peril" (ibid.) which also fits this route. Having "gone over two thirds of the distance which still separated us from Orange River" Casalis broke his spectacles and returned to Graaff-Reinet for replacements.

He set off once more, alone on a pony, probably up the Oudeberg, spent the first night with an unnamed "colonist," then got lost the next morning when "the main road, became nothing more than a winding track, and ended by disappearing amongst the tall heather." (ibid.:127). He must have recovered the main road soon and ridden very hard through the Sneeuberg: "the general configuration of the country is by no means reassuring. It consists of a succession of plains cut across by barren hills forming a ridge, except where in places in the rainy season the waters have made themselves a passage." (ibid.). The farthest that Casalis could have travelled in one day is 65 miles, but he caught up with his party that night. This could have brought him out of the mountains at Vergelegen (RICH.123) or Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) at the limit (see Figure 3-14). Any other route through the mountains seems unlikely.

After that the narrative is silent for the next three days until they arrived at the new village of Colesberg. The reunited group probably travelled over the most popular wagon route (via Kraanvogel Valley - RICH.120, Wonder Heuvel - NOU.166, Elandsheuvel - COL.146, Morgenwacht - COL.109 and Kuilfontein - COL.115). After buying supplies in Colesberg, the party moved off to the north.

3.16. DR. ANDREW SMITH (1834 & 1835)

Andrew Smith travelled through the interior of southern Africa in 1834 and 1835 as head of a sponsored expedition to describe the natural history and native populations of the region. He kept a diary (Kirby 1939) and a journal (Lye 1975) and submitted a report to the Association (1836), all of which supply fragments that allow his routes (see Figure 3-15) through the valley to be reconstructed. Among the other members of the expedition were John Burrow (Surveyor and Astronomer), and Charles Bell (Draughtsman) both of whom kept journals. Only Burrow's (Kirby 1971) is published, but this is brief and only supplies some details of town life in Colesberg. The map of the expedition has been lost, obliging Kirby (1939) to reconstruct the route from surviving documents. As the narrative of this part of the journey is very incomplete, and perhaps wrong in

places, it is open to various interpretations. The following account extends Kirby's original research and offers an improved interpretation of the route.

On Tuesday 12 August 1834 the party left Graaff-Reinet and proceeded into the Sneeuberg as far as the farm Poortje (GR.132), owned by Petrus van der Merwe. Some of the party then set off for the base of the Compassberg peak. The journal records that they travelled for seven hours on a bad road and reached the base of the peak by evening. The neck on Kruygers Baaken (MID.145) would have been the most sensible position from which to climb the mountain, and this could be done in seven hours on horseback from Poortje. On the morning of 15 August they climbed Compassberg on foot (Lye 1975; Kirby 1939,I), then returned to their base. They immediately rode back down to the main party, which was waiting for them at Poortje.

They set off at noon the next day, having sent the baggage train ahead. Although Kirby's (1939,I) map has Smith passing through the Sneeuberg to the east of the Compassberg, the evidence points to him having travelled west of this prominent landmark. That evening, they caught up with their baggage wagons at the farm of another Petrus van der Merwe (Kirby 1939,I:60). This could only have been the farm Zuurplaats (GR.35) of Petrus van der Merwe, Petrus son (SASA LBD/83 no.404). Not only was it owned by a man of the same name, but it was within an afternoon's travelling distance of Poortje. Having remained there during Sunday, the party set off, after which the record is blank. Working back from the next entry, it is reasonable to infer that the night of the 17th was probably spent at the outspan at Vergelegen (RICH.123), and the next night (18th) at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). Thus: "from the place we rejoined the waggons [Zuurplaats] we travelled for three successive days before we saw reason to expect we were soon to emerge from the mountains and it was not till the evening of the 19th we were able to consider the Sneubergen as behind us" (Lye 1975:21).

Of their trip on the 19th, Smith wrote that the land sloped towards the north and that "the direction of the dry channels of the mountain streamlets as indicated by narrow stripes of withered rushes, soon satisfied us that we were upon the declivity which conducts to the Orange river."(Lye 1975:26). As they advanced the view widened gradually providing them with "an extensive view of the country to the northward as well as to the eastward and westward of our position." (ibid.:26). This would have been *Die Ou Vlak*. That day they travelled nine hours and "reached Cornelis Visser at Gordons Fonteyn at 8 p.m." (Kirby 1939,I:62), which places them firmly at Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) of 'Cornelius Johannes Visfer' (S.G.Dgm.273/1827), later recorded as Cornelius Johannes Visser (S.G.COL.Q.5.18 - 1842).

On the Wednesday, 20 August, they "halted at Visser's" (Kirby 1939,I:62). Smith then observed that although their journey thus far had mostly been due north, their route then inclined towards the east (Lye 1975). An error in the narrative however follows. At 9 a.m. on 21 August, the party left Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) and followed the "direct road" to Colesberg where, Smith says, they arrived that evening at six-thirty (ibid.:27). However, this is a two-day journey by wagon and could not possibly be accomplished at a non-stop speed of 7,7 mph.

Although their route is obvious enough: "a succession of undulating plains whose surfaces presented nothing but the bare soil or at most that sparingly sprinkled, here and there, with the withered remains of a few small shrubs."(ibid:62), their timing is wholly improbable. They passed several (unnamed) farm houses en route to Colesberg and even halted at two of them for short periods where their owners "entertained our party with tea." (Kirby 1939,I:62-63). The first farm at which they halted could have been either Allemans Fontein (NOU.83) or Wild Fontein (NOU.144). The second was Willem Adriaan Venter (SASA LBD/83 no.245) of Elandsfontein (COL.110), as Smith noted a certain "Venter, a little distance from Colesberg." (ibid.:63).

The party then spent four days at Colesberg and thereafter (August 26) proceeded northwards to the Orange River probably Bothasdrif on Rietbult (COL.205) in order to cross the river.

Of his return journey in December 1835, Smith provided no details concerning his route. He merely noted: "During our return journey a considerable number of oxen died from absolute exhaustion, and eleven which were unable to proceed were left between the Vaal River and Graaff-Reinet, with instructions to send them on to the latter, should they eventually recover." (Lye 1975:293). In Smith's diary, no record of his route between modern Hopetown, which Smith reached on 21 December, and Graaff-Reinet, which he reached on 4 January 1836, exists (Kirby 1939). Kirby's map (ibid.) however indicates that the route between these towns lay to the west of the Seacow River valley.

3.17. CAPTAIN WILLIAM CORNWALLIS HARRIS (1836 & 1837)

The hunter and trader William Cornwallis Harris (1838) made two trips through the Seacow River valley, first northward, then returning to the south. His trip began on 1 September 1836 when he left Graaff-Reinet and passed through "the elevated region of Sneuwberg proper" (ibid.:30). By 3 September, his party passed the residence of "Piet Van-der Merwe, yclept Dickwang or double chin", certainly Petrus van der Merwe at Zuurplaats (S.G.GR.Q.10.46), whose nickname differentiated him from "neighbours of the same name" (ibid.: 33), specifically Petrus van der Merwe of Poortje (GR.132). They then "cleared the Sneuwbergen" (ibid.) over the pass above Vergelegen (RICH.98), and arrived at the still deserted farm 'Dassies fontein' (ibid.), i.e. Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) (see Figure 3-16). As it snowed on 5 September, the late winter was no doubt the reason why the owner had not yet returned from his down-valley grazing place. Harris carried on another 25 miles to "Vogel valley" (ibid.:33). This farm was not the well known neighbouring farm of Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) used by so many previous narrators, but another lesser known place to the north-west called (confusingly) Kraan Vogel Valley (RICH.67), a small farm beyond the Klein Tafelberg. Only deeded in 1866, Harris's account reveals that it was already known by this name 30 years earlier.

Frozen in by bad weather, they appear to have remained at Kraan Vogel Valley for the whole of the next day. On 7 September, they moved north-west and "reached Bok's fontein" (ibid.:34) which must have been Bonteboks Fontein (HAN.97) on the western edge of the valley. The party then continued to "Seven Fountains" (ibid.:34-35), which was the farm Zewe Fountain (DEA.9) to the west of the valley in the De Aar district. From there they cut away to the north-west, crossed to the Orange River and proceeded into the interior.

Harris returned in 1837 from the far north and reached the bank of the Orange River on 17 January, having followed the road from Philippolis. They were ferried over, and the party rested the night at the farm of "an insolent boor, named Pienaar" (ibid.). No farmer bearing this name has been identified as living on the farms between the Orange River and Colesberg, but it may be that Pienaar was a manager at Rietfonteinpoort (COL.186), one of many farms owned by Petrus van der Walt at the time (S.G.GR.Q.7.33).

Their route of the 19th and 20th after detouring around Colesberg is not recorded. They are likely to have taken the usual route via Elandsfontein (COL.110), Allemans Fontein (NOU.83), Elandsheuvel (NOU.146), Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) and Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). By this date, survey diagrams designated this as the Public Road (Neville *et al.* 1994). On the 21st, Harris (1838:338) "struck into the high road near Dassies Fontein" at which they had stopped before.

Their journey through the Sneeuberg for the next two days was hard. Having lost an ox, they had "barely sufficient number remaining to drag our wagons into the village of Graaff Reinet." (ibid.:339).

3.18. JAMES BACKHOUSE (JUNE 1839)

James Backhouse was a Quaker minister who passed through the valley headed northwards for the interior in 1839. Later that year, he again passed through, on his return journey (see Figure 3-17).

Backhouse evidently left Graaff-Reinet in June "the sixth month" (Backhouse 1844:338) and headed into the Sneeuberg, but there are no details. It seems that he took the easterly way over the Lootsberg pass because by 8 June he was at 'Groot Fontein' which must be Grootfontein (MID.81), a farm just to the north of modern-day Middelburg. They left there in the early afternoon and "travelled about twelve miles, and passed the houses of two Boors" (ibid.:338). These were probably the farms Wolve Kop (MID.12) and Tweefontein (MID.11) which were directly in the path of the old wagon track route, and indeed are still crossed by the national road. Both farm names are also labelled in Backhouse's map (ibid.) although the route itself is not shown. A twelve mile journey from Groot Fontein (MID.81) would have brought the party into the poort known as Naauw Poort and this seems to be where they camped for the night. On the following morning (Sunday 9 June) they "remained in a mountain kloof" (ibid.:338) which must refer to the poort itself. The farm

house on Naauw Poort (NOU.1) was to the north of this poort and thus would have been reached the following day.

On 10 June they travelled over "some rough hills" (ibid.) before stopping early in the afternoon at "some shallow pools" (ibid.) to allow the cattle to feed. The modern Carolus Poort (NOU.166) has two homesteads, one south of some low hills cross-cutting the property, and one to the north. It appears that the party stopped at the northern one. Here, they would have camped along the banks of the Noupoortspruit, which runs through the property. Backhouse also indicated Carolus Poort (NOU.166) on his map which further suggests that they stopped there.

On 11 June, they broke camp at noon and travelled about 13 miles. Along this road, they halted at the house "of a civil Boor, who had a large garden, enclosed with a dry, stone wall" (ibid.:39). This farmer was also in the process of constructing a dam, an uncommon event in those days. The survey diagram (S.G.Dgm.576/1839) for the farm Morgenwacht (COL.109), which was then (1839) Mooyfontein, shows an 'artificieele dam' at the southern most end of this long farm. As Mooyfontein is about 13 miles from Carolus Poort, this is surely the same dam mentioned by Backhouse. After the dam, they entered a plain (ibid.:339) and halted that evening "near a house inhabited by a few, friendly, People of Colour" (ibid.:340). It can be assumed that Backhouse travelled further than the homestead on Mooyfontein, so this house could have been on either Mooyfontein or on the adjoining farm Elandsfontein (COL.110).

Next day "we proceeded on the way toward Colesberg" (ibid.:340). The party probably travelled over the flats on the abovementioned farms, hunting game. Passing west of the homestead at Elandsfontein (COL.110) and over the farm Kuilfontein (COL.115) they would have reached Colesberg. The last farm to the south of Colesberg which Backhouse labels on his map. 'Kull Fontein', was at that time owned by Willem Hendrik Peltzer (S.G.Dgm.646/1837). It was his kin whom Backhouse described as "an interesting family of Dutch people" (ibid.:340). On 13 June, the party crossed a plain and passed through "a defile among the hills"(ibid.:341) along which a stream of water flowed. They then arrived in Colesberg. The description of the journey to Colesberg fits the description of the route from Kuilfontein into Colesberg. To arrive at Colesberg from this farm, the party would first have to pass over a large plain, and then travel from here through a low neck between two hills, to within sight of Colesberg.

On 19 June, they left Colesberg for the Orange River. En route, they passed a vacant farm house, then two inhabited farms and reached "Botas Drift" (ibid.:347), undoubtedly Bothasdrif on the farm Rietbult (COL.205) north of Colesberg.

Having spent some time in the interior, Backhouse returned via the Seacow valley, this time from the north-west (see Figure 3-17). In contrast to his earlier journey, he generally listed the names of the farms along the way. On 25 October, Backhouse left his previous encampment, 'Jagers Fontein' (Jaag Fountain - HAN.60) and reached the deserted farmhouse on the farm 'Bontebok Kraal' (ibid.:482), which must be Bonteboks Fontein (HAN.97) at noon. Next day it had been agreed that the wagons would stop at Honger Fontein (HAN.102), which at that time was deserted, but the total lack of forage for their cattle led them to proceed further. They followed

wagon tracks across "a sterile plain" (ibid.:483) and caught up with his main party outspanned among some bushes on a rocky hillock at a place which he called "Kaal Plaats, Bare Place" (ibid.). Their camp was probably on the farm Amoy Alias Overschot (HAN.105), which extends across the edge of the west half of *Die Ou Vlak* plains. A number of dolerite outcrops come together there and it was probably on one of these that the party camped. Backhouse further noted that "although Kaal Plaats was a very poor place, there was a little rivulet, by which a few acres of land were watered; and these were sown with corn" (ibid.:483). A small stream does cross Amoy Alias Overschot (HAN.105) and this was probably the 'rivulet' referred to. They then "proceeded to Kraanvogel Valei, Crane-fowl Valley" (ibid.:484). This name, along with his description of pools of water on the farm, coincide with the farm Kraan Vogel Valley (RICH.67) to the north-west of the mountain Klein Tafelberg.

That afternoon, the party continued to "Paard Fontein" and Backhouse (ibid.:484) noted that they "stationed the wagon where some tall rushes, near a pool, afforded shelter for the men" while the cattle were driven to an adjacent mountain named 'Tafel Berg, Table Mountain'. From their previous stop, the party would have followed the road along the Seacow River, to the farm Perdefontein (RICH.138). Although all the above-mentioned farms - Honger Fontein (HAN.102), Amoy Alias Overschot (HAN.105), Kraan Vogel Valley (RICH.67) and Perdefontein (RICH.138) - were only deeded later in the nineteenth century (in 1865, 1875, 1866, 1866 and 1880 respectively) they were no doubt occupied long before this date. The cattle were probably kept close to the adjacent mountain (Klein Tafelberg) to the south-east.

The Sunday 27th was spent at Perdefontein. The party then travelled the short distance to "Krygers Fontein, Warriors Fountain" (ibid.:484) which was Kriegars Fontein (RICH.73), then into the Sneeuberg mountains - to "Dasjes Fontein." That evening, they outspanned "at the foot of an isolated, basaltic hill and a more continuous cliff, in a winding valley, where [they] we found water and a little grass." (ibid.:484). This winding valley was definitely the farm Vergelegen (RICH.123), and the party appears to have halted at a prominent hill on the road shortly before arriving at the farm, where the public outspan was located (S.G.Dgm.576/1839). The party continued through the Sneeuberg on the 29th and travelled through "a series of valleys" and halted that evening at "Klip Fontein, Rock Fountain, near Zuur Plaats, Sour Place." (ibid.:485). The rest of Backhouse's journey to Graaff-Reinet is less detailed, but must have taken the usual path.

3.19. GEORGE NICHOLSON (1843 - 1844)

George Nicholson was a farmer turned hunter who briefly owned land in the upper Seacow valley. He wrote two books (Nicholson 1848, 1898) from which it is possible to infer the route of his first journey in 1843 from Graaff-Reinet to his new farm, and also his 1844 journey down the valley when he set off for the north to start his second career as a hunter.

Although he nowhere names the farms which he bought and quickly sold, these were in fact Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121), as Rent Registers indicate (SASA 1/GR/14/33 pp.49:1178, 1182). Only Ruigte Valley had a 'Dwelling House' (S.G.Dgm.554/1838) which he described as "a tolerable one, containing four rooms, provided with the usual mud-floors, but having the unusual luxury of reed ceilings" (Nicholson 1848:58). His "2.5 acres of cultivated land close to the house" (1898:20) matches the 1 morgen of 'Arable Land' on the survey diagram. Elands Kloof only boasted a hut (S.G.Dgm.577/1839).

His narrative lacks detail, but he evidently moved his possessions from Graaff-Reinet by a circuitous route of 65 miles. This must mean that he took the easterly pass through the Sneeuberg to where Middelburg now stands, then he tuned due west through Lessingshoogte in to the upper valley. From there it is level riding across Alphen (MID.145), Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) and Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) to reach Ruigte Valley. After various difficulties, and two long journeys back to the coast, Nicholson (1848) set out on a hunting trip to Colesberg and the country north of the Orange River (see Figure 3-18). The date is uncertain, but he took an ox-wagon and four horses (ibid.:77).

Leaving Ruigte Valley, he stated that he travelled for nine hours northwards across a large, elevated plain. In fact, the road would have taken him north-northeast across *Die Ou Vlak*, that is across Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120), Plakkerskraal (RICH.72), and Bock Fontein (HAN.130), to either Leuwe Poort (HAN.127) or (more probably) Drie Koppen (HAN.122). At this stage he described the Seacow River, the pools of which could be found by "diverging a little to the eastward from the road to Colesberg" (ibid.:79). These pools would have been in the channel of the Klein Seekoei River just 10 km farther along the road at Oude Kraal (HAN.123). He then travelled a short distance to the "substantial and large house of a well-known Dutch farmer " (ibid.:85). This was Cornelius Johannes Visser who had owned the farm Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) since at least 1827 (S.G.Dgm.273/1827), and still owned it in 1841 (S.G.Col.Q.5.18). Gordons Fontein is rather short of half way between Colesberg and Ruigte Valley. Nicholson visited Visser, and probably spent that night at Gordons Fontein.

He then departed for Colesberg, probably following the most direct wagon road north-east across Elandsheuvel (NOU.146) then turning northwards over Allemans Fontein (NOU.83), Wild Fontein (NOU.144), Morgenwacht (COL..109), and Elandsfontein (COL.110). From the latter farm he probably followed the wagon track north-east across Kuilfontein (COL.115) to Colesberg. He reached the town "after a few days' slow travelling" (ibid.:88) which suggests the trip took at least two days from Gordons Fontein, but the farm(s) at which he rested for the night were not recorded.

Nicholson spent a few days in Colesberg, then left town in the morning and reached the banks of the Orange River by evening. That his journey took an entire day, and what follows later in the narrative, suggests that he rode north-east and crossed the Orange River at Norvalspont (on Dapperfontein - COL.79), rather than at Bothasdrif (on Rietbult - COL.205) which took only half a day to reach.

3.20. R. GORDON CUMMING (OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1844)

R. Gordon Cumming was a Scotchman who transferred to the Cape Mounted Rifles from Newfoundland in 1843 (De Kock 1972). He soon sold his commission and set off into the interior as a trader and hunter (Cumming 1855,I:86). By October 1844 he was in Cradock, from where he journeyed to Colesberg via "the Theebus Mountain", still a well known landmark on the farm Van Vuurens Kraal (STYN.84). Extensive hunting on the adjacent plains near Theebus delayed him, and it was some days before he set off again for Colesberg. After "three long marches" he arrived at the farm "of a Boer named Penar" (ibid.:86). The names of his two stops on this leg of his trip are unknown, but it probably ended at the farm Driefontein (COL.137) on the Colesberg - Cradock road. Piennar was then a manager for Petrus Gerhardus Cilliers (S.G.Col.Q.1.43), who died in 1859 and deeded part of Driefontein to Petrus Jacobus Piennar. Rent paid for Driefontein in 1857 lists the 'Proprietor' as 'P.J. Pienaar' and records that it was paid in by 'P. Cilliers' (SASA 1/CBG/10/1/2).

"One more long march" brought Cumming (ibid.:86) to within five miles of Colesberg, probably in the vicinity of Van der Walts fontein, and he halted there for the night. On 27 October, he rode into Colesberg which he used as a base until 1 December 1844.

He then set off to hunt on the frontier (see Figure 3-19). On the evening of 2 December, he departed from Colesberg having rounded up his party of "drunken servants, ... oxen and horses" (ibid.:91-92) and steered "west for the vast Karroo plains" (ibid.:92), but intoxicated staff prevented them from getting very far and they probably camped out on either the Colesberg Commonage or on Constantia A (COL.185) both of which were unoccupied places on the road west out of Colesberg.

On 3 December they "performed two long marches, crossing the Sea-cow River, and halted as it grew dark on a Boer's farm" (ibid.) set on the plains. Their route probably took them along the well worn wagon track across Hartebeestfontein (COL.67) and Elands Rivier (COL.63) before they crossed the Seacow River. The farm where they spent the night was probably T'zamenkomst (COL.57) which was at that date owned by Nicolaas Tjaard van der Walt (S.G.Gr.Q.7.1). The above identification of the farm seems plausible as T'zamenkomst (COL.57) was a well-known farm and meeting place on the direct road from Colesberg. In fact Cumming's friend Campbell arrived on horseback by pre-arrangement the following morning (4 December), and they hunted together across the plains for the next six hours while the wagons were ordered to "proceed to a vley about four miles to the west" (ibid.:92). This 'vley' was probably a tributary of the Seacow River which drains the flats of T'zamenkomst and neighbouring Taaiboschfontein (COL.58).

On 5 December, Campbell returned to Colesberg while Cumming rode "for the Karroo." (ibid.:93). After travelling all day "and having performed a march of twenty-five miles" (ibid.), he halted at sunset at a farm belonging to "old Wessel" who was drunk and refused him hospitality. Joseph Orpen also alluded to a Wessels who was known as a good doctor (Le Fanu 1860). Although his residence remains unknown, Wessels possibly managed the farm Zewe Fontein (DAR.9) which is a large farm on the road from Colesberg and 25 miles west of T'zamenkomst.

Cumming then continued his journey farther to the west.

3.21. ALFRED W. COLE (1848)

Alfred W. Cole was a London-trained solicitor (De Kock 1972) who came to South Africa by accident (his ship sunk in Table Bay), and stayed on to become a member of the Circuit Court. He thus journeyed throughout much of the Colony, and wrote a short anecdotal account of his travels (Cole 1852) interweaved with long scenic descriptions borrowed directly from other authors. In one passage he described how, in the winter of 1848, he arrived in Colesberg from Cradock (1852:212), and went to view the Orange River, probably at Bothasdrif (on Rietbult - COL.205).

Then: "I turned my steps in another direction, and took a westerly route across the Sea-cow (Hippopotamus) River." (ibid.:216). Cole probably travelled (see Figure 3-20) from Bothasdrif to Schaape Kraal (COL.20) where he made the crossing. On the west bank of the Seacow River were mountains. Cole then arrived at the farm of 'Mynheer Hendrik Rens', a Colesberg farmer, where he spent some time. No record can be found of a Colesberg farmer bearing this name in 1848, nor are there any obvious names from which Cole may have derived a misspelled or abbreviated version. Evidently the farm had "stunted bush, which had the most wicked thorns in the world." (ibid.:220), which aptly describes the Withaak bush (*Acacia heterocanta*) growing only in the narrow gorge through which the lower reaches of the Seacow River flows to meet the Orange River. Of the farmers established in this rugged country, the most likely candidate for Cole's 'Hendrik Rens' was Hendrik Venter who owned the farm Tweede Poort (COL.22).

From Tweede Poort, the remainder of Cole's journey through the valley remains obscure. In a rambling anecdote about lion hunting he referred to a Major, "who has retired from the toils of warfare to the peaceful position of a Cape farmer" (ibid.:222), but no officers listed in the British War Office Army Lists (Anon. 1845) are recorded as owning farms in the valley, so he may have been referring to a 'Major' living somewhere else. From Tweede Poort (COL.22), Cole headed south, the most likely route being the well trodden path probably via Rietfontein (PHIL.173), Petrus Valley (HAN.73), Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) and Vergelegen (RICH.123). He determined to ride through the Sneeuberg mountains to Graaff-Reinet in spite of the cold. Although they rode "at double the ordinary travelling pace" his "after-rider was constantly letting the led horse escape from him, through inability to feel the leading-rein with his benumbed hands." (ibid.:224- 225). Although it took two or three days to make it through the mountains, there are no details of where he stayed overnight.

3.22. THOMAS BAINES (MAY 1848)

Thomas Baines, the artist and explorer, left Grahamstown on a hunting expedition into the interior in 1848. Having reached Cradock, he set out for Colesberg in May, crossing the 'Brak Spruit' (probably the Great Brak River) and reaching the flood-swollen 'Oorlog's River'.(Oorlogspoort River) on the 20th. His route is included here (although outside the valley) as he makes numerous interesting observations along the way. His journal describes their struggle to cross 'the drift' (Kennedy 1961,I:98) which suggests they were on the public road from Cradock, which would place them on the farm T'zeekoegat (COL.174), south-east of Colesberg. The party was at that stage "within hours" of Colesberg. They halted for a short time on the way in to town, but the location of this stop cannot be estimated. That evening they crossed "a small stony ridge" probably on the farm Draper's Application (COL.117) and camped in the open veld without any water point.

On 21 May they journeyed "a few miles further over level country to Van der Walts Fontein" (ibid.:99). This was the strong spring just to the south of Perde Kop, south-east of Colesberg. They must have halted here to let their animals graze and water. On Monday 22 May, the party rode into Colesberg which Baines described in some detail. The following morning he made an excursion to the banks of the Orange River, 15 miles along a road which Baines noted was good in spite of the fact that it was "formed merely by the constant passage of wagons over the gently undulating plain" (ibid.:100). The Orange River was at that time swollen as a result of the rains, but Baines rode the ferry across and went for a "short run in what is now the district of Bloem Fontein" (ibid.:101). He returned to Colesberg that evening.

On the next day Baines left Colesberg and halted on the evening of 24 May at his "former bivouac". This was probably their camp on the banks of the Oorlog's Poort River as the other two encampments were too close to Colesberg.

3.23. BISHOP GRAY (NOV. 1848 AND APRIL 1850)

Bishop Gray, first Anglican bishop of Cape Town, journeyed throughout the Colony on pastoral duties, and published two accounts of his travels. His first visit to the area of the Seacow valley was in November 1848. Travelling along the road from Cradock to Colesberg (east of the valley), he passed one night at 'Zoet Fontein of Andries Bester' (Gray 1849:72), undoubtedly Soet Fontein (HOF.99) and arrived the following evening "at Peter Zisanopol's farm, Macaster Fontein" (ibid.:73). Gray's map shows this farm as 'Mancaster'. This was Macasserfontein (COL.176), but the owners' name is enigmatic. The original deed (S.G.Col.Q.1.55) gives O.J. van Schalkwyk as the owner, but the subsequent ownership history is missing until an 'amended grant' of 1895.

Leaving Macasserfontein between 4 and 5 a.m. on 8 November, they crossed similar looking country and breakfasted "at Cobus Pinars" (Gray 1849.:74) probably the manager on Driefontein

(COL.137) then owned by Petrus Gerhardus Cilliers (S.G.Col.Q.1.43). The connection between these two men is detailed in Cole's route (see above). Leaving Pienaars' place, they bathed in a vlei (possibly at Van der Walts fontein) before arriving in Colesberg at 5 p.m.. The following morning, 9 November, was spent in Colesberg.

On the 10th, Gray (ibid.) rode on horseback from Colesberg early in the morning and arrived at the Orange River at 8 am. They probably approached the river over the farm Rietbult (COL.205) close to Bothasdrif. After knee-bathing their horses and swimming across the river, Gray and his companions returned to Colesberg by 12 a.m. (ibid.).

The weekend was spent in town, and they left Colesberg on Monday (see Figure 3-21). Their journey that day (13th) took them as far as Elandsfontein (COL.110) where they camped out at "a muddy vlea" probably at the drift across the Elandsfonteinspruit. They must then have headed south out of the valley via Naauw Poort (NOU.1). On the 14th they "slept at Mr Bark's, an Englishman" (ibid.:76). No 'Mr. Bark' or similar sounding name - such as Barker, Eckart or Probart - could be detected in either the deeds office or in archival records. He may have been a farm manager or perhaps he worked as a tutor for the children of a Dutch farmer. Gray's map shows him passing to the east of the Compassberg before turning west for Graaff-Reinet. Gray commented that the countryside through which they passed that day was "much the same as that already passed through - large dreary plains interrupted by rocky koppies" (ibid.:77). This would fit the description of the countryside between Elandsfontein and Naauw Poort.

In 1850, Bishop Gray was again in the north of the Colony. He left Graaff-Reinet on Wednesday 24 April and journeyed through the Sneeuberg on a novel route: "the first day's journey lay through the Sneewberg, on the road to Beaufort" (Gray 1852:11). This took him west along the path of the modern national road to Murraysburg which was at that time the road to Beaufort West. He turned off this where the modern road to Richmond crosses the farm Rhenosterfontein (MUR.50), given as 'Rhenoster Ft.' on Gray's map. It is unclear whether he overnighted here. He arrived in Richmond at the end of another days' journey (ibid.).

He departed late on Friday (26 April) for Colesberg, reaching "a Mr Ackerman's, who has a property of 60000 acres in the Karoo." (ibid.:14). This was Bloemhof (RICH.80), a farm on the south side of the Colesberg - Richmond road and occupied by Frederick Godtholdt Ackerman (S.G.Gr.Q.5.6).

On 27 April, Bishop Gray followed the modern Richmond - Colesberg road (cf. Neville *et al.* 1994) and halted for the night close to a "mud house about three hours from Colesberg" (ibid.:14). Not finding the appearance of the house very tempting, Gray decided to spend that night in his cart. This 'mud house' could have been on either Kuilfontein (COL.115) or Roode Kopjes (COL.94), both of which are about three hours along the road from Colesberg. Of the countryside through which he passed between Richmond and Colesberg, Gray commented that it was "like the rest of the Karroo, dreary, dry and monotonous" although he noted that afternoon that "the country was as well stocked as an English gentleman's park." (ibid.:15). Although long, this day's route would have been possible as the terrain is very flat.

At 10 a.m. the following morning, 28 April, he arrived in Colesberg. At 8 a.m. on the following Tuesday (30 April) he left Colesberg and crossed the Orange River, probably at Bothasdrif on the farm Rietbult (COL.205).

3.24. REVEREND CHARLES E.H. ORPEN (1848 - 1850)

Dr. Charles Orpen arrived in the district of Colesberg in July 1848 (Le Fanu 1860). He had emigrated from Ireland because of severe famine there and had come to Colesberg to be close to his sons who farmed in the district (see 3.2.4.). He was ordained as an Anglican minister while practising in Colesberg. He probably came to Colesberg along the most popular route of the day, via Middelburg, but there are no detailed accounts of his very many other trips in the countryside around Colesberg in the course of his double duties as minister and physician.

3.25. JOSEPH M. ORPEN (1847 - 1850)

Joseph Orpen and his older brother Charles had emigrated from Ireland and followed their brother Francis to the Cape Colony. On their arrival in Graaff-Reinet in 1847, Charles arranged transport for them in the form of two 'tent-waggons' (Orpen 1908:10). The owners of these wagons were travelling with their wives from Graaff-Reinet to farms close to the boys' destination which was Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) near modern Hanover Road in the Richmond district (see Figure 3-22). As they went, the party dropped other farmers "one by one at or near their homes" (ibid:10) before coming within sight of Taaiboschfontein. Unfortunately no other details are given.

In 1850 Joseph and his brothers were forced by famine to go their separate ways and Joseph left for Colesberg where he worked as a clerk in a shop.

3.26. JAMES LEYLAND (1848 - 1850)

James Leyland was a hunter who travelled through the Seacow River valley at least three times. Unfortunately there is not much information about his route(s). In 1848, on hearing that a local farmer, Mr. Nicholson, intended to journey to the interior on a hunting expedition, Leyland arranged to join his party (Leyland 1862). They left Graaff-Reinet and proceeded through the Sneeuberg - probably via the Oudebergpas to Zuurplaats (GR.35) and over the crest to Vergelegen (RICH.123), halting for a few days at "a sheep farm, which Mr. Nicholson had recently sold for Rx. 3,000." (ibid.:14). This was Ruigte Valley (see Nicholson's route above). As they travelled with Nicholson, they must have followed the route detailed by him.

On their return journey a year later, Leyland simply recorded that they "passed through Colesberg to Graaff-Reinet" (ibid.:22).

In 1850, Leyland led his own expedition into the interior (see Figure 3-23). On 18 May he set out in two wagons from Graaff-Reinet and went over the Sneeuberg via Zuurplaats while "the top of Sneeuw Bergen mountain was skirted with hoar-frost" (ibid.:28). Then "after passing a Dutch farm, and winding around the mountain" (ibid.), which must be Vergelegen, they reached "the farm which had belonged to Mr. Nicholson" (ibid.), namely Ruigte Valley. They remained on this farm until its then owner, a Mr. Smith, returned to his house on the 28th. This man 'Smith' apparently owned the farm between the tenures of the two deeded owners, Stephanus and Johannes Meintjies (1842) and Hendrik Eckhard (1852), as the farm was transferred to the latter by a F.J. Smit according to the Quitrent title deeds (S.G.GR.Q.10.36).

On the 29th he set off again, and lost the way. He failed to note the position of his outspan place that evening, but a day's journey (20 miles) would have taken him as far north as about Leuwe Poort (HAN.127). On the 30th, Leyland appears to have continued along the wagon track via Kriegers Poort (HAN.125) and Beeste Kuil (HAN. 110). Having reached Beeste Kuil (HAN.110), he must have realised that he had not turned east early enough, so probably turned across the plains to Drie Fontein (HAN.87), hoping to meet up with the route he knew. They halted on the evening of the 30th close to "the remains of an old Dutch farm house" (ibid.:30). Drie Fontein, granted in 1830, may have been ruined by 1850, but this remains uncertain. On the following morning, 31 May, the party proceeded as far as the Seacow River (ibid.), perhaps first crossing at Dwaal Fontein (HAN.29) before crossing the plains to Klip Kraal (COL.104) where he would again have met up with the Seacow River. On 1 June, they arrived at sunset "at the great dam or water" (ibid.:30-31) where they paused before hastening on to Colesberg that same evening. From Klip Kraal (COL.104), Leyland probably crossed the flats to Colesberg, perhaps via Riekertsfontein (COL.95) and Constantia A (COL.185). No sign of the 'great dam or water' can be discovered, unless he means Van der Walts fontein, but this would have meant a large detour. After spending two days in that town, Leyland (ibid.) departed on 4 June for the interior and reached the banks of the Orange River by sunset. Their point of cross-over was Norval's Pont (Dapperfontein - COL.79) rather than the closer Bothasdrif (Rietbult - COL.205).

Sometime later, Leyland crossed back into the Colony via the Orange River. Arriving in Colesberg, he soon set out once more for the interior on 26 October 1850. He returned to Colesberg two years later on 9 January 1852, hired a wagon to transport him and his specimens to Graaff-Reinet, and passed "nearly the same route as before" (ibid.:233-234). He finally arrived in Graaff-Reinet on the 18th.

3.27. H.A.L. HAMELBERG (1856)

H.A.L. Hamelberg, a lawyer from the Netherlands, crossed the Seacow valley from Richmond to Colesberg *en route* to Bloemfontein in 1856. His route has already been illustrated by Neville (*et al.* 1994), so it will only be summarised briefly below (see Figure 3-24). Travelling in a Cape cart all the way from Cape Town, Hamelberg (Spies 1952) habitually commented on the nature of the road which he travelled along and mentioned the farms at which he passed and overnighted along the way. Leaving Richmond he followed the wagon track in a north-easterly direction via Treurfontein (RICH.58) and Kantfontein (RICH.36) before coming to Aas Vogel Valley (RICH.67) which he found deserted. He then passed over Plooysfontein (HAN.93) before finally coming to Hoogmoeds Fountain (HAN.109) on the Seacow River where he spent the night (ibid.). Leaving the latter farm the following morning, Hamelberg again headed north-east and passed Drie Fontein (HAN.87) and Dwaal Fountain (HAN.29) before finally halting at Mooyfontein (mod. Morgenwacht - COL.109). From Mooyfontein he continued through to Colesberg, and mentioned two farms, Elandsfontein (COL.110) and Kuilfontein (COL.115), which he must have passed. Hamelberg (ibid.) then spent a few days in Colesberg before proceeding further on his journey.

3.28. JAMES LYCETT (1864 - 1867)

James Lycett was the Chief Constable and Messenger for the district of Middelburg from 1864 to 1866 whereafter he was transferred to the Colesberg District (CAL 1864). His role as Chief Constable would have brought him into contact with many of the people living within the south-eastern parts of the Seacow River valley. Lycett maintained contact with his sister Ann (then living in England) and the pair exchanged lengthy letters detailing their respective lives. Lycett for example noted that "in the pursuance of the duties of my office I often ride on horseback eighty and even a hundred miles a day without fatigue." (Lycett 1864). He also boasted that he was considered "rather a successful hunter" (ibid.) On moving to Colesberg in 1867, Lycett (in the last of his surviving letters) wrote: "I do not like Colesberg, where I now live, so well as Middelburg. The reason is because game is not so plentiful, and the other is because it is a much dearer place to live in." (ibid.:1867).

3.29. DR. EMIL HOLUB (1872 AND 1879)

Dr. Emil Holub was a Czechoslovakian doctor as well as a naturalist and collector who journeyed around the Colony with the intention of finding suitable employment as a doctor. In 1872 he set out for the diamond fields, hoping to establish his practise there (De Kock 1968). After passing through Cradock, Holub (1881,I) headed for Colesberg and arrived there after two days,

noting: "towards Colesberg the isolated, flattened eminence's gradually decrease both in number and in magnitude, the country becoming a high table-land." (ibid.:38). From Colesberg, Holub journeyed to the Orange River and across to Philippolis (ibid.). Holub re-entered the Colony seven years later and returned to Colesberg where he was taken to Cole's Kop. Then he left for Cradock "not by the shortest route" owing to the dry state of the country, but via Middelburg to assure sufficient fodder for his oxen (see Figure 3-25)(ibid.:457). His route took him past Kuilfontein (COL. 115), then owned by Mr. James Murray (ibid.), confirmed in the title deed (S.G.Col.Q.3.1). He spent a week on Kuilfontein. Once again on the road, the long drought made the remainder of his journey "very arduous" (ibid.:458). He next mentions "Newport farm" (ibid.) which is Naauw Poort (NOU.1) on the south-eastern rim of the valley. Holub must have followed the public wagon track south to Rietfontein (COL.140), before heading slightly to the west over Hartebeestfontein (COL.145) and Falsefontein (COL.165) to Naauw Poort (NOU.1), and continued on his way to Cradock.

3.30. S.C. CRONWRIGHT-SCHREINER (1880-1881)

S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner is best known for his biography of his wife, the famous Olive Schreiner, but he also published a small book entitled 'The migratory Springbucks of South Africa' (1925) which mentions that he gained his first experience of the Karoo in December 1880 and January 1881 at Kuilfontein (COL.115), then owned by James Murray. He took the train to Cookhouse, which "was then the railhead" (ibid.) and went on by mule wagon "via Cradock, Middelburg, Naauwpoort and Colesberg" (ibid.) to Kuilfontein (see Figure 3-26).

3.31. M. WEAKLEY (JANUARY 1892)

M. Weakley became editor of the Colesberg Advertiser, after the death of his brother in 1887 (CA 1887:Vol.26). In the first edition for 1892, Weakley described a three day journey (see Figure 3-27) which he had started on 1 January (CA 1892:31, 1561[wn]). From Colesberg he headed directly for Muskietfontein (COL.112) via Kuilfontein (COL.115), then "moved westward and rode over Klein Elandsfontein to Quaggasfontein" (ibid.). The house on Klein Elandsfontein (COL.110) was closed up as the occupants had gone elsewhere for New Year (ibid.). Arriving at Quaggas Fontein (COL.98), the owner, Mr. James Murray, was at home. Weakley probably spent the night here. He set off again "at a leisurely pace under a hot sun to Klip Kraal (COL.104)." (ibid.), managed by Mr. George Weakley, no doubt a relative of the editor. He then crossed the Seacow River and rode to Groot Half Akker (COL.100) at about sunset (ibid.). This was owned by Mr. John Murray. At sunrise he headed back to Klip Kraal. From there, he followed the Seacow River down to Tzamenkomst (COL.57) where " 'Uncle Jack' bade us welcome in his usual kindly way." (ibid.). 'Uncle Jack' was John W. van Zyl, who ran the farm. From there Weakley returned to Colesberg.

CHAPTER 4 - EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURY VALLEY ANIMALS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Many of these travellers who crossed the Seacow River valley commented on animals which they observed during the course of their journeys. Micromammals, small mammals, aquatic animals, birds and insects were usually mentioned in passing, if at all, unless a particular traveller was keenly interested in a specific animal sort. Large mammals received the most comment, because of their large size, and their popularity. The food and other products (such as skins) which these animals yielded once dead were the primary reason for this popularity, although the aesthetic appeal of large herds of game 'dashing about the open plains' should not be ignored. This chapter attempts to bring together all of these far-ranging comments regarding the individual animals. The main emphasis is on identifying which game animals were present on the valley landscape during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and more importantly, to gain a better understanding of the impact which Europeans had on these creatures. Amphibians, reptiles, aquatic creatures and birds are not discussed below, because, although several travellers mentioned their presence, these observations are not detailed enough to allow conclusions to be made regarding the impact of Europeans on these animals. Reports of locust swarms are however considered. To allow easy reference (and hopefully comparison) to the modern animal populations (see Chapter 2), the animals mentioned in the documentary sources are considered in the same order in which they were above, namely micromammals, small mammals, large mammals and then the locusts.

4.2. MICROMAMMALS

Although these animals were present throughout most of the Karoo environment, they are very small in size and were not commonly reported on in nineteenth century literature. Only one specific reference has been found.

4.2.1. **Common molerat** (*Cryptomys hottentotus*)

Visitors to the valley tended to report molerat burrows and soil mounds rather than direct sightings. Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I), for example, described the nuisance caused by these holes. Riding across the plains bordering the Seacow river in 1777 he commented that they "had ridden from the wagon across the veld where there were many little holes of the *blesmol*, or hamster, and mice, which made hunting on horseback rather dangerous." (ibid.:91). Raper and Boucher (ibid.), the editors of Gordon's work, deduced that the 'blesmol' mentioned by him was probably the common molerat. Steedman (1835,I) in 1830 commented on the peculiar behaviour of

some black wildebeest which his party startled en route from Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) to Wonder Heuvel (NOU.166). He noted that they had been "butting at the mole-hills." (ibid.:139). Sclater's golden mole is the only mole known to occur in the valley. This creature does not however burrow in the soil in the valley plains, but rather hides among the rocks and scrub of the valley hillsides. The "mole-hills" alluded to by Steedman (ibid.:139) could therefore either reflect the mounds raised by the common molerat or could have been the mounds raised by any of the other burrowing animals occurring commonly on the valley floor. Common molerats probably abounded on the valley floors in spite of their low visibility in the documentary sources. Some of their habitat was probably destroyed by the building of roads and through extensive grazing by sheep and cattle.

4.3. SMALL MAMMALS

Small mammals were mostly overlooked by late 18th and 19th century travellers who were more concerned with describing the larger game or small animals of unusual appearance. Consequently, entries about small mammals were little more than incidental comments (Skead 1987). The upshot is that the range of small mammal species is very under-represented in the literature, and those descriptions we do have are not always accurate, thanks to the tendency of most small mammals to flee and hide, leaving little time for close observation. This in turn led to ambiguous identifications. Sometimes burrows, rather than direct sightings, were the basis for identification. Accuracy would depend on the individual travellers' past experience as well as the information which they gleaned from local farmers. Of all the travellers it is the second, namely Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I), who provided the most extensive descriptions of small mammals in the valley.

4.3.1. **Cape Dassie** (*Procavia capensis*)

The valley's abundance of koppies, krantzes and rocky hillsides covered in small bushes provided (and still provide) the ideal habitat for the hyrax. Then as now, they would have been seen daily by any traveller or passing farmer. They would have been so common as to excite little or no comment from anyone. It was only the naturalist and collector Steedman (1835,I) in 1830 who mentions two young dassies which he also called the rock rabbit. These two creatures had fallen from a projecting crag on the farm Wonder Heuvel (NOU.166) whereupon he caught them both alive and kept them for several weeks (ibid.). In 1879 Holub (1881,II:457) visited Cole's kop (or Toverberg) where he noted the presence of "rock-rabbits" on his climb to the top. He (ibid.) would have observed some dassie on that climb and these are probably what he refers to here. Indeed, 'rock rabbit' is today the common American name for the dassie.

The dassie is one of a few small mammals after which farms were named. The farm Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) in the foothills of the Sneeuberg was granted in 1839 and was visited by some travellers. Backhouse (1844:485), for example, commented that they "came to Dasjes Fontein,

Coneys Fountain" when descending through the Sneeuberg, as did Cornwallis Harris who passed the then deserted 'Dassies fontein' in 1836 (1838:30). Many of these visitors would have seen the dassie in their rock strewn habitat.

4.3.2. Lagomorphs

Although largely nocturnal, hares and rabbits were more frequently alluded to by travellers than any other small mammal. Indeed, even today, these small mammals are encountered everywhere in the Karoo by anyone walking across the countryside. Barrow (1806) while crossing the plains bordering the Seacow River observed four species: "the common hare, the Cape hare, the mountain hare, and the red-rumped hare." (ibid.:219). These four 'hares' appear to correspond to the Scrub hare or 'kolhaas' (*Lepus saxatilis*), the Cape hare (*Lepus capensis*), Smith's red rock rabbit or 'rooihaas' (*Pronolagus rupestris*) and the springhare or 'springhaas' (*Pedetes capensis*) respectively. The latter is a rodent and will be discussed in the following section.

Both the scrub hare and the less frequently seen Cape hare live on the Karoo flats and would have been sighted daily by travellers across the valley's plains. Many travellers could not differentiate between these two animals, and mentioned simply sighting 'hares'. Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) for example sighted several hares at 'Champagnes River' while headed north and again while close to the same river on their return. These hares could have belonged to either of the above two species. While encamped at Plettenberg's river (the Seacow River), he observed "many hares which are small here - one of our hunters decapitated one of them with a bullet, while it was sitting." (ibid.:88). Riding across these same plains in 1797, Barrow (1806) commented that hares were continually among the horses' feet. As noted above, he reported the presence of both the scrub hare and the Cape hare in the colony and it is probable that he observed both within the valley.

Backhouse reported the presence of "hares among the hills" surrounding the farm Kuilfontein (COL.115) in 1839 (1844:341). These may have been rock rabbits or scrub hares. Exiting the valley via Vergelegen, Backhouse (ibid.) wrote: "Here a few, Red Hares were obtained among the rocks ... - The Red Hare or Roode Haas, *Lepus rupestris*, is smaller than the Common hare, and it has white flesh; the Rock hare or Rheebok Haas, *Lepus saxatilis*, is a larger species, with ears upwards of six inches long; the Cape Hare or Vlaakte Haas, *Lepus capensis* is a smaller species inhabiting the open country; the other two are found in rocky or mountainous situations." (ibid.: 485). Four hares were therefore referred to: the red hare, the common hare, the rock hare and the Cape hare. The latter two hares are easily identifiable as the scrub hare (*Lepus saxatilis*) and the Cape hare (*Lepus capensis*). The red hare referred to was probably Smith's red rock rabbit which, although not known by the scientific name *Lepus rupestris*, is known as *Pronolagus rupestris*. The identity of the common hare referred to here is unclear.

Other travellers also commented upon Smith's red-rock rabbit. Gordon, for example related how he "caught a rabbit which is the same here as in Europe, but smaller by about a third ..." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:95). Raper and Boucher (ibid.) observe that this was possibly Smith's

red rock rabbit, a point supported by Gordons' position in the valley, namely the foothills of the Sneeuberg. The mountain hare described by Barrow (1806) in 1797 probably also belonged to this species. Holub paid a visit to Cole's Kop in 1879 and noted that "the number of mountain-hares, rock-rabbits ... that I saw more than repaid the exertion of the clamber." (1881,II:457). Here, 'mountain-hare' probably refers to the rooihaas and the 'rock rabbits' observed were undoubtedly dassies.

The different terminology used to describe these various species thus makes their positive identification difficult and confusing. The farm Haase Kraal (RICH.75) was one of the earliest valley farms granted (1830) and it probably received its name from the abundance of hares present.

4.3.3. Springhare (*Pedetes capensis*)

This large bipedal rodent makes characteristic burrows which must have been commonly observed across the Karoo landscape. Springhares largely escaped the attention of travellers owing to their nocturnal existence and to their habit of plugging their burrows, which would have led travellers to assume that these were unoccupied (Skead 1988). Furthermore the springhare would have not come under much adverse scrutiny until farm crops were established and the burrowing of these creatures became a nuisance (ibid.). Barrow (1806) in 1797 was the first and only visitor to the valley to describe this creature. Illustrating the various species of hare, Barrow discussed a "red-rumped hare" which he described as follows: "the exterior part of the thighs and its long tail are of a deep chestnut colour, and the ears are much shorter than in the others." (ibid.:219). Although the red colour of this species could have identified it as Smith's red rock rabbit, the rest of the description ties it much more closely to the springhaas which alone has a long tail and is characterised by short ears.

Springhares received no further mention for almost a century until the headline 'SPRING HARES' appeared in the Colesberg Advertiser of 5 September 1885. These animals were reported as "having increased to such an extent on the farm Riekertsfontein as to cause considerable damage." (CA 1885:24*,2116). The owner of the farm, Mr. von Maltitz, was said to have successfully exterminated these pests by throwing dynamite into their warrens after having blocked up all the entrances. The ravages of the springhare described for Riekertsfontein (COL.95) were probably common on farms throughout the valley and large numbers of springhare were possibly destroyed in a similar manner.

4.3.4. Yellow mongoose or Meerkat (*Cynictis penicillata*)

Riding between Colesberg and Kuilfontein (COL.115) in 1839, Backhouse described a "small Weasel-like animal with a bushy tail." (1844:341). He (ibid.) argued that this animal was probably a species of Cynictis and was colloquially known as the 'Meerkat', the Dutch name for monkey. Backhouse's description of this animal together with the Latin label which he gave it identifies it as the yellow mongoose (*Cynictis penicillata*). He also noted that these creatures generally burrowed

on low, sandy hills covered with a few bushes where they lived together in groups (ibid.). Only quieter or more fortunate observers would have seen the mongoose in the characteristic situation described by Backhouse: "it is often seen basking in the sun, or standing on its hind legs, looking around, especially if it suspect danger to be near." (ibid.:341). In spite of the dangers resulting from colonial expansion, these herbivores are still common in their respective niches within the valley.

4.3.5. **Ground squirrel** (*Xerus inauris*)

The extensive burrow colonies in which the ground squirrel live are easily spotted (Skinner and Smithers 1990). As these burrows were probably regarded as part of the landscape by most of the visitors to the valley, they and their occupants were rarely commented upon. If ground squirrels were noted, they were given minimal coverage by the writer. Gordon, describing the veld near the 'Champagnes River' in 1777, for example noted the presence of the "burrows of ground squirrels" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:86). On the next day, he (ibid.) again related how ground squirrel burrows were everywhere visible on the valley plains.

Nicholson (1848), riding in the region of the Rhenosterberg in 1844, complained about the extensive burrow colonies of the ground squirrel. He (ibid.) related how the holes of the anteater and the burrows of the ground squirrel made hunting risky. Some idea of the size of these burrow colonies can be grasped from his description of their burrows: "Colonies of little animals resembling the squirrel, but rather larger, ... form a kind of warren in the softer and more sandy portions of the plain, which break in with the horse, and bury him up to his shoulders in the dust and rubbish, amongst which his rider is then pretty sure of finding himself on his back." (ibid.:82-83). It is likely that many of the valley farmers met with the same problems as Nicholson. To safeguard their crops, some farmers may have systematically destroyed the ground squirrels on their farms. Ground squirrels do however still dig burrows in the twentieth century valley floor.

4.3.6. **Antbear or Aardvark** (*Orycteropus afer*)

Like many other small mammals, antbears were rarely seen and were thus rarely reported. Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) and Nicholson (1948) were again the only visitors to the valley to comment on this animal. Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) used the term 'anteater' to describe the antbear, which he observed not only close to the 'Champagnes River', but further north on the valley plains.

Antbear burrows seemed to be closely associated in travellers' minds with the burrows of ground squirrels. Just after crossing the Seacow River, Gordon noted that: "In and around this river it is full of rock sills and the burrows of anteaters and bushpig" (ibid.:92). The burrows of these two creatures were differentiated according to their size. Nicholson, writing about these burrows while passing through the Rhenosterberg in 1844 commented that ground squirrel burrows were small compared to those of an antbear. "The ground is frequently full of holes, large and small; the larger ones are made by the great ant-eater, and the small ones by colonies of little animals resembling the

squirrel." (1848:82). Although the antbear may have been influenced to a degree by the influx of Europeans into the valley, and the subsequent building of roads and grazing of livestock, very little is known about the extent of this influence.

4.3.7. **Cape clawless otter** (*Aonyx capensis*)

Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) camped at a deep spring of brackish water on the valley plains in 1777 (at 'Gordon's Fountain' or Dwaal Fontein - HAN.29). Although a number of otters probably fed on crabs and frogs here, Gordon merely noted: "We ... shot at an otter." (ibid.:95). A passing reference to otter was also made by Backhouse (1844) in 1839. On their arrival at 'Paard Fontein' (Perdefontein - RICH.138), his party had stationed their wagon near to a pool where some tall reeds provided shelter. "Traces of otters" (ibid.:484) were reported in the area.

Although these references to otters are very fragmentary, they provide evidence that the Cape clawless otter did indeed occupy pools, be these springs or pools in the Seacow River itself, in the valley. The latter is supported by evidence of twentieth century occupation of stream banks provided by the presence of the shell-filled scats and mussel meat remains of the diet of these animals. The pressure placed on water resources by the introduction of grazing livestock such as cattle could have resulted in the decrease in the numbers of otter. The Cape clawless otter (as has already been noted) is however known to move across land towards more permanent water when their niches dry up and could possibly have done this when their niches were threatened.

4.3.8. **Cape Porcupine** (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*)

Documentary sources rarely mention this nocturnal mammal. Skinner and Smithers (1990) describe how this animal has been hunted to near extinction. Indeed, the only reference to porcupine in any literature relating events in the valley was a published account of such a hunt undertaken by the Colesberg Porcupine Club. Published in 1861, the article read as follows: "PORCUPINE CLUB - Some few days back, in consequence of a notice issued for that purpose, the members of the above club assembled to enjoy, perhaps, the finest sport this division affords, viz. - hunting the porcupine" (CA 1861:1,53). The hunting of porcupine was considered an enjoyable pastime and had probably been popular long before this article was published. It has already been noted that tubers and roots formed the diet of this creature and that this animal therefore competed directly with Bushmen for food. The extent of the reaction of Bushmen to this competitor is unclear.

PART 1 - PRIMATES

4.4.1. **Samango monkey** (*Cercopithecus mitis*)

Documentary evidence for monkeys within the valley in the nineteenth century is restricted to only one sighting of the Samango monkey. These monkeys are closely confined to a forest habitat, only leaving it when foraging or in transit (Skinner and Smithers 1990). Plant foods, particularly ripe wild fruit form their diet, and they are now found only in the thick acacia and willow gallery forest along the banks of the Orange River, particularly in the more remote gorges, but including the narrows where the Seacow River joins the Orange.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Barrow (1806,I) encountered them as he was one of the few journal keepers who followed the Seacow River to its outlet into the Orange River. Passing through the mountainous poorts leading to the Orange, he commented: "In the rocky mountains of the long pass, through which we had approached this magnificent river [the Orange River], were ... a species of monkey of a grizzled greenish tint, with a straight tail, a third longer than the body, and black at the extremity; a horizontal white line around the forehead, just above the eyes; cheeks bearded with whitish hair." (ibid.:251). His description definitely points to the Samango monkey with its greenish colour; long, black-ended tail; characteristic white forehead markings and white 'collar'.

Cole (1852), who was the only other author to penetrate these thickets in 1849, saw none although they were probably still present. The remote, thorn-choked ravines are seldom visited, and may yet harbour small troops.

4.4.2. **Chacma Baboon** (*Papio ursinus*)

Chacma baboons occupy rocky terrain, favouring the heights and hiding-places of mountains and the highest koppies of the Karoo landscape. Although observed in the valley from the earliest colonial times through to the present, very few visitors mentioned them. This was probably because baboons would have been frequently sighted from afar, excited little comment, were not favoured for hunting and were considered unsuitable for the pot.

No references to baboons were made before 1839 when Backhouse (1844) noted some baboon footprints in a poort (probably Naauw Poort) which his party explored. These footprints were observed along the bed of a rivulet associated with leopard tracks (ibid.). Mountainous terrain was again the preference for a troop of baboon which Leyland (1866) noted in 1850. Although it is unclear exactly where he observed this troop, he probably came upon them while travelling through the mountains bordering the Orange River somewhere to the north or north-west of the valley. Leyland wrote: "Baboons or Chacma, (*Cynocephalus Porcarius*) are very abundant in the mountain

districts of the Colony. In winding round the base of a mountain, I suddenly came upon a troop engaged in pulling up bulbous roots. On catching sight of me they instantly ran up the mountain side; I soon overtook them, being on horseback. The old ones turned round grinning for a moment or two, then off again. I could have shot several, but as they were useless just at the present time I did not do so. The young ones clung to their mothers, while the old ones brought up the rear. After getting some distance on the flat I turned round, saw and heard them howling and chattering on the top of a projecting rock, doubtless well pleased at my departure." (ibid.:89). The circumstances in which Leyland came upon the baboons and the manner in which they reacted, was probably a fairly common experience.

In 1872, twenty years after the last reference to baboons, Holub (1881,I:39) described herds of baboons which "haunted" the heights in the district of Naauw Poort (NOU.1). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, numerous newspaper reports indicated that baboon were increasingly regarded as a menace by valley farmers. Although the damage is not specified, it was almost certainly crop damage that was alluded to. There was (and is) also a persistent belief that baboons tear open the stomachs of lambs to extract the gut content of milk. Numerous hunts were detailed on farms with the direct objective of wiping out all the baboon occupying hilly terrain. In 1889, the Colesberg Advertiser reported that "During the holidays a party of farmers and townsmen surrounded a krantz out at Keerom, and shot eight baboons." (CA 1889:28*,2292). The first references to the formation of a Wild Animal Poisoning Club appeared in the latter newspaper this same year. Baboons were included among the wild animals, like the jackal, which this club was proposed to destroy (CA 1889:28*,2328). M. Weakley, the proprietor of the Colesberg Advertiser alluded to the presence of baboon in his journey through the valley in 1892. He wrote that, had he travelled into their particular haunts, he would have seen baboon (CA 1892:31*,1561).

Further evidence for the destruction caused by baboon on the farms within the valley is provided by a notice that was published in 1894 (CA 1894:33*,1703). Rewards were offered for the destruction of numerous wild animals, the tails of which were deemed satisfactory proof of their destruction. Anyone producing a baboon tail to the Resident Magistrate could earn him or herself 1s. 6d. Baboons were therefore being deliberately killed by farmers to protect their property. Thirty-two more baboons were shot at Keerom in 1899, indicating that baboon were still consistently killed by farmers (CA 1899:39,1927).

This practise of killing baboon when they became too much of a menace continues to this day on Sneeuberg and the Agter-Renosterberg farms. In spite of these setbacks to their numbers, baboon are today one of the few wild animals still at large in the mountains.

4.4.3. Lion (*Panthera leo*)

Lions were frequently remarked upon by early travellers. Barrow (1806,I) was the first to report their presence there, in 1797. Although only one was spotted by his party among the reedy banks of the Seacow River, near Van Plettenberg's beacon (on Quaggas Fontein - COL.98), he made it clear that lions were at that time much more abundant. The 'peasantry', as he described the local farmers, expressed surprise along the way that only one lion had been seen during their trip down the valley. Apparently they were especially troublesome in the Sneeuberg where they regularly attacked horses "... to the flesh of which, after that of a Hottentot, the lion seems to give a decided preference" (ibid.:220).

Lions continued to plague the Sneeuberg farmers for the next several years, as attested by members of Governor Janssens' entourage as they passed through there in 1803. Di Capelli (De Kock 1965) described the courage of the son of Commandant Van der Walt, at Wolve Kop (MID.12) three years previously, when the boy had shot and killed a lion which had badly injured his father by jumping at his horse. Lions still abounded in the vicinity of the farm in 1803, as Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II:49) noted "The lions came in the dark within sixteen paces of the house, but without doing any mischief".

It wasn't only in the mountains that lions caused serious damage. Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:33), passing down the valley in 1809, commented that "lions, of course, were numerous; but we did not see many, and never near: though few nights passed without some damage done by them among the cattle and horses of the farmers at whose residences we were obliged to rest".

A decade later Thompson (1827) had the same general impressions, and dwelt again on the damage done to horses. "It is the habit of the lion, it seems, when he kills a large animal, to spring upon it, and, seizing the throat with its terrible fangs, to press the body down with his paws till his victim expires. The moment he seizes his prey, the lion closes his eyes, and never opens them again until life is extinct" (ibid.:57). At Elandsheuvel (NOU.146), Thompson (ibid.:50-51) had the following encounter: "When we had outspanned at mid-day, ... , we were startled by the appearance of two lions, which passing within 400 yards of the waggons, proceeded to a neighbouring height that overlooked our encampment, and there lay down and gazed at us. ... During our repast we kept a watchful eye upon them, having our fire-arms all ready for action in case of an attack. They remained, however, perfectly quiet, and in about an hour we proceeded, leaving them undisturbed." Not far from there Thompson (ibid.:52) came upon the reason for their lack of interest in his party, namely "the skeletons of several gnoos and quaghas" which had recently fallen victim to these carnivores. Travelling further down the valley, he related how a lion which had killed an ox on either Hamelfontein (COL.10) or Bischuitfontein (COL.26) was itself killed by the "ingenuity of a Hottentot" (ibid.:57). Knowing that the lion usually seized his prey and held onto it until all life had been extinguished before opening its eyes, this Hottentot had run to within a

few paces of the lion (which was still holding on to the ox) and then shot the lion in the head, killing it (ibid.).

Seven years later, Steedman (1835,I) had repeated trouble with lions as he passed down the valley by ox wagon. Descending through the Sneeuberg he noted that "there were lions also in the neighbourhood", one of which approached close to the party one evening (ibid.:134). 'Jacobs', the farmer at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) pointed out a spot to Steedman (ibid.) where he had recently shot a lioness and had captured three cubs. Nearing Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), the following morning, Steedman was astonished to see several oxen "running at a furious rate without any ostensible cause of alarm." (ibid.:141). A Hottentot herdsman at Wonder Heuwel explained the behaviour of these cattle when he told Steedman that a lion had pursued the oxen for some time whereupon "they had become quite wild" (ibid.:142). This herdsman noted that there were "all too many lions" where he usually took the cattle to graze. Indeed, 'Jacobs' had seen no less that 15 lions "prowling at the foot of a neighbouring mountain" (ibid.:143) not long before. Moving towards Carolus Poort (NOU.166), Steedman also observed the spoor of four lions, which had apparently passed the party the previous evening. Travelling between the latter farm and Colesberg, Steedman (1835,I) described another incident in which a herd of gnus was seen racing across the plains, apparently pursued by a lion. The gnus were totally oblivious to Steedman's presence and raced straight past his wagon, although whether the lion was still in pursuit at that stage was unclear to Steedman owing to the large clouds of dust stirred up by the frightened animals (ibid.).

A few year's later (1834) Andrew Smith (1939,I:63) could still report their presence: "lions are very common in the country towards Visser's," that is, Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). However, Burrow (Kirby 1971:16), who was in the same party, reported that the country immediately around Colesberg "used to be infested with lions in old times, but with the increase in the population of the area, lions have entirely disappeared." This is the first mention of their numbers beginning to wane.

But this was not so in the countryside beyond the town itself. Backhouse (1844:340) who passed through in 1839 apparently stayed at Kuilfontein (COL.115), where one of inhabitants claimed to have shot about 50 lions. "These formidable animals were reported to be still far from uncommon in this vicinity, inhabiting the rugged hills," remarked Backhouse in conclusion (ibid.:340-41). Five years later (in 1844), Nicholson (1848:79) was the last to publish remarks on lions in the veld. He notes that lions, although formerly abundant, "... now ... are rarely seen" except during or after the large scale migrations of springbok through the region. The farmer Visser at Gordons Fontein (HAN.111), having related to Nicholson how he had killed about a hundred lions on his property alone, told him "that of late he had not seen many [lions] in the neighbourhood." (ibid.:86).

4.4.3.1. *Habitat and Ecology*

The recorded sightings of lions indicate many different niches: the mountains (Barrow 1806,I; De Kock 1965; Plumptre 1815,II; Steedman 1835,I and Thompson 1827), the reed banks of the Seacow River (Barrow 1806,I), the broken plains bordering on the Seacow River (Hutton

1887; Thompson 1827; Steedman 1835,I; Kirby 1939 and Nicholson 1848) and the hilly border of the valley closest to Colesberg (Burrow 1971, Backhouse 1844).

Steedman excepted, the paucity of sighting by most other travellers can be attributed to several factors. Chief among these, as Andrew Smith (Kirby 1939,I:63) pointed out, is that lions "are said generally to resort to the hills during the day and to the plains during the night.", which is why early 19th century travellers generally avoided moving across the valley flats at night unless they were absolutely forced to do so. In 1820 Campbell (1822,II) related how the fear of lions prevented them from travelling after sunset, while Steedman (1835,I:140) noted in 1830, that he was advised not to travel during the night, lest he "be annoyed by lions". One of Steedman's servants was forced to spend the night away from the camp while *en route* across the valley. Although he secreted himself within "a snug bush", he was still surprised in the middle of the night "by the growling of a lion, apparently close at hand." (Ibid.:156). Steedman probably observed such a large number of lions owing to a severe drought which had been affecting the countryside for a long time. The owner of Wonder Heuvel had for example only recently returned from the other side of the Orange River, where he had been forced to go on account of this drought (ibid.:142). Lions were probably so hungry that they risked going close to travelling parties and farmsteads where food in the form of oxen was available, even if this meant doing so during the day (as was the case of both the oxen and the gnu chased by lions).

4.4.3.2. *Place Name Distributions*

More valley farms names contain the word leeuw (lion) than any other beast of prey. The valley thus conforms to a well known feature of South African farm naming patterns (Acocks 1988). These valley farms are Leeuwen Fontein (HAN.129 - est. 1839), Leuwe Poort (HAN.127 - est. 1830), Leeuw Hoek (MID.61 - est. 1830), Leuwe Kop (NOU.120 - est. 1827), and Leeuwrand (HAN.84 - est. 1908).

What has not been noted elsewhere in South Africa, however, is that most of these valley names occur in areas where travellers have reported seeing lions. Thompson (1827) in 1823 observed lions near to Elandsheuvel (NOU.146) and Steedman (1835,I) commented upon lions while further south at Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), as well as between there and Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) and there and Carolus Poort (NOU.166). Leuwe Poort (HAN - 127), Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) and Leuwe Kop (NOU.120) are all in the general region of Wonder Heuvel, which seems to form the centre of a region where lions were commonly observed in the nineteenth century. Some years later, Smith (Kirby 1939) commented on the presence of lions in the vicinity of Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) as did Nicholson (1848) in 1844. Although a bit further afield, this farm is still in the general area of the three farms named after lions listed above.

No record of lions occurring at Leeuwen Fontein (HAN.129) could be found, so the reasoning behind this farm name remains obscure. The farm Leeuw Rand is a much newer farm, allocated in 1908. The name probably applied to a large, boulder-strewn, dolerite ridge so named from earlier times, and it should not be taken to mean that lions were still present at or just before

that date. Newcomers also imported names from other districts, where they had either farmed on land of the same name or near to a farm which they had admired.

4.4.3.3. *The Date of Last Sighting*

No published accounts of lions, either attacking or being killed, have been found later than the 1844 account of Nicholson (1848). Indeed, by the end of that decade, their numbers had probably decreased markedly. For example, Joseph Orpen (1908), a farmer in the valley a few years later (between 1847 and 1850) although mentioning other hazards to stock farming did not name lions as a problem. Although the Colesberg Advertiser, founded in 1861 took a lively interest in any drama involving lions, there are none that unequivocally show that lions still appeared in the valley veld after that date. By the early 1860's lions may already have been regarded by some as exotic novelties from elsewhere. For example, one issue of that newspaper (CA 1861:1,25) reported on two lions, obtained in the Free State, being conveyed through Colesberg to Graaff-Reinet by their owner who was attempting to sell them. He was unsuccessful as his price was regarded as excessive, and he thence returned with them to the Free State. In the same year, however, the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser (1861:1,28) had this to say: "Unfortunately for our young men, there are but few lions or tigers in our neighbourhood, and it is but seldom an opportunity occurs of their displaying their prowess."

Although hardly a firm sighting, this at least hints that their presence in the local veld would not have been regarded as extraordinary. Only a few years later this view may have changed, because the same newspaper (CA 1865:5,257) reported on the ensuing uproar when a pet lion escaped from the place of his confinement and prowled the streets of Colesberg. An overzealous Colesberger shot the "harmless animal", much to the dismay of a large sector of the population. Unfortunately we are given no history of how this poor creature was acquired, so that it is impossible to tell whether it was of local origin or from farther north. In 1892 a newspaper article described how lions had "made night hideous with their cries and howls" earlier in the century, but that they had all disappeared by that date (CA 1892:31*,1597).

4.4.3.4. *Methods of Extermination*

The record makes it clear that between ca. AD 1780-1845, the valley was being systematically cleared of lions by the local farmers and that the process was more or less complete by 1861, when the first newspaper appeared. From the beginning of this campaign, dogs were being used to kill lions. Barrow (1806,I:222) in 1797, for example, noted that local farmers possessed "a kind of dog that is not afraid to attack a lion" and he was told of an instance where two of these dogs managed to kill one. Lichtenstein, in turn, mentioned that Sneeuberg farmers commonly kept between ten and fifteen large dogs, three of which were deemed "a sufficient match for the largest leopard." (Plumptre 1815,II:13). These dogs were described as "generally known by the name of the Danish dog" (ibid.) and indeed, Steedman (1835,I) described the benefits of

possessing "a large rough kind of dog" about the size of a Newfoundland dog. This dog "proves by its courage in facing the lion and keeping him at bay, a valuable assistant in hunting that formidable creature." (ibid.:132-23).

The method of hunting lions is described by Thompson (1827,I:50-51): "Ten or twelve colonists, mounted, and armed with their large guns, go out; and having, with the assistance of their dogs or hottentots, ascertained where the spoiler lies, approach within a moderate distance, and then alighting, make fast the horses to each other by their bridles and halters. They then advance to within about thirty paces, backing the horses before them, knowing that the lion will not spring till within half that distance, ... As they advance, the lion at first surveys them calmly, ... ; but when they appproach nearer, he begins to growl ... He is now fully enraged, and only measuring his distance, in act to spring upon his audacious assailants. This is the critical moment, and the signal is given to half the party to fire. If they are not successful at killing him at the first volley, he springs like a thunderbolt upon the horses. The rest of the party then pour in their fire upon him, which seldom fails to finish his career, though, perhaps, with the loss of one or more horses; and sometimes, though more rarely, some even of the huntsmen are destroyed in these dangerous encounters." Cole related a similar, although less complex practise: "the lion is hemmed in, and, though woe betide the mortal whom he 'charges', there are generally a dozen barrels ready to be discharged at him" (1852:217).

Besides the farmers who strove to protect their livestock, the lion population was also undoubtedly eroded by the activities of travellers seeking trophies. Lions also possibly suffered under the effects of poisons distributed by valley farmers. Farming at Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) in the late 1840's, Joseph Orpen described how he was possibly the first to introduce strychnine into the region (1908:49). According to him "White arsenic" or "*Rotte kruid*" [rat powder] had already "been tried" in the region as a means of fighting against the depredations caused by "jackals, wolves (i.e. hyenas) and wild dogs" (ibid.). Lions could therefore have also been affected by arsenic and by another poison which Orpen described as "Nux vomica, the seed of the strychos" which too was already in use and known locally as 'Kraan oog' (ibid.). Neither poison was however deemed as effective as strychnine which was administered in the following way: "we began ... dropping pills of meat on the trails made at a distance in a circle around the house" (ibid.:49).

It may be that lions also migrated away from the advancing trekboer front, thus further thinning their numbers. Encroachment by farmers on the game animals which they fed on and the water holes where they drank and hunted would have been some incentive to move. Stockenstrom (1887:33) in 1809 noted this process in its early stages "Since the [*trekboer*] population has increased; and the springs have been taken possession of, the game and lions have of course greatly diminished, and may in another half-century become as scarce in the Colesberg district as in those of Swellendam and Stellenbosch." His timetable proved prophetic for an event that removed a significant element from the top of the valley's food-chain, and permanently altered the ecological balance of its wild animal population.

4.4.4. **Leopard** (*Panthera pardus*)

Travellers, like the valley's farmers with whom they stayed, often referred to leopards as either 'Tigers' or 'Panthers'. Although Barrow (1806:220-222), in 1797 notes that the 'peasantry' distinguished between the 'tiger of the plains' and the 'tiger of the mountains' it is no longer possible to determine whether there were indeed two races of local leopard. Barrow's 'tiger of the mountains' appeared thus: "the upper part of the body and exterior part of the legs are of a fallow ground, with irregular black spots, some circular, some lunated, and others ocellated, in some parts distinct, in others running together in clusters; the sides, belly and interior parts of the legs, a white ground with large black circular spots; upper part of the tail fulvous, with oblong black spots; under part barred across with alternate black and white bands; vibrissae or strong bristles about the mouth, silvery white; a black line along the fore part of the shoulders to the chest; length from the nose to the end of the tail seven feet four inches; length of the tail two feet, two inches." Barrow's 'tiger of the plains' is described as a lighter, larger version of the spotted 'tiger of the mountains'. Both appear to fit the description of the leopard. The inhabitants of the region described to him a third feline species which they called a "leopard" but the description was detailed enough to make it clear today that the account is of a cheetah (see below)..

The earliest recorded sighting of a valley leopard is in 1777 by Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:91). Evidently a 'tiger' leapt in front of an ox-wagon in his entourage as it moved along the banks of Plettenberg's River. It then stood there for a few minutes before walking away. Barrow (1806,I) in 1797 while travelling along the banks of this same river, near to Plettenberg's beacon, probably observed some leopards in the region as it was then that he discussed the two types of 'tiger' alluded to above.

Approximately forty-two years passed before the next mention of a leopard. Backhouse (1848), while spending the Sunday at Naauw Poort (NOU.1) in 1839 reported seeing the footprints of a leopard in the dry sand in the bed of a rivulet. A favoured food of the leopard is the baboon, and significantly enough, Backhouse (1848) noted baboon footprints in the same place. Although a leopard was probably creeping up on a baboon feeding in the poort, the spoor of a large caracal (red-cat) can be mistaken for those of leopard.

Nicholson (1898), who owned the farms Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121) on the southern slopes of the Sneeuberg in the 1840's records the presence of leopard in the mountains surrounding his homestead. Generally, however, leopard sightings were rare since this predator prefers rocky, less visible habitats, from which to hunt, while other predators such as the lion prefer bush cover on the open plains. Consequently the later sightings are connected with the more noticeable destruction of livestock. In 1861, a party of young men spotted a leopard on Platberg, a hill in the vicinity of Colesberg. Although a number of shots were fired at the leopard, it escaped unharmed (CA 1861:1,26). The presence of, and damage done by leopards in the valley is evidenced by donations made to the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of the Colesberg district by private individuals who donated eleven pounds which were to be added to the Premium Fund, set aside for "the destruction of Tigers and other beasts of prey." (CA 1861:1,33 & 34). This

money was to be divided amongst the most successful destroyers of these animals. In 1865, the organisers of the Agricultural Show to be held at Colesberg, offered prizes for the person destroying the largest number of beasts of prey (CA 1865:5,218).

The next mention of the sighting of a leopard was made by Emile Holub (1881,I) in 1872. Passing over the farm 'Newport' (Naauw Poort - NOU.1), Holub (1881,I:39) wrote: "The heights in the district are haunted by herds of baboons, by several of the smaller kinds of antelopes, and by some of the lesser beasts of prey of the cat kind, principally leopards."

Despite earlier attempts to destroy leopards, they still appear to be a menace to valley farmers in 1889, as the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser (1889:28,2328) writes: "Many parts of this district are still troubled with wild animals, whose depredations are a heavy tax on the farmers. We would just hint at the advisableness of establishing a Wild Animals Poisoning Club among those who are troubled by the vermin ... The Government has lately voted £500 as a grant to such clubs, and we do not see why this district should not avail itself of a portion of that money to get rid of its tigers, jackals, baboons &c." A meeting of farmers was held in Colesberg a year later, in 1890, and a poisoning club was formed (CA 1890:29,2366). A considerable number of the farmers present joined, and it was resolved to obtain copies of the rules of some other clubs of the same kind which were to be used as a basis for future meetings. At a Colesberg Divisional Council meeting (CA 1890:29,2369) a Mr Van der Walt, proposed that "the secretary purchase poison [for the destruction of wild animals] to the value not exceeding £10, and that the poison be distributed amongst such farmers who shall apply for the same, in such quantities as the secretary shall deem sufficient." This proposal was carried by the Council.

In that same year (1890), a farmer, Mr. M. J. Pretorius of Falsefontein (NOU.165) reported (CA 1890:29,2380) that he had shot three 'tygers' on his farm in the space of three weeks. This appears to be the last reference to leopards in the valley's open veld. Leopards probably continued to occupy the high mountains for decades longer as indicated by an article published in 1892 which related how leopards had formerly "made night hideous with their cries and howls" but by that date had disappeared "excepting here and there in the mountain fastnesses" where "an occasional leopard" still preyed on the flocks (CA 1892:31*,1597). The last leopard shot in the Sneeuberg was in the 1920s (Mr N. Sheard, pers comm.).

The increase of references to leopards after about 1850 can be tied to the rise of local newspapers. Post-1850 accounts were invariably given by farmers in those papers, while no such medium for these accounts was available before this time. Another consideration is that leopards were becoming an increasing menace to the stock of valley farmers, because there was no longer competition from lions. It is also likely that leopards on the plains increasingly resorted to the livestock of farmers as a result of the depletion of their natural food sources. Most of the leopards observed early in the century were spotted on the plains adjoining the Seacow River (Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Barrow 1806,I) while later references generally alluded to either the Roodeberg (Backhouse 1844; Holub 1881,I) or the Sneeuberg (Nicholson 1898), perhaps indicating that as

farmers occupied more and more land within the valley, leopard were gradually pushed into mountainous regions where they had more chance of survival.

Only one valley farm, Luiperts Kop (HAN.112) was named after the leopard. This farm was probably named after the characteristic koppie bearing the same name, possibly because leopards were known to occur near there.

4.4.5. **Cheetah** (*Acinonyx jubatus*)

Barrow (1806,I:221) seems to err when he notes that valley farmers described a third felid species as being a leopard: "To another species of the feline tribe they give the name of leopard. It is not so long, but thicker, taller, and much stronger, than those described above [i.e. the two sorts of tigers]: the color is cinereous, with small black spots; the neck and temples covered with long crisp hair like that of the mane of the lion; tail two feet, flat, vertical, spotted half way from the root, and the other half annulated; a thick black line from the interior angle of the eye extends to the opening of the mouth." Barrows' description of 'long crisp hair' covering the neck and the temples, as well as the line extending from the eye to the opening of the mouth are characteristic of the cheetah. The common name for the cheetah is still 'jagluiperd' in Afrikaans, and it is obvious that Barrow translated the original Dutch literally as a hunting (jag) leopard, rather than to a cheetah. He also found a small cub of this species, which he said became instantly tame and as playful as the domestic kitten (ibid.:222), another highly characteristic feature of cheetah ethology. It thus appears that cheetah roamed the valley plains until at least the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it probably did not survive for long once the rapid seizure of land up to Plettenberg's Beacon gained momentum. Possibly always a minor feature of the landscape, they are not remarked upon in any subsequent published sources, and were not deemed sensational enough to be noted in local newspapers, if indeed any survived by the time these began to be published.

4.4.6. **Brown Hyaena** (*Hyaena brunnea*)

Hyaenas or 'wolves', as they were termed by valley farmers in the 19th century, are noted for their peculiar gait, their scavenging habits and their laughter-like howls. They appear repeatedly in Gordon's 1777 journal (Raper and Boucher 1988,I). He described its howl when one approached his camp in the valley near a spring at Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81). After travelling a little further north, Gordon's party doubled back towards the Sneeuberg and along the way camped at 'Gordon's Fontein' (on Dwaal Fountain - HAN.29). Here, they "chased out two hyaena, but they ran too swiftly." (ibid.:95). *En route* to the 'Champagnes Poort River' (ibid.:96), now the Klein Seekoei tributary, Gordon's party fired at a hyaena, wounding it. Although overtaken by their horses, it still managed to get away in the mountains: "it ran as though it was stiff behind, galloping." (ibid.).

None of Governor Janssens party mention hyaenas, although at Zoete Valley (RICH.115) they met the farm owner, Albertus Jan Viljoen, who had lost his one arm "when adjusting the bait he had set in a trap he set with a gun trained for wolves, and had his arm shattered by jerking too

hard on the line." (De Kock 1965:260). These wolves which Viljoen was targeting were probably the troublesome hyaenas.

The next to report on their presence was Steedman (1835,I:134) who came down the adjacent Elandskloof tributary in 1830, where he noted "the wolves were exceedingly numerous in this quarter". Further down the valley, near the farm Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), he had another brush with a hyaena. One ran swiftly past his camp in the night and he only identified it as a hyaena by the dismal cry it uttered at intervals. At Carolus Poort (NOU.166) he met some Bushmen out hunting and made the useful observation that "the only species of food which they nauseate or reject is the flesh of the hyaena." (ibid.:148).

Nicholson (1898:21) also had much to say about hyaenas. He mentioned their presence on his farms Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121) in 1844. That same year while travelling through the valley to Gordons Fontein (HAN.111), he discussed the migratory patterns of the 'springbuck' there, and noted that they were hunted by the farmers and preyed upon by 'panthers' and hyaenas inhabiting those regions (ibid.:79-80). Again, between Gordons Fontein and Colesberg, he "disturbed the slumbers of one of the common kind of hyaenas, of immense size. He jumped up close at my feet, and much startled me at the moment, but knowing the cowardly nature of the tribe, saluted him with a ball, which broke one of his hind legs, and he limped unresistingly off"(ibid.:87-88).

Farmers continuously lost stock to these creatures. In 1848 Orpen (1908:49) complained that "wolves, (i.e. hyenas) ... were very numerous and troublesome in those days [the 1840's]." He related how meat was laced with "white arsenic" and the "seed of the stychos" in attempts to get rid of these animals. He then experimented with strychnine, which he found the most effective for getting rid of such 'troublesome' predators. The use of this poison no doubt soon spread to other farms within the valley.

As with leopards, the valley farmers were spurred on to kill hyaenas by rewards offered from the Agricultural and Horticultural Society for their destruction. Such calls were being made in 1861 (CA 1861:1,26), but there is no further mention of hyaenas in any source until 1871 (CA 1871:11,539) when "a fine he wolf" was shot by a farmer on Driefontein (COL.137) just outside the valley. The Colesberg Advertiser (1874:14,684) of 1874 again notes that "a family of these destructive brutes [hyaena] ... appear to have taken up their residence on Platberg [a hill near the town of Colesberg], from whence they make forays upon the flock and herds of the surrounding farmers." Resident farmers laid out poison which killed one of the 'brutes'.

Not only did hyaenas prey on the flocks and herds of the valley farmers, but they later destroyed the eggs of ostriches, once these birds began to be farmed. Mr J.J. Oosthuizen of the farm Poortjie (COL.149) to the east of the valley, for example had a nest of fifteen ostrich eggs destroyed during a single night (CA 1876:16,812). By 1878, hyaenas were still causing destruction among valley farmers. As the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser (1878:18,909) wrote: "hyaenas, commonly called wolves in these parts, are committing a great deal of slaughter amongst livestock, in that part of the Upper Seacow River adjoining the Middelburg district." Indeed, hyaenas were the

main target of the Poisoning Club established by farmers in 1890 (see above). A 'Rewards' notice published in 1894 offered six shillings for the presentation of a hyaena tail as proof that the animal had been destroyed (CA 1894:33*,1703). By 1892 it was being reported that although hyaena had formerly "made night hideous with their cries and growls", they had all disappeared from the valley (CA 1892:31*,1597).

Although no valley farms were named after the hyaena, two farms was named after the colloquial term 'wolf'. These were Wolvenhuis Hoek (RICH.125) and Wolwe Kop (HAN.92) which were occupied very early in the nineteenth century.

Before 1871, hyaena were always described as preying on wild animals, although they did sometimes approach near the oxen and flocks of travellers moving through the valley. Only the newspapers mention hyaenas making forays amongst livestock, events not commented upon by early travellers who stressed instead the destruction caused by lions. It is thus possible that hyaenas only started to turn from wild to domesticated prey after the extermination of the lions, from which the hyaenas had previously scavenged.

4.4.7. **The Black-backed jackal** (*Canis mesomelas*)

Jackals were mentioned in the accounts of only a few early visitors to the valley. Gordon, while travelling over the flats in 1777 made the following note: "... saw several so-called 'jackal', approximating most nearly to our fox." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:87). On the banks of the Seacow, termed by Gordon 'Plettenberg's River', he noted that "jackal often yelped around us." (ibid.:92).

Not until 1820 was the jackal again mentioned in print, when Campbell (1822,II:307) commented extensively on the close relationship between jackals and lions. Most of his entries were made just before reaching the Seacow River. Thus: "the natives believe that when the lion is attacking a human being, the jackal aids the latter, and appears as if he would drive the lion away".

Twenty-four years later (1844), Cumming wrote about his experience with a jackal after he had shot two springbok. One was entirely eaten by the vultures, while the second "had its leg broken by the ball, and was making off, when a jackal suddenly appeared on the bare plain, and, giving him chase, after a good course ran into him." (Cumming 1855,I: 92). Orpen, farming at Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) was troubled by jackals and so scattered chunks of meat poisened with strychnine "on the trails made at a distance in a circle around the house" (1908:49). As a result, they "killed several jackals every night and upwards of forty the first month." (ibid.). Many jackals were thus killed in this manner and indeed Orpen commented that technique of using strychnine "succeeded afterwards in many other parts for many long years, so that there were parts where jackals and other troublesome beasts were long unheard of." (ibid.).

In spite of this, their continued presence in some small areas of the valley possibly led a farmer buying a piece of ground in 1867 to name his farm Jackals Dam (COL.113), the only valley farm named after this animal.

Few specific mentions of jackals occur after this date. In 1879, the following headline occurred in the Colesberg Advertiser (1879:19,961) under the heading Local and General News: 'Jackals on the Commonage'. The farmer living on the farm Platberg, Mr. R. Maeder submitted the following to the newspaper: "It seems that very few if any inhabitants of Colesberg are aware that their commonage is infested by jackals. They are to be heard every morning and evening at the 'old kraal' and along the foot of Platberg, laughing and uttering their howling threats. Last week I threw some poison between the boundary of my farm and that of the commonage; the result was next morning five fat brutes were lying dead, a few yards from the place where the pills were dropped. In spite of five of them having succumbed to poison, the same evening some more jackals came within a hundred yards of my kraals. I hope the Municipal council will take immediate steps to destroy these destructive animals, which overrun the whole commonage during the night. If they are not destroyed, the consequence will be they will make the neighbouring farms leave their homes."

Jackals therefore remained a definite menace until late in the nineteenth century. In 1892 "a sprinkling of jackals" still preyed on the flocks of valley farmers (CA 1892:31*,1597) while a Rewards notice published in 1894, offered 6s for proof of the destruction of the jackal and the same amount for the destruction of the "maanhaar jackal or warwolf" (CA 1894:33*,1703). The threat posed by the jackal to livestock was seen in a serious enough light by local farmers to prompt the formation of the Wild Animals Poisoning Club discussed above. Nevertheless, jackals were still a pest in 1896, in which year farmer of the district 'Achter-op-Sneeuberg' wrote a letter in Dutch to the Colesberg Advertiser (1896:35*,1789), describing his success in wiping out wild animals such as the jackal and red-cat (Lynx) with the aid of fox terriers.

Clearly jackals survived in the valley's veld up to and beyond the time that the last hyaenas and hunting dogs (see below) were exterminated. They are still commonly sighted in the veld today, and are systematically hunted whenever and wherever their numbers grow.

4.4.8. The African Hunting Dog (*Lycaon pictus*)

Only a few references to the wild dog appear in the literature. As early as 1797, Barrow (1806,I:221) refers to the domestication of this animal. While travelling along the banks of the Seacow river, he makes the following curious remark: "the cadaverous crocuta, the wild dog, has lately been domesticated in the Sneuwberg, where it is now considered as one of the best hunters after game". We may assume that his reference to 'crocuta' (spotted hyaena) is a taxonomic confusion. There are no further references to the taming of wild dogs.

Nicholson (1848:87), who lived south the valley, and travelled through it in 1844, makes some passing remarks about the wild dog. A troop of these animals was seen between Gordons Fontein and Colesberg. Although he called them "the hunting species of the hyaena" (ibid:87) he described them as "fleet-looking animals, of a greyish colour, and [they] seemed half inclined to take the offensive, but at last left me, much gratified at their forbearance to attack, as I was alone, on foot, and, although armed, far from the waggons."

"We were troubled by wild dogs, too" noted Joseph Orpen (1908:50) who farmed at Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) in the valley. On one occasion about a dozen of these dogs approached the house just as the sheep were being returned to their enclosures. "Each rushed at a sheep, tore a huge piece out of it and was off and away before anything could be done." (ibid.). A few years earlier, Orpen had gone out onto the plains to hunt and soon found himself among fifty wild dogs who moved a distance away while he approached a system of burrows which they had taken over from porcupines or 'ant-eaters' (ibid.). While investigating the burrows, a wild dog raced out of one of them past Orpen, scaring him enough to make him leave the exploration for his elder brother, Arthur. After crawling through the burrows and finding only a few "wild puppies", Arthur decided to "try to poison the whole troop at their holes" (ibid.:51). As they did not have much strychnine, large quantities of meat were poisoned with arsenic, and the chunks of poisoned meat were scattered about the burrows. The brothers however never found any wild dogs poisoned by the meat and Orpen concluded that "Arsenic often acts as an emetic instead of a poison, if taken in strong doses." (ibid.:51).

The later absence of references to this animal point to it being exterminated soon after the lions were gone. It would be interesting to know to what extent they may have been incorporated into the intruding population of farmers' dogs. Because this predator preferred the open plains, with its plentiful bovid prey, they must have been quite visible and fell more rapidly to the guns of hunters and farmers than did the more elusive cats and fugitive hyaenas. However, some wild dogs apparently survived late into the nineteenth century as recorded in the 1894 rewards notice which offered 10s for proof (in the form of the animals tail) of the destruction of the 'wild dog' (CA 1894:33*,1703). The fact that the reward for the 'wild dog' was ten shillings in comparison to the usual six shillings indicates that this animal was either scarcer, or more of a menace than the other beasts of prey.

4.4.9. The Caracal, Lynx or Red-cat (*Felis caracal*)

The caracal is generally referred to as the Lynx or Rooikat (Red-cat). Backhouse (1844) is the only traveller to note the presence of this animal in the valley. While resting at a pool close to the farm 'Paard Fontein' (Perdefontein - RICH.138) in 1839, some of Backhouse's party drove their cattle to an adjacent mountain, namely Tafel Berg. Here, they killed "a lynx" (ibid.:484).

There are no further references until 1893. On the farm Poortje (COL.149) in the New Hantam on the east flank of the valley, a few ewes and lambs strayed from the kraal during the night and wandered off into the veld. On the next morning, some of the lambs were found dead, apparently killed by wild animals. The farmer, Mr. Oosthuizen, set a trap which the next morning was found to contain a large female red-cat measuring 3 feet, 6 inches from tip to tip. (CA 1893:32,1626). "Lynx (red-cat)" were included among the 1894 list of animals which the Resident Magistrate of Colesberg wanted destroyed. Like most of the other species in the list, six shillings was offered for proof of its destruction (CA 1894:33*,1703).

In 1896, red-cats were still troubling valley farmers. The same letter quoted above from a farmer in the district 'Achter-op-Sneeuwberg' set out the best way to hunt animals like the red-cat, again with the aid of fox- terriers (CA 1896:35*,1789).

The red-cat was thus a low-level nuisance to valley farmers throughout the nineteenth century, gaining slight prominence after the larger beasts of prey had disappeared. Today, they still make episodic appearances and excite great communal hunts among neighbouring farmers where they have been sighted, in sharp contrast to the outbreaks of jackal attacks, which are considered normal attrition.

4.4.10. **African Wild Cat** (*Felis lybica*)

The African wild cat is still present today in the valley veld, but is not often seen. It usually occupies rock strewn koppie areas and ranges over adjacent plains in search of micromammal prey. Campbell (1822,II:307) is the only traveller who refers to the wild cat. Travelling beyond the valley, close to Hephzibah to the east of the Seacow River, he (ibid.) described how his travelling companion killed a "large wild cat" on the banks of a seasonal river which flowed into the Orange River a little distance away. Then as now, this species must have been rarely sighted, and thus did not warrant enough attention to be preserved in the printed word. A Colesberg newspaper observed at the close of the century (in 1892) that although the wild cat (among other beasts of prey) had formerly existed "in variety" in the valley, they had all disappeared by that date (CA 1892:31*,1597).

4.4.11. **Small Spotted Cat** (*Felis nigripes*)

Like the African Wild cat, this extremely rare species is hardly mentioned in travellers accounts. Backhouse(1844:339) in 1839 mentioned it as 'a Black-footed Cat' which was killed by the party's dogs. Fortunately his description is so detailed that there can be little doubt of its identity:"it was about the size of a domestic cat; the colour light grey with a brownish tinge, spotted and barred with greyish black, and on the legs, with pure black; the soles of the feet were also black; the whiskers white; its tail was shorter than that of the domestic cat, but scarcely so short as the tails of the Servals". This cat met its end in about the middle of the valley on either Mooyfontein (Morgenwacht - COL.109) or Elandsfontein (COL.110). No other mentions of this species were found in either the newspapers or among the accounts of other travellers.

PART 3 - ARTIODACTYLS (UNGULATES)

4.4.12. **Red Hartebeest** (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*)

Although more farms in the valley are named after hartebeest than any other animal, references to hartebeest by travellers and farmers in the nineteenth century fail to mirror this

frequency. One reason for this discrepancy may be that several farm names were corrupted from 'hard-biessie' (bulrush) which would have been a marker feature of the bigger fountains. Thus the terms 'hartebees' and 'hartbeest' may derive from this source. The term 'hartbeeshuis' (a house made of bulrushes) was in common usage on the frontier. Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887) for one made use of this name. Describing the reception they met with on their arrival at valley farms, he described how "the welcome songs of the numerous bushmen scattered among the rocks above the Hartebeest hut, ... rendered the scene very cheering." (ibid.:39).

While camped near the 'Champagnes River' in 1777, Gordon recorded that they saw various "so-called 'hartebeest'" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:86). Two days later, while traversing the plains bordering the Seacow River, he (ibid.:87) again observed various herds of hartebeest. Barrow IN 1797 (1806:208) observed hartebeest on the valley plains south of Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). Two days later, hartebeest were again fleetingly described on the plains bordering the Seacow River (ibid.:219).

On entering the valley in 1803 via Naauw Poort (NOU.1), Van Reenen, Dr. Passet and Di Capelli all got lost while following a herd of hartebeest (De Kock 1965:257). They only rejoined the remainder of their party late that night as a result and caused great anxiety on the part of Governor Janssens. Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II:49) failed to mention this misadventure and merely wrote that "in the course of the next day the travellers saw a great many gnus, hartebeests and eland antelopes."

"Endless droves" of hartebeest were recorded by Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:33) in the vicinity of Quaggas Fontein (COL.98). Stockenstrom's astonishment at the number of ungulates, including the hartebeest, is sharply contrasted thirty-five years later (in 1844) by Nicholson (1848:80-81) who traversed the same area of the valley and commented that: "on some of the flats near Rhinosterberg ... The more rare hartebeest - a large antelope, of the size of the Scotch red deer, and much prized by the sportsman - is found."

Despite all the references in the literature to the large size of the hartebeest and to the hartebeests' popularity as a game animal, none of the above travellers mention killing, or even shooting at this animal. This total lack of 'hartebeest kills' along with the continual reference to observing the hartebeest in the distance, all indicate that this antelope, although occurring in the valley, were not abundant. They were probably hunted mercilessly by farmers and their popularity might explain the abundance of references to hartebeest in farm names.

4.4.12.1. *Place name distribution*

Six farms in the valley bear the name 'hartebeest'. These are Hartebeestfontein (COL.67) close to Colesberg, Hartebeesfontein (COL.145) and Hartebeest Hoek (NOU.182) close to Naauw Poort and Hartebeest Fontein (RICH.116), Hartebeest Valley (RICH.128) and Hartebeeste Fontein (MID.149) in the upper valley. These farms were granted in 1836, 1837, 1827, 1839, 1839 and 1836 respectively. Interestingly enough, most of the references to hartebeest in the literature record

the presence of hartebeest on the valley plains along the Seacow River (Gordon 1988,I; Barrow 1806 and Stockenstrom 1887), on the plains adjoining the Rhinosterberg (Di Capelli 1967, Lichtenstein 1930, Nicholson 1848) and in the Sneeuwberg mountains (Gordon 1988,I). These three areas correspond directly with the groupings of farm names noted above.

4.4.12.2. *Date of last sighting*

Some of the farms bearing the name 'Hartebeest' were granted as late as 1839, indicating the presence of even a few red hartebeest at this time. Indeed, Nicholson's (1848:80-81) reference to 'the more rare hartebeest' illustrates that by 1844, these animals were not as prevalent in the valley as in former times. This together with a general lack of further references to the hartebeest after this date, all show that after about 1840 the red hartebeest probably only occurred in a few favoured niches in the valley. No newspaper reports ever mentioned the animal, so it was probably gone altogether by 1860.

4.4.13. **Springbok** (*Antidorcas marsupialis*)

Of all the valley's animals documented in the nineteenth century, the springbok is without doubt the most commonly mentioned and many probably shared Alfred Cole's opinion that they were "the most graceful, swift, and beautiful of antelopes" (Cole 1852:214). In spite of, or perhaps because of this they were constantly under heavy pressure from Europeans, providing for both the excitement of the hunt and food for the pot. The springbok was repeatedly mentioned throughout the time span covered by this thesis, from the earliest reports of Gordon in 1777 to the newspaper reports of 1899.

Two categories can be distinguished, namely springbok resident on the valley flats and springbok migrating through the valley in search of pasture. Cronwright-Schreiner (1925:40) has left us a useful colloquial terminology for these: "Where springboks run wild in large numbers, they are distinguished as 'houbokke' and 'trek-bokke', the 'houbokke' being bucks (we term all antelopes 'bucks') that live permanently on the same veld, the 'trekbokke' those that congregate in vast hosts and migrate from one part of the country to another in seasons of drought." Skead (1988) also accepts this division, remarking however that houbokke did not necessarily remain in one area all of the time, but rather that herds would replace other herds as they moved about the landscape in search of food.

Differentiating between reports of these two categories in the literature, however, can prove difficult. Firstly, the term 'trek-bokken' appears in literature pertinent to the valley only after 1844, with one much earlier exception by Stockenstrom (1887:33) in 1809. Then, he noted the immigration of springbok "will ... for several generations continue periodically to replenish our flats with one species of antelope." This introduces the second point, that trekbokke not only passed through the valley, but numbers also remained behind after the masses had left. This means that houbokke populations could never have been stable for very long. Consequently some visitors,

particularly those in later years called them 'trek-bokken', while others referred instead to numerous 'herds' or 'flocks' of springbok or to 'thousands' of springbok. The last phrase raises another problem, namely interpreting herd size estimates in the literature. As Skead (1988) has noted, traveller's counts of animals were often either exaggerated or played down, depending on their personal writing styles and training. Thus 'thousands' could be used to mean 'many' or could mean literally thousands. Finally, it should be pointed out that springbok did not migrate on a seasonal basis, and treks were recorded in January, March, June, September, November and December, in other words, throughout the year (ibid). Thus it may not be possible to infer a trekking herd from the date of a traveller's sighting.

Houbokke and trek-bokke would have responded to the influx of Europeans in quite different ways, so it is worthwhile to determine which kind each observer saw. Two criteria may be used, namely herd size and herd mixture. The scant literature dealing with trekbokke (Cronwright-Schreiner 1925, Skead 1987, Skinner and Smithers 1990) agrees that they formed large, usually unbroken groups of animals moving through the veld, devouring anything in their path. Some visitors to the valley were astonished by the unusually large numbers they encountered, which may be taken in itself to mean they were looking at a migrating herd. Springbok migrations were highly visible when they occurred, and it is unlikely that a traveller would have mistaken a resident springbok herd for a trek. Furthermore, the concern which such a trek caused among farmers would have been communicated to any traveller. Cronwright-Schreiner (1925) has also commented that numbers of other antelope were often carried along in the midst of large springbok treks.

4.4.13.1. *Resident Springbok (Houbokke)*

Non-migratory springbok are gregarious (Skinner and Smithers 1990) and moved about the valley landscape in small herds. In November of 1777, on entering the valley near Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:82) cited the presence of "a few springbok." A day later several springbok were sighted while encamped at the Klein Seekoei River. Moving further across the valley plains, Gordon (ibid.) observed a gnu which chased a springbok for almost thirty minutes and later the same day, various herds of springbok were observed ranging across the plains. "Several springbok" are described by Gordon on the 19th of November on the banks of the Seacow River (ibid.:88), on the 22nd while resting at Gordon's Fontein (ibid.:95) and yet again on the next day having left the nights camp (ibid.:96). On the latter day, two springbok were shot "with one shot." (ibid.:96). Passing the Klein Seekoei River en route out of the valley, a "fair number of springbok" were again sighted (ibid.:96). None of these sightings sound like major concentrations and can be safely assumed to be houbokke.

Barrow (1806:208) in 1797 commented on springbok "... in such large troops as in no other part of the country had yet been observed by us." This happened somewhere on *Die Ou Vlak* between the Sneeuberg mountains and the farm Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). "Countless troops" of springbok were again noted two days later by Barrow's party while travelling along the banks of the Seacow River (ibid.:219). That Barrow also referred to troops of hartebeests and bonteboks in the

same sentence indicates that the springbok were not the dominant feature of the landscape, as they would certainly have been had they been trekbok.

In 1803 Governor Janssens (Godee-Molsbergen 1932) noted that across the plains south of Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) the hunters in his party had resorted to hunting springbok. The latter were certainly part of the "springbok from a countless multitude." which Di Capelli (De Kock 1965:260) observed his companions shooting before they arrived at the latter farm. Although a 'multitude', these were probably not trekbok as other members of Di Capelli's party would have been sure to mention the springbok if this had been the case.

Collins (1860,V:2) crossing the same flats in 1809 observed a "a prodigious quantity of game." Chief among these were springbok which were observed grazing on the river banks. While Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:33), who accompanied Collins, recorded flocks of "countless" springbok between Graaff-Reinet and the Sneeuberg, he also noted that "in the valleys, interspersed among the higher chains of the Sneeuwberg, these animals were found in smaller numbers."

Burchell (1824,II:79) in one of his few observations about valley animals observed in 1812 that "great numbers of springboks were seen." This comment was made while traversing an eighteen mile stretch of plains between Grootfontein Landgoed (RICH.33) and Kriegars Fontein (RICH.73) in the upper valley. Entering the valley from the direction of Hephzibah (from the north-west) in 1820, Campbell (1822,II:314) observed "a few flocks" of springbok feeding on the plains to the west of the Seacow River. On reaching the plains close to Toverberg, he remarked on the total absence of animal life, in contrast to when the missionaries had first arrived in those parts. Then (in 1814), the plains had been covered with springbok and other antelope, the greater part of which "have either been killed or frightened away by the late influx of boors." (ibid.:316). Nonetheless, moving from here towards Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140), Campbell's dogs caught two springbok and on leaving there he noted that "we went forward amidst many droves of springboks and other game" (ibid.:323).

Springbok, so Steedman (1835,I) noted in 1830, were targeted by Bushmen hunting on the plains surrounding the farm Carolus Poort (NOU.166). A party of them "had been trying to shoot spring-boks, but had found them so wild that they could not creep within reach of them." (ibid.:147). Discussing springbok four years later while travelling between Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) and Colesberg, Andrew Smith (Kirby 1939,I:63) told how "springboks are extremely common at certain seasons, and the farmers make large karosses with their skin, which they sell in Graaff-Reinet for floor covers. One containing 42 skins was brought by one of our party for 25 Rds." Large numbers of springbok were therefore killed by valley farmers. Smith (Lye 1975) further recorded the presence of small herds of these buck, which he noted occurred "here and there" between the two places noted above.

Backhouse (1844) while traversing the plain between Mooyfontein (Morgenwacht - COL.109) and the 'People of Colour' (on Elandsfontein - COL.110) in 1839, noted that gnus, springbok and blesbok abounded. Returning to the valley from the north, he mentioned the presence of springbok around Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73): "these places are generally surrounded by a

wilderness of scattered bushes, ... with a little grass, in tufts, browsed by sheep and larger cattle, and by thousands of Springboks." (ibid.:484). Gordon Cumming (1855,I:92) passed through the valley in 1844 and noted that the plains west of the Seacow River "were covered with springbok." That he and Campbell, his companion, hunted across the plains and succeeded in killing only five springbok indicates that these were not trekbok.

Joseph Orpen (1908:12), who farmed Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) from 1846 to 1850, also made several comments about springbok. On arriving at the farm in 1846, he described how he and his brothers set out with their guns "to replenish the larder." Although the brothers came across a herd of quaggas, they did not disturb them, choosing instead to fire on "a troop" of springbok. Orpen described how he "proudly carried home the springbok's beautiful body" which was readily included in their breakfast. Later, Orpen described (ibid.:13) in amazement how his Hottentot herdsman named Avontuur could, "with a single charge or ball, bring home a buck or two."

In 1848 Bishop Gray (1849:77) also referred to an abundance of springbok. When he (1849:72) passed the plains east of the valley before arriving in Colesberg, the plains abounded with springbok of which Gray observed: "we must have seen thousands: they kept crossing our path incessantly, skipping and bounding very beautifully." (ibid.:72). Gray did not comment regarding springbok in the valley although when he reached the foothills of the Sneeuberg after leaving the valley via Naauw Poort (NOU.1), he reported "successive herds of spring-bok." However, on entering the Sneeuberg he noted that the springbok and gnu had disappeared and that sheep were the only visible sign of life. Discussing the plains around Colesberg in that same year (1848), Cole (1852:214) described the "bounding springboks" present on the plains. He noted that one could not ride in any direction without seeing and possibly getting a shot at some of the plain's animals, including the springbok. "I saw hundreds of them on the plains here" (ibid.:214-215). Although hundreds are described here, the nature of Cole's description suggests that these were resident springbok rather than trekbok.

Traversing the valley once more in 1850, Gray (1852), who had seen little game before arriving in Richmond, noted: "this afternoon, however, we came across immense herds of spring-bok, and several quaggas and wilde-beests. The country was as well stocked as an English gentleman's park ..." (ibid.:15). Later that year, Leyland (1866) also referred to resident springbok. Hunting in the vicinity of the farms Elands Kloof (RICH.121) and Ruigte Valley (RICH.122), he gave a graphic description of shooting a springbok: "In this neighbourhood I shot a springboc, with a charge of No. 6 shot; this I was enabled to do by hiding among the rushes and low bush, creeping to within a distance of sixteen yards: on receiving the contents of my gun, it made a bound into the air, and dropped down dead." (ibid.:29-30). Springbok are once again referred to by Hamelberg (Spies 1952) who recorded only a few springbok while en route to Hoogmoeds Fountain (HAN.109) on the banks of the Seacow River in July of 1856. Having moved closer to Colesberg, between the farms Drie Fontein (HAN.87) and Dwaalfontein (HAN.29), Hamelberg wrote: "Ik zie vandag veel springbokken." [I saw many springbok today.] (ibid.:136).

Springbok were first reported upon by the local newspapers in the same month, July of 1856. Three farmers from farms in the Sneeuberg rode through these mountains to the extensive flats about Cephanjes Poort (MID.143), Kol Hoek (Alphen) (MID.145) and Zaay Fontein (MID.65) to hunt springbok and wildebeest. The newspaper reported that "they were very successful, and in three days killed eighty-eight springboks and two wildebeest, or Gnus, which were nearly all in excellent condition, many of the springboks being as fat as such game can be. A strong wagon they had taken was so heavily laden with these ninety carcasses, that some difficulty was experienced in getting all of this quantity of game to the homesteads of the owners. Nothing however was left behind or lost." (GRH 1856:4,206). Two years later, a group of sportsmen also chose Kol Hoek (Alphen)(MID.145) as the site of a hunt. Over four days one hundred and three springbok were shot, along with three wildebeest GRH 1858: 6,206). It is possible that these two hunts were initiated by the presence of trekbokke in the area, but this cannot be verified.

"Numbers of springboks" were reported on the boundary of the Colesberg Commonage in 1863 (CA 1863:3,110). Whether these were houbokke or trekbokke is open to question, although the former seems more likely as the context points to merely the presence of springbok rather than to an abundance of these animals. Emile Holub in 1879 was the next person to make a general comment on springbok. He (1881,II) related how his host, Mr. Murray took him on several excursions about Kuilfontein (COL.115) farm. The only game which Holub spotted were springbok and several birds. Cronwright-Schreiner visited Kuilfontein (COL.115) in December of the following year, 1880. Remaining on the farm into the new year, Cronwright-Schreiner (1925) remembered shooting his first springbok. He again visited the farm in 1881 over the same period, December and January, "and again shot springbucks, which were still uncamped and numerous." (ibid.:13).

Ten years later, the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser, M. Weakley, travelled through the Seacow River valley over the New Year, noting that: "although for the most part keeping along beaten tracks we saw a good many springbucks ..." (CA 1892:31,1561*). Indeed, in October 1893, springbok (along with korhaans) were reported as plentiful "all about the country" (CA 1893:32,1658*). The editor, however wryly noted that "they appear to know that they are protected, for they are fairly tame." (ibid.). A Cape Town newspaper reported that trekbok had passed through the region in this year (see below), but the Colesberg Advertiser termed such reports "buncombe!" (CA 1893:32,1642).

In June 1895 "some gentlemen went out shooting springbok" (CA 1895:34*,1789), indicating that springbok were still present on the landscape. In 1897, the first hunt of the season took place outside the valley to the north of Colesberg on the farm Buffelsvalley (COL.69). Only six springbok were killed by these hunters who were regarded as 'good shots' (CA 1897:36,1827).

All of this information indicates that springbok were far from plentiful by the end of the nineteenth century. In April of 1897 numerous other hunting parties were reported on. A gentleman of one such party, hunting on Kuilfontein (COL.115), had killed two springbok at once, the second one having been hiding behind the first (CA 1897:36*,1827). The farm Kuilfontein was again the site of a hunt a week later, to greet farewell to a Colesberg inhabitant, Mr Fryer. This gentleman

shot 9 springbok out of a total of 30 killed that day and he transported six of them to England (CA 1897:36*,1839). In February 1898, the start of the hunting season, about twenty men from Colesberg hunted springbok on the farm Vaal Kop (COL.114) in the valley. The buck were described as very wild. "Although a nice lot were seen when the party arrived on the hunting ground, they soon disappeared over a rise and were lost sight of." (CA 1898:38,1882). The hunters then contented themselves with hunting a few stray springbok which remained behind within range.

Finally, a reference to springbok appeared in 1899 in the Colesberg Advertiser. On the last day of the hunting season, a number of Colesberg inhabitants are reported as having gone out early in search of game. A number of springbok were shot, and venison is once again remarked upon as plentiful in the town of Colesberg (CA 1899:39,1957).

Clearly springbok were always prolific on the valley plains but were notably scarcer in the Sneeuberg mountains with their difficult terrain, unpalatable grazing, and lethal winter storms. Visitors to the valley, farmers, farm servants and even unattached Bushmen all favoured the animal. Both the hide and meat of the springbok was popular. Springbok were generally hunted from horseback or on foot and there are hints that many managed to escape the guns.

By the end of the nineteenth century, town residents still travelled to neighbouring farms to hunt these animals. Therefore, although springbok were killed in large numbers throughout the nineteenth century there is no evidence that they disappeared altogether from any areas of the valley. Their density on the landscape did however decrease. The owner of Kuilfontein told Cronwright-Schreiner of: "the enormous numbers of game when first he knew Kuilfontein. Pointing to a low rand, some two or three miles away, he assured me that, in the mornings before driving his sheep out of the kraals (folds) to graze, he used often to send a 'boy' (coloured servant) to drive the game off the proposed grazing ground under the rand." (1925:22). The introduction of fencing towards the end of the century would have limited the movement of springbok to within the limits of certain farms or indeed to specific camps on these farms. They would therefore be positively or negatively affected depending largely on the attitude of the farmer to their presence. During periods of drought, for example, many of the farms' springbok may have been killed to release more pasturage for the extensive use of sheep or cattle.

4.4.13.2. *Migratory springbok (trekbokke)*

Although not yet properly researched, the migration of springbok across the plains in the interior of southern Africa in the nineteenth century is generally thought to be their reaction to drought in the more northern areas. Cronwright-Schreiner made this point well when he (1925:40-41) explained that "when the country was so densely covered with all kinds of game, the vast herds of springbok quickly felt the effects of the frequent droughts that devastate the inland up-country parts and began to "trek". Congregating in millions they moved off in search of better veld, destroying everything in their march over the arid flats." This provides a clear picture of the large numbers of springbok involved in such 'treks' and indeed Cronwright-Schreiner is here one of the

few individuals to actually estimate the number of springbok in such a trek. Evidently springbok did not migrate on a regular basis. Such treks would occur at any time.

Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887) in 1809 was the first traveller to mention such a springbok 'trek', although it is unclear whether he actually saw one. Upon descending onto the large plains bordering the Seacow River, he was astonished at "the endless droves of the same bucks not only [i.e. the springbok]," (ibid.:33) but also all the other antelope which infested the area. It is at this point in his narrative that he made the previously mentioned comment, namely: "the immigration of the trek-bokken will, however, for several generations continue periodically to replenish our flats with one species of antelope." (ibid.:33). He however did not note that the springbok which he saw were part of such a trek.

For three decades, the literature is silent about these migrations across the valley, so it is impossible to know how many took place within this time. Either migrations did not occur for a long time, or they happened at dates for which no travellers' accounts are available.

Not until 1844 do they recur in the literature. Then, Nicholson (1898) recorded how springbok grazed in their thousands upon the plains. As he was heading northward towards Gordons Fontein from his farm, Nicholson (1848:77) again commented that the plains "are, in most cases, covered with game; in some places immense herds of springboks, thousands in number, are seen." A most valuable observation then follows in which he noted that they usually passed over the valley after a continuance of south-easterly winds, causing the destruction of all the pasturage in their path. "Some idea may be formed of the extent of this plague, when I assert that I have seen a column of these animals of at least fifteen miles in length, and so closely packed together in some places, that nine of them fell at one discharge from a large gun. These columns march on in unbroken masses, till they reach the high mountains which bound their native plains; in ascending these, they become dispersed by the nature of the ground, and then great havoc is committed among them by all in the neighbourhood who possess guns, and not a few become victims to the rapacity of the panthers and hyenas inhabiting those regions." (ibid.:79-80). Gordons Fontein (HAN.111), although a well-watered, fertile pasturage was then in an unfortunate position that resulted in serious loss over the years owing to the plagues of locusts as well as the migration of what Nicholson (1848:85) termed 'frek bokken' in a wonderful and apparently unintentional pun. He provides another equally valuable insight into their movements when discussing the inconvenience faced by the farm-owner Cornelius Vischer "of having to provide pasture, at all seasons, for many thousands of antelopes and other grazing wild animals, which always feed at his expense, when not driven away by excessive dry weather." (ibid.:85-86).

As trekbok were regarded with much interest and indeed alarm by town-dwellers and farmers alike, newspapers can be regarded as a good source of evidence on the movement of these migrants through the district encompassing the valley. In 1858, for example, a correspondent to the Graaff-Reinet Herald, writing from Richmond, reported that the country swarmed with springbok and other game. He quoted a local farmer as stressing "that the people are obliged to watch the fountains to prevent the game and wild animals from exhausting the water." (GRH 1858:6,325).

Water was again central to a report published in the same newspaper a year later. Rain, which had fallen in the Colesberg district, had "had the effect of causing us [writes the Colesberg Correspondent] without one days warning, (to get powder and lead ready) to be overrun with thousands of springbucks, some wildebeests, and ostriches ..." (GRH 1859:7,350).

Similar observations of trekbokke were reported upon regularly by the Colesberg Advertiser. In December of 1861, the flats about half an hours ride from Colesberg were described as being covered with springbok. Although not having observed these animals himself, the editor reported the presence of thousands of bucks on these flats (CA 1861:1,51). In April of 1862, springbok were again reported to be seen on the flats in the neighbourhood. Colesberg sportsmen set out to hunt these animals, but whether or not they were successful remained unreported (CA 1862:2,67). In July, some inhabitants of Graaff-Reinet had taken home 250 "bokken", assumed to be springbok, the fruit of a hunt on the Sneeuberg side of Richmond (CA 1862:1,83). These springbok had probably formed part of a migrating herd. Trekbok appeared again in the valley in 1864. In May, a great deal of game, such as springboks, paauws, partridges and wild ducks are reported as present in the Colesberg district (CA 1864:4,177). A brief note in the Colesberg Advertiser of 16 August 1864 pointed to the continuing presence of trekbok in the area: "Springboks, in great numbers, are again visiting our district." (CA 1864:4,189).

Seven years passed before the next movement of springbok through the valley. In 1871, numerous reports appeared concerning the presence of the buck. In June, springbok "in thousands" (CA 1971:2,36) were reported as having done incalculable damage to the veld on the farm of Mr. W.C. van Der Merwe. Contemplating these springbok, a local editor commented: "The injury done by the 'trek-bokken' to the pasturage cannot be imagined by those who have not seen the veld after it has been passed over by one of the countless herds that visit our district." (ENMA 1871:236). By December, most of these animals had probably moved up north of Hanover to take advantage of the pasture resulting from rains in this region. A Hanover correspondent wrote that lots of springboks as well as other game such as paauws and korhaans could be found (ENMA 1871:2,65).

Towards the end of 1872, trekbok perpetrated further destruction. A long and severe drought had had a bad toll on the pasturage of most of the valley farms. The editor of the Colesberg Advertiser voiced the complaints of local farmers when he reported that "a large proportion of this district has lately been invaded by herds of springboks from the Interior, commonly known as trek-bokken, and farmers complain, and with much justice, that their farms, ... have been further laid waste by the invading army, which, to say the least, will prove far more destructive to the veldt than vast swarms of locusts, and, in localities where rain has not fallen, if there be any such, will cause severe loss to the stock farmer." (CA 1872:12,626). Some idea of the extent of this trek in the region can be gained from the editors comment that apart from the vast herds of buck which have made their appearance in the Colesberg district, "the districts of Hope Town, Richmond, Middelburg and several others, have also suffered severely." (ibid.). The trek described must have been sufficiently large to have been noted as passing through all of these regions. Relating the destruction resulting from these animals, the editor noted that "crops have been destroyed, ostrich enclosures taken possession of, and vast extents of country overrun and the pasturage destroyed."

(ibid.). If the letter of the law had been upheld, reported the editor, the farmers would have had no protection. He thereafter hinted that the law was not obeyed to the letter - "doubtless there may have been considerable slaughter committed amongst the springboks by many in this and neighbouring districts. But if such has been the case, it has been done in such a manner that nothing should be known of the matter by outsiders ..." (ibid.).

Five years later, in 1877, another group of trekbokke passed through the valley. In April, "springboks in considerable numbers" were described as having made their appearance in the district. Their appearance led the editor to profess that the drought extended far inland (CA 1877:17,847). A report published on June 16 advertised that venison was becoming plentiful in town and that it had recently been sold at the Colesberg morning market for "very reasonable prices, the lowest being 1s. 6d. per haunche for springbok venison." (CA 1877:17,854). Springbok biltong was also recorded as abundant. This report however indicated that the trek was moving off, making for their native grazing grounds further inland as a result of the rains which had fallen in the region.

An article published three weeks later in the July 7 edition of the same newspaper provides a time scale by which this particular trek can be measured. This article advertised the arrival of a large number of haunches and shoulders of springbok venison from the Hanover district at the Colesberg Market. The haunches were sold for the same price as previously while the shoulders sold for 6d. each. Springbok biltong was priced at 9d. a pound (CA 1877:17,857). This indicates that the springbok chronicled as leaving Colesberg by June 16 had reached the region of Hanover by a few days prior to July 7 and therefore probably took some 20 days to cover this distance. Large herds of springbok are again reported in the region of Hanover on 20th October of 1877, where they are described as "overrunning the pastures, especially where rain has lately fallen." (CA 1877:17,872). These herds could have formed part of the trek which had reached Hanover in July and could possibly have then headed southwest, returning north via the Hanover region with the downpour of rain. Alternatively, these herds could have been another trek making their appearance in the region.

The heading "TREK BUCKS" in the 'Local and General News' section of the Colesberg Advertiser in 1882, denoted the passage of a further trek (CA 1882:22,2001*). This report merely noted that springbok were trekking through the Hope Town district and were said to be headed in the direction of Colesberg. After 24 June, the date on which the above appeared, no further references to this trek were made. This trek either went unreported when it arrived in the district, turned away before getting too close, or was wiped out by farmers before arriving in the district. It is possible that this trek did sweep through the valley, en route from Hope Town, but this is only speculation.

In 1893, 'TREK-BUCKS' again made the headlines in the Colesberg Advertiser. Indeed, the editor observed that "that heading is typical of South Africa - a mixture of Dutch and English." (CA 1893:32*,1642). The Colesberg Advertiser responded to reports published in some of the newspapers' contemporaries nearer Cape Town, which had announced large numbers of trekbok in

the Colesberg region, trekking southwards in search of pasture. "It puzzles us to know how these bucks manage to 'trek' when the whole country is traversed by a network of wire fences, and a still greater puzzle is, how it comes about that no inhabitant of this district has seen the 'trek bucks'. There are considerable numbers of springbok in the district whose homes have been on our wide flats as long as the oldest inhabitant can remember, but trek bucks ! - buncombe!" (CA 1893:32*,1642).

From the above, it can be inferred that trekbok were far from common in the region. The editor attributes this to fences which had only appeared across the valley in recent years (see Chapter 10). Indeed, Cronwright-Schreiner (1925:13), while paying a visit to the farm Kuilfontein near Colesberg had remarked that in 1882, springbok "were still uncamped and numerous." The introduction of fencing and the formation of camps by farmers as part of their farming practise, indicates not only a halt to the movement of large herds of springbok, but also the individual ownership by particular farmers of these herds (Skead 1988).

In spite of the above comments on the matter, the Colesberg Advertiser three years later, in 1896, noted the presence of trekbok in the valley. Quoting a contemporary, the Midland News, trekbok were described as grazing within two miles of Naauw Poort (NOU.1) "where they can be seen in countless numbers." (CA 1896:35*,1789[wn]). One party apparently succeeded in killing 600 bucks in the space of a few hours, a total contrasting markedly with the five or six springboks reported on normally. Not the slightest impression on the herd was deemed to have been made despite the large number of kills (ibid.). This trek was probably the remnants of a large herd which Cronwright-Schreiner (1925) described as having passed Prieska earlier in the year, but this proposed link has yet to be researched. A report published a week after the trekbok had been recorded at Naauw Poort observed that these bucks were apparently making their way towards Colesberg. The end of the hunting season was on hand, however, which would have prevented further destruction (CA 1896:35*,1800). Although regional newspapers continued to mention the presence, and shooting of springbok until the end of the century, no further treks were reported. Indeed, Cronwright-Schreiner pointed to the 1896 trek as the last of the great treks.

In conclusion, large scale migrations of springbok were generally attributed to droughts in the more northern reaches of the Colony. These springbok therefore moved southwards across the Karoo plains eating any grass in their path. Although regarded as the ideal prey for hunters, these trekbok were dreaded by farmers who regarded them as vermin. Indeed many accounts point to the destructive nature of their visits (c.f. Nicholson 1848; GRH 1858:6,325; CA 1862:2,72; ENMA 1871:2,36; and CA 1872:12,626).

From documentary sources, it appears that definite treks took place in 1844, 1858, 1859, 1861, 1862, 1864, 1871, 1872, 1877, 1882, 1893, and 1896. It is however possible that treks recorded for two years running (e.g. 1858 and 1859) could simply refer to the southward migration in the first year (e.g. 1858) and the northward, return migration in the next (e.g. 1859). These dates clearly illustrate the connection between droughts and the movement of trekbok, as droughts occur in all the years in which such migrations took place, except for 1844, 1858, 1859, 1864 and

1871 (see Table 5-1 below for the timing of these droughts). It seems possible that Stockenstrom's use of the term 'trekbok' in detailing his 1809 account was a term which he had learnt of long after his 1809 journey (his autobiography was published in 1887), which he inadvertently applied to an earlier time. The dearth of references to trekbok before the 1840's in the literature dealing with the valley could have one of two causes, either these treks were not correctly pinpointed in the documentary sources, or they only became frequent occurrences later in the nineteenth century.

These migrations were usually restricted to the plains bordering the Seacow River although plains within the Sneeuberg did not escape their ravages. Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) is one farm which appears to have been regularly crossed by migrating springbok (cf. Nicholson 1848). Trekbok generally appear to have entered the valley from the northwest, often via Hope Town. They then either moved south up the valley as far as Middelburg and Naauw Poort (NOU.1), or they moved diagonally across the valley, by-passing Colesberg and the plains to the north of the Roodebergen, into the Hantam to the east. As has been noted, the last recorded springbok migration took place in 1896. Such large-scale migrations would have become rarer owing to both the destruction of springbok populations in the north and the curtailing of the movement of springbok through the introduction of fences in the late nineteenth century.

4.4.14. **Eland** (*Taurotragus oryx*)

Eland feature prominently in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century travellers' accounts. Gordon, for example, spotted various herds "of thirty and forty eland." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:85) close to the 'Champagnes River', some of which members of his party overtook on horseback and shot. His opinion was that this animal could be shot without danger, by simply catching up with it and cutting it off on the windward side, in which direction it would always run, then jumping from the saddle to shoot (ibid.). Six eland were killed and two wounded on that day, the largest being eight feet eleven inches long and five feet ten inches tall. Gordon expressed amazement that such a heavy creature could on occasion "leap like a springbok while running" (ibid.). He also though they would make excellent draught, milk and meat animals should they be domesticated. His description (ibid.:85-6) is characteristically detailed and accurate: "The old bulls have a russet, bristly, hairy tuft on the forehead, standing up black to the sides of the nose, like that of a gnu but not as long or as low. They have a thick, short strip of russet hair from the horns to the withers, like a mane, and a black stripe from the neck to the tail. For the most part they were greyish, [and] slightly slate-coloured towards the underside of the body. Some bulls, but not all, have three or four very narrow white stripes from the withers to beneath the body. The long bulls have the longest horns. The horns of the cow are thinner, but also long. However, the twist in the horns is not as pronounced. They have four teats, no tear ducts, and a large gall-bladder."

The following day, Gordon travelled further north, arriving in the late afternoon at the spring on Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) where he found a herd of approximately one hundred and thirty-eight eland. His party shot three of these, but owing to the encroaching darkness, they were forced to leave two carcasses behind to be cut up the following morning (ibid.:87). Several more eland were

spotted on the banks of what Gordon termed 'Plettenberg's River' (the Seacow River), but only one was killed (ibid.:88). Two days later, still travelling along the Seacow River banks he noted (ibid.:94) that the spoor of more eland were spotted and that although he attempted to persuade his companions not to kill any more eland, they argued that they "needed more hides" and thus killed six more.

Two decades later Barrow (1806,I:217) contrasted the eland and the gnu, describing the eland as a "heavy and lumpish figure" in contrast to the elegance portrayed by the gnu. Of more importance, he observed that the eland was not less numerous than the gnu and was 'taken' in the hunt much more easily. Barrow shot a male eland measuring ten and a half foot in length and six and a half foot in height on the plains north-east of Van Plettenberg's beacon (ibid.).

If eland were shot for their skins, their meat was also desirable. For example Governor Janssens' party, which traversed the valley in 1803, was treated to "tasty smoked eland sirloin" (Di Capelli 1965:257) at the farm Wolve Kop (MID.12). This eland had been shot for their enjoyment by the twelve year old son of the resident farmer, Commandant Van der Walt. Moving into the valley, one of the travellers recorded that many "eland antelope" (Plumptre 1815,II) could still be seen between Wolve Kop and Carolus Poort (NOU.166). He further noted that after descending into the valley via the poort on this farm, "they found on all sides such an incredible number of elands, that the hunters killed no less than seventeen ..." (ibid.:49). Governor Janssens himself notes that seventeen eland were fired upon (Godee-Molsbergen 1932). Lichtenstein reported that "several thousand pounds of flesh were obtained; a much larger provision than could be carried away." (Plumptre 1815,II:49). Di Capelli (De Kock 1965:257) also noted the profusion of eland, and Van Reenan observed that the meat which could not be carried away was salted and distributed amongst some of "the wild Bushmen" (Blommaert & Wiid 1937:233) who were presumably following this entourage.

Three more eland were shot at Van der Walts fontein (Blommaert & Wiid 1937) close to Toverberg, including two bulls each weighing 900 pounds (De Kock 1965).

4.4.14.1. *Extermination*

After that, no further references are made to eland in the travel literature and it is not difficult to reconstruct what must have happened. Already in 1797, Barrow could observe: "The Eland is altogether as mild and patient. On account of the ease with which this animal is taken, the utility of its flesh as food, and of its skin for harness and traces, few of them now remain within the limits of the Colony; and in a few years the Eland will, in all probability, be a rare beast in the southern angle of Africa. The rude farmers who, like children, grasp only at the gratification of the moment, without any regard to futurity, are taking the best means in the world to hasten their extirpation. The bull, being much larger, fatter, and having a tougher hide, than the female, is always selected from the herd and hunted down by dogs, or killed with the musket; the

consequence of which is, that numbers of herds are occasionally met with consisting only of females ..." (1806:217-9).

Barrow also gives valuable details of the effects of a debilitating disease then prevalent among ungulates of the region: "It is called by the farmers the *brandt siekte*, or burning disease. It generally makes its appearance among the cattle towards the end of the rainy season. The hair first begins to fall off; the skin is covered with scurf and scabs; the joints become stiff, and the animal languishes, consumes, and dies. All the antelopes are more or less subject to this disorder, but chiefly so the Gnoo, the Hartebeest, and the Eland, these approaching nearest to the nature of the ox" (ibid.:219). According to Barrow, many of the valley plains were strewn with the skeletons of these and other animals which had fallen victim to the disease.

4.4.14.2. *Place name distributions and date of last sighting*

Given the overwhelming dominance of place names containing 'eland' in the South African interior (Acocks 1988), the paucity of such names in the Seacow valley bespeaks an early extermination date. Only three farms within the valley are named after the eland. These are Elands Kloof (RICH.121), Elandsheuvel (NOU.146), Elands Gat (HAN.77) and Elandsfontein (COL.110). Although deeded in 1839, 1827, 1830 and 1837 respectively, they were in place long before these dates. The latter three farms were first occupied as early as 1807, 1808 and 1808 respectively (Sampson *et al.* 1994). The farm Elands Gat was almost certainly 'Eyland's Drift' where Van Jaarsveld's commando rested (Moodie 1960,III), while Elands Kloof (RICH.121) is close to the sightings of eland made by Gordon in the vicinity of the Klein Seekoei River. Both Elandsheuvel and Elandsfontein are on the plains bordering the Seacow River. The modern owner of Elandsheuvel equates the name with profuse engravings of eland in the ridge behind his house (G. Sampson pers. comm.). All farms named after the eland could thus potentially have been home to members of this species when these farms were allocated. The term 'eland' was noticeably never applied to farms established later in the nineteenth century, in the lower Seacow River valley, another indication that eland numbers were very low by that time.

The evidence therefore indicates that the valley plains were home to the eland until shortly after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Eland were hunted with ease and many eland were shot by the men passing through the valley and by farmers. Even a twelve year old boy had claimed his trophy. The diseases spread by colonial cattle and the greed for skins resulted in further destruction (Skead 1987). It thus seems apparent that eland were totally exterminated very early in the colonial history of the Seacow River valley and that this extermination was linked primarily to the influx of the colonists. The only reference to the relationship between Bushmen and eland concerns the provision of eland, by Governor Janssens party, to the Bushmen living in the area. They were apparently very enthusiastic about this meat as Lichtenstein noted that "when a quantity of eland's flesh was given them [some Bushmen who approached the party close to Toverberg], they immediately set about cutting it to pieces, and devoured it half raw." (Plumptre 1815,II:50). Di

Capellis also referred to the enthusiastic reception which the eland meat met with (De Kock 1965:257).

4.4.15. **Blesbok** (*D.d. phillipsi*)

Although Smithers (1986:149) states that blesbok "were never encountered west of Colesberg and did not occur in the Great Karoo" they did occur on the valley plains in the past, and are still kept in small numbers there today.

Some early travellers, namely Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I), Barrow (1806,I) and Di Capelli (De Kock 1965) recorded the presence of bontebok on the valley flats. These animals were most likely misidentified blesbok, which resemble bontebok to the untutored eye.

Thompson (1967,I:51) in 1823 was the first to point out in print that the valley's blesbok "much resembles the bonte-bok , which is found in the vicinity of Swellendam." It is therefore likely that travellers traversing the valley before him were quite familiar with bontebok which they had seen *en route* to the more northern reaches of the Colony, and on sighting blesbok in these regions, mistook them for bontebok. The lack of further references to bontebok after 1803 and the subsequent references to blesbok after this time, indicate that by the early nineteenth century, travellers and farmers were much more aware of the differences between the two species.

Backhouse (1844) in 1839 attempted a detailed description: "The Blesbok, *Gazella albifrons*, called also the White-faced Antelope, is upwards of 3 feet high at the shoulder, and exceeds six feet in extreme length. The sides of the head and neck are deep purple chocolate; the back and shoulders hoary-bluish white; the flanks and loins brown. The horns are about a foot long, white, thick at the base, and diverging, with about a dozen imperfect rings, projecting in front. At the base of the horns, there is a chocolate coloured patch, divided by a white streak, which widens between the eyes to the whole breadth of the face, down which it passes to the nose; hence the Dutch name, Blesbok, bles signifying a white patch." (ibid.: 339-340). His estimate of its height is rather short, modern specimens being closer to four feet high.

It thus seems that blesbok were first noted by Gordon in 1777. Moving over the plains in the vicinity of the Seacow River, Gordon noted the presence of "a few bontebok" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:87). On reaching the Seacow River, "bontebok but few ..." were again noted (ibid.:88). After having left Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) on their return journey, Gordon (ibid.) observed several more 'bontebok' (blesbok). "A few bontebok" were recorded a day later between the Klein Seekoei River ('Champagnes River') and Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) (of 'Smit').

Two decades later, in 1797, blesbok were still present on the plains adjoining the Seacow River as evidenced by Barrow's (1806,I) reports. Di Capelli in 1803 was the first and only traveller to mention shooting bontebok. He (De Kock 1965) noted that bontebok as well as eland were shot at Van der Walts fontein, close to modern Colesberg. Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:33) in 1809 made the observation that "when we descended into the great plains bordering on the Sea Cow

River, the endless droves of the same bucks not only [i.e. Springbok], but of ... blesboks, were indeed astonishing." Emerging out of the Sneeuberg onto these same plains, Thompson (1827) was amazed at the number and variety of game in the desolate region. "Among the antelopes", he (ibid.:51) "observed a species only found in this quarter, and called the bles-bok."

Blesbok were again seen in abundance in 1839 by Backhouse (1844) as he crossed the valley plains between Mooyfontein (Morgenwacht - COL.109) and Elandsfontein (COL.110). No other visitors or residents mention blesbok after this date. Blesbok therefore appear to have been present in the valley environment from the earliest times. Although they were present, indications are that their numbers were never very high. Their preference for grassland areas with available water probably explained the common occurrence of small herds of these animals on the plains bordering the Seacow River (Raper and Boucher 1988:I; Barrow 1806:I; De Kock 1965; Hutton 1887; Thompson 1827; and Backhouse 1844).

As no reference to this medium-sized antelope was made in any of the literature after 1839, it can be assumed that their numbers probably dwindled until no further blesbok survived. Indeed, their numbers had probably been decreasing since the beginning of the nineteenth century. No farms in the valley are named after the Bles- or Bontebok, although one farm on the western rim of the valley, Bonteboks Fontein (HAN.97), does bear this name. This point corresponds to the general lack of references to this animal in the literature of the time.

4.4.15.1. *Reintroduction of Blesbok*

Valley blesbok had therefore probably been exterminated well before the mid-nineteenth century. In the 20th century, some farmers in the valley have reintroduced them into fenced camps, and today, they may for example be seen on Dasses Fontein (RICH.117). Bigalke and Bateman noted that blesbok were fairly widely available for sale in the early 1960's and that blesbok were then "almost a beast of commerce" (1962:93). Such reintroduction may have been made possible as a result of the introduction of fencing in the valley in the late nineteenth century. Blesbok usually crawl through fences rather than jumping over them, so they can easily be confined by means of ordinary six strand stock fences. This, as Smithers (1986) notes, makes the blesbok an ideal choice for integrated stock farming.

4.4.16. **The Grey Rhebok** (*Pelea capreolus*) **and the Mountain Rhebok** (*Redunca fulvorufula*)

Two types of rhebok have been noted historically in the valley, the vaal- or grey rhebok and the red- or mountain rhebok. The grey rhebok is a medium-sized antelope, which prefers the grassy hillsides and mountains of the valley. Often found grazing together with the latter, the mountain rhebok also inhabits rocky hillsides, mountains and other forms of broken country. According to Lynch (1983) the females of these two species are difficult to distinguish at a distance. Not

surprisingly therefore, historical accounts often group these two species together, referring to them merely as the 'rhebok'. Consequently both species are discussed together.

Neither animal excited much comment by travellers. In 1777, Gordon (1988,I:82) noted the presence of "a few ... rhebok" at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). Large numbers of rhebok were also observed by Barrow in 1797 in the long poort through which the Seacow River flows before joining up with the Orange River (Barrow 1806,I:251).

Nicholson (1898:21) noted the presence of rhebok and klipspringer in the mountains surrounding his homestead on the Sneeuberg farm Ruigte Valley (RICH.122). No other sightings of Rhebok were noted by any other travellers, and even the newspaper sources are relatively quiet concerning this animal. M. Weakley, the proprietor of the Colesberg Advertiser made a three day journey through the valley in 1892. He noted that "had we turned into their particular haunts we should have been able to add to our list rhebok, steenbok, duiker, Klipspringer, baboon &c" (CA 1892:31,1561). Taking this and the particular habitats of the rhebok into account, it seems likely that far from being scarce in the valley throughout the nineteenth century, rhebok were present, but were not noted by travellers who stuck mainly to the flats. Those few who cover the mountain fauna, on the other hand, invariably mention rhebok.

Nonetheless, rhebok numbers undoubtedly decreased in the nineteenth century. Calls were made in 1891 from within the Divisional Council of Colesberg, for example, that the shooting of game and the use of dogs for hunting should be prohibited from 1 March to 1 December every year. It was also proposed that the vaal- and red rhebok, the steenbok and the korhaan be protected for a period of two years from 1 January 1892. These proposals were not seconded and were hence lost (CA 1891:30,24035). The latter proposal was however again raised in 1892 by another Councillor and was accepted. The result was a proclamation by the Governor of the Cape prohibiting the shooting of "korhaans, paauws, rheboks and steenbok" as of 1 February 1893 (CA 1892:31,1604). Rhebok in the region were thus given a chance of surviving into the twentieth century. Only one farm in the valley, Rheboksfontein (RICH.132) in the Sneeuberg shares the name of this antelope. This farm was allocated in 1872 and is in the right environment to be named after an animal present on the ground.

Recent sightings of grey rhebok are always restricted to farms higher in the valley, in the Sneeuberg.

4.4.17. **Duiker** (*Sylvicapra grimmia*)

Duiker prefer open savannah type countryside. Only one mention is made of duiker occurring in the valley, but it is uncertain whether this reference truly reflects the presence of this small antelope. G.R. Weakley, the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser in 1892, mentioned this animal as one of many species which occupy habitats through which he did not pass on his journey

through the valley (CA 1892:31,1561). He noted that 'if' he had turned into the particular haunt of the duiker, he should have been able to observe it -- hardly an eyewitness sighting.

Although probably present in very small numbers in nineteenth century times, this small nondescript antelope was hardly worth mentioning by travellers or by farmers.

4.4.18. **Steenbok** (*Raphicerus campestris*)

A young Steenbok was caught on the plains by Gordon in 1777 (1988,I:95). Other than this, no further reference is made to the occurrence of this plains dwelling grazer until the 1890's. The steenbok was one of the animals which M. Weakley (CA 1892:31,1561) refers to as living in the valley. Steenbok, were also included as one of the species protected from harm by hunters by an official proclamation in 1892 (CA 1892:31*,1604). The necessity of protecting this species indicates that it was rare within the valley confines. This rarity was typified by the accidental shooting of a 'tame steenbok' by an apprentice hunter on a farm near Colesberg in 1897 (CA 1897:36,1839).

Today, the steenbok is ubiquitous on the valley flats, preferring to graze on fenced road verges where livestock cannot stress the plant cover. The keys to its spectacular recovery are twofold. The first is that it is adept at passing through narrow wire fences and very small gaps in jackal-proofing mesh. The second is the widespread but erroneous belief among modern farm staff that its flesh carries parasites and is dangerous to eat.

4.4.19. **Klipspringer** (*Oreotragus oreotragus*)

Klipspringer as the name indicates can most commonly be observed on rocky mountainsides, koppies and rock strewn hills (Lynch 1983). Travellers noting the presence of this buck, commonly refer to its co-occurrence with rhebok. Barrow in 1797, travelled to the mouth of the Seacow River and noted that "in the rocky mountains of the long pass, through which we had approached this magnificent river [the Orange River], were great numbers of klip-springers and reeboks" (Barrow 1806,I:251).

Nicholson, who also recorded the presence of fauna in mountain areas in 1844, related (1898:21) that klipspringers browse in the more mountainous reaches of his farm. M. Weakley tells how klipspringer should be observed if one were to pass through the mountainous habitat (CA 1992:31,1561[wn]). The klipspringer was probably present throughout the nineteenth century Seacow River valley, but not in large numbers and only in selected, more protected habitats.

4.4.20. **Gemsbok** (*Oryx gazella*)

Given that the valley is outside the natural range of this desert adapted antelope, it is somewhat surprising that gemsbok are mentioned by Andries Stockenstrom (1887:33) as: "endless droves of ... gemsboks" on the great plains bordering the Seacow River. As a very young traveller new to the area, he probably mistook the large herds of blesbok which were undoubtedly common, for gemsbok. More telling is the account of Cumming (1855,I:91) who, leaving Colesberg in a westerly direction thirty-five years later, was told that the vast Karoo plains offered an abundance of gemsbok. He did not actually see this animal until he had almost reached Hope Town far to the north-west of the valley, which is more in keeping with its known range.

4.4.21. **Quagga** (*Equus quagga*)

No clear distinction between mountain zebra (*Equus zebra*), quagga (*Equus quagga*) and Burchell's zebra (*Equus burchelli*) is evident in the many documents making up the historical record. Concerning Burchell's zebra, Skinner and Smithers (1990:584) point to a consensus which "suggests that Burchell's zebra never occurred south of the Orange River." This would mean that only the quagga and the mountain zebra, could have been valley occupants during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unfortunately, no valley traveller has left a detailed enough description of what they termed 'quagga'. As a result it is very difficult to decide which species was actually seen by individual authors. Further confusion results from the nineteenth century valley farmers' use of the colloquial name 'Bergkwagga' to mean the mountain zebra.

Actually, the naturalist Steedman (1835,I:139) was the only writer to use the name zebra to mean quagga. He noted the presence of "wild zebras, or quaggas, which inhabit the same localities [as gnus]." As gnus are known to prefer open countryside and as this observation was made while travelling over the valley plains (between Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) and Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140)), it can safely be inferred that the animal reported by Steedman was indeed a quagga.

Animals which visitors to the valley termed 'quagga' were observed in two main niches, namely the plains bordering the Seacow River (Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Barrow 1806,I; De Kock 1965; Hutton 1887; Thompson 1827,I; Steedman 1835; Nicholson 1848; Orpen 1908; and Cole 1852) and the mountains to the north and south of the valley (Godee-Molsbergen 1932; and Holub 1881,I). According to Skinner and Smithers (1990), the quagga was a species which grazed over open country. In comparison, the species of mountain zebra discussed above favoured mountainous, rocky country. It is therefore possible that all the 'quagga' described as occupying mountainous niches were really mountain zebra. Although there are plains in the mountainous terrain of the Sneeuberg, these would have been used mostly by mountain zebra rather than quagga. Mountain zebra were better adapted to frozen winter conditions and to the seasonally unpalatable sourveld grazing. Skead (1987) notes that although it is probable that mountain zebra went down to the flats from time to time, they would have fled to the mountains long before

travellers came close in their noisy wagons. The animals seen grazing on the vast valley flats were probably all 'true quagga' as Orpen (1908) termed them.

Quagga appear to have been a common sight to valley visitors. On the 16 November 1777, while encamped on the banks of 'the so-called Champagnes River' probably the Klein Seekoei, Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:85) mentioned seeing several quagga. As he was beyond the mountains, these animals were probably true quagga grazing on the plains bordering the river. The next morning a number of quagga were again spotted. On the 22nd of November, when Gordon's party had turned back and were crossing the valley plains towards the Sneeuberg, they spotted another herd: "Seeing a herd of quagga we rushed thither. They ran too swiftly but, a young one became separated from the herd, we caught up with it. This poor creature, which was about a month old, ran along with the horses, without being tied, back to the place where we had unyoked. Now and then it called to its mother with a yelp similar to that of a jackal". This young quagga, however, made its escape from the party the following day. Back at the 'Champagnes Poort River' on 24 November, Gordon reported that the group saw many quagga along with springbok and 'bontebok' (blesbok).

Twenty years later, near the location of Van Plettenberg's beacon (on Quaggas Fontein - COL.98) Barrow (1806) recorded that his party killed two quagga. Quagga appear to have grazed in large numbers over the landscape as Barrow reported on the same day that "quaghas from fifty to a hundred in a troop were hourly seen." (ibid.:219). A quagga foal was found by a farmer forming part of Governor Janssens' entourage in 1803 (De Kock 1965). Di Capelli, accompanying the Governor on this journey described how, while chasing a herd of quagga further up the Seacow River, his companion, Van Reenen, shot a quagga. Di Capelli's horse took fright at the shot and stopped in its tracks, throwing him over the horse's head with the result that Di Capelli landed with his groin on the cocked hammer of his gun and suffered great pain as a result.

Andries Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:33) who travelled through the valley in 1809 had no such mishaps. He was astonished, however, by the droves of game grazing on the plains bordering the Seacow River. Quagga were mentioned as one of the species to be found in large numbers. Thompson (1827:51) *en route* through the Sneeuberg mountains in 1823, "discovered thousands of antelopes, quaggas and gnus" and described how the gnus were playing around the party in their hundreds, "ever and anon a troop of these fantastic animals would join a herd of quaghas, and all bound off helter-skelter across the plains, throwing up clouds of dust from the arid ground". Although described *en route* through the Sneeuberg, these animals bounded across the plains rather than heading into the mountains and were thus probably true quagga. Steedman (1835,I:138), seven years later described similar 'animated' scenes. He noted the presence of "herds of ... quagga" on the valley flats and further added that these "wild zebras, or quagga" (ibid.:139) occupied similar niches to the gnu or blue wildebeest. Travelling through the valley between the farms Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) and Carolus Poort (NOU.166), Steedman (ibid.) recorded that quagga flesh was much esteemed by both the Bushmen and the Hottentots.

In 1844 the Sneeuberg farmer Nicholson (1848:77) described his journey between the Sneeuberg and the frontier town of Colesberg, mentioning the presence of "many troops of ... the heavy-looking quaggas" on the valley plains and discussing the best means of killing them (see below). Barely three years later, the valley farmer, Joseph Orpen (1908:11), on the farm Taaibosch Fontein near modern Hanover Road (HAN.41), gave the first sign that quagga were being depleted. He chose not to kill quagga which bounded across his path. "We fell in with a troop of true quagga, now an extinct animal, but left them alone" and hunted springbok instead (ibid.:11). Paradoxically, while describing the quagga as 'extinct', Orpen (ibid.:13) later described the brothers' hide-tanning 'cuyps' or basins as "deep receptacles made of quagga hides, slung to four horizontal bars in a square, supported on upright posts, so that they bagged down when filled with tanning liquor." Orpen's avoidance of hunting quagga had thus not been a family ideal for long.

The scarcity of quagga is alluded to in later accounts. In 1848 Cole (1852:214) described "prancing quaggas" on the plains around Colesberg. He however noted that "all this [a list of antelope including the quagga] you may see on the plains round Colesberg; not altogether though, dear reader, as if the Zoological Society had let loose all their stock in a body for our special entertainment, but you can scarcely ride in any direction without seeing some of the above mentioned animals, and getting a shot at them if you are so inclined." (ibid.:214). Indeed, by 1850, Bishop Grey (1852:15) reported observing "several quagga" in contrast to "immense herds" of springbok. All these references are thus in sharp contrast to the vast troops of quagga sighted by early travellers such as Barrow (1806,I).

More than two decades later, Emil Holub (1881,I:38-39) travelled over the farm 'Newport' or Naauw Poort (NOU.1) on the eastern rim of the valley and described some quagga grazing on what he terms "the tableland", which I infer to be the valley plains. Up to fifty quagga were included in this group which Holub (ibid.:38-39) commented on as follows: "I was delighted to find that latterly they had been spared by the farmers; ten years previously their number had been diminished to a total of about fifteen heads." Skead (1987:565) notes that Emil Holub found "what must have been the last survivors south of the Orange River."

4.4.21.1. *Methods of extermination*

The general decline in the number of quagga inhabiting the valley can, to a large extent, be attributed to hunting. Steedman (1835,I:138), riding between Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) and Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) noted an extremely destructive hunting method being used by farmers at the time. "The farmers are frequently in the habit of driving a troop of qauggas to the brink of a precipice, which was pointed out to me, when those animals rush over the declivities ... and fall an easy prey to their pursuers." Large numbers of quagga would have been wiped out in this manner.

4.4.21.2. *Use of hunted quaggas*

Quaggas were probably included among game shot by farmers to feed their staff - both Bushmen and others - and to retain their service. Stockenstrom (Hutton 1887:39) for example mentioned finding a Bushmen family who were "easily maintained by the enormous flocks of sheep and game, and very useful to the farmer - the men as herdsmen, the women as servants to the housewife." Indeed, Thompson (1827,I:55) related how poor valley farmers hunted wild animals "for their families and servants, the latter not unfrequently eating the flesh of the quagha or wild ass." This appears to have been a fairly common practise among valley farmers.

Quagga were also shot for their hides which were used (among other things) to make the deep receptacles used for tanning hides. Joseph Orpen (1908:13) related how his brother, Frank, asked their more experienced neighbour, 'Van Voor' to "look over the skins and pieces of hide-tanning in our 'cuyps', deep receptacles made of quagga hides, slung to four horizontal bars in a square, supported on upright posts, so that they bagged down when filled with tanning liquor."

4.4.21.3. *Place name distributions*

Only two farms in the valley bear the name of the quagga, these are the farms Quaggas Fontein (COL.98) and Quaggas Gat (COL.37), allocated in 1837 and 1836 respectively. Both farms occur on the great plains bordering the Seacow River (the latter on the very edge of these plains), in an area widely favoured by the quagga according to the documentary accounts.

4.4.21.4. *Date of last sighting*

The quagga sighted after 1844 appear to be among a few 'fugitives' which survived the guns of farmers and travellers alike. These hunters competed favourably with other, wilder predators. Thompson (1827), for example, described passing the skeletons of several quagga which had recently fallen victim to lions in the Sneeuberg mountains. The plains of the valley which were formerly covered in herds of quagga probably only housed small groups of quagga after the early 1840's. These groups would have existed in habitats protected by farmers thoughtful enough not to destroy these animals. Neither newspapers nor subsequent travellers refer to quagga, and it seems likely that their numbers were totally whittled away by the combined effects of hunting, natural deaths, and drought.

4.4.22. **African Buffalo** (*Syncerus caffer*)

Shade, grass and water are the basic habitat requirements of the African buffalo. Only the thorn-choked ravines of the lower reaches of the valley would have provided a suitable habitat, particularly the last few kilometres of the Seacow river's banks before its joins the Orange River. Although Smithers and Skinner (1990:683) note that "they probably never occurred in the Karoo",

buffalo were occasionally mentioned by travellers passing through the valley. As will be shown, however, none of these constitutes an actual sighting.

While travelling along the banks of the Seacow River in 1777, Gordon noted (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:94) that "our hunters espied the spoor of eland and buffalo close to us. I did all I could to persuade them not to kill any more, but they said they needed more hides and went after them, shooting six more of these animals, as well as another hippopotamus." Whether 'these animals' included buffalo is not made clear. That the men were after hides suggests that only eland were killed, but this is far from certain. The spoor of eland and buffalo are about the same size (Skinner and Smithers 1990), so Gordon's 'buffalo' might have been his reading of the spoor of an older or larger eland. Alternately, he may have been using a colloquial Dutch term for wildebeest (see below).

Half a century later, Cole (1852:214) had much to say about 'Lordly buffalos' on the flats bordering Colesberg, although he never set eyes on one. After leaving Colesberg and crossing over the lower Seacow River, he embarked upon a buffalo hunt in the company of a farmer who was possibly living alongside the Seacow River at Tweede Poort (COL.22) (see 3.19). The tactics were described as follows: "they have to creep through dense bush to find him; and when they come upon him, in some small open place, they are face to face with a ferocious brute, who (unlike the king of the forest) never declines a contest." Apparently Cole's host delighted in hunting 'buffalo' hereabouts, and provided all the necessary tackle including "a couple of little, tough looking ponies" low enough that the legs of their riders reached close to the ground. Both carried an "immense, long-barrelled Boer's gun." (ibid.). A Hottentot or 'tottie' tracker named Piet and a troop of sixty 'mongrels' made up the remainder of this train. Picking their way painfully and slowly through the impenetrable dense thorn bush, the farmer eventually shouted out that he had spotted a spoor. The dogs immediately raced off ahead with the two hunters close behind. This hunt ended farcically. "I pressed forward, got a-head of the Boer, ... determined, if possible, to get the first shot. At length I caught sight of a dusky brown hide, and the sound of a loud 'lowing' caught my ear, amid the din of the curs' howlings. A step or two further brought me to the verge of the green sward, and in sight of the brute. His stern was towards me. It was too bad to fire at him thus - to take him in the rear. - Fair play and honour forbade it ! The dogs were hard at him, however, and he ran from me without turning his head. Another moment and I heard the Boer crashing through the bush, and fast approaching. The thought that he might rob me of the prey was too much for me, I levelled my huge gun and fired right into the animal's posteriors. Down he went like a shot. I dashed forward at a gallop, and on reaching him, saw - a fine fat ox, instead of a wild buffalo!" (ibid.:221).

Thus Cole never actually saw a buffalo, although he insisted that they were commonly hunted. Certainly the thorn thickest would have been an appropriate place for them. However, caution is needed as Cole's understanding of his host's goals may have been confused. Skead (1987:628) has surmised that "the early Dutch pioneers might have used the word 'buffel' as a loose colloquialism for the wildebeest. The true buffalo would have been well known to them in the coastal belt from George eastwards and they would have met the Black wildebeest only on reaching the Winterberg. They would surely have seen the difference but they might not have had a name for

the 'new' animal." It is remotely possible that Cole himself was using the term buffalo to mean wildebeest. In conclusion, it must be noted that no farms in the valley are named after this elusive animal, nor are there any other place names which incorporate the word 'buffel'.

4.4.23. **Black Wildebeest** (*Connochaetes gnou*)

Late eighteenth and nineteenth century sources usually call the black wildebeest either the 'white-tailed' wildebeest or the 'white-tailed gnu' or 'gnoo'. Gnu is a Khoikhoi name referring to the characteristic bellowing snort which this animal makes when alarmed (Skinner and Smithers 1990). Aside from the springbok, gnu are most commonly observed and commented on by valley inhabitants and visitors. Lichtenstein (1815,II:51), for example described it as follows: "It has the mane and tail of the horse; the form of the head and the horns resemble the ox; and in the legs and delicate make of the body it appears of the antelope species, to which it should seem, on this account, to belong."

Cornwallis Harris (1838: 33-34) provided an even more vivid description: "Of all quadrupeds, the Gnoo is probably the most awkward and grotesque. Nature doubtless formed him in one of her freaks, and it is scarcely possible to contemplate his ungainly figure without laughter. Wheeling and prancing in every direction, his shaggy and bearded head arched between his slender and muscular legs, and his long white tail streaming in the wind, this very wary animal has at once a ferocious and ludicrous appearance. Suddenly stopping, showing an imposing front, and tossing his head in mock defiance, his wild red sinister eyes flash fire, and his snort resembling the roar of a lion, is repeated with energy and effect. Then lashing his sides with his floating tail, he plunges, bounds, kicks up his heels with a fantastic flourish, and in a moment is off at speed, making the dust fly behind him as he sweeps across the plain."

The dramatic appearance and behaviour of this antelope could well be seen as the reason for its' popularity both in the hunt and in travellers' accounts of the valley landscape. No fewer than twenty travellers have left comments about this animal. Gordon (1988,I) is the first of these. Descending into the valley on 16 November 1777 from the Sneeuberg he saw several gnu. Only slightly further north on the next day, one more gnu was sighted. Then, crossing the plains towards Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) he "encountered a herd of seventeen gnu which approached us out of curiosity, but not within shot. We chased after them but could not overtake them." (ibid.:87). Enigmatically, one was seen chasing after a springbok for almost thirty minutes. During this time, several more herds of gnu were observed. Moving farther that day, Gordon "wounded a gnu but did not get it." Several more gnu were spotted grazing along the banks of the Seacow on 19 November (ibid:88). Returning from the Seacow River to Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81), Gordon spotted several more gnu of which he shot a gnu. "Many gnu" were again noted shortly after having left 'Gordon's Fontein' (Dwaal Fontein - HAN.29) and many more after reaching the 'Champagnes Poort River' or Klein Seekoei River (ibid: 96).

Barrow (1806:208) in 1797 commented on the 'gnoo' which he described as only one variety of "a multitude of wild animals" grazing in the vicinity of Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). Riding

further over the plains towards the Seacow River, he chased many more of them (ibid.:210). Later, "hunting excursions had daily been made on the plains, at a distance from the river, where game of all sorts were in the greatest abundance; but the chief object of our pursuit was the gnoo or wild beast, as it is called by the Dutch. A party of five or six boors, with as many Hottentots, had attended me for two days, in order to procure one of these animals, but without success. On the third day, having mustered a company of ten boors, after a very long chace [*sic*] we contrived to hem in between two hills a troop consisting of about fifty, out of which, at one volley, we killed and wounded no less than half a dozen" (ibid.:214).

Descending through the Roodeberg into the valley on 15 July 1803, members of Governor Janssens' entourage also noted the presence of gnus. Di Capelli (1965:257) for example recorded seeing some at a distance while Lichtenstein (1815,II:49) noted that a "great many" were sighted. Moving beyond the valley to the Orange River, one of the farmers accompanying the Governor, Commandant Linde, shot a gnu which was examined with great interest by the Governor (Godee-Molsbergen 1932). Lichtenstein (1930,II:51) noted that a "pretty exact drawing" was made of it. Blommaert and Wiid, the translators of Van Reenen's journal (1937:233) called this specimen a 'wild ox', which is a direct translation of the Dutch word wildebeest. Di Capelli (1965:257) on entering the valley had noted that this animal is "called by the colonists (the blaauw) wildebeest on account of it's wild and wonderful capers." Having passed Gordon's Fontein on their return route, he again referred to this wild nature, and pointed out that they were too fast for the hunters chasing a large herd of them. Governor Janssens also noted this, saying that they turned to hunting springbok instead (Godee-Molsbergen 1932).

All of the above suggests that the valley carried very large herds of wildebeest. The first hint of any impact on their numbers by the European influx comes from Collins (Moodie 1960,V:2) who was disappointed by the 'inferior' specimens of the gnu which he examined in 1809. He had shot three of these animals from among "several troops of gnoos" which he came across just outside the valley to the north-east near the farm Groot Fontein (COL.155). Travelling from another farm named 'Groote Fontein' (Grootfontein Landgoed - RICH.33), on the opposite side of the valley to the farm Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) in 1812, Burchell (1824,II:79) noted "sôme gnus", but made no further mention of this animal.

Eight years later their diminishing numbers were being widely recognized. Campbell (1822,II:314) on arriving in the valley, observed a few "flocks" of gnu feeding on the plains. On the day he arrived at the Toverberg, he (ibid.:316) wrote: "The plain before was extensive but solitary in the extreme, from the total absence of animal life, though when the Missionaries came into those parts it was covered with elks, knoos, ... , &c. The greater part of them have either been killed or frightened away by the late influx of boors." Campbell (ibid.:324-325) also related a dispute which arose among members of his party concerning a gnu, while they were leaving the valley via the Sneeuberg. A Hottentot, Michael, had observed a wounded gnu which was in a very weak state. He pointed it out to two Corannas travelling with Campbell, who joined Michael in pursuit of it. Nearing the animal, Michael fired, but missed. The Corannas immediately rushed upon the animal and cut its throat. Both parties claimed ownership and Campbell had to mediate. It was never made clear

whether the unfortunate object of this row had been wounded by a hunter's bullet or from some natural cause.

In 1823, shortly before arriving at the Sneeuberg farm Elands Kloof, Thompson's (1827:51) party discovered thousands of "antelopes, quagga and gnus." This was the first time that Thompson had seen these animals: "hundreds of them were now playing round us ..." (ibid.). However, proceeding further north through the valley, the skeletons of several gnus which had fallen victim to lions were sighted (ibid.).

Steedman in 1830 also came across many gnus. These appear to have been particularly plentiful on the great flats between Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) and Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140). Herds of these animals roamed the extensive plains and one gnu was spotted trapped in a chasm alongside the road (Steedman 1835,I). It appeared to have fallen into this hole from whence it tried to rush at the travellers. It was in a weakened state brought on by *Brandt-siekte* (ibid.:138-9). Later he observed that "Hundreds of gnus were feeding and frisking about in every direction" (ibid.:153). Again, on the plains between Carolus Poort (NOU.166) and Colesberg, he espied a herd of gnus approaching the party from a distance. They were pursued by a lion and raised great clouds of dust in their flight, apparently seeking the vicinity of his wagon as protection.

Eugene Casalis, passing alone over the south side of Sneeuberg in 1832, was highly alarmed when he came across what he thought to be a lion. Poor Casalis, having broken his glasses *en route*, mistook groups of gnu for lions: "What should I see but a monstrous head, which appeared in the midst of a thicket of mimosas, and an entire animal disengaged itself from the brushwood. It was as to size something like a small pony. My spectacles did not allow of my distinguishing the outlines in detail, but the whole appearance awakened in me certain recollections of the menagerie which were anything but agreeable - to wit, a mane, a bearing assured and menacing, and a tail ceaselessly lashing the hollow flanks. Without doubt it was a lion, and of a large size!" (Casalis 1889:129-130). Passing a little further northwards over the plains, Casalis came across six more of these so-called 'lions'. Needless to say he was highly dismayed and confused as to the lack of reaction on the part of his horse to this animal. On joining up with his travelling companions, Casalis related his tale, much to their amazement. Crossing the plains the following morning, he (ibid.:131-132) again spotted some 'lions', his report of which was met with amusement by his colleagues: "Without moving, he [Casalis's companion] said to the Hottentot who was driving, 'Go quick with the whip, and chase my friend's lions over there!' - 'No, no!' replied the other, roaring with laughter, 'better give me your gun, I will make him eat steaks off them!' They were gnus! a very inoffensive kind of antelope!" (ibid.).

Andrew Smith (Kirby 1939,I) in 1834 also described these 'inoffensive' creatures, which he observed were "abundant on the flats in herds of considerable size...[and] were seen gambolling about in the most playful manner just like young calves or horses." (ibid.:62). These remarks were made on the same day that the party arrived at Gordons Fontein (HAN.111). Leaving this farm for Colesberg, Smith (Lye 1975:27) observed: "small herds of ... gnus (Antelope gnu) were here and there observed, and some of them appeared actually feeding; though on examining several of the

localities in which they were discovered, nothing could be detected but the mere remaining of minute and shrivelled shrubs, few of which exhibited any signs of having recently been cropped by the teeth of animals." Cornwallis Harris in 1836 stopped at 'Vogel Vallei' (Kraan Vogel Valley - RICH.67) where he (1838:33-34) recorded the presence of several large troops of gnu. His party hemmed one of these herds into a valley and made them run the gauntlet, shooting three in the process.

Although popular targets, gnus still abounded on the plains near Colesberg in 1839. Backhouse (1844) records their presence near to the farm Kuilfontein (COL.115). Five years later, Nicholson (1898) noted black gnus and springbok grazing on his farm in the thousands. In that same year, "many troops of grotesque gnoos" (Nicholson 1848:77) were still being observed on the flats between the Sneeuberg and Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) while slightly further north alongside the Seacow River, Cumming spent six hours galloping about the plains firing at them. "Having breakfasted, we started on horseback to 'jag' springbok and wildebeest, ... I wounded three springboks and one wildebeest, but lost them all." (Cumming 1855,I:92).

"Galloping gnus" are described by Cole (1852:214) four years later as he gazed over the plains around Colesberg. The "large dreary plains" of the valley are also described as abounding with springbok and gnu by Bishop Gray (1849:76-77) on leaving Elandsfontein (COL.110). From here, on his journey towards the Sneeuberg, Gray notes more herds of gnu grazing on the plains. However, when he arrived in the Sneeuberg, he noted that "the spring-boks and the gnus have disappeared, and we have scarce seen any symptom of life, except that of a few sheep" (ibid.:77). The bishop traversed the valley again in 1850 and once more reported very little game. But once he came to the country between Richmond and Colesberg, he noted "several ... wilde-beests." (1852:15).

In 1856, Hamelberg's (Spies 1952) coach driver pointed several 'wilde-beesten' out to him between the farms Drie Fontein (HAN.87) and Dwaalfontein (HAN.29). Hamelberg, not being able to recognize these animals asked the brother of Dwaalfontein's proprietor, Van Aswegen, about these animals: "'Wilde beesten', zegt hij, 'zijn wilde beesten'. Ik vraag of het bokken zijn -- 'neen'; ezels? -- 'neen'; paarden? -- 'neen'; leeuwen? -- 'neen'; tijgers? -- 'neen, the zijn wilde beesten!'" [Wildebeests, he says. They are wildebeest. I ask whether they are buck? - 'no' - elk? - 'no' - horses? - 'no' - lions? - 'no' - tigers? - 'no, they are wildebeest.'] (ibid.:136).

4.4.23.1. *Date of extermination*

No other travellers' account of the valley describes wildebeest or gnu after 1856. However, in this same year, the Graaff-Reinet Herald (GRH 1856:4,206) reported on a hunting expedition undertaken by Sneeuberg farmers on the extensive flats about Cephanjes Poort (MID.143), Kol Hoek (now Alphen - MID.145) and Zaay Fontein (MID.65). "They were very successful, and in three days killed eighty-eight springboks and two wildebeest, or Gnus, which were nearly all in excellent condition" (GRH 1856:4,206). Two years later, the farm Kol Hoek (MID.145), was again the site of a hunt. On this occasion, three farmers hunted for four days and in this time shot 103 springboks

and three wildebeest (GRH 1858:6,312). In 1859, the Graaff-Reinet Herald again reports the presence of wildebeest. Their Colesberg correspondent writes: "Rains having now fallen in a partial manner in different portions of the district, have had the effect of causing us without one days warning, (to get powder and lead ready) to be overrun with thousands of springboks, some wildebeests, and ostriches, the latter two being rare sights in this part of the country." (GRH 1859:7,350). Therefore, it seems that by the late 1850's, wildebeest were becoming a rare sight anywhere in the valley.

However, in a few remote corners they must have lingered on in tiny groups or as solitary animals. Thus, in 1883, the Colesberg Advertiser (CA 1883:23,2040) published the following account: "A WILDEBEESTE SHOT. - We are informed that Mr Du Plessis of Quaggasgat (COL.37), whilst in the veldt on that farm with his dogs on Wednesday last, startled a wildebeeste to which the dogs gave chase. Mr Plessis followed in pursuit and ultimately shot the animal. This is the only wildebeest which has been seen and shot in this district for a number of years."

4.4.23.2. *Methods of extermination*

Wildebeest were regarded as challenging and popular to hunt. The herds of wildebeest could be tracked by the dust clouds which they raised (Steedman 1835,I; Kirby 1939,I; Nicholson 1848). The hunters then either hemmed them in between two hills (Harris 1838) or outdistanced and then fired upon them (Nicholson 1848). In the former method, after having placed themselves strategically in the gaps between hills, hunters generally chased these animals out through the line of fire. A few wildebeest are then killed as a result (Barrow 1806,I; Harris 1838). In the second method, "if the hunter can go the pace quick enough to cross the line of flight taken by the column [of wildebeest], at a reasonable distance, he pulls up suddenly, dismounts quickly, and fires into the cloud of dust enveloping the rushing crowd of fugitives. Very often the ball does execution, but more frequently, strange to say, the best rifle shots fire in vain." (Nicholson 1848:80-81).

Otherwise wildebeest were shot at randomly from horseback or on foot (Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Plumptre 1830,II; Blommaert and Wiid 1937; Moodie 1960,V; Campbell 1822,II; Casalis 1889 and Cumming 1855,I). Wildebeest were also targeted by predators such as lions (Thompson 1827,I; Steedman 1835,I) and also suffered from diseases such as the Brandt-siekte as Steedman (1835,I:140) relates: "they are said to be subject to a cutaneous eruption at particular seasons of the year, which they sometimes communicate to domestic cattle, and which invariably ends in death." As discussed above, Cole (1852) may have provided a good description of the equipment necessary for hunting wildebeest in the thorny reaches of the lower valley.

4.4.23.3. *Place name distributions*

Despite their popularity both in the hunt and in the literature, the gnu or wildebeest do not form the subject matter for any of the valley farm names. Wildebeest seem to have been prevalent over most of the valley plains, particularly those of the upper valley. Many travellers reported their

presence between the Sneeuberg mountains and either Gordons Fontein (HAN.111)(Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Barrow 1806,I; De Kock 1965; Campbell 1822,II; Thompson 1827,I; Kirby 1839,I; Nicholson 1848) or Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)(Burchell 1824,II; Steedman 1835,I; Harris 1838). They also seem to have been noted on plains bordering the Seacow River (Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Barrow 1806,I; Campbell 1822,II; Casalis 1889 and Cumming 1855,I) and between the above-mentioned farms and Colesberg (De Kock 1965; Plumptre 1815,II; Steedman 1835,I; Lye 1975; Backhouse 1844; Cole 1852; Gray 1849; Gray 1852; and Spies 1952). Some travellers also observed wildebeest on the flats within the Sneeuberg (Raper and Boucher 1988,I; Thompson 1827,I; Nicholson 1898; Gray 1849). Wildebeest do not seem to have been prevalent on the plains in the lower valley. Both Van Reenen (1937) and Collins (1960,V) noted the presence of wildebeest to the east of the valley, between Colesberg and the Orange River.

A small herd was reintroduced on the farm Sneeukuil in an enormous fenced camp at the foot of the Meiringsberg in the late 1970s. This herd has flourished there for nearly 20 years. No other reintroductions have been recorded.

4.4.24. **Hippopotamus** (*Hippopotamus amphibius*)

The very first animal to be recorded in documentary sources as prevalent in the Seacow River was the hippopotamus. As early as 1775 the Field Corporal Adriaan van Jaarsveld communicated the circumstances of a retaliatory commando against Bushmen stock thieves, whom they followed to the vicinity "of Seacow River" (Moodie 1960,III:44). The word 'Seacow' is an English rendering of the Dutch `Zeekoei' which means hippopotamus. The name 'Seacow River' therefore points directly to the presence of these large animals in the valley waters from the earliest colonial times, and before.

In 1775 Van Jaarsveld's commando spotted a lone Bushman in the upper valley and not wanting to cause alarm, they decided to "persuade this Bosman that we came as friends, and were merely travelling to the said river to shoot sea cows." (ibid.:44). Proceeding north-west along the river, the party arrived at 'Eylands Drift' (probably Elands Gat - HAN.77) where they observed fires which had been lit as a signal of the presence of a commando. Contrary to the Bushmen's customary behaviour when "any of the men came to shoot sea cows" (ibid.:44), no Bushmen approached the party. Later, as a sign of friendship, the colonists shot a 'sea cow' for the Bushmen, sixteen of whom approached the party at 'Ronde Kop'. Several more sea cows were then shot with the aim of enticing the Bushmen with the meat (ibid.:44). The carcasses were then left at this spot and the party proceeded further downstream to 'Blauw bank' (i.e. Klip Kraal - COL.104). Here, twelve sea cows were shot after which Van Jaarsveld (ibid.) moved his camp two hours downstream. Spies soon reported that many Bushmen had congregated at the 'Blauw bank' to feed on the hippo carcasses and the commando then attacked them there, killing many. During the subsequent massacre, some escaped by swimming across "the sea cow pool".

Numerous references in the report of this commando attest that hippopotamus were prevalent in the Seacow River and that these animals were highly favoured by Bushmen, an aspect

recognised by farmers of the region. Farmers appear to have also killed their share of hippopotamus before this date as it was considered unusual that Bushmen did not approach the 'sea cow hunters' as was their custom. The popularity of hippopotamus among the Bushmen is confirmed by the large number of these people who were killed, having aggregated to feed on the hippopotamus carcasses.

A few years later (1777) Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) produced a graphic, detailed account of hunting hippos in the river. He also mentioned that it "contained sweet but insipid water." (ibid.:88). On it's banks he found many "droppings and tracks of 'sea-cows', as they are called here, but are hippopotamus". Later in the day (19 November) while riding along the river, Gordon's party "saw three of these hippopotamus floating on the water, sleeping." (ibid.:90). These hippos were then hunted: "I shot the first right in front of the head, upon which it dived, since I had but an ordinary hunting load of powder, so that our hunters told me to use a heavier charge to shoot this tough creature. We wounded a few others, there being four in this pool of about a quarter of an hour in length and at most forty feet wide. After that we saw no more. One must now wait for about an hour until the dead hippopotamus float to the surface." (ibid.:90).

Gordon (ibid.) travelled up and down the Seacow River, hunting hippos. Finding one, he described the kill in graphic detail: "After watching it for a while - certainly a wonderfully monstrous creature - I shot it between the eye and the ear so that a great stream of blood spurted out. It stretched its huge jaw wide open and, roaring all the time, champed at the reeds on all sides, and still made attempts to reach me. However, having now received a mortal wound, it hurled itself into the river again, struggling, and we saw it sinking to its death." (ibid.:90). This hippopotamus was the same one which Gordon had earlier shot in the forehead, the too light charge having glanced off its smooth, hard head. The retrieval of this animal is well illustrated: "We went to the first hippopotamus and, since the remainder of these animals had earlier been killed or escaped downstream, a Hottentot swam over to it and tied a rope around one of its legs. He then sat on top of it and we towed it floating in this manner, with yet another Hottentot on top of it, to the bank. After a great deal of trouble the twenty-five of us, with the oxen pulling the wagon ropes, dragged it out of the water. I measured the creature and after examining it, drew it. It was a cow." (ibid.:90).

The following morning the party attempted to haul out the second hippo, a large bull. Having managed to drag this animal to the bank, ten oxen were used to pull it onto the bank. Gordon (ibid.) drew this animal and aimed to eviscerate it and preserve its hide, as the cow which had been hauled out the previous night had been damaged by jackals. Leaving the scene, Gordon proceeded down the river for about three hours. He passed a hole where he shot a hippo and then rode to a second where five or six adults as well as two calves were observed. Both calves were shot. Gordon (ibid.) reported that many shots were fired at these hippos which only stuck their noses out of the water. They occasionally stuck their heads out, but this was only for an instant. After the animals had sunk into the water, Gordon and the other hunters returned to their wagons.

Gordon went the next day to see what they had shot in the two pools and found five dead hippos which he ordered to be cut up and salted before travelling further down the river with a

farmer and a Hottentot (ibid.). Soon, the hunters had as much hippopotamus fat or 'spek' as they could load, Gordon (ibid.) chose not to shoot any more of these animals. He commented, however, that "the further to the north east one goes, the more numerous these creatures become." (ibid.:92). Hippopotamus therefore appear to have been much more prevalent in the lower reaches of the Seacow River.

Gordon's party then cut up the remaining hippos. In all, they had shot nine, three bulls and six cows, of which two were carrying almost fully grown calves. Although Gordon (ibid.) only opened these two, he guessed that more would have been pregnant. However, he noted that: "according to the testimony of the farmers more cows are ordinarily shot than bulls. Whether that is a result of the bulls at the waterhole driving the others off, since they fight each other very fiercely, or of their being fewer bulls I do not know for certain, but I believe the former to be the case, since the two calves were also bulls." (ibid.:94).

Barrow (1806:251) in 1797 travelled the length of the Seacow River and on arriving at the Orange River observed "vast numbers of the hippopotamus [which] were snorting and blowing in every part of the river, endeavouring as it were to emulate the torrent that roared among the rocks." Under the shade of the trees flanking this river and on the reedy banks near the mouth of the Seacow River, Barrow (ibid.) discovered the beds where the hippopotamus had been playing and rolling when they had ventured forth from the water.

Hippos formed the focal point of the Governor's party when they arrived on the banks of the Orange River six years later. On arriving at the river, the party found it far from full: "In dit oogenblik is er niet veel water in de rivier, zodat nu de breedte een groot geweerschot zal zijn, dog moet by hoog water een gedugte stroom formeeren." [At the moment, there is not much water in the river, so that it would be possible to reach the other bank with one big shot, although high water would form a thick or wide stream] (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:190). Governor Janssens himself related how he had been told that "zeekoeyen" were to be found in this river. Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II:53-54) noted that "a number of sea-cows, or rather river-horses, take up their abode in this river, where they are scarcely ever disturbed by the hunters." One hippo which was shot by the hunters floated downstream with the result that the only people to get close to it were several Bushmen, who had swum across the river with the aim of retrieving it, for the Governor to examine. The two Bushmen who had attained the other bank "made a large fire, cut a quantity of the fat off the monster's back, which they baked and eat [ate] most voraciously." (Plumptre 1815,II:54). Five more Bushmen were tempted by this to cross. They reached the other bank quickly and then attempted unsuccessfully to dislodge the hippo from the rock to which it had become attached (ibid.; Godee-Molsbergen 1832).

Another man tried to cross the river to help, but he almost drowned. The Bushmen already on the opposite bank rescued him and revived him by "rubbing his benumbed limbs over with the heated fat of the river-horse." (Plumptre 1815:70). The Governor's party in spite of their attempts, did not succeed in showing him a hippopotamus. Governor Janssens, however, appeared to have been given an opportunity to examine this animal as the party proceeded along the Seacow River,

although neither he nor the men accompanying him mention this in their memoirs. A commandant who travelled with Collins along the banks of the Seacow river in 1809 claimed to have been with the Governor's party in 1803. He reported to Collins (Moodie 1960,V:2) that they "had killed thirty sea cows in the river of that name."

Many hippopotamus were found in the Seacow River for years afterwards, noted Collins's informant, but in 1809, they were described as met with only very seldom, except near the junction of the Seacow River with the Great River (ibid.). Collins reported that his own party came across none of this species. The reason for this is most likely that his route passed nowhere near the main chain of hippo pools in the lower valley. Nonetheless, hippos do appear to have become scarce in the Seacow River by the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century. Burchell (1824,II:90) in 1812 noted that "hippopotami, formerly so numerous in the Zeekoe river, are no longer, unless accidentally, to be found there; but have all retreated to the Black River or Nugariep." They were said to live undisturbed in this, the Orange River (ibid.).

In 1820, however, hippos were still present as Campbell (1822,II) observed that they had been attracted into the Seacow River. The many, deep pools forming the course of the Seacow River are described (ibid.) as "fitted to gratify the disposition and taste of the hippopotamus", which "loves to stand during the day in water, deep enough to cover itself completely." (ibid.:314).

Hippos were not mentioned again by any later travellers. The late Mr F. Rubidge of Zoete Valley (RICH.115) recounted his father telling him that the last hippo in the river was said to have been shot on that farm, but the date was unknown. Probably the later 1830s when the lower valley land grants were made (see 1.11) would have spelled the end of the hippo here. A subfossil hippo mandible has been found in the river gravels of Kuilfontein (COL.115) (J. Southey pers.comm.).

Clearly, the many deep, long pools (col.:'zeekoegaten') of the lower Seacow River offered favourable habitats for the hippo. They were killed by travellers, farmers, and possibly by Bushmen. If more cows were killed than bulls, it is understandable that the numbers of hippopotamus gradually decreased as the breeding population was whittled away. By 1820, the many pools which had once been occupied by hippo no longer harboured so many of these creatures. A few probably moved north to the more protected Orange River. Only the name 'Seacow River' as well as the many 'hippo pools' along its length remained as mute testimony of the presence of these large mammals.

4.4.25. **Warthog** (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*)

Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) meandering through the valley in 1777 made numerous references to 'bushpig'. The editors of his memoirs (ibid.) commented that his descriptions of both the appearance and the behaviour of this animal leave little doubt that the animal referred to was the warthog, rather than the bushpig. Once his party had off-saddled on the banks of what was probably the Klein Seekoei River, Gordon described the animals which one of the wagons had caught along the way. Included among these was a warthog which Gordon termed "a young so-

called 'bushpig', with large tusks and without incisors." (ibid.:86). More 'bushpig' (warthog) were observed the following day as the party traversed the valley plains (ibid.). On that same day, Gordon (ibid.) noted that ground squirrel burrows, anteaters and 'bushpig' (warthogs) were to be found everywhere. He wrote that: "these pig sleep in holes at night; the Hottentots watch to see where these places are, seal them off and remove them in the morning." (ibid.:87). Two days later, warthog holes were again recorded, this time along the banks of the Seacow River (ibid.).

Although never stated explicitly, the warthog's pig-like nature as well as its ivory teeth made it both a popular item of food, for example among the Hottentots, as well as a lucrative game animal. Both of these factors appear to have resulted in the early disappearance of this animal from the valley. Had they been prevalent after the end of the eighteenth century, one would expect their characteristic appearance to have attracted more attention from writers. Any warthog which were present were probably soon killed off by farmers acting against the destruction of grain fields for which these creatures are notorious. No others mention of this animal has been found.

4.5. INSECT LIFE - LOCUSTS

Although several traveller's complained about the inconvenience which they experienced because of insects such as flies as they travelled over the valley plains, no other insects gained the same degree of notoriety as the locust, nor did any insect affect the European presence more.

The Brown locust (*Locustana pardalina*)is endemic to the karroid areas of the Cape. It has been shown (cf. Chapter 2) that these locusts occur in two forms or phases, namely the Solitaria phase and the Gregaria phase. Locusts in the first phase lead a solitary life, and are generally referred to as 'typical grasshoppers' (Annecke and Moran 1982:287). These creatures were probably the grasshoppers referred to by Cronwright-Schreiner (1902) when he commented on the extraordinary "variety of grasshoppers and ants" (1902:148). Apart from this, these insects received no mention.

Locusts in the Gregaria phase, however, aggregate in large numbers. The historical literature described these locusts more frequently than any other insect. The life-cycle of the brown locust when in the Gregaria phase is composed of a number of stages: first, the small egg is deposited in the soil; these eggs then hatch when the soil is sufficiently wet and the temperature is high - eggs may remain dormant in the soil for up to 3.5 years, hatching only when the conditions are right. Secondly, the bright orange and black hoppers emerge from the egg, aggregate in large numbers and move across the land in search of food. These hoppers then, thirdly, grow into the larger adults which also aggregate and move across the landscape (Annecke and Moran 1982).

Crossing through the Sneeuberg in 1797, Barrow (1806,I) was the first writer to note the presence of locusts in the valley. In the vicinity of the Compass mountain, he noted "a curious but most deplorable spectacle", a troop of locusts resting upon the plain (ibid.:196). These locusts completely covered an area of one square mile (ibid.). Barrow described what he observed: "the

surface appeared to the eye ... to have been burned and strewed over with brown ashes. Not a shrub nor blade of grass was visible." (ibid.:196). The Hottentots ran among the swarm and the horses were made to gallop about through them in an attempt to observe them all in flight, but only those locusts immediately affected by the men and horses rose up. The local farmers remarked that the locusts were "not to be driven away unless the signal for departure should be given from their commander in chief, one of which is supposed to accompany every troop." (ibid.:196).

A few days later, the "incomplete insect or larvae" of the locusts were observed by Barrow (ibid.:212-214) along the banks of the Seacow River. "For the space of ten miles on each side of the Sea-cow river, and eighty or ninety miles in length, an area of sixteen or eighteen hundred square miles, the whole surface of the ground might literally be said to be covered with them." (ibid.:212-214). The water in the Seacow River was barely visible owing to the large numbers of locust carcasses floating on the surface. The latter had died while attempting to devour the reeds growing in the water (ibid.). "Luckily" related Barrow, "the visits of this gregarious insect are but periodical, otherwise the whole country must inevitably be deserted." (ibid.:212-14). The locusts had destroyed every blade of grass along the Seacow River and his party kept their cattle alive by feeding them the reeds, without which their journey further north would have been curtailed.

The larvae were more voracious than the adult, not rejecting anything belonging to "the vegetable part of the creation." (ibid.:212-14). "They swarmed in thousands into our tent to devour the crumbs of bread that fell on the ground, and seized with avidity onto a mutton-bone." (Ibid.:212-14).

It seemed to be almost impossible to stop or turn these swarms which were constantly in motion, generally moving with the wind. "The traces of their route over the country remain for many weeks after they have passed it, the surface appearing as if swept by a broom, or as if a harrow had been drawn over it." (ibid.:212-14). At dusk, these swarms generally stopped moving, upon which they divided into smaller groups gathered around small shrubs, anthills or tufts of grass (ibid.). They then rested in this manner until daybreak. Barrow (ibid.) recorded how farmers usually then took the opportunity of trying to kill these insects, often driving flocks of from two to three thousand sheep among them. It was then hoped that the agitated movement of these grazers would cause the larvae to be trampled to death. He (ibid.) noted that these swarms of locusts had been continuing in the region for the previous three years. Prior to this, these insects had not been seen in the region for ten years. Two farmers related how this earlier migration had passed their homesteads, and this in such large numbers that the column "continued moving forwards without any interruption, except by night, for more than a month." (ibid.: 214).

More than thirty years passed before anyone mentioned further swarms, although a number of them probably did pass through the valley. Steedman (1835,I) in 1830 came upon a family attempting to expel a swarm of locusts from their corn, a task which they had been busy with since sunrise. They described the insects as so numerous that: "it would take an hour's ride on horseback to reach the extremity of the ground which they covered." (ibid.:135). While at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) he observed how these numerous locusts were put to good use:

fowls on the farm were fed the locusts which had been contained in a large sack. "It was surprising to see with what avidity they devoured them." (ibid.:137). Indeed, Steedman later commented that game-birds which they shot in the region had "a strong and disagreeable flavour" as a result (ibid.:137).

Nicholson in 1844 related how the ravages of these insects, the frequent droughts and the poor quality of the pasturage had culminated to a large extent in the abandonment of the land bordering the Seacow River to "the free flocks and herds of game of all kinds which abound in this region." (1848:80). Halting at the farm Gordons Fontein (HAN.111), Nicholson (ibid.) commented that although the pasturage was good and that water was sufficient, the position of the farm exposed it to the destructiveness of locusts.

From the above accounts it is apparent that both the pasture of the cattle and horses as well as the corn planted by farmers, suffered heavily under the ravages of these swarming insects. Indeed, the countless reports concerning these creatures in the local press during the late nineteenth century indicated that their ravages still continued to draw the interest and anger of local farmers and town-dwellers alike. Locusts were reported on with more regularity than any other agricultural phenomenon, with the exception of drought. Indeed, more than a hundred and thirty reports concerning these creatures were published between 1850 and 1900. Of these reports, forty related the passage of locusts over Colesberg while more than eighty described their presence in the district. As the Colesberg Advertiser reported the majority of these instances, it is probable that not every swarm of locusts was recorded. These reports do however provide some details concerning the extent of these locust swarms, their timing, their movement and the destruction resulting from their movement through the valley.

4.5.1. Locusts as depicted in newspaper accounts

Although locusts were reported as occurring in the valley in twenty nine of the fifty years reported in local newspapers, the swarming of these insects can be broadly divided into six swarming periods, namely 1852-unknown; 1854-unknown; 1863-1866; 1868-1876; 1878-1880 and 1891-1899. These periods were calculated according to the assumption that the first report of swarms of locusts in the region denotec the beginning of a swarm period and that the last report denoted the end. It is of interest to note that many of these periods were less than 3.5 years apart and that the locusts emerging for a new swarm period could thus have been the progeny of earlier swarms. These swarm periods all followed a period of rainfall, often arising after a drought had broken up (cf. Table 6-1).

In 1852, locusts appear to have ravaged the valley. The Graaff-Reinet Herald reported that locusts were "lying several inches deep in the streets of Colesberg" and that "every green thing along the road" had been completely destroyed (GRH 1852:1,12). Another report described the damage done to numerous farms, including the wheat fields on the farm Klein Cephanjes Poort (MID.144)(GRH 1852:1,12). Here, the numbers of locusts were "compared to the grains of sand on the sea shore which no man can number" (ibid.). The reporter did however note that humans could

diminish these numbers "by unceasing exertion and the use of all possible means." (ibid.). He (ibid.) told how animals and birds devour many locusts. In 1855, locusts were reported in the vicinity of Richmond (GRH 1855:3,124; GRH 1855:3,128). No other information concerning this swarm was found.

In April 1863, locusts made their appearance in Hope Town (CA 1863:3,118[wn]). By 10 November these creatures were reported between Hope Town and Colesberg (CA 1863:3,149). Fourteen days later, "small lots" of locusts were recorded between Colesberg and Philippolis (CA 1863:3,151). These locusts had therefore evidently moved across the valley throughout 1863, only leaving the area in November of that year. In 1864, a local farmer, Mr. Adriaan Botha of Middelwater (COL.68) was recorded as having lost his entire crop of oats to these insects (CA 1864:4,161). A report published in April of that year recorded the "great damage ... done" by the locust in the Lower Seacow River ward (CA 1864:4,185). In October, John Norval of Norval's Pont on the banks of the Orange River had fifty men, women and children employed in protecting his land against the locusts (CA 1864:4,199). They had been so engaged for fourteen days. In 1866, locusts were again reported, this time between Hope Town and the Seacow River where they were said to be "destroying the pasturage." (CA 1866:6,284).

The Colesberg Advertiser reported that a larger than normal swarm passed over Colesberg in 1872. "We believe this to be the largest swarm we have ever seen, and some hours elapsed after the advanced guard made its appearance before the last of the pests had passed. We judge the swarm to have been some ten miles long." (CA 1872:12,590). Large swarms still infested the district in 1873 and a large swarm was estimated to be ten miles in width and twenty in length (CA 1873:13,636). In 1874, numerous reports of locusts appeared. Young locusts in "countless swarms" were reported as present in the Hope Town, Richmond and Middelburg districts (CA 1874:14,721). By January 1875, reports noted that the country was as bare as during periods of drought (CA 1875:15,731).

By 1879, farmers seem to have been combining forces to rid themselves of this menace. Locusts were reported at De Eerste Poort (COL.39) and at Tweede Poort (COL.22) on the Seacow River, the reporter noting that: "If the neighbouring farmers do their duty, these insect pests will be promptly destroyed." (CA 1879:19,972).

Several years later, in 1891, major swarms were again reported. The valley farm Brimscombe (HAN.106) was reported as having been overrun with locusts (CA 1891:30*,2389). Three thousand sheaves of hay were destroyed by these creatures (ibid.). In April a report noted that locusts moving between Colesberg and Hanover were: "still moving about from farm to farm, eating all before them." (CA 1891:30*,2407). The latest report of their whereabouts came from T'zamenkomst (COL.57) (ibid.). A Dutch report published in October no doubt voiced the feelings of many farmers: "DE VELLE millioenen kleine sprinkhanen die nu op onze velden te zien zijn, brengen ons schrik op hey lijf. Wat zal het gevolg zijn!" [The many million locusts on our veld is frightening. What will the results be!] (CA 1891:30*,24033). In November 1891, a large swarm passed through Colesberg (CA 1891:30*,1553). They began passing through on the Saturday and continued

without halting, except at night, until the Thursday when rain stopped them (ibid.). This swarm was rumoured (ibid.) to extend in an unbroken line for seventy miles. In 1892, a swarm heading towards Hanover took two hours to fly over Colesberg (CA 1892:31*,16011[wn]). This was billed as "the largest swarm of locusts we have seen for twenty eight years" (ibid.).

In 1893 and 1894, numerous swarms were reported. One account commented that "travelling across country, one scarcely losses sight of one swarm before encountering another." (CA 1894:33*,1681). In December, a farmer described the situation at his farm T'zamenkomst (COL.57): "Saturday and Sunday were dreadful days for us, locusts everywhere, we'd never seen the like, everywhere around the house the ground looked a living red mass, they were in all the lands, and every man, woman and child, white or black, (numbering over fifty) driving all day." (CA 1894:33*,1716). By 7 December, the farmer described the worst as past although little damage appeared to have been done to the "enemy".

4.5.2. Devastation caused by the locust swarms

Locust swarms therefore occurred in the Hanover district (cf. CA 1870:10,522), the lower Seacow valley (cf. CA 1879:19,942), and the upper Seacow valley (cf. CA 1895:34*,1728). Indeed, many of the valley farms suffered the devastation resulting from the locust swarms. Farms mentioned specifically include Gordons Fontein (HAN.111), Brimscombe (HAN.106), Wild Fontein (NOU.144), Carolus Poort (NOU.166), Klein Cephanjes Poort (MID.144), Kleinfontein (NOU.117), Kuilfontein (COL.115), Taaiboschfontein (COL.58) and T'zamenkomst (COL.57) to name but a few. Locust swarms which did not arise within the valley itself, usually originated within the Orange Free State, from the vicinity of Hope Town. From there, these swarms regularly passed over Hanover, moved across the lower Seacow River valley and either flew over Colesberg or moved east between Colesberg and Philippolis. Their return route was often the reverse of the above. Indeed, many of the newspaper reports recorded that these insects flew either in a north-easterly direction (cf. CA 1869:9,437) or in a north-westerly direction (cf. CA 1896:35*,1776) over Colesberg.

As has been shown, these insects devastated the valley environment whenever they passed through. The destruction of pasturage was the most notorius result of their passage. Indeed, the Colesberg Advertiser provided a typical example of how the valley vegetation was usually affected by locusts: "a swarm of these pests settled down on the commonage in the neighbourhood of Coleskop, and the veld was soon turned from green to brown." (CA 1874:14,694). This devastation reduced the available grazing land available to farmers, reduced the amount of game animals likely to be present on the landscape, made travelling more difficult as oxen and horses had to be fed and would have led to erosion if rain followed the passage of these locusts. Cultivated fields were also targeted by these creatures, thereby destroying more of the farmers livelihood (cf. CA 1874:14,722). The emotions evoked by such destruction are recorded in an article which ended on the sad note that: "what at one time promised to be a season of plenty, now appears more likely to turn out a time of great scarcity." (CA 1870:10,519).

4.5.3. Attempts to eradicate the locusts

The scarcity resulting from the activities of these locusts led many farmers to attempt different means to drive the locusts off their land and specifically off their cultivated fields. It is detailed above how farmers drove sheep across the resting swarm to crush them (cf. Barrow 1806,I) while others used flags (Gray 1849) and fires (GRH 1852:1,12) to keep the locusts at bay.

Numerous reports stressed the frustration felt by many farmers who did their utmost to destroy the locusts, simply to find that their neighbours refused to kill even one, regarding such a task as hopeless (CA 1891:30*,1552). A notice concerning the eradication of these insects appeared in the Colesberg Advertiser in 1893 - "Farmers and others" in the district were requested by the Civil Commissioner to inform him immediately should locusts be observed depositing their eggs (CA 1893:32*,1635). This would enable the ground to be located to allow the speedy destruction of these insects when the young locusts hatched out (ibid.). A farmer wrote to the Colesberg Advertiser later this year and told how he had tried to kill locusts in various ways, but that they had cost so much that "it is of more worth to pray that God might remove the plague." (CA 1893:32*,1660[wn]). The valley inhabitants therefore disagreed about the ways in which to destroy these insects, with some willing to fight while others preferred to let nature run its course.

Natural factors also resulted in the eradication of some of these insects. Game-fowl ate the locusts (Steedman 1835,I) as other animals no doubt did. Horses were reported to have died as a result of feeding on these creatures (CA 1864:4,173). The greatest predators of these locusts were three birds - the Wattled starling (*Creatophora cinerea*), the white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) and a kestrel and falcon (*Falco* spp.). These birds were often observed following the swarms across the countryside, feeding along the way (cf. Barrow 1806,I; CA 1875:15,733; CA 1875:15,775; CA 1876:16,820).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, numerous reports were published describing a 'fly maggot', a parasite which was eating away the insides of the locusts. "The locust killing flys are killing a good many voetgangers in this district. That is to say the rubs from their ears are." (CA 1891:30*,1557). Two years later, "a swarm of sickly flying locusts" flevv over Colesberg (CA 1893:32*,1667). The identity of this parasite remains unclear.

The flavour of the locusts themselves was not without its merits, as Steedman noted that: "the Bushmen, however, are particularly partial to locusts." (1835,I:137) and that "they [the Bushmen] subsist on ... locusts." (ibid.:148). In 1852, a reporter commented that: "both the wild and tame Bushmen make of locusts thick bread." (GRH 1852:1,12)

CHAPTER 5 - EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURY VEGETATION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the natural vegetation of the valley as perceived by travellers and others during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although the plant cover is certainly vulnerable to overstocking stresses, the role that drought plays in altering this cover should not be underestimated. At the time of Acocks' (1988) monumental study, almost nothing was known of past climate changes in the Karoo during the past several centuries. Here, anecdotal evidence of drought in the valley is first considered in up a record of drought order to build cycles. Eyewitness accounts of the natural vegetation are considered in chronological order and compared with Acocks' pioneer vision of dwindling grass cover and an invading Karoo scrub community. 'Relic' stands of grass in the upper Seacow drainage seen in the late 1940s were the inspiration for his bold model of past vegetation change in central South Africa (P. Roux, pers. comm).

5.2. DROUGHT CYCLES

Quasi-cyclic, long term droughts (see 2.2.1) are a feature of the Karoo environment. Although Vogel (1988) has already mapped such drought cycles for the eastern Cape from nineteenth century eyewitness accounts, accounts specifically referring to (and made within) the Seacow River valley are considered below. Then as now, droughts were a regular feature of eighteenth and nineteenth century life in the valley. Nicholson, who farmed at Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121) in the 1840's stressed that "droughts are a frequent occurrence, and entail great losses" (1848:94), and again "those terrible droughts ... happen about once in seven years, and prevail for perhaps two or three years in succession" (ibid.:59). His overview of cyclic changes is difficult to check against travellers' reports, however, because they lacked the long-term perspective of a resident farmer. Travellers also became very scarce during droughts because of obvious shortages, especially of fodder and water.

In spite of this, circumstances forced several published travellers to pass through the valley during (or just after) droughts. These include Steedman (1835,I), Smith (Kirby 1939; Lye 1975), Bishop Gray (1849) and Holub (1881 I), many of whom complained of the hardship endured. In 1848 Bishop Gray, for example, "found some difficulty even in procuring sufficient water for our horses" as many of the streams which he came across were "quite dry through the long continued drought" (1849:77). Holub passed through the valley at the end of another long drought in 1879 and noted that he travelled from Colesberg to Cradock via Middelburg, rather than "by the shortest route" (1881,II:457). This was necessitated by the "parched state of the district" and the need "to find better fodder for the bullocks." (ibid.).

Recognizing the gaps in the documentary evidence, it is still possible to identify several drought cycles from both the travellers accounts and from local newspapers. The latter source is particularly informative as drought was a major concern of the newspaper's readership and the editor thus took pains to talk about the drought and to celebrate when droughts were broken. These references to drought are plotted in Table 5-1 in chronological order. Years in which droughts occurred are indicated by a dot (●) with the first mention of the drought during that year quoted in the next column in the table. The sources of the evidence for that quote as well as further references to the drought during that year are then listed.

None of the travellers through the valley in the latter parts of the eighteenth or the first quarter of the nineteenth century mentioned the occurrence of droughts although these certainly were recorded elsewhere in the region. Although Gordon mentioned that "it has rained very little this year" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:88), the abundance of hippo in the Seacow River and the depth of water in 'zeekoegaten' (hippo pools) indicates that he did not travel through the valley during a period of drought. Nine drought cycles can be identified during the remainder of the nineteenth century: 1828 - 1830; 1834; 1848; 1860 - 1862; 1872 - 1875; 1877 - 1878; 1882 - 1889; 1893 and 1896 (see Table 5-1). Droughts occurring during the single years listed could have either begun in the previous year or extended into the next.

5.2.1. Impact of drought on European inhabitants

These droughts naturally affected the environment and its European inhabitants. Many farmers moved away with their stock north over the Orange River and remained there in areas where they could find pasture for their flocks and herds. When Steedman visited Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) in 1830, for example, he found that its owner had recently returned from the opposite side of the Orange River "where they had been with their flocks in consequence of the drought so long prevalent in the Colony." (1835,I:142). The survey diagram drawn up for Wonder Heuvel (NOU.146) in 1830 indicates that this drought was widespread: "all the Farmers of Upper Seacow River, where obliged to migrate with their Stocks beyond the Orange River on account of the lasting Drought; and did not return before this year." (on a copy of the original - S.G. Dgm.B/2/1842). This practice of migrating was also noted by Smith who found on his visit to the valley that "Nearly every inhabitant was ... on the trek ... wandering around in quest of subsistence for their flocks and herds." (Lye 1975:27).

By the middle of the century, however, this response to drought was no longer possible as more and more land became occupied by farmers who lived there all year around. Nicholson related how although his farms in the Sneeuberg (Ruigte Valley and Elands Kloof) could carry "about 5000 or 6000 sheep, 400 head of oxen, and a troop of horses, in ordinary seasons", during the periodic droughts so many animals "would overburden the place" (1848:59). Drought affected valley farmers in numerous ways as the Colesberg Advertiser summed up well in 1878: "From all directions we hear the same story. Dams drying up! Fountains getting weak. Pasturage scarce. Livestock falling off in condition .. " (CA 1878:18,884).

TABLE 5-1: Droughts recorded in sources for the valley - 1770 - 1900

DATE	DROUGHT	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCE
1770			
to			
1776			
1777		"it has rained very little this year"	(Raper and Boucher 1988,I:88)
1778			
to			
1827			
1828	•	DROUGHT	
1829	•	DROUGHT	
1830		"in consequence of the long droughts ... for two years"	(Steedman 1835,I:135)
1831			
1832			
1833			
1834	•	"when such droughts occur as have happened this year" "the extreme drought which had occurred"	(Kirby 1939,I:63) (Kirby 1939,I:67)
1835			
to			
1847			
1848	•	"the streams being ... quite dry through the long continued drought"	(Gray 1849:77)
1849			
to			
1859			
1860	•	"We commenced the year (1860) with a drought almost unprecedented"	(CA 1861:1,1)
1861	•	"farmers ... losing numbers of sheep ... in consequence of the long drought"	(CA 1861:1,39; 1,49)
1862	•	"the continued drought is being felt most severely"	(CA 1862:2,55; 2,79; 2,80; 2,91; 2,94; 2,102)
1863		"the drought broken up"	(CA 1863:3,106)
1864			
to			
1871			
1872	•	"the drought still continues"	(CA 1872:12,708*; 12,800(wn); 12,801(wn); 12,805*)
1873	•	"the drought still continues"	(CA 1873:13,667; 13,678)
1874		"Breaking up of the drought"	(CA 1874:14,724)
1875	•	"the drought still continues"	(CA 1875:15,769; 15,776)
1876		RAIN	
1877	•	"the drought still continues"	(CA 1877:17,833; 17,847; 17,850; 17,879)
1878	•	"This town and district is now feeling the full influence of the severe drought" RAIN - "the flats around town were under water"	(CA 1878:18,884; 18,888;18,922) (CA 1878:18,928)
1879			
1880			
1881			
1882	•	"The drought is very severely felt in this district"	(CA 1882:22, 1079; 22,2014*)
1883	•	"The drought still continues unbroken"	(CA 1883:23,2064; 23, 2071)
1884	•	"the drought still continues"	(CA 1884:23*,2093; 23*,2071(wn); 23*,2078(wn))
1885	•	"The drought is still unbroken"	(CA 1885:24*,2084(wn); 24*,2088(wn); 24*,2107(wn); 24*,2113(wn); 24*,2129(wn))
1886		RAIN - several welcome showers fell here"	(CA 1886:25*,2137(wn))
1887			
1888	•	"Drought - the want of rain is beginning to be severely felt"	(CA 1888:27*, 2282(wn); 27*,2283(wn))
1889	•	"The continuance of cold and drought is becoming a serious matter in this district" RAIN - "We may regard the drought as completely broken up in this district now"	(CA 1889:28*,2318(wn); 28*,2324(wn); 28*,2326(wn)) (CA 1889:28*,2333(wn))
1890			
1891			
1892			
1893	•	""The drought is becoming serious in this district"	(CA 1893:32*,1651)
1894			
1895			
1896	•	"the drought is becoming serious"	(CA 1896:35*,1780; 35*,1813)
1897		RAIN - "The Seacow River ... overflowed its banks"	(CA 1897:36*,1823)
1898			
1899			
1900			

Reports often listed stock losses resulting from the lack of both forage and water during drought years. In January 1862 the Colesberg Advertiser reported that some farmers had to daily send their sheep nine miles to get some water (CA 1862:2,55). Towards the end of this bad drought year the owner of Rietfontein (COL.140) was obliged to abandon his farm as it now had "neither water nor pasturage" (CA 1862:2,94). By December 1862, of 6000 sheep on Kareepoort (PH.120), a farm just west of the valley, 4000 had already died as a result of the drought. "Verscheidene boeren hebben al twee derde van hunne schapen verloren" [Various farmers have already lost two third of their sheep] noted the same article (CA 1862:2,102). Stock loss during periods of drought were common, with particularly new born lambs suffering: "Several farmers in the Lower Hantam and Seacow River wards have lost more than half the seasons lambs" and in exceptional cases "even horned cattle have perished, literally of starvation" (CA 1878:18,922).

When rain did fall, valley farmers, particularly those living along the banks of the Seacow River suffered as a result of flash floods. A newspaper article listed the typical results of a heavy downpour in the region on the farm Bultfontein (COL.11) on the Seacow River: "heavy rain fell on the Thursday, and there was a great rush of water, consequent upon which five dams were burst, three of which were of considerable size. Mr. van der Merwe also lost some fifteen sheep and a few goats, which were drowned in the spruit." (CA 1872:12,627). In this instance, even this amount of water was not enough to break the drought which continued for two more years.

At such times Bushmen and Hottentot farm labourers were discharged from the service of the farmers "because they had no food to give them" (CA 1866:6,307).

5.3. VEGETATION

5.3.1. Introduction

Vegetation was usually mentioned incidentally by travellers, usually as 'grass' or 'Karoo' rather than individual plant species. The three zones of plant-cover in the modern valley are summarized in Chapter 2. Historical sightings in each of the three main zones will be treated in chronological order.

5.3.2. Mountainous regions - the Sneeuberg and the Roodeberg

Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) was the first (1777) to comment on the Sneeuberg plant cover. On the south side he noted: "Having climbed for some time, one comes onto large, flat plains three to four hours in circumference on which grass grows, but absolutely no shrubs or wood." (ibid.:79-80). There were low resinous shrubs in the gorges scattered about the mountain slopes. These shrubs were often burnt by the local inhabitants (ibid.). Moving through the Sneeuberg, he "saw no flowers except yellow irises and white and yellow arctotises." (ibid.:79-80). These would have been the Yellow wild iris (*Dietes bicolor*) and the Cape weed or Cape dandelion

(*Arctotheca calendula*) respectively. The latter flower can be either white or yellow or a combination of the two colours (Pienaar 1984). While still in the Sneeuberg, Gordon's party crossed a "grassy plain" (Raper & Boucher 1988,I:80). After a few days, he neared the northern reaches of the valley and observed that although they were still on the mountain, "the landscape again became caro " (ibid.:81-82). Returning from the north via the same road in November 1777, Gordon ascended the Sneeuberg once more. Arriving at the farm Zuur Plaats (GR.35) just outside the valley rim, Gordon observed that there were "more bushes" (ibid.:97).

John Barrow (1806) left Graaff-Reinet for the interior in October 1797. Passing through the Sneeuberg he described the plants growing on the elevated plains: "tufts of long grass, small heathy shrubs, a beautiful mesembryanthemum with large clusters of small, bright red flowers, and another that seemed to differ in nothing from the former, except in the colour of the petals, which were white." (ibid.:200-201). The mesembryanthemums described here probably belonged to the Delosperma sp. or 'doringlose vygie' which are known to have purple or white flowers (Shearing 1994). A small species of *diosma* (probably the small plant known as the 'breath of heaven' (*Diosma ericoides*) as well as two species of "the iris with tall spikes of flowers, one blue, the other yellow" were also observed (Barrow 1806,I). The latter description tallies with that of the fan iris (*Neomarica caerulea*), a flower tipped with light blue or lilac petals supported by an inner petal purple, yellow or brown in colour (Pienaar 1984).

"The lower parts of the plains were charmingly embroidered with almost the whole tribe of syngenesious plants" (ibid.:200-201). Included among these, Barrow noted, were various species of "*arctotis*, *cineraria*, *aster*, *calendula*, *athanasia*, *tanecetum*, *senecio*, and *gnaphalium*, all of them, at this time, in the height of their bloom." (ibid.: 200-201). Many of these terms, namely the *cineria*, the *aster*, the *calendula*, and the *senecio*, refer to plants of European origin (Pienaar 1984). Their Karoo equivalents were probably any of the numerous daisy-like species known to occur in this region. The arctotis were probably the Cape dandelion referred to above while the term *athanasia* could possibly refer to the 'Vuursiektebossie' (*Athanasia minuta*). The identity of the *Tanecetum* and the *gnaphalium* remains a mystery. Characteristic of the Sneeuberg, however, was the total lack of shrubbery (Barrow 1806,I). Barrow commented that "for miles together these elevated plains produced not a stick." (ibid.:201), although he saw "a dozen small mimosas" i.e. sweet thorn or 'soetdoring' (*Acacia karoo*) later that day up a kloof. Barrow made all these comments shortly before he halted for the night at Cephanjes Poort (MID.143), on his way into the valley.

Di Capelli (De Kock 1965:256) was next to comment about the montane vegetation: "the hills all around are totally bare and stony but with high grass among the farm buildings in this season." (De Kock 1965:256). None of his companions commented concerning the plant cover in the Sneeuberg, nor did Collins or Stockenstrom (Moodie 1960,V; Hutton 1887).

In 1812 Burchell crossed through the valley from the west and took the road into the Sneeuberg (via Vergelegen - RICH.98) where he noted that the grass became more plentiful in the valleys. Also abundant in the declivity's of the mountains, this thick grass was "of a growth equally fine with that which we call 'sheep's fescue-grass.'" (1824,II:88-89). This was probably the

species known as Rescue grass (*Bromus catharticus*). After crossing the highest point of the Sneeuberg, Burchell passed over a fine grassy flat having "a real turf or sod" which however abounded with what he termed "the mat-rush" in many places (ibid.:89). 'Mat-rush' refers to the bulrush. Halting at a mountain farm, Barrow reported that the Rhinoceros bush (*Elytropapus rhinocerotis*) grew abundantly in different parts of the Sneeuberg and that this was the only fuel used by the farmer, other firewood being very scarce.

Casalis in 1832 found himself lost "amongst the tall heather." (1889:127), and later noticed "an aloe" (ibid.:128), probably the widespread *Aloe arborescens* (Pienaar 1984). Riding further he encountered a "thicket of mimosas." (Casalis 1889:128).

Dr. Andrew Smith (Kirby 1939; Lye 1975) in 1834 provided some of the most detailed information on drought-stricken vegetation. In mid-winter at the crest of the Sneeuberg he was appalled by the scarcity of plant cover and feared for the safety of his cattle. No grass was visible in any direction, with only low, stunted bushes covering the soil. "In no direction was anything like verdure to be seen and except an occasional tuft of withered grass or the woody remains of some dwarf shrub, nothing appeared to testify that vegetation had ever existed there." (Lye 1975:18-19). Knots of grass were thinly distributed in the valleys and slopes of the hills near to their bases. Smith was told that after summer rains, this situation would alter and grass would become very abundant, providing ample grazing for both sheep and cattle. Moving through the hills of the Sneeuberg to Zuurplaats (GR.35), the valleys became "covered with elephant grass, dried and withered, together with long rushes." (ibid.:60).

Two years later in 1836, Cornwallis Harris (1838) on the same road could see that "the vegetation became visibly more abundant" (ibid.:31) as he climbed the south slopes. He was probably copying Burchell who saw on the same stretch of road "what is the greatest rarity in Southern Africa, a real turf or sod, though in many places abounding in the mat-rush." (Burchell 1824,II:89). Harris wrote: "that greatest of all rarities in South Africa, a real turf or sod, was to be seen, interspersed with mat rushes." (ibid.:31). While Burchell (1953,II) noted the abundance of the Rhinoceros bush in the mountains and the use of this wood as fuel in the house of Piet 'Dikwang' (Zuurplaats - GR.35), Harris, 24 years later observed that "barely a sufficient quantity of fuel" from the Rhinoceros bush, "could be obtained for culinary purposes" near Zuurplaats (GR.35) (1838:32).

Backhouse (1844) went over into the Roodeberg from the flats around modern Middelburg in 1839, noting that the countryside became "more grassy" (ibid.:338). He (ibid.) spent the next day in a mountain kloof (Naauw Poort - NOU.1), where he thought he saw a species of Thalictrum [found in England] which was probably the shrub Van Wyks Brak (*Galenia sarcophylla*) which it superficially resembles (Shearing 1994). Returning though the Sneeuberg, Backhouse saw crimson flowers growing among rocks: "the pretty Cyrtanthus rupestris" (1844:485). The Fire Lilly or 'Kleinrooipypie' (*Cyrtanthus parvifloris*), a species of small, bright red flowers best fits this description (Shearing 1994).

In 1843, Nicholson (1848) crossed the Sneeuberg mountains and settled on the farms Ruigte Valley (RICH.122) and Elands Kloof (RICH.121) in the foothills of the Sneeuberg. En route to

these farms he crossed the plains near where Middelburg is today and then crossed between the Agter-Rhenosterberg (the old Roodeberg) and the Rhenosterberg mountains to reach his farms. The vegetation of the hills was "small tussocks of a greyish coloured grass" (ibid.:56). He described the pasturage on his farm as good, and proceeded to massively overstock it.

5.3.3. The valley plains

The plains form the largest of the three ecozones, and all travellers had to cross them. Not everyone saw fit to comment on their vegetation cover. Again, Gordon in 1777 was the earliest to do so. He passed first through "a marshy valley" at Dasses Fontein (RICH.117) before arriving at Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120). The veld which they had crossed that day was "mainly grassland ... but sometimes *caro*" (Raper & Boucher 1988,I:82). The further hey descended, the more flowers they encountered: "irises, mesembryanthemums, moraeas, and many blue violets." (ibid.). These were probably the Yellow wild iris, the family Mesembryanthemaceae, the Moraea (e.g. the yellow *Moraea aristata*) and the blue-lilac German or Persian violet (*Exacum affine*) (Pienaar 1984). The Mesembryanthemaceae include a variety of daisy-like flowers growing on herbaceous or woody shrubs known as the 'Vygie family' (Pienaar 1984:12). Cutting north-east across the valley towards the Klein Seekoei River, they rode across "a large, level plain, half caro and half grassveld, called 'gebroken veld'" by local farmers (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:83-85). They encamped on the grassy banks of the 'Champagnes Poort River' or the Klein Seekoei River (ibid.).

Farther down stream the soil was "russet clay" less compact than elsewhere, and covered with "mostly grassveld" and "occasional low shrubland" (ibid.:86). Apart from the yellow and white arctotises described earlier and some small mesembryanthemums, no flowers were observed (ibid.). Near Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) "the landscape [was] for the most part sweet grassveld, here and there caro and gebroken velt, mainly level, but now and then undulating slightly." (ibid.:87). Again, he saw arctotises and some small blue mesembryanthemums (possibly either *Conophytum circumpunctatum* or *C. jacobsenianum*, both of which have small purple-blue flowers) (Pienaar 1984). The lower reaches of the Seacow River had reeds and low shrubs growing out of a different sort of soil. Returning again on the flats, the vegetation was "once again grassy" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:95), but greener as a result of the rain. They passed 'Gordon's Fountain' (on Dwaal Fountain - HAN.29) surrounded by tall reeds (ibid.). Encamping the following night close to their earlier camp at the Klein Seekoei River, the party were forced to spend the night without lighting a fire as they could not find any bushes with which to make one (ibid.).

In 1797 Barrow was heading towards Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) across "a level country, consisting chiefly of meadow ground" (Barrow DATE:208). Although watered by numerous springs and small rills, it was "destitute of every appearance of a bush or shrub." (ibid.). The Seacow River banks were covered with tall reeds, "the *arundo phragmites*" (ibid.:209) and not a tree or shrub grew there. The reeds described were probably Common reed or 'fluitjiesriet' (*Phragmites australis*) (Shearing 1994).

Of Governor Janssens' party, only Van Reenan (Blommaert and Wiid 1937), while crossing through the Roodeberg towards the valley, noted that every local colonist had special farms in the low country "which is called Caroo, and which consists of a reddish soil overgrown with shrubs named vygebosjes " (ibid.:231-33). Although excellent for sheep. "it is an 'opslagveld' and only becomes good in the winter owing to the frequent rains, at which time it is very fertile and also provides grass for the cattle." (ibid.). Blommaert and Wiid note that 'opslag' refers to any small short-lived vegetation which sprung up immediately after rains, filling in the open spaces between the Karoo bushes. Van Reenan observed that "this Caroo" was evident at the foot of the Sneeuberg, "along the Zeekoe River, Wolvenkop, Fenter Fontein and the Rhenosterbergen" (ibid.:231-23). 'Fenter Fontein' was Mooyfontein (now Morgenwacht - COL.109) on the valley plains while Wolve Kop (MID.12) was just outside the valley close to modern Middelburg. The valley plains were therefore undoubtedly covered with Karoo scrub species at that date.Vegetation across the valley flats received no further mention on the northward route although all four writers (Plumptre 1815,II; Godee-Molsbergen 1932; Blommaert and Wiid 1937; De Kock 1965) noted the tall reeds surrounding a spring on Rietfonteinpoort (COL.186), north-east of the valley. They then proceeded to the Orange River. Returning across the valley plains, *en route* south to Van Plettenberg's Beacon, Van Reenan noted that "Caroo and grass-veld alternate." (ibid.:237-39). He (ibid.) added that the inhabitants prefer the Karoo veld for grazing their sheep, only using the Sneeuberg when forced to do so.

Three years later, in 1812, Burchell (1953,II) *en route* to Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) saw "the uniformity, and karro-like nature, of the country, every where apparently destitute of water." (ibid.:79-80), but not a single tree in the entire district. Coming to the farm Vergelegen (RICH.98) he did find a garden composed of "poplars, pine trees, willows, roses, and peach trees" (ibid.: 88) which had been introduced.

In 1820, Campbell (1822,II), on reaching Hephzibah, close to the Orange River noted "bushes." (ibid.:308). Entering the valley via Ventersvalley (PH.129) he observed a small amount of grass near some water before crossing the valley plains and arriving on the banks of the Seacow River in "that part of Africa producing no trees, and hardly a bush" (ibid.:314-15). From the Seacow River, he headed towards Toverberg, describing the numerous koppies and hills dotted about this region as "neither clothed with trees, bushes, or verdure, the surface consisting of only dull, withered grass, or brown and dark red, coloured stones." (ibid.:316). Leaving Toverberg, Campbell crossed the plains in the vicinity of Vanderwaltsfontein where he recorded evergreen trees and bushes on the dolerite dikes and hills (ibid.). At Wonder Heuvel (NOU.140) game was feeding on "low bushes" (ibid.:323). Thompson (1827,I) reached Bischuitfontein (COL.26) and Hamelfontein (COL.10) where the soil on the plains appeared more fertile and that the plains were covered with "fine grass" (ibid.:56).

Steedman (1835,I) in 1830 moved across "a fine open district covered with low shrubs and bushes." (ibid.:135). At Wonder Heuvel, the fountain had been planted with "a cluster of fine lofty trees" (ibid.:143).

Smith (Kirby 1939; Lye 1975), moving down valley towards Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) saw very little grass. Long rushes grew in the central portions, otherwise "Everywhere the country presents a most barren appearance." (Kirby 1939:61). He (Lye 1975) noted that one hue dominated a persons perception when they looked over the valley - black. The effect was such that Smith recorded that it seemed as if the grass of the districts had recently been consumed by fire although this was not the case: "we soon discovered it was the appearance usually presented by the country between the Sneubergen and the Orange River." (ibid.:27). This countryside was only thinly covered by black bushes which were between six inches and a foot in height. The "verdure of vegetation", he continued, "was only exhibited there during seasons favoured with abundant rains" (Lye 1975:27). However, such rains often did not occur for a number of years (ibid.). The plains between Gordons Fontein (HAN.111) and Colesberg "presented nothing but the bare soil or at most that sparingly sprinkled, here and there, with the withered remains of a few small shrubs." (ibid.:27). The grass was withered and dry. Returning to the colony in 1837 from the interior, Harris (1838:337) commented of the countryside between the Orange River and Colesberg: "not a blade of grass met the eye".

Riding over the rough hills between Naauw Poort (NOU.1) and Carolus Poort (NOU.166), Backhouse saw "a little grass among the low bushes." (1844:338). Later, at Kuilfontein (COL.115) he recorded a few small bushes on the hills surrounding the farm and trees only rarely "a stunted wild Olive, of arborescent growth" and a "strong" bush of a Rhus species (probably the Karee - *Rhus lancea*)(ibid.:341). The plains between there and Colesberg were covered with "short, dry grass" (ibid.:341). On his return to the valley from the north, Backhouse (1844) outspanned among some bushes on what was probably Amoy Alias Overschot (HAN.105). At Perdefontein (RICH.138), they outspanned near a pool in the shelter of some tall 'rushes' (bulrushes) (ibid.). Of Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) he notes: "these places are generally surrounded by a wilderness of scattered bushes, mid-leg high, with a little grass, in tufts, browsed by sheep and larger cattle" (ibid.:484). Finally leaving the valley, Backhouse outspanned in the Sneeuberg close to Vergelegen (RICH.98) where there was both water and a "little grass" (ibid.:484). Among the rocks he reported some beautiful "rosy salmon" coloured flowers which he thought resembled Toad-flax (ibid.:484) but was probaby 'Kruidjie-roer-my-nie' (*Melianthus major*), a perennial shrub which when touched leaves a strong odour (Shearing 1994).

In 1844, Nicholson crossed the plains at modern Middelburg which "were plentifully supplied with tufts of the best kinds of 'karroo' bush" (1848:56).

In early Spring 1844 Cumming (1855) crossed the plains east of the valley where "the country continued much the same; wide Karroo plains bounded by abrupt rocky mountains." (ibid.:86). He then spent some time in Colesberg before heading west across what he termed "the vast Karoo plains" (ibid.:91-92) to the Seacow River.

Arriving in Colesberg in 1848, Baines (Kennedy 1961,I) described the surrounding dolerite koppies as covered with "the green brengt aan bush and a bright yellow-flowered shrub." (ibid.:99).

Bishop Grey (1849) also journeyed to Colesberg in 1848. Crossing the plains to the east of the valley, he noted that "nothing ... but a kind of bush" grew over them (ibid.:72). Returning to the valley from Graaff-Reinet two years later, he simply noted that "the country from Richmond to Colesberg is like the rest of the Karroo, dreary, dry and monotonous" (1852:15).

James Lycett (1864), the Chief Constable at Middelburg wrote to his sister in 1864: "the country hereabouts consists for the most part of perfect flats, from one to ten miles across ... [they] are covered with a mean-looking scrubby bush, not more than twelve inches high" (ibid.:9). All types of stock flourished to such an extent by feeding on these plants that a visitor to the region would be astonished at the big-tailed sheep and healthy cattle and horses resulting. Lycett recorded how he arrived in the Middleburg district in the midst of a drought and that nothing but the stumps of bushes could be observed "sticking out here and there" (ibid.:10). Sheep and cattle however remained in a fair condition which Lycett attributed to the "highly nutritious qualities of the 'karroo-bush'" (ibid.:10). Although many farms covered thousands of acres, very little wood was available. He observed "only one species (a sort of thorn) that grows to any size" (ibid.:10) which although useless for timber was used as fuel. Another letter (1865) explains that, owing to the long periods without rain, no pretty flowers were to be found in the district. A number of succulent plants curious and some of them pretty" (ibid.:15) were plentiful. Many plants and bulbs in the region were referred to as "air-plants" (ibid.:15), but he does not say why.

A number of years later, in 1872, Holub (1881,I:39) noted "grass and bushwood" covering the heights around Colesberg. This was "at so low a growth that from a distance they have the appearance of being almost destitute of vegetation."(ibid.:39).

Poetry in the Colesberg Advertiser for 1876 includes: "But here the Olive tree does not abound - The `besom bosches' grow instead of them. Here it is said the Bushmen once were found, Though here's few bushes. I shall not condemn ..." (CA 1876:16,799). The 'besembos' or 'basterkareeboom' (*Rhus dregeana*) is a small tree not growing higher than 1.4 m (Shearing 1994). The long, elongated leaflets give this tree its name.

The editor of the Colesberg Advertiser crossed the flats outside town in 1892 (CA 1892:31,1561[wn]), noting "the veld presented a pleasant green to the eye, dotted with many little flowers." (ibid.).

5.3.4. **The Lower Gorge and Confluence with the Orange River**

Because of the abundance of water flowing in the Orange river, the plant growth along this river (and at the mouth of the Seacow) contrasts strongly with the rest of the valley. In 1797, Barrow saw the banks fringed with "the Karroo mimosa, the willow of Babylon, and the rhus viminalis." (ibid.:251). These trees were the Withaak thorn (*Acacia heterocanta*), the Cape willow (*Salix mucronata*) and the White karee (*Rhus viminalis*) respectively.

In 1803, some of the Governor's party followed a hippopotamus track along the Seacow River for fifteen miles "through reeds and thick shrubbery" (Blommaert and Wiid 1937:250) until

they emerged from a narrow defile to its outlet into the Orange River (ibid.). Coming to the Orange River, Van Reenan commented that wood was scarce throughout the valley although a small amount of "willow wood" (ibid.:237) was obtainable at this larger river.

Willow and thorn trees were therefore characteristic of the vegetation along the Orange River as Collins remarked that its banks were lined with both willow and mimosa trees (Moodie 1960,V). Years later, in 1848, the same two trees still grew alongside the Orange river as Cole (1852) was astounded by the broad waters bordered with willows and mimosas. Later that year, Baines also commented on the large "Babylonian willows" (Kennedy 1961,I:100) growing on the river banks. Cole (1852) was in the deep gorges of the lower valley in 1848 (possibly the farm Tweede Poort - COL.22), when he set out to hunt: "We groped on through the stunted bush, which had the most wicked thorns in the world." (ibid.:220). These bushes were probably Withaak bushes (*Acacia heterocanta*) named after their large thorns. They went through his corduroy trousers, but not through his farmer companion's "leather crackers" (ibid.:219).

5.3.5. The impact of seasonality on the environment

Observations made by travellers concerning the dominant vegetation could however be misleading if the season in which the observation was made is ignored. If, for example, the traveller traversed the valley during the spring and summer months, he would be more likely to observe grass growing between the Karoo scrub. This grass would have been particularly prevalent after the first spring rains. During the dryer, winter months, grass can dissappear entirely, particularly during drought years. In wetter years, grass could still occur during these winter months. The seasons in which these travellers commented on the valley vegetation are tabulated below (see Table 5-2) and the dominant vegetation observed by that traveller during that season is listed. Where drought could have impacted the environment, this is also indicated. Only the observations pertaining to the vegetation of the valley plains is included in this table.

Table 5-2: Seasons in which eighteenth and nineteenth century traveller's commented on the vegetation (including the effects of drought)

TRAVELLER	DATE OF JOURNEY	SEASON	DROUGHT	DOMINANT VEGETATION
Gordon (1777)	November	Spring	No	Grassveld in lower valley Grassveld/ Karoo in upper valley
Barrow (1797)	October	Spring	No	Apparently grassland
Janssens' party (1803)	July	Winter	No	Karoo
Burchell (1812)	March	Autumn	No	Karoo
Campbell (1820)	September	Spring	No	Karoo - some grass
Steedman (1830)	November	Spring	Yes	Karoo
Smith (1835)	August	Winter	Yes	Karoo
Harris (1837)	January	Summer	No	Karoo
Backhouse (1839)	June	Winter	No	Karoo - some grass
Nicholson (1844)	Not given	Not given	No	Karoo
Cumming (1848)	October/ November	Spring	Yes	Karoo
Gray (1849)	November	Summer	Yes	Karoo
Lycett (1864)	Not given	Not Given	No	Karoo

From this table it is clear that the type of vegetation which travellers observed *en route* through the Seacow River valley was indeed dependent on the season during which they passed through the region and the amount of rainfall in that year (i.e. the occurrence of drought or not). All travellers observing grassveld (such as Gordon and Barrow) made these observations during spring. Gordon, for example, commented on the lack of rain in 1777 as he entered the valley, but during his journey, heavy spring rains fell, with a resulted increase in the amount of grass. In contrast to these spring travellers, the two travellers (Steedman and Cumming) who observed only Karoo scrub species during spring were travelling through the countryside during, or just after, bad drought years, hence the lack of grass.

5.3.6. Discussion

The three ecozones can be clearly distinguished in the eighteenth and nineteenth century reports. In the Sneeuberg mountains, tussock grass was observed as the dominant vegetation from late in the eighteenth century, all the way through to the end of the nineteenth century. Shrub species grew in gorges and ravines while occasional clumps of mimosas were also observed. Drainage channels and streams were surrounded by reeds.

The third ecozone, the lower gorge and confluence, is similarly visible in the record. Thorn trees, willows and karee trees then grew along its banks as they still do today.

Vegetation on the vast valley plains appears less homogenous from these records. The difference in the dominant type of vegetation observed was, however, not a result of overgrazing as has been argued by Acock's (1988), but instead corresponded to both the season in which the observation was made and the amount of rainfall (or lack of it) that had fallen during that season. As a result, the vegetation cover of the valley plains during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was probably a continually changing mosaic of Karoo scrub and grass species as a result.

5.4. THE UTILIZATION OF PARTICULAR KAROO PLANTS

5.4.1. The tanning of hides

The tanning of hides, from both game animals and domestic livestock was an important activity on many valley farms, not only for providing the farmer with products such as clothing and shoes for his family, but also for purposes of trade. Steedman (1835,I:137) in 1830, for example noted that farmers from the interior brought their produce "consisting of ... ox hides, &c. for barter with the inhabitants" of Graaff-Reinet. Orpen gave a helpful description of the equipment needed for tanning such hides when he noted that a neighbouring farmer was requested to examine "the skins and pieces of hide-tanning in our 'cuyps', deep receptacles made of quagga hides, slung to four horizontal bars in a square, supported on upright posts, so that they bagged down when filled with

tanning liquor." (1908:13). A species of Karoo bush was used to manufacture this 'tanning liqour' which Orpen said they "used to make, by soaking, the bruised leaves and bark of a bush called 'bergbast'" (ibid.). The condition of this bush, the Berg Bas (*Osyris compressa*) (Watt & Breyer-Brandwijk 1962) on the Karoo landscape must therefore have been adversely affected by what was probably a common practice.

5.4.2. The production of soap (and candles)

Fat obtained from melting down the fat of sheep and cattle (tallow) was used for both the manufacture of candles and the production of soap. Steedman, for example, listed "tallow" as one of the items traded by interior farmers with the inhabitants of Graaff-Reinet in 1830. Only Orpen (1908) mentioned the manufacture of candles, while the manufacture of soap was commented upon more regularly. Burchell (1953,II:81) in 1812 described how the fat from sheep consumed daily on farms "was considered almost equal in value to the rest of the carcass" owing to the production of soap from this fat. He noted that originally the "alkali necessary for this manufacture, was obtained ... from the Ganna - (or Kanna) bosch" (ibid.:81), but by the time he travelled through the valley, this bush had all been consumed owing to the constant demand for it. This bush was probably the Ganna (*Salsola dealata*) (Shearing 1994). "Another species of Salsola" was therefore taken as a substitute and was according to Burchell (1924,II:81) found to be preferable to the ganna. At Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) in the valley, he observed a large number of cakes of soap which had been piled up to harden so that they could be transported to Cape Town for sale (ibid.). First Steedman (1835,II) and then Nicholson (1848:48) mentioned the importance of soap as "saleable commodities produced on a stock farm."

In 1847, Orpen (1908:13) detailed the processes involved in soap manufacture. He related how "the soap ... was a-making in a huge boiler where it used to be boiled for a week, at least in the old times." The alkali used for the manufacture of this soap was even in Orpens time "made from the ashes of a bush called lidjes ganna" which he (ibid.) noted grew on the farm. This plant was therefore not totally eradicated in the valley even in the middle of the century, contrary to what Burchell suggested. Gradually, however, this species of bush must have been totally eradicated through continued use in the manufacture of soap which Orpen noted was one of the "staple manufactures on almost every farm." (ibid.).

The popularity of the use of this bush for the manufacture of soap is exemplified by a farmer whom Cumming (1855,I) met on the plains on the road from Burghersdorp to Colesberg. This impoverished farmer lived off the money "obtained by manufacturing ashes" (ibid.:68). He cut down these bushes, piled them up on the plains to dry and then burnt them. The ashes were then collected and packed into "raw skins of hartebeests and zebras [quaggas]" (ibid.), whereupon this farmer loaded them onto a wagon and travelled from farm to farm, selling these ashes which were needed for the manufacture of soap (ibid.).

Therefore, although it is clear that the influx of Europeans did affect the plant cover of the valley in various ways, this effect was nowhere near as profound as Acock's (1988) would have us believe. Overgrazing no doubt gradually impacted the more palatable Karoo scrub but it did wholly alter the nature of the valley's major plant community.

CHAPTER 6 - THE BUSHMEN OF THE SEACOW RIVER VALLEY

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Travellers and farmers moving into the Seacow River valley from the 1770's did not move into a landscape covered with grass and bush, and inhabited only by large herds of wild game. Although in 1803 Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II) voiced the opinion that "The Bosjesmans did not originally inhabit the countries whence they now carry on their most injurious warfare against the colonists ... [but that] it was the wealth of the colonists which first attracted them thither, from their own proper districts on the banks of the Great River" - such a scenario was definitely not the case. Bushmen had occupied the Seacow River valley for centuries prior to European arrival (see Chapter 1) and Bushmen hunter-gatherers undeniably occupied the valley when farmers and travellers first moved into the region.

Indeed, the first documented account of an expedition into the valley -that of Van Jaarsveld (Moodie 1960,III) - had the primary aim of hunting down these Bushmen. From then on, the Bushmen formed a major focus of any journey into what was then coined 'Bushmanland'. Three initial contacts which Van Jaarsveld had with Bushmen are illustrative of the different processes by which travellers (and commando members) generally came across Bushmen. First, on entering the valley Van Jaarsveld "came unexpectedly upon one of the cattle stealers", a Bushman (ibid.:44). Next, on setting up camp alongside the Seacow River, "Sixteen Bosmans came out of the mountains to the south, to us ..." (ibid.) and thirdly, the commando moved away and waited until the Bushmen gathered together in a large group before they surprised them and "... Over threw the robbers there" (ibid.), killing 122 Bushmen. Although this report was made during a particularly violent period of contact between Bushmen and Europeans, it makes the point that Bushmen were either encountered during the course of a traveller's (or commando member's) journey across the valley (i.e. the traveller approached the Bushmen); or the Bushmen visited the traveller while he journeyed across the landscape (i.e. the Bushmen approached the traveller), or alternatively, the travellers (or commando members) attacked or visited the Bushmen camps.

Once contact was made with Bushmen, these travellers questioned them on particular aspects of their life style, or recorded their observations concerning these people. They were especially interested in (1) their material culture, (2) the means by which they procured food, (3) their camps and (4) their social organization. Their comments regarding these aspects have therefore been separated out from the travellers texts and are each discussed below. The aim of this section is not only to illustrate what travellers recorded concerning the Bushmen hunter-gatherers occupying the valley, but to synthesise this in order to clarify how they lived when Europeans first arrived in the region. Some of the texts referred to below use the word 'Hottentot' rather than 'Bushmen' when discussing the Seacow valley population, but it is highly unlikely that an ethnic

distinction was implied. 'Hottentot' became the abbreviated term for 'Bushman-Hottentot' which was the earliest ethnic label applied to these people.

6.2. MATERIAL CULTURE

Visitors to the Seacow River valley made numerous observations concerning the items of material culture which they observed the Bushmen producing or utilizing. They were especially interested in those aspects of the Bushmen's material culture which were considered unique and out of the ordinary, particularly to their western mindsets. Much of their attention was therefore focused on Bushmen arms, specifically bows and arrows, which apart from having an appeal owing to the danger which they represented, were also considered characteristic of the Bushmen themselves. Instruments used to procure food and containers in which water was transported were only mentioned in passing, while many writers commented at length on the particular clothes (or lack of clothing) that Bushmen were seen in. Bushmen habitations at their camps (see 6.3) were also occasionally described, although such description was generally very superficial.

6.2.1. Arms

6.2.1.1. *Bows*

According to Barrow (1806,I) Bushman bows observed around Graaff-Reinet differed in no way from those of the Hottentots seen farther south. "The bow was a plain piece of wood from the guerrie bosch, which is apparently a species of Rhus; and sometimes the Hassagai wood is used for the same purpose." (ibid.:99). The 'guerrie bosch' refers to the Karee bush, *Rhus lancea*, which is a tough, durable wood (Palmer and Pitman 1961). Barrow's 'Hassegai wood' remains uncertain, since the assegai tree (*Curtisia dentata*) is found only in rainforest (ibid.). Barrow gives the bow string length as three feet long and composed "of the fibres of the dorsal muscles of the spring-bok twisted into a cord." (ibid.:99). Although Karee Bush is present in the Seacow valley, the preferred wood in the lower and mid valley may have been the hardier Bloubos (*Diospyros* sp.).

In 1797 Barrow was taken to a large Bushman camp near Toverberg where he witnessed one man shot by a Dutch farmer who said he had "a drawn bow" aimed at him (ibid.:229). The young boys at this camp "carried their bows with them and were well accustomed to their use from an early age". Later accounts give no useful details of bow construction. In 1803 bows were reported at nearby Van der Walts fontein (Plumptre 1815,II:50) and bows were bartered at the Orange River (De Kock 1965). They were reported near Toverberg again by Evans in 1815 (CWMA 6:72 - 21.12.1815) and were used in a personal squabble at the mission station the same year (Steytler 1956a:85). In 1830 Steedman (1835,I:148) reported them at Carolus Poort, and they are again mentioned in 1862 in an ambiguous account of a violent encounter near Colesberg (CA 1862:2,66). This is the most recent surviving report of the bow still in use.

6.2.1.2. *Arrows*

Although Barrow (1806,I:99) has the earliest description of a typical Bushman arrow from near Graaff-Reinet in 1797, metal was already being used to arm the tips. In one end of the two foot long reed "was inserted a piece of highly polished solid bone from the leg of an ostrich, round, and about five inches in length" (ibid.). To this was attached "a small sharp piece of iron of the form of an equilateral triangle; and the same string of sinews that bound this tight to the bone, ... The string tied in also at the same time a piece of sharp quill pointed towards the opposite end of the arrow" (ibid.). His illustration entitled 'A Bosjesman in Armour' (ibid.:238-9) shows the quill barb clearly.

Di Capelli's description of arrows used by Bushmen at modern Holle Fontein (COL.38) near the Seacow/Orange confluence in 1803 differs only in the detail of the barb. Thus: "it is constructed so ingeniously that it cannot fail to be deadly, having a head contrived of a piece of reed, a length of bone and a triangular iron point to which are attached barbed hooks made of splintered shafts of a feather imbedded in the paste of the poison and designed to break off on striking the body in such a way that it cannot be withdrawn." (De Kock 1965:258).

There had been little change except in barb design by 1830 when Steedman at Carolus Poort (NOU.166) saw arrows "... about two feet long, formed of a slender reed, at the top of which is fixed a slight piece of the leg-bone of the ostrich, three or four inches in length; and on this is fastened a sharp iron point, barbed and covered with the most deadly poison; an inch below the point are fastened, transversely, two pieces of sharp-pointed quill, forming a second barb, which not only renders the weapon more difficult to extract but, by lacerating the flesh, causes a greater absorption of the poison." (Steedman 1835,I:148). This account is also the first to mention that the point was removable: "they carefully removed the barbed point, and proceeded to display their skill as marksmen." (ibid:149).

6.2.1.2.1. Mode of Firing arrows

Firing of these arrows could be by deliberate aim or by massed volleys, and Barrow noted both methods. On confronting a farmer who had fired on the Toverberg camp, he was answered: "Good God ! ... have you not seen a shower of arrows falling upon us?" (Barrow 1806,I:229). Soon afterwards, a Bushman was shot dead. He had reportedly crept up close to a colonist, "and was in the act of taking a deliberate aim with his drawn bow", when another colonist realized his intentions and shot him (ibid.). In 1830, Steedman gave the most vivid account: "there was no cautious aiming; but a quick, playful sort of a jerk, they sent their arrows, one after another, in rapid succession none of which fell very short of the mark, sufficiently showing me the extent of their dexterity in the use of the bow." (Steedman 1835,I:148). The [iron-weighted] tips of the arrows had been removed, so that these were just the reed shafts. The last reference to firing a bow and arrow is that mentioned under Bows above (6.2.1).The Colesberg Advertiser (CA 1862:2,66) reported that a Bushman was supposed to have aimed at a farmer "apparently with intent to shoot

him" (ibid.). This is contradicted in a later entry (CA 1862:2,69) which denies that a bow and arrow was involved.

The maximum range of these arrows was alluded to by two travellers. Thompson visited a Bushmen kraal in the vicinity of Modern Petrusville where they demonstrated both the accuracy of their aim and "the great distance to which they could shoot their slender but dangerous arrows." (1827,I:57-58). Di Capelli states that the Bushmen were capable of firing their arrows with accuracy to about 200 yards (De Kock 1965:158).

6.2.1.2.2. Arrow Poison

Gordon was the first to specifically mention "poisoned arrows" (Raper and Boucher 1988:195), found lying in the veld at T'zamenkomst (COL.57). They had been dropped in haste the previous night, probably when Gordon had fired into the dark (ibid.). There are so many subsequent references, that these are best organized under sub-topics.

Sources of arrow poison

Somewhere in the Sneeuberg in 1797 Barrow was taken to a cave where "a part of the upper surface of the cavern was covered with a thick coating of a black substance, that externally had the appearance of pitch. In consistence, tenacity, and color, of a brownish black, it resembled Spanish liquorice. The smell was slightly bituminous, but faint, and rather offensive." (Barrow 1806,I:194-195). Heated with a candle, it gave off a liquid described as "a black coaly substance" (ibid). Barrow was warned by the accompanying farmers "if the smallest particle got into the eye the sight of it would be lost for ever; that it was deadly poison, and used by the Hottentots to smear the points of their arrows." (ibid.). The farmers also told him that several of their companions had suffered lingering deaths "from wounds received with arrows poisoned with the *klip gift*, or rock poison" (ibid.).

Shaw *et al.* (1963:6) identified this as 'Klipsweet' or the residue of evaporated hyracium (Hyrax urine), but Skinner and Smithers (1990) correctly point out that hyracium can only accumulate on top of rocks, not on cave ceilings, and that hyracium is well known for its healing properties. Schapera suggested a mineral source from the rock itself "there are hints that it may have been some form of arsenic, which was probably heated till it became liquid and then the arrows were dipped into it."(Schapera 1925:203-204), but the basis of his interpretation is not clear and the question has yet to be resolved.

Di Capelli listed several more plausible sources in 1803 at the Orange river: "the poisons, obtained from bulbs, shrubs or snakes, differ according to the sort of game they wish to kill." (De Kock 1965:258). Steedman at Carolus Poort some 30 years later also noted that the Bushmen obtain the poison for their arrows "from plants indigenous to the country, as well as from the Cobra di Capello, and other venomous snakes" (Steedman 1835, I.:148-49). Shaw et al. (1963:3-4)

suggest that *Acocanthera venenata*, *Haemanthus toxicaria*, and various Euphorbia species are the plants most readily available in the eastern and central Cape.

Application of poison to arrows

According to Barrow, the string binding the bone link shaft to the reed arrow shaft "served also to contain the poison between the threads and over the surface, which was applied in the consistence of wax or varnish." (Barrow 1806,I:99). He also described how Bushmen boys carried "a few small brushes to lay on the poison" (ibid.:243). Di Capelli reported that the "barbed hooks made of the splintered shafts of a feather [were] imbedded in the paste of the poison" (De Kock 1965:258), while Steedman noted that the sharp iron point was barbed "and covered with the most deadly poison" (1835,I:148). The Bushmen whom he saw "carried a soft lump of the poison rolled up in a piece of skin" (ibid.:148-49). Just before shooting, the Bushmen removed this piece of skin from the top of the quiver, where it was stored, and "rubbed [it] on the point of their arrows" (ibid.). Application methods probably differed slightly according to the poison in use and the target selected.

Effects on Game

Steedman described the effects a poisoned arrow had on an animal: "when they wound an antelope, it generally bounds away with the arrow fixed in its flesh, until it becomes 'drunk', when it staggers and falls" (1835,I:149-50).

There are three surviving reports of encounters with valley Bushmen out hunting with bows and poisoned arrows. The first was by Evans who saw Bushmen near Toverberg, just returning from such a hunt with unnamed prey (CWMA 6:72 - 21.12.1815). The second was by Thompson (1827,I) in 1823 who saw a Bushman at Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) who had just killed a gnu "with his poisoned arrows." Before the carcass was carried back to his hut, however, the hunter had cut out and discarded the piece of flesh which the arrow had pierced (ibid.). Far west of here and "past the habitation of the remotest colonist" he came across several Bushmen kraals where "now and then the men succeed in killing game with their poisoned arrows" (ibid.:58). The third is Steedman (1835,I) at Carolus Poort (NOU.166) where the Bushmen were reportedly out looking for springbok.

Effects on Livestock

With the influx of colonists into their territories, the Bushmen turned to using poisoned arrows to kill their sheep, cattle, horses and guard dogs. The earliest recovered account of arrows fired by Seacow river Bushmen is in the 1775 commando report of Adriaan van Jaarsveld (Moodie 1960,III). Two horses of an unnamed Sneeuberg farmer were reported wounded with arrows and one soon died, presumably of poisoning. A fortnight later, the farmer lost another, killed "by the thieves with an arrow" (ibid.:43). At Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124) one of the cattle was seriously

wounded by arrows. Also at Sneeuwkuil, two of the pursuers' dogs were killed by arrows fired at them (ibid.). At Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120) Gordon saw hides of four cattle recently killed "with the poisoned arrows of Bushmen" (Raper & Boucher 1988,I:96).

At the end of the Sneeuberg war, Barrow, addressing the occupants of the Toverberg kraal, asked them to tell their fellow Bushmen that should they desist from stealing sheep and rather approach the farmers "without bow and arrows, or other weapons" and ask for help, they would be given sheep by the farmers (Barrow 1806,I:231).

Effects on Farmers and Herdsmen

The poison was dreaded by local farmers because it was widely know to be fatal. The first recorded death is that of a certain Van der Walt who was killed by a poisoned arrow somewhere in mid-valley in 1776. Gordon visited his grave in 1777 (Raper and Boucher 1988,I). In 1775 Van Jaarsveld repeatedly emphasised in his report on the Blauw Bank massacre (Moodie 1960,III) that commando members were hit by arrows, but "not mortally" (ibid.:85). One 'Stephanus Vorie', was wounded with an arrow while four other colonists were "hit with arrows through their clothes." (ibid.:45). Another colonist was hit when the commando attacked a Bushmen kraal in the Roodeberg north of Carolus Poort (NOU.166). In the attack on the cavern at Blydefontein (NOU.168) yet another colonist was hit in the neck by an arrow (ibid.).

On such occasions, even though the person struck by the arrow did not die, they could be permanently harmed by the effects of the poison. An example of this is another 'VanderWalt' at Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) whom Thompson recorded had been "wounded about thirty years ago by a Bushmen's arrow" and he still suffered because of the wound (1827,I:57).

Those who suffered most were the Hottentot herdsmen in charge of livestock at the time of a Bushman attack (cf. Moodie 1960,III). Thus, on an unnamed Sneeuberg farm, the lifeless body of the herdsman had been discovered, presumably killed by arrows. At Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124), the farmer himself may have come under fire from arrows. When the caretakers of the farm recaptured his stolen stock that evening, they did so "with immanent danger of their lives" (ibid.:43), which must mean that the robbers fired arrows at their pursuers.

Effects on other Bushmen

In 1815, Corner (Steytler 1956b) described a confrontation between two Bushmen at the Toverberg mission: "A boy and a man had some words; he stept off a distant and shot the man in the head; with an arrow" (ibid.:99). A slightly blunt arrow tip and his leather cap saved him from poisoning. Smit (Steytler 1956a) also had to intervene when a Bushman threatened to shoot one of the young 'Bastards' with a poison arrow. A month later a recalcitrant gang of Bushmen thieves fired their poison arrows at the kraaled sheep (ibid.). These sheep were at the centre of a related disturbance a day later when two camps of Bushmen became involved in a pitched battle lasting three hours, in which the two groups threw stones at each other, hit each other with knobkerries

and stood ready with "assegais, arrow and bow" to fire on one another (ibid.:85). The missionaries eventually stepped in to help the women pacify their warring menfolk.

6.2.1.3. *Quivers (and headbands)*

At Carolus Poort (NOU.166) Steedman noted that "the quiver which contains their arrows is made of the trunk of a small tree, and is suspended at their back." (Steedman 1835,I:148). Barrow (1806,I) recorded that quivers were made by Hottentots from aloes. This would have been *Aloe dichotoma*, the Kokerboom, 'koker' being Dutch for pipe or quiver (Palmer and Pitman 1961; Wilson 1993). Although these grow profusely today in a ravine at the foot of the Sneeuberg near Graaff-Reinet, none can grow at higher elevations and there are none within the Seacow valley itself.

Other accounts concern the contents rather than the construction. Barrow at the Toverberg camp noted that "a complete quiver contains about seventy or eighty [arrows] ... and, in addition to these, a few small brushes to lay on the poison; pieces of iron, red-ochre, leg-bones of ostriches cut in lengths and rounded, and two little sticks of hard wood to produce fire" (1806,I:243). At the same camp "all the little boys who came to us at the kraal carried their bows and small quivers of arrows." (ibid). Also near Toverberg in 1803, Lichtenstein saw quivers filled with arrows at Van der Walts fontein (Plumptre 1815,II:50) and Evans in 1815 saw "quivers full of poisoned arrows" in the same vicinity (CWMA 6:72 - 21.12.1815).

Apart from the quiver, arrows were apparently also attached to headbands for easy retrieval. The Bushman in Barrow's illustration (1806,I) has a headband around his head into which more than twenty arrows are inserted. When Casalis rode through the Sneeuberg in 1832, he apprehensively imagined "the Bushman, his locks bristling with poisoned arrows, trying the string of his bow, to make sure it is well stretched" (Casalis 1889:128), but there is no clue that he actually saw this.

6.2.1.4. *Spears*

Seacow River Bushmen were also armed with a throwing spear or assegai. It was probably not unlike Schapera's generic description, presumably from the Kalahari region: "the spears have long wooden shafts and an iron head about six inches long. The latter is obtained by barter from the neighbouring Bantu, but the spear itself is made by the Bushmen. For the shaft, they pierce the end of a stick, then heat the tang of the iron head in the fire and insert it, binding the joint tightly with sinew." (Schapera 1930:133).

In 1777, Gordon found "a short assegai" and several poisoned arrows near the foot of 'Gordon's Mountain' (see Figure 3-3) (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:95). Assegai's were one of the weapons used by the rival Bushmen camps during the mission station battle of 1815, mentioned above (Steytler 1956a). Steedman at Carolus Poort (NOU.166) also mentioned that Bushmen "are usually armed with a javelin or assegai" (1835,I:148). The next reference is in the Dutch section of

the Colesberg Advertiser (1862:2,66) in which a Bushmen is said to have rushed at local farmer with "een Assagaai" but this is contradicted by a later report (CA 1862:2,66).

6.2.1.5. *Clubs*

Only one reference has survived in which the knobkerrie or knobbed stick is mentioned. Erasmus Smit at Toverberg mentions "knobkieries" during the pitched battle already mentioned (Steytler 1956a:85). The Bushmen emerged from this battle with bad head wounds, probably caused by these sticks.

6.2.2. Food procurement tools

6.2.2.1. *Digging sticks*

Schapera (1930) gave a generic description of the digging stick as a hard, durable piece of wood, usually between three and four feet long and sharpened to a point at one end. In regions with hard ground, the point was usually inserted in perforated stone and wedged for extra weight. Some points were tipped with antelope horn. In the Seacow valley, only two travellers recorded these objects in any detail.

In 1812 the Circuit Court judge Reyneveldt (1835) visited part of the lower valley (he mentions visiting farms on the boundary of the Cape Colony beyond the Sneeuberg) but there are insufficient details to reconstruct the route or to map his observations as the only farmer he named cannot be located. This farmer however told Reyneveldt that in that region the Bushmen "went daily around the fields to look for food, consisting of uintjes (a kind of bulb), wild flower bulbs, and the like, which they called field food." (ibid.:113). Several Bushmen he encountered had a lot of "uintjes, bulbs and nuts" with them. These had been dug out of the ground with "a piece of wood about 1 1/2 inch thick, which was pointed at the end and stuck into a round stone, in order to make it heavy" (ibid.).

The second observer was Thompson (1827,I) at Rhenosterfontein (PH.61 - modern Petrusville) outside the valley where he saw several women of whom he remarked: "the bulbs and ants they dig up by means of a hard pointed stick, with a piece of stone fixed on its head to give it sufficient impetus." (ibid.:58).

6.2.2.2. *Knives*

Stone tools were never described by any traveller. Nowhere is this frustrating omission more apparent than in the description of butchering activities. The only knife described in detail was neither of stone nor metal. Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) on modern Quaggas Fontein (COL.98) or Klip Kraal (COL.104) in 1777 observed a young farm Bushman "making a natural knife here in their fashion with which he cut meat in pieces and very well." (ibid.:94). The knife was "a reed he split apart, and every time it became blunt, he again tore off a strip with his teeth." (ibid.).

This was probably the Common reed or 'fluitjes riet' (*Phragmites australis*), which is commonly found on the banks of the Seacow River.

Various descriptions of butchery leave us uncertain whether a stone or metal knife was in use. Thus Lichtenstein noted in 1803 at Van der Walts fontein: "when a quantity of eland's flesh was given them, they immediately set about cutting it to pieces" (Plumptre 1815,II:50), but their implements are not described. Again, Thompson (1827,I) recounted a tale by Stockenstrom who had found a starving Bushman who on being given a whole sheep "had nearly cut up half the carcass" (ibid.:53) within a few hours.

It may well be that (European) metal knives rapidly became commonplace possessions of valley Bushmen. Barrow in 1797 at the Toverberg camp included "knives" (ibid.:231) among the gifts handed out. Presumably these (and not stone knives already in their possession) were immediately used to slaughter and dress a sheep which they were also given. Metal knives must have been highly desirable, and were certainly stolen, but only one record of this kind of transfer has survived. In 1815 two Bushmen boys stole "a few Knives of Br. Smits." (Steytler 1956b:98) with some sheep from the Toverberg mission station.

Metal sickles may also have come into the possession of a few mission Bushmen. One told Thompson how Smit had taught them to "cut down the corn" (1827,I:51) which they had cultivated.

6.2.2.3. *Reed Fish-traps*

On the banks of the lower Seacow river Gordon records that the Bushmen "make a type of deep wide basket of rushes, made of crushed, plaited reed ropes, and place them where the stream flows down in narrow pools." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:88). The reeds must have been Bulrush (*Cyperus marginatus*) or the Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) both of which along the banks today. Farther downstream he again saw "old fish-traps" (ibid.). Again in 1803 on the Orange River banks, Di Capelli reports that the Bushmen "catch fish with reed cages which they make most efficiently." (De Kock 1965:258). This is the last mention of such traps in surviving records.

6.2.3. **Storage Containers**

6.2.3.1. *Pottery vessels*

As early as 1777, Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) recorded the occurrence of pottery sherds on the abandoned site of a Bushman camp which he visited accompanied by several farmers (i.e. Leeuw Hoek - MID.61). There Gordon "found some poorly baked potsherds which had been carved for ornamentation on the outside." (ibid.:85). In 1803 Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II) made the only other reference to pottery when he described the small Bushmen camp near the Seacow River. He noted that they had "also a sort of earthen pot" but that this was "rough and clumsily formed" (ibid.:75-76).

6.2.3.2. *Gourds*

Only Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II) mentioned this type of container, noting that the occupants of a Bushmen camp close to the Seacow River "evidently preferred for use the half shell of a gourd" for storage purposes, rather than a clay pot (ibid.:75-76). Not a single traveller mentioned the use of ostrich egg shells as containers by the valley Bushmen.

6.2.4. **Original dress and ornaments**

6.2.4.1. *Men*

When Barrow was at the Bushman camp near Toverberg in 1797 (see 3.5 above) he reported that the men "were entirely naked" (Barrow 1806,I:232-233). A normally accurate observer, Barrow's phrasing is enigmatic. Although the men had been rudely awakened by a dawn raid, it is unlikely that they slept without the usual loin pouch. Only a few years later (1803) Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II: 67) referred specifically to this covering when he saw Bushmen on the banks of the Orange River with "the skin thrown over the shoulders, and a jackal's skin in the centre of their bodies" (ibid.:67).

Men also wore leather caps. The earliest record is Barrow's drawing of 'a Bosjesman with Armour' (1806,I: inter 238-239) which shows a brown (animal skin?) helmet fitting tightly to the head. Again, in 1815 Corner (Steytler 1956b:99) mentions a "leathern cap" which protected a Bushman from an arrow, fired at him during a fight at the Toverberg Mission station. An unpublished line drawing of the Bushman 'captain', Tkai, whom Campbell questioned at Hephzibah in 1820, shows Tkai wearing only a kaross (dark in colour with patches of white around the neck), and a red (fez-like) helmet.

The earliest record of personal adornment is Barrow's drawing, which also shows a length of porcupine quill through the septum of the nose. This is corroborated by his narrative which states that the Bushmen near Toverberg "had the cartilage of the nose bored, through which they wore a piece of wood or a porcupine's quill." (Barrow 1806,I: inter 238-239). In his illustration, the Bushman also wears an earring in the right ear, apparently a thin piece of metal wire (or grass?) which has been bent into an oval shape, dangling about five centimetres from the ear.

By the time of Campbell's visit, metal ornaments were already strongly in evidence. Tkai, the Hephzibah captain, is depicted with a rectangular yellow pendant hanging in front of his chest, exposed between the folds of the kaross (Campbell nd). The ornament is long, flat and decorated with a zigzag pattern, possibly made of copper. Most of the Bushmen close to Hephzibah "had ornaments of copper and beads." (Campbell 1822,II:308). His diary records: "most of them wore ornaments of one kind or another, viz., brass plates on the crown of their heads or suspended to their ears, or beads &c." (Campbell in Schoeman 1993:233).

6.2.4.2. *Women*

Barrow's dawn raid found the women in the Toverberg camp "almost" naked except for "a belt of springbok's skin" around their waists, with "the part that was intended to hang before cut into long threads" (Barrow 1806,I:232-233). Having been surprised out of sleep, many women had their aprons in complete disarray and some "had fallen down as low as the knee" (ibid.). Neither old nor young were embarrassed to appear before the visitors like this, causing Barrow to wonder if the "carelessness" was wholly the result of shock and confusion (ibid.). A few years later Lichtenstein saw a slightly different arrangement: "the women had a number of large pieces of leather, tied one over the other, as aprons." (Plumptre 1815,II:68). This was on the banks of the lower Seacow River.

Later entries are less helpful in detail. By 1815 Evans at Toverberg noted that the men and women had "no clothing" (CWMA 6:72 - 21.12.1815). Between Toverberg and the Orange River he saw several others: "... they have no clothes, only a small piece of skin of a wild beast" (EMMC 1816:485). A year later at Hephzibah, Read noted "they are nearly naked but some parts better covered than those of the caffres" (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816). In 1820 Campbell was greeted here by several men and women - "all their skin dresses were in tatters" (Campbell 1822,II:308). In 1823 Thompson saw a family of Bushmen "almost entirely destitute of clothing" at Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81)(1827,I:53). He used the same expression to describe Bushmen at Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) a few days later.

Women were "not entirely without notions of finery." (Barrow 1806,I:232-233). Like the men, some wore caps made from the skins "of asses" (presumably he means quaggas), which in their shape "were not unlike helmets." (ibid.). Many had "bits of copper, or shells, or beads, ... hanging in the neck, suspended from their little curling tufts of hair" (ibid.). Lichtenstein also mentions "the intestines of animals, hung around the neck, as necklaces" (Plumptre 1815,II:68), although it is not clear whether these were for women or men. The women "had a bandeau of little pieces of ostrich egg-shell" (ibid.) strung on twine and rounded to the same size.

6.2.4.3. *Body decoration*

According to Barrow (1806:232-233) the Toverberg Bushmen merely wiped "their greasy hands on the skin" rather than systematically oiling themselves. They did however rub red ochre into their hair and onto their faces. A few used the burned kernel of a small nut, named "kai" to blacken their faces "as if they wore a mask" (ibid.). The nut, he said, was similar to the seed of a tea-shrub.

On the banks of the Orange River, the Bushmen seen by Lichtenstein smeared grease on their skins, obscuring their own natural pigmentation (Plumptre 1815,II). Read, at Hephzibah in 1816, again remarked: "their skins would be a light brown if they were not too daubed with fat and the black earth coating on them makes them look as if daubed with soot." (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816). A few years later Campbell said of the Hephzibah Bushmen that they were"black as

soot, and their bodies plastered over with dirt." (Campbell 1822,II:308). His illustration of Tkai also shows the man's hair as red, suggesting the same treatment detailed by Barrow.

6.2.4.4. *Adoption of Sheepskin Karosses*

By 1797, a woman at the Toverberg camp already "had a single sheep's skin thrown over her shoulders" presumably acquired from a Dutch farm inside the Colonial boundary. (Barrow 1806,I:231). This enraged the Dutch farmers in the party, who assumed without question that it was from a stolen sheep. It could just as easily have been acquired through the exchange system from Bushmen already working on the farms inside the boundary. Barrow described them thus: "the poor Bosjesman has nothing except his sheepskin and his meat." (1806,I:248). His illustration of a Bushman has the upper torso covered with a white kaross, which may well be a sheepskin. By 1802 those seen on the banks of the Orange River, still well beyond the boundary, were "like all the other savages of this country, cloathed in (antelope) skins" (Plumptre 1815,II:67) but some were already "in sheep-skins." (ibid.). Dutch colonists still upheld that those wearing sheepskins were robbers and "among the disorderly" while those in antelope-skins "which are the fair product of the chace" (ibid.) were "orderly" folk.

In 1830, Steedman at Carolus Poort gives the last recorded account of Bushman attire. Men out hunting were each clad in "a dirty sheep-skin kaross flung over the shoulder." (Steedman1835,I:148). After this date, European clothing began to be adopted at an increasing rate.

6.2.4.5. *Discussion*

Valley Bushmen were therefore wearing their traditional apparel when first observed by Europeans and they continued to wear this form of dress into the nineteenth century. However, from early in the last century, their traditional dress was increasingly worn in conjunction with other forms of clothing, initially sheep skins and possibly clothing of European design produced from game skins. Other European articles of clothing apparel then slowly replaced these more traditional items (see Chapter 7).

6.2.5. **Habitations**

6.2.5.1. *Huts*

On 17 November 1777 Gordon was taken to an abandoned Bushmen camp which had been attacked a year previously by a commando, probably on Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) (see 3.2). He described it as a "deserted village of about twelve or thirteen huts, but there was nothing to be seen but dry bushes in a semicircle, sheltered to the S, over which they hang mats, and open to the E. They were lying around next to these bushes." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:85). These mats would have been made of either the Common reed (*Cyperus marginatus*) or the Bulrush (*Phragmites*

australis), as seen by Burchell (1824,II:89) and possibly Harris (1838:31). Both used the term "mat-rush" to describe living reed stands. Gordon also saw a number of "sleeping-places" hollowed out of the ground in each hut to a depth of about eight inches (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:85). These were "all close together" and each sleeper, Gordon tells us, covered himself with "his hide", for warmth. He counted eight such hollows in one hut, but gives no other dimensions.

The "horde or kraal", close to the Toverberg, which Barrow surprised in 1797 was made up of twenty five huts, each between two and three feet high and four wide (1806,I:232). The huts were constructed out of "a small grass-mat bent into a semicircle, and fastened down in this form between two sticks; open before, but closed behind with a second mat." (ibid.). Like Gordon, Barrow noted that the ground in each hut "was dug out like the nest of the ostrich" and that the occupants slept on a bed of grass in these hollows, coiled up "in the manner of some quadrupeds." (ibid.). An entire family was said to live in each of these huts "or holes in the ground." Barrow estimated 150 occupants, giving an average of six people per hut.

The missionary Read writing from 'Hephzibah, Bushmen's Land' to the Directors of the L.M.S. in 1816 described a similar camp but with only "6 households" (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816). Bushmen "fixed themselves near Mr. Corner" (ibid.) in habitations made of "sticks like a half moon, or near by half circle. These are planted in a circle about 16 feet across, behind these sticks are fixed matts 3 feet high" (ibid.). Also: "under the sticks is made a hole for each family about 2 1/2 feet wide, 3 inches, perhaps 4 deep."

By contrast to these three accounts, other travellers' descriptions appear incomplete. Governor Janssen's party for example observed a Bushmen camp a short distance from their road, shortly before they arrived at the Seacow River in July 1803. Two men, three women and several children lived in "hollows in the ground" according to Di Capelli (De Kock 1965:259). Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II) noted that there were two large hollows, probably for the adults, and several smaller ones for either single people or children. There is no mention of matting or other forms of wind shelter.

In 1823, close to the farm house on the farm Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81), Thompson saw a Bushmen family living "in a small hut of rushes" (1827,I). The Bushmen "seemed to be in the boor's service", although they enjoyed "their freedom undisturbed" (ibid.:53). The use of 'small' suggests that the hut was of their own design, and not a 'hartebees' (hard-bessie) hut of the larger single-roomed sort made by Dutch farmers. On visiting a "kraal or horde" outside the limits of the Colony - north-west of modern Petrusville - Thompson also saw the Bushmen "crouching together under a few thorn bushes" (ibid.:57), which sounds more like Gordon's "dry bushes" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:85), but again no reed mats are mentioned.

6.2.5.2. *Use of Fires*

Barrow recorded that "two little sticks of hard wood to produce fire" were included in the contents of quivers carried by Bushmen at Toverberg in 1797 (1806,I:243). No other means of

producing fire were referred to until June 1815, when Smit (Steytler 1956a:75), returning to Toverberg presented "kopere tinteldoozen" [copper tinderboxes] to the Bushmen who welcomed him there as well to some Bushmen who arrived a few days later (ibid.:76). Several more of these tinderboxes were probably distributed among the Bushmen and Smit (ibid.:78) even presented some Bushmen who visited the Mission from the other side of the Orange River with a "vuurdoos" or tinderbox.

Fires were particularly necessary for warmth during the harsh, cold winter months, making it easier for commandos to locate stock thieves by day and night (cf. SASA 1/STB 10/162). The commando of 1786, for example, observed smoke to the north, on Scheurfontein (RICH.35), and on arrival at the camp found it freshly abandoned with the fire still burning (SASA 1/GR 12/2 pp.32).

In 1797, Barrow was taken to a recently abandoned cavern deep in the Sneeuberg where he noted that "The fires were scarcely extinguished" (1806,I:192-194). Warm fires, were also probably among the "many circumstances" which Barrow took to indicate that several camps which he passed between Beeste Kuil (HAN.110) and Van Plettenberg's Beacon "had recently been evacuated." (ibid.:224-225). During the Sneeuberg war, Bushmen also lit fires to warn one another of approaching commandos from the time of the earliest incursions into the valley. Some scouts sent out by Van Jaarsveld in 1775, for example, reported that they had observed only a single Bushmen, who moved ahead of the commando "lighting fire as he went from hill to hill to give warning " (Moodie 1960,III:46). Gordon had a similar experience (Raper and Boucher 1988,I), and Van Plettenberg's party lost a Camdeboo farmer's captive Bushman when he saw such a smoke signal and deserted (Godee-Molsbergen 1916). This man managed to return to the Camdeboo farm and release his wife and children, escaping with them into the mountains.

By 1803, fires were no longer being used as warnings. Van Reenan noted that between Van der Walts fontein and the Orange River, "the savages lit several fires, which with them signifies friendship, and which we repeated in return" (Blommaert and Wiid 1937:233). Several of the Governor's party related how the farmers lit fires to draw Bushmen to them. Di Capelli noted that in this manner "Commandant van der Walt enticed three or four Bushmen to us in order to show them to the Governor" (De Kock 1965:257).

6.3. FOOD PROCUREMENT, PROCESSING AND CONSUMPTION

Traveller's who approached Bushmen, or were visited by them, were also interested in how the people procured, processed and consumed the food; three procedures which involved the use of many of the material culture items listed above. Their observations concerning these factors are considered below in terms of their two primary food groups, meat and vegetables.

6.3.1. **Procurement, processing and consumption of meat**

6.3.1.1. *Hunting*

Bushmen used bows, poisoned arrows and assegais to hunt wild game. The meat of ungulates was preferred by the Bushmen, with eland and gnu meat being particularly popular (see Chapter 4). Hippopotami were also favoured as a source of meat, particularly for their fat (De Kock 1965). Steedman observed in 1830 that "the only species of food they [the Bushmen] nauseate or reject is the flesh of the hyaena." (1835,I:148). Although several visitors to the valley recorded the weapons used to hunt wild game (see 6.1 above) as well as the game preferred by the Bushmen, not a single one observed Bushmen actually hunting game.

John Evans came the closest to observing Bushmen hunting when two Bushmen "who were out hunting" approached him at the foot of Toverberg in 1815 (CWMA 6:72 - 21.12.1815). Two other visitors came across small groups of Bushmen who had recently returned from the hunt. A Bushman accompanied by his wife and child arrived at Hephzibah in 1816 and Read noted that "they had been in pursuit of a hartebeest which they had wounded with poisoned arrows and were in expectation of its falling." (CWMA 6,78 - 24.09.1816). Thompson discovered a Bushmen family at Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) in 1823 and recorded that the man had "just killed a gnoo with his poisoned arrows." (1827,I:53). In 1830 Steedman encountered a party of Bushmen "telling us they had been trying to shoot spring-boks, but had found them so wild that they could not creep within reach of them." (Steedman 1835,I:147) at Carolus Poort (NOU.166). Their flightiness was probably due to the number of lions reported in the vicinity.

6.4.1.2. *Game Drives*

Bushmen also drove the wild game towards waiting hunters. In 1777 Gordon saw on the plains north of Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) "low rows of stones packed in the shape of longbows in the veld" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:87). These walls were topped with "ostrich feathers heavily smeared with buchu" (ibid.). Bushmen would drive the game upwind through wide openings in these walls and hunters, hiding in small holes at the openings, would then fire at the game (ibid.).

Gordon probably pointed the same walls out to Governor Van Plettenberg whom he guided along a similar route a year later. Van Plettenberg noted that stones had been piled upon one another over great distances and from far they looked like many "zittende en staande menschen" [sitting and standing people] (Godee-Molsbergen 1916:77). Remains of this walling are still visible today on Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81)(G. Sampson pers.comm.), but few such large scale examples are known from elsewhere in the central and upper valley.

Travelling further over the valley plains the next day, Gordon "passed a number of shooting and hunting-places" of the Bushmen, but he unfortunately neglected to describe these. These sightings probably refer to the widespread hunting blinds made of small half-moon shaped heaps of stone found on most dolerite ridges, at blind rises with shallow slopes where game can be easily driven (Sampson 1985:93). Later he observed "some shooting-places" made "in a hollowed-out

anthill." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:88). Van Plettenberg also noted many of these big, hollowed out ant-heaps in roughly the same area, and he commented that this allowed the Bushmen hunters to come within firing distance of the game (Godee-Molsbergen 1916). No other practices of this nature were reported upon by any other travellers.

6.3.1.3. *Pit Traps*

Several travellers observed traps dug by Bushmen. Van Plettenberg in 1778 is the first to mention that the Bushmen dug deep holes which were then covered over with vegetation and soil, into which any animal passing over the spot would fall (Godee-Molsbergen 1916). The animals were impaled on sharpened stakes protruding from the base of the pit. These pits were possibly designed to trap hippopotami on the banks of the Seacow River. Four decades later Thompson could still see "pits dug in the ground, with a large stake fixed in them" (1827,I:58). These pits were specifically built close to the Orange River (north-west of the valley) to trap hippopotami (ibid.).

6.3.1.4. *Butchering*

Eyewitness accounts connecting Bushmen to the hunt generally described the butchery rather than the kill. Read in 1815 encountered a Bushman who had just struck a hartebeest with a poison arrow and was in "expectation of its falling" (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816). The hunter had to "be quick to cut out the place the barb enters, before the poison affects the whole body" (ibid.). Thompson also observed that the part of a gnu which a Bushman had killed which had been "pierced by the arrows" was "cut out and thrown away" (1827,I:53). Thompson then noted "the rest of the carcass he [the Bushman] and his family had carried to their hut" (ibid.). Other than this comment, the portage and division of the carcass in camp went unrecorded.

On the other hand, there are several accounts of Bushmen processing animals which were shot for them by travellers and others. Van Jaarsveld's commando was the first expedition recorded as supplying the Bushmen with meat, although he noted that prior to his expedition, Bushmen were in the habit of approaching hunting parties "when any of the men came to shoot sea cows." (Moodie 1960,III:44). Van Jaarsveld's plan was to "entice the thieves by the meat" as "... where carrion is to be found, they assemble there in the night." In 1803 Governor Janssens' party provided Bushmen with "a quantity of eland's flesh" (Plumptre 1815,II:50) while Collins in 1809 met some Bushmen who "made a hearty supper on gnoo's flesh" which he had evidently killed for them (Moodie 1960,V:2). The missionaries also apparently killed wild game for the Bushmen. Corner (Steytler 1956b) for example shot a hippopotamus on the banks of the Orange River for them while Read killed "2 hartebeests, 2 elks, 2 gnus, 1 kwagga and one hippopotamus", the meat of which was given to the Bushmen (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816).

Flesh supplied to the Bushmen was usually immediately cut "to pieces", as in the case of the eland which Janssens (Plumptre 1815,II:50) had provided them with. Barrow described how three Bushmen who had accompanied them to the Seacow River cut up a sheep which had been

given them: they cut its throat, then "let the blood run among the entrails" before cutting these "with a knife", thereby mixing the blood and the contents of the entrails (ibid.:244-45). The Bushmen then "drank the nauseous mixture" (ibid.). Encamped on the banks of the Orange River, Lichtenstein described how two Bushmen who had swum to the opposite bank made a large fire and proceeded to "cut a quantity of the fat off the monster's back" which they then ate (Plumptre 1815,II:69). Steedman (1835,I:148) noted that the Bushmen "were extravagantly fond of fat".

6.3.1.5. *Roasting*

Bushmen appear to have roasted the meat over a fire before eating it. The Bushmen whom Lichtenstein described on the banks of the Orange River, for example, cut slices of fat off the hippopotamus carcass which they then "baked and eat most voraciously." (Plumptre 1815,II:69). Di Capelli (De Kock 1965:257) had earlier noted that the Bushmen given the eland meat had eaten it "almost raw" or "half raw" as Lichtenstein put it (Plumptre 1815,II:50).

6.3.1.6. *Meat Consumption*

Several travellers mentioned the Bushmen penchant for eating as much as they could at one sitting. The three Bushmen who had accompanied Barrow's party to the Seacow River, for instance, consumed an entire sheep between 5 o'clock one evening in 1797 and noon the following day (1806,I). "They continued ... to eat all night, without sleep and without intermission, till they had finished the whole animal." (ibid.:244-245). Having feasted on the animal, "their lank bellies were distended to such a degree that they looked less like human creatures than before" (ibid.). Di Capelli also remarked that the Bushmen "stay with killed game till it is consumed, even if half-composed by then." (De Kock 1965:258). Corner in 1815 made a very similar observation: "in very little time there was scarcely a bite of the Cow [hippopotamus]" which he had given the Bushmen on the banks of the Orange River. Read observed in 1816 that "the Bushesmen ... take no pains to preserve it [meat] from putrification but eat when the worms are creaping from it and seem to like it when fresh." (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816).

6.3.1.7. *Fishing*

Valley Bushmen appear to have also made use of basketware traps to catch fish from the Seacow River. There are no sightings of nets or lines. Gordon described such a trap as "a type of deep wide basket of rushes, made of crushed, plaited reed ropes" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:88). He (ibid.) observed these traps wherever the water flowed down into narrow pools along the course of the Seacow River. Because the traps which he saw were old ones, Gordon assumed that the Bushmen had not been in the region for quite some time (ibid.). More traps were observed further downstream (ibid.). Di Capelli in 1803 also alluded to similar "reed cages" which the Bushmen on the banks of the Orange River made "most efficiently." (De Kock 1965:258).

6.3.2. **Procurement, processing and consumption of vegetable (and insect) foods**

6.3.2.1. *Foraging*

Women in Bushman society had the primary task of foraging for plant (and insect) foods, but there is only one eyewitness account that this also held for the Seacow River Bushmen. Thompson "saw numbers of the Bushwomen ... digging up roots" on the plains north-west of the valley (1827,I:58). However, this could not have been a very rigid social rule, especially when some patch of plant food became briefly abundant. For example, Barrow's party observed "vast numbers of the savages ... upon the plain digging up roots" (Barrow1806,I:226-27); his phrasing suggests that men were also present. This seems to be implied in other recorded statements: for example in 1812 Van Ryneveldt recorded that some Bushmen still "went daily around the fields to look for food" which they called "field food." (IBB 1835:113). In mid June 1815, Corner complained that although the Bushmen were called to church, the greater part of them failed to attend as they were all "away in the field" (Steytler 1956b:97). At the end of August the mission Bushmen left the station for a period of almost two months "om mieren en uientjes ... te vergaaderen" [to gather ants and bulbs] (Steytler 1956a:82). Another Bushman rebuffed efforts to get him to remain at Toverberg, because "voor als nog moesten zy in het veld woonen om hun voedzel te vergaaderen" [before anything else he had to live in the field in order to gather food] (ibid.:83).

6.3.2.2. *Geophytes*

In 1797 Barrow's party observed "bulbous roots ..." among the foodstuffs in the foragers' camp near Toverberg (Barrow 1806,I:232). Thompson claimed that roots were "all they have to subsist upon, except where now and then the men succeed in killing game." (1827,I:58). Van Ryneveldt (IBB 1835:113) in 1812 also commented on the "uintjes (a kind of bulb), wild flower bulbs, and the like" which the Bushmen gathered on the plains, using digging sticks for the purpose. In August 1815 Smit related how the mission Bushmen had left Toverberg to collect their favourite food "mieren en uientjes" [ants and bulbs], which they ate either raw or roasted (Steytler 1956a:82). Thompson also described the "wild bulbs which grow in the plains" (1827,I:58). In 1825 Philips met a Bushman close to the Toverberg who still subsisted "upon roots and locusts" (1828,II:52). A local farmer had accosted him on the plains and accused him of theft, although he was only "seeking roots to eat" (ibid.:53). Steedman in 1830 also noted that "bulbous roots" were a major part of the diet of Bushmen at Carolus Poort (NOU.166)(1835,I:148). References to the types of plant foods gathered by Bushmen were thus very general with underground roots and tubers featuring as important parts of Bushmen subsistence patterns. 'Uintjie' or 'uientjie' was a term applied to a wide range of plants with bulbs; corm or tubers - especially species of *Iridaceae* and *Cyperaceae* (cf. Wilson 1993).

6.3.2.3. *Termites and their Eggs*

Gordon while on the banks of the Seacow River (on Quaggas Fontein - COL.98 or Klip Kraal - COL.104) in 1777 recorded "various holes where the wild Bushmen had dug up ant eggs and ant larvae to eat." (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:92). He does not explain how these differed from the damage of ant-eaters. Barrow too described the "eggs of the larvae of white ants" (1806,I:232). These were among the "only viands" which he found in the huts in the foragers' camp at Toverberg. In 1803, Di Capelli (De Kock 1965) merely noted that white ants and their eggs were considered a delicacy among the Bushmen, without any mention of how these were obtained. Later, In 1815, Smit relates how the Bushmen left the mission to search for "mieren" [ants] and several years later Thompson recorded that "white ants and other insects" formed a major part of the diet of Bushmen whom he observed north-west of the valley (1827,I:58).

6.3.2.4. *Locusts*

Swarms of brown locusts (*Locustana pardalina*) periodically passed through the valley (see Chapter 4) and formed an important part of the Bushmen diet. "The dried larvae of locusts" (the locust eggs) were for example included among the food items found in the foragers huts at Toverberg in 1797 by Barrow (1806,I: 232). Di Capelli concluded in 1803 that locusts afforded "a good meal." (De Kock 1965:258) and in 1823, Bushmen north-west of the valley were still observed to favour "locusts" (Thompson 1827,I:58). The Bushmen 'captain' Uithaalder still subsisted upon "locusts" when Philips met up with him in 1825 (Philips 1828, II:52). Locusts were still favoured as food as late as 1852 when "wild and tame Bushmen" were recorded to "make of locusts thick bread." (GRH 1852:1, 12).

6.4. HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF SEACOW RIVER BUSHMEN CAMPS

Many of the individuals who traversed the Seacow River valley visited or observed Bushmen camps or 'kraals', either ones which were still occupied, or ones which were deserted. What these visitors recorded regarding these camps sheds light on where the Seacow River Bushmen were living when Europeans first began to expand into the valley. Their accounts also provide information on the number of Bushmen occupying these camps and the seasons in which they were occupied.

6.4.1. **Camp localities**

The term 'camp' is used below to refer to Bushmen encampments as the term 'kraal' is problematic. Lately, 'kraal' has come to mean a structure built to secure livestock. In the nineteenth and late eighteenth centuries, however, it was a label of convenience applied to any native residence. Consequently 'Bushman kraal' meant a Bushmen encampment, not a place where

domestic animals were penned. In the texts that follow 'kraal' is taken to mean a temporary settlement of hunter-gatherers unless specified otherwise.

Because it has been possible to track travellers across the valley landscape in most cases (see Chapter 3), comments made by travellers and local farmers concerning camps occupied by Bushmen in particular parts of the valley can be mapped geographically. Bushmen camps were usually encountered in one of three contexts: they were mentioned in reports concerning commando attacks on their occupants; deserted camps (either recently or for unknown periods) were encountered; or else the travellers visited camps still occupied by Bushmen. In what follows, observations regarding camps are considered individually and where possible these are then pinpointed on the valley landscape (see Figure 6-1).

6.4.1.1. *Localities of Attacked Camps*

The earliest documented Bushman camps in the Seacow valley show up in commando reports. The first on record is by Van Jaarsveld (Moodie 1960,III) dated 1775, and its position in the narrative (see 3.1.) indicates that it must have been near the spring later called Falsefontein (NOU.165). Van Jaarsveld then rode to a second camp somewhere in the adjacent Roodeberg, but this location cannot be narrowed any further. From here Bushmen were tracked down to "a cavern" (ibid.) which was probably Blydefontein Shelter (NOU.168) on the admittedly slender grounds that it is the largest known shelter in the Roodeberg.

In 1779 a commando led by Carel Van der Merwe rode down "the left bank of Mr. van Plettenberg's river"(Moodie 1960,III:82) i.e the Seacow River, in pursuit of Bushmen with stolen cattle. After following up traces of the thieves, they discovered a camp which they attacked. Although the exact position was not given, it can be inferred from the ensuing text which describes how the commando soon thereafter challenged some Bushmen on Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124). Riding distances and timing of the narrative would place the first attacked camp somewhere in the vicinity of Leeuwen Fontein (HAN.129) below Klein Tafelberg.

Later that year another commando rode "to the Nauwe Poort, at the source of Mr. ... Van Plettenberg's river" and "found a kraal there" (ibid.:82-83) which they then attacked. This would have been at the edge of the Roodeberg at the spring of Naauw Poort (NOU.1) where the Noupoortspruit rises.

Also in that year, the Field Sergeants H.M. van den Berg and Adriaan van Jaarsveld led a commando "seven hours N.E. into the Roodeberg" (Moodie 1960,III:85) - from the plains on which modern Middelburg lies - to attack two camps which their spies had located. Upon approaching the camp of "the Hottentot Caarl", they discovered that the inhabitants had already fled. In haste they galloped on to the camp of 'Captain Caantoe', but the inhabitants were already on the run and were out of range (ibid.). These camps were in the Roode Berg north-east of Naauw Poort (NOU.1), but their exact locations cannot be narrowed further.

In 1786, members of De Villiers' commando reported "dat sy een kraal ontdekt heeft daar een meenigte Hottentot in was" [that they had found a kraal within which was a multitude of Hottentots] (SASA 1/GR 12/2 pp.32), but it had been precipitously abandoned on the previous evening. The position of this encounter in the narrative (see 3.4) suggests that the encampment was on the modern farm Scheurfontein (RICH.138). This is the last properly documented commando into the Seacow valley which has been found.

The number of commandos against the Bushmen decreased sharply after Earl Macartney's Proclamation ordering alternative means of "civilizing and conciliating the Bushmen" (IBB 1835,I:53). A table compiled by Andries Stockenstrom and headed 'Return of all Commandos and Expeditions against the Bosjesmen, as far back as the same are recorded at the Drostdy of Graaff Reynet' mentions only three more expeditions in the years 1816, 1822 and 1824 which had the "Object of the pursuit of kraals which had committed various depredations and murders" (ibid.:56). Although the locations of these kraals were not given, there is one hint that the 1824 expedition may have been through the valley. Mr. A. Meyburgh, writing from 'Behind Sneeuwberg' (IBB 1835:100), reported that he had just returned home from a commando to the "Bosjesmen's country" (ibid.), where one of their camps had been found. At that date, the territory north of the colonial boundary marked by Van Plettenberg's beacon (on Quaggas Fontein - COL.98) was still referred to as the "Bosjesmen's country". There are no more commandos reported after this date.

6.4.1.2. *Localities of Deserted Camps*

During these tense times, three travellers left descriptions of camps from which Bushmen had recently fled. The first account is by Gordon in 1777 who visited 'De Schanse Kraal' on land which was later to become Ruigte Valley (GR.122) (see 3.2.). The camp was under an "overhanging cliff, which formed a shallow but long hollow" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I: 83). Gordon's copies of rock paintings on the shelter wall (ibid.:84) can be matched to the originals, making this one of the only documented camps which can be pinpointed in the field (G. Sampson pers. comm).

On the following day Gordon was taken to an abandoned Bushmen camp which the occupants had successfully defended against a commando, killing one of the farmers, Van der Walt, in the process. The site of this battle was "a rocky hill where they had concealed themselves" and "had piled up stones everywhere, to serve as fortifications." (ibid.:85). As indicated in Chapter 3, this camp was probably located on the farm Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) on the edge of the Roodeberg. Gordon described it as a "deserted village of about twelve or thirteen huts" (ibid.) which the Bushmen inhabitants appeared to have hastily abandoned shortly after the battle.

The next camp was 'De Boter Kraal', so named because a large amount of stolen butter was recovered there (ibid.). The position of this reference in Gordon's narrative (see 3.2.) narrows the location of this kraal down to the outlying foothills of the Roodeberg on modern Allemans Fontein (NOU.83) either close to Slagterskop on the southern edge of the property or close to the spring from which the farm derives its name and where the party watered their livestock (see 3.2.).

Arriving at 'Shuilhoek' (now Schuil Hoeck - HAN.81), Gordon observed another "vanquished kraal" where Bushmen had been hiding, hence the name of the place. Later, on 20 November, Gordon crossed the Seacow River "at a place where there was a defeated Hottentot village" (ibid.:91-92). In Chapter 3 it has been argued that this was on ground later to become Quaggas Fontein (COL.98).

In 1797 Barrow noted that "several kraals, or dwelling places of Bosjesmans, had been seen" (Barrow 1806,I:224-225) on the plains between "the commencement of the Sea-Cow river" i.e. modern Beeste Kuil (HAN.110), and Van Plettenberg's beacon. All had been evacuated in advance of so large a party of Europeans passing down the valley (ibid.). These camps were observed in the course of hunting excursions across the valley plains and as a result their position on the landscape can only be narrowed to the vicinity of the route travelled by the party's wagons (see Figure 3-4.).

The next record of deserted camps to be found dates to 1825, when Petrus van der Walt reported from Rietfontein (COL.50) that several farms bordering the lower reaches of the Seacow River had been plagued by thefts (IBB 1835,II:5). The Bushmen thieves had fled into the mountains, probably those through which the Seacow River flows into the Orange River. Van der Walt came across "three kraals, with nothing in them" (ibid.) over a period of three days spent in the mountains.

6.4.1.3. *Localities of Occupied Camps*

After the British occupation of the Colony further commandos were forbidden, trust was slowly restored, and Bushmen were less likely to flee in advance of European arrivals. In Barrow's time (1797), however, an approach could only be achieved through stealth. In what amounted to a dawn raid, Barrow's guides led him to an enormous camp between some hills on the outskirts of modern Colesberg (Barrow 1806,I:227). Its precise location has been argued in Chapter 3 but it cannot be pinpointed in the field because it has been built over by townships.

By 1803 when Di Capelli (De Kock 1965) and Lichtenstein (Plumptre 1815,II:75-76) visited the lower valley, residual fears had evaporated. Their visit to a camp appears in both narratives at a point that suggests that they were near the spring later to become Hollefontein (COL.38). After Barrow's, this is the next best description of an occupied Seacow valley camp, then still beyond the Colonial boundary.

A few years later (1809) Collins passed an occupied camp outside the limits of the valley within a few kilometres of the Orange River (Moodie 1960,V:2). This must have been one of the "several kraals of the savages" (Hutton 1887:39-40) which Stockenstrom says were still "in their natural state" (ibid.) and living beyond the Colonial boundary. This camp was probably in the low lying portions of the Suurberg (between Driefonteinsberg and Tweefonteinsberg) through which the two explorers would have had to pass to reach their evening stopping place at the Suurbergspruit.

Within a day's journey of "Dasser Poort" (modern Bosch Duiven Kop - PH.123) just north-west of the valley, Mr. Melvill in 1821 observed a Bushmen camp "about a quarter of an hour's ride from the road" (1825:3). This camp was probably in the hills south of the most popular wagon track from the Seacow River to the above mentioned farm - on either De Eerste Poort (COL.39) or Ganzengat (COL.23).

Thompson (1827,I) was the next to record occupied camps beyond the border in 1823. He visited one close to Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) which was occupied by Bushmen friendly to the colonists. Although the latter were well armed against less friendly camps further to the north-west (and well beyond the Seacow valley) Thompson later passed "several Bushmen kraals" (1827,I:58) in the feared region, without being harmed.

6.4.1.4. *Localities of Camps Near the Mission Stations*

Records of the L.M.S. stations at Toverberg and Hephzibah also contain several references to camps in or close to the Seacow valley. James Read was the first to mention the presence of Bushmen camps near Toverberg in May 1813: "... sent to one of the Bosjesmans craal, to bring them to us" (CWMA 5:59 - 18.05.1813). His party was then "almost at the border of the colony" and would reach "the fountain where we wish to establish an institution to instruct the Bosjesmans" (ibid.) which was at modern Colesberg, the next day.

In July 1815 Erasmus Smit recorded that several of the Bushmen who had visited the mission station resided in "hunne kraal ... op deze zeide aan de Groote Rivier" [their kraal ... on this side of the Great River] (Steytler 1956a:78). Later, Smit made the rounds of several Bushmen camps "welke er thans drie aan torenberg geleegerd waare" [three of which were then in the vicinity of Torenberg] (ibid.80). A few months later, Smit reported a confrontation between "twee boschjesmans kraalen"(Steytler 1956a:85) probably two of the above camps located closest to the station. One had recently been very troublesome with stock thefts.

A year later, Read recorded that there were " four kraals of Bushmen ... in the neighbourhood" (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816). Another useful diary entry is Smit's for 24 November recording the visit of a group of Bushmen led by a Captain whose "kraal (dan hier en dan daar) omstreeks de zee koeij rivier is geleegen" [kraal (now here and then there) was close to the Seacow River] (Steytler 1956a:86). Although exact locations are not given, the statement points to sustained mobility.

6.4.1.5. *Discussion*

Most of the reported camps appear to have been in more protected positions close to water sources. During the early period of conflict between the Bushmen and the colonists (AD.1770-1780), surviving reports point to concentrated Bushman occupation in the rugged and deeply incised Roodeberg mountains on the south-eastern rim, with more scattered camps on the plains on the east side of the valley. Data for the remainder of the eighteenth century (AD.1780-1798) are

missing. Macartney's Proclamation of 1798 (IBB 1835) led to livestock subscriptions, more peaceful conditions, rapid occupation of the upper and middle valley by Dutch colonists, and more Bushmen entering the service of incoming farmers. From 1798 onwards Bushmen camps were only reported from lands beyond the colonial boundary.

6.4.2. **Numbers of Camp Occupants**

Many of the references to Bushmen camps related above discussed the number of Bushmen occupying the various camps. These are discussed below, again in chronological order and these numbers are also mapped (see Figure 6-2).

6.4.2.1. *Numbers at Attacked Camps*

When the earliest recorded camp at Falsefontein was surrounded and fired upon, 15 Bushmen were killed and 8 children were captured. As no number of escaped is given, the total of 23 is likely to be the whole complement (Moodie 1960, III:45). Next, 44 Bushmen were killed and seven children captured when the commando fired upon them "in their caverns" at Blydefontein, allowing not a single one to escape (ibid.).

The 1779 attack on the camp at or near Leeuwen Fontein by Carel van der Merwe's commando "killed 9 and took 5 defenceless" (Moodie 1960,III:82), giving a total of 14 since no escapes are listed. The commando members subsequently divided the surviving women and children amongst themselves. Later that year 19 Bushmen in the camp near Naauw Poort (NOU.1) were killed and seven survivors were again distributed among the colonists. No escapees are listed in the inventory, so the total would be 26. Eight occupants fleeing Captain Caantoe's camp in the Roode Berg were killed when the commando fired on them and five children were captured (Moodie 1860,III). Apart from this total of 13, others must have survived.

Scouts of De Villiers' commando reported "een meenigte" [a multitude] at the camp on Scheurfontein, but it was abandoned before the attack and no numbers were recorded (SASA 1/GR 12/2 pp.32).

The 1824 attack on a camp "beyond the colonial boundary" (perhaps north of Quaggas Fontein) was reported by Meyburgh with better precision. Of the "52 resident Bushmen, 48 were captured and 4 killed" (IBB 1835:100).

6.4.2.2. *Numbers at Deserted Camps*

Only Gordon's description of the abandoned camp at Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) which had been attacked the previous June provided enough information to allow the number of occupants to be calculated. Between 12 and 13 huts made up the camp and Gordon (ibid.) counted eight "sleeping-places" or hollows in one hut. If they were all this size, the camp could have held 104 members,

but he probably singled out the largest hut for mention, so that this can only be a maximum number. Even at six per hut (see below) the total would have been over 70 souls.

6.4.2.3. *Numbers at Visited Camps*

Traveller's visiting occupied camps were in a stronger position to provide accurate numbers. Barrow's dawn encounter near the Toverberg in 1797 allowed him to observe twenty-five huts, inhabited by one hundred and fifty people (1806,I:232), which averages six per hut.

Two men, three women and several children occupied the camp which Governor Janssen's party visited on Hollefontein in 1803 (De Kock 1965:259; Plumptre 1815,II:75-76), for a total of about 12. Beyond the colonial boundary (and the Seacow River valley) in 1809, Collins recorded "about twenty Bushmen" (Moodie 1960,V:2) at the Suurbergspruit camp. Neither Melvill (1825) nor Thompson (1827,I) recorded the number of Bushmen occupying the kraals which they came upon although Melvill did refer to the occupants as "a little horde" (1825:3).

6.4.2.4. *Numbers at the Mission Camps*

The mission reports are disappointingly vague about the numbers of Bushmen occupying individual camps around the stations. Only Read, visiting Toverberg in 1816, noted that "about 300 Bushmen" lived in the four kraals in the neighbourhood of the mission (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816), which is an average of 75 Bushmen per camp.

6.4.3. **Month or season of occupation**

The month or season at which particular camps were occupied can be ascertained from the dates at which commandos attacked or from the date at which travellers described their visits to camps. Accounts of deserted camps are less straight forward to interpret unless the visitor was informed of an earlier attack on the abandoned camp. Again, as in the previous two sections, these seasons are mapped onto the valley landscape (see Figure 6-3).

6.4.3.1. *Dates of Commando Attacks*

Van Jaarsveld entered the valley in mid-Winter, early in August 1775, and he attacked the Roodeberg camps a week or two later. Thus the Falsefontein camp (attacked on August 17) and the Blydefontein camp (August 19) were both unequivocal Winter camps, as was the unlocated camp (August 16) from which the occupants had already fled (Moodie 1960,III).

Van der Merwe's 1779 attack (Moodie 1960,III) on the small camp at Leeuwen Fontein was in May at the end of Autumn. His attack on the Naauw Poort camp took place on 14 August of that year, so this was another Winter camp. The two Roodeberg camps targeted by Van den Berg and Van Jaarsveld that year were ridden upon in early September (Moodie 1960,III), making them

Spring camps. De Villiers (SASA 1/GR 12/2 pp.32) approached the camp on Scheurfontein in June 1786, thus this too was a Winter camp.

The table drawn up by Stockenstrom (IBB 1835:56) shows that the last recorded expeditions against Bushmen set out in July 1816 (Winter), February 1822 (Summer) and January 1824 (Summer). The latter expedition reported by Meyburgh (ibid.:100) provides the only insight into Summer camp numbers.

6.4.3.2. *Dates for Deserted Camps*

The deserted camp visited by Gordon (Raper and Boucher 1988,I) on Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) had been occupied by the same Bushmen who routed the June Commando of the previous year. While this must mean that it was a Winter camp, it may have been occupied more recently than a whole year back from Gordon's visit, given that he saw mats still lying next to the hut frames. The several recently abandoned camps observed by Barrow in October 1797 on the valley plains were no doubt early Spring camps.

6.4.3.3. *Dates of Visits to Camps*

The dawn raid by Barrow's party on the Bushmen camp close to modern Colesberg also took place in late October 1797 (1806,I), while the smaller camp on Hollefontein (COL.38) visited several years later by Governor Janssens's party was observed in mid-Winter, July 1803 (De Kock 1965; Plumptre 1815,I).

Another small camp visited by Collins (Moodie 1960,V) close to the Orange River was seen in Summer, that is January of 1809 (Moodie 1960,III). Melvill (1825) failed to record the month in which he traversed the valley while it was in Winter (June 1823) that Thompson recorded the camp near Rhenosterfontein (1827,I).

6.4.3.4. *Occupation Dates for the Mission Camps.*

The dates at which Bushmen were in residence at camps around the Toverberg station can be ascertained from letters and from Smit's journal entries. Read's first visit to a Bushmen "craal" was in late Autumn, i.e. in May 1813 (CWMA 5:59 - 18.05.1813).

Two years later, Smit referred to Bushmen camps near the Orange River in July and near the Toverberg in October and November (Steytler 1956a). On 10 August, three camps were recorded in the vicinity of the mission station (ibid.) while Read's comment on the"four kraals of Bushmen" was for September 1816 (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816).

6.4.3.5. *Discussion*

Commando raids were more frequent in Winter when there was less to do on the farms, the Bushman were forced to warm themselves with fires, thus rendering themselves more visible, and the lack of rain reduced the risk of damp powder. Not surprisingly, most commando observations are on winter and early spring (roughly May to October). What is immediately apparent from the scant figures is that winter camp numbers were notably high when compared to those given for recent Kalahari Bushmen groups. Whether the tendency to winter aggregation in the Seacow valley resulted from better carrying capacity or from the special stresses of the conflict with the boers is hard to unravel.

Another remarkable feature of the seasonal mobility round is that very large gatherings could occur in late winter into the spring (August to October) in places where resources such as uintjies were temporarily concentrated.

6.5. BUSHMEN GROUPS AND THEIR PURPORTED LEADERS

Although most travellers were not primarily concerned with the social organization of the Bushmen whom they came across, many of the comments they made allow some details of this organization to be worked out, principally in terms of larger social groups and leadership figures.

It is easy to suppose that the term 'kaptein' (captain) was a convenient construct applied to particular Bushmen whom the colonists not only came to know, but regarded as intelligent and distinguished enough to be the leaders of Bushmen groups. Although this term was used to designate individuals, rather than territorial zones, an examination of specific references to these 'captains' along with evidence for groups or 'hordes' of Bushmen within the valley allows for a general mapping of groups of Bushmen. These groupings were no doubt affected by changing conditions within the valley environment over time.

6.5.1. **The Conflict Period (1770's - 1790's)**

Given their own background and social structure, it is hardly surprising that Dutch colonists expected any large group of Bushmen to be under the control of an individual. That they would label such individuals with such titles as 'chief' or 'captain' is also unremarkable. Thus in 1775, when Van Jaarsveld enticed several Bushmen to approach his commando at Klip Kraal (COL.104) his only question was "where their captain lived" (Moodie 1960,III:44). The Bushmen replied that "he was in the Roode Bergen" (ibid.). Although these Bushmen deserted the commando's camp the same evening, they probably formed part of the large group (148 Bushmen) most of whom were massacred on the river bank two days later. Whether this was a single band or parts of contiguous bands is impossible to tell.

Two Bushmen captured at Carolus Poort (NOU.) several days later also identified the Roodebergen as the location of their "Capt. with his people" (ibid.:45). A day later, the commando massacred another camp at Blydefontein Shelter. The children who survived this raid informed their European captors that a captain was among the 44 dead, but that he was however "not the chief captain that governed over the whole Seacow River." (ibid.:45). While it is possible that the Dutch were putting words in the mouths of terrified children, it is interesting that somebody viewed the Seacow valley as a political unit.

A few years later the situation had not much changed much. In 1778 Governor Van Plettenberg was told that farmers in the Sneeuberg still suffered great losses from "agter dezelve [gebergten] ten N:Oten zig schuyl houdende zogenaamde Bosjesmans Hottentotten" [behind the same mountains (the Sneeuberg) to the north-east hundreds(?) of so-called Bushmen Hottentots concealed themselves] (Godee-Molsbergen 1916,IV:75). This must be a specific reference to the bands in the Roodebergen.

Scouts sent into the Roodeberg by a commando in 1779 spied on two Bushmen camps, one of which was reported to be that of "Captain Caantoe" (Moodie 1960,III:85). After it was attacked, the 'captain' was among the eight killed.

6.5.2. **Period of Fragile Peace (1797 - 1810)**

Barrow (1806,I) was the first visitor to explicitly question the assumed hierarchical organisation of the Seacow River Bushmen. On arrival he clearly believed that this was a segmented society. Indeed, his main purpose in approaching the large camp at Toverberg in October 1797 was "to have spoken to the captain or chief of the horde" (ibid.:230). Once there, however, they assured him that "there was no such person" and that "every one was master of his own family, and acted entirely without control, being at liberty to remain with, or quit, any society he might incidentally have joined, according as it might suit his convenience." (ibid.).

The huge camp (150 Bushmen) was almost certainly not one cohesive social group. On the day before Barrow's visit, members of his party had climbed the Toverberg from where they could see "vast numbers of the savages had appeared upon the plain" (ibid.:226-27). These Bushmen had come "from different quarters, and in so many groups ... there must be several hordes in the neighbourhood" (ibid.).

Six years later at nearby Van der Walts fontein, a farmer in Governor Janssen's party lit several fires on the hills thereabout to signal the local Bushmen to come to them (Plumptre 1815,II). It may be significant that such fire signals were set only when the party had reached the vicinity of Toverberg. Evidently the farmers in the party knew that in the year 1803 they were more likely to see Bushmen here than at any point along their route down the valley.

When the party reached the banks of the Orange River , Lichtenstein noted that they had "left a very remarkable tract of land to our right, which, among all the country inhabited by white men, has remained the least altered from its original state, and is inhabited by ... several hordes of

the miserable aborigines of the country, as well as the new settlers; -- I mean the neighbourhood of the Sea-cow river" (Plumptre 1815,II:47).

On the Orange River bank they were approached by about 30 Bushmen, whom Lichtenstein thought to be as yet unmarked by European influences: "no other part of the colony stretches so near to the Orange River, consequently in no part of the Colony do the Bosjesmans, whose proper home is on the banks of the river, appear so much in their genuine form as here."(ibid.). Echoing Barrow, we again have the categorical statement of Di Capelli, also in the Governor's party, that valley Bushmen "have no captain or chief", and that "mostly single families ... wandered from mountain to mountain" (De Kock 1965:258).

Lichtenstein was the first to realize that the colonists were trying to impose some sort of hierarchy on the Bushmen so that the *trekboers* could deal with them through their appointed leaders. The colonists were giving names "to some of the oldest and most distinguished" of the Bushmen (Plumptre 1815,II:67) and had tried "to set up one as a captain" (De Kock 1965:259). This was done by giving "a large stick, ornamented with metal buttons ... [to] ...the most intelligent person in one particular kraal (locality unknown), to distinguish him as a commander among them" (Plumptre 1815,II:77). The others were "strongly exhorted to obey" (ibid.) their appointed leader, but the Bushmen would have none of it. The man presented with the stick soon died, followed shortly by his son; and the stick was returned forthwith to the colonists.

Six years (1809) later, Collins listed "Groot Fontein, situated on that part of the boundary nearest the Orange River" and "the vicinity of Groot Tafel Berg, west of the Seacow River" as favourable points for the establishment of missionary institutions "both from the excellent water and pasturage which they afford, and from the neighbourhood of several kraals of Bosjesmen." (IBB 1835,I:50). It is likely that these criteria were used a few years later to decide on the site of the mission at Toverberg.

6.5.3. **The Period of Missionary Influence (1813 - 1825)**

Earl Macartney's Proclamation of 1798 had the ideal of "civilizing and conciliating the Bosjesmen" (IBB 1835:53). The first step towards attaining this objective was to impress upon the Bushmen "a sense of the benefits arising from permanent property preferable to casual and predatory supplies" (ibid.). The mission stations were considered a major force in attaining this goal and they were therefore established where the Bushmen were known to occur in large numbers.

Barrow (1806,I) in 1797 had encountered many Bushmen near Toverberg and when Erasmus Smit arrived there in 1814 this was still the case: "upwards of five hundred of them [Bushmen] repaired to the spot eagerly waiting the arrival of the promised Missionary." (LMS 1815:18).

In 1816, the missionary Read made the decision to establish Corner and Jan Goeyman at Hephzibah (at Rhenosterfontein - PH.61) as it was "said that 300 Bushymen inhabit this spot."

(CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). The missionary literature pertaining to the two missions to the Bushmen therefore provides evidence for the distribution of Bushmen across the valley landscape.

6.5.3.1. *The Toverberg Mission*

Soon after the establishment of the Toverberg mission in September 1814, "alle de Boschjesmans nevens hun opperhoofd of cappetein" [all the Bushmen together with their chief or captain] approached Smit and protested against his presence there, demanding that he go to another people and emphasising that they had had enough of his teaching (Steytler 1956a:70). Four days later, a Bushmen, who "van hunne voornaamste was" [was one of their leaders] emphasised the Bushmen standpoint on the missionaries by threatening one of the mission Hottentots (ibid.:71). As a result of further unrest, Smit abandoned the mission a few days later.

In June 1815, when Smit returned to Toverberg with Corner, no mention was made of the 'captain' referred to above (ibid.). Sixteen "wilde Boschjesmans" visited the mission in August, among whom was a man accused of four murders who was "de Captyn van deze Bende" [the captain of that band] who seemed to instill a sense of fear among the missionaries (ibid.:80). A month later, this same man was reported to have ridden wildly on a horse belonging to one of the mission Hottentots (ibid.). Falling off the horse, he hurt his foot and Smit (ibid.) hoped that this injury would keep him at the mission for some time, which it apparently did although he still managed to continuously steal sheep from the mission kraal. This man however soon began to delight in the Bible teachings and Smit (ibid.:83) noted that he soon "stil by ons ter woon opgehoude" [resided quietly at the Mission]. No other references were made to this 'captain'.

A group of Bushmen which Smit described as "ons Eerste en vaste boschjesmans" [our first and permanent Bushmen] (ibid.:84) had left the mission towards the end of August to collect "Mieren en uientjes" [ants and bulbs] (ibid.:82). These Bushmen returned to the mission late in October and Smit noted that "Uithaalder die zoo veel als hunne Capityn is" [Uithaalder, who was in essence their captain] introduced a young Bushmen who speak both Dutch and 'Bushmen' to him (ibid.84). Uithaalder was referred to several times thereafter (cf. ibid.:85) and appears to have been the leader of the Bushmen at Toverberg. Indeed, Uithaalder was the first Bushman to be baptized at the mission and Read summed up his position at Toverberg in 1816 as "captain of those Bushmen remaining here [at Toverberg]" (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816; see also LMS 1817:28).

In 1825, Reverend Philips (1828) spent some time at the ruins of the Toverberg mission. Shortly after leaving there for Philippolis, a Bushman, who turned out to be Uithaalder, was spotted on a koppie in the distance (ibid.). Philips interviewed him and promised to take Uithaalder with him to Philippolis for his protection. In the record of this interview, Uithaalder was described as "the Captain of Toverberg" and "a chief of a tribe of the Bushman nation lying around Toverberg" (ibid.:50).

Besides Uithaalder, the Toverberg missionaries (Steytler 1956a:85) referred to another Bushmen, Witbooy, as "de captyn van eene andere Boschjesmans kraal" [the Captain of another

Bushmen kraal]. When Uithaalder tried to prevent Witbooy from stealing sheep from the mission, the latter led a group of Bushmen in a three hour battle against Bushmen aligned to Uithaalder (ibid.). Uithaalder was possibly referring to the same man a few years later in his interview with Philips when he noted that "Whitboy, one of my Bushmen, and his wife, were both shot by the boors, whilst taking shelter among the rocks" (1828:50). Although the region from which Witbooy came to the mission was not given, it is probable that he was part of the large number of Bushmen living on the banks of the Orange River which Collins (IBB 1835) had referred to (see above) and where Smit (Steytler 1956a) had noted the presence of a Bushmen camp (see above). In June 1815 Corner had almost reached the Orange River where he hoped to hunt when he was surrounded "by a number of Bosjesmen from every side" (Steytler 1956b:97). Corner noted that "one would imagine that they were droping from the Clouds, or sprung out of the Earth." (ibid.).

Bushmen from the north side of the Orange River also occasionally visited the mission station. Once, a mission Bushman brought "four strange Bushmen" claiming to be from the other side of the Orange River to the mission (Steytler 1856b). "They appeared to be of a different tribe from ours" noted Corner when they arrived on 20 July (ibid.:100). The missionaries had invited the "four strange men" to remain at the mission, but they noted the reaction of the Bushmen already present to these newcomers: "and this they did not like; as there is no communication between them." (ibid.).

In November 1815, "een Boschjesmans Captyn die veel volk by zich heeft" [one Bushmen Captain who had a lot of people with him] and whose camp "(dan hier en dan daar) omstreeks de zee koeij rivier is geleegen" [(now here and then there) was close to the Seacow River] arrived at the mission. This 'Captain' refused to listen to any of Smit's preaching, but instead demanded that "kost, tabak, Dagga, enz." [food, tobacco, dagga, etc.] be given to them (ibid.).

In 1820 Campbell visited the ruins of the Toverberg mission and there he reported on a conversation "with Na-a-kaw, chief of the Toornberg Bushmen." (1822,II:317). Na-a-kaw stressed that he had always lived at Toverberg and "in describing the extent of his district", he noted that "he drank the waters of the Sea-cow River, of Vander wault's Fountain, &c." (ibid.:318). Campbell offered the slightly broader comment that his district extended "to the Seacow River, to Vander wault's Fountain, Buffalo Fountain,&c." (ibid.). Campbell was the first and only traveller to describe the extent of the area 'governed' by one of these Bushmen captains. Further comments by Na-a-kaw as well as the names of his two brothers, indicate that he had spent some time at the Toverberg mission (ibid.). It is, however, unclear whether Na-a-kaw was really another name used by Uithaalder, whether he was the first 'captain' mentioned by Smit, or whether he was another captain not mentioned in the surviving missionary literature.

6.5.3.2. *The Hephzibah Mission*

Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) was chosen as the site of the Hephzibah mission station in 1816 owing to the knowledge that "300 Bushymen inhabit this spot" (CWMA 6:78 - 17.09.1816). On arriving at the site of the mission in late September, the missionaries Read and Corner waited a few

days before a Bushman who they had come across hunting on the plains fetched "the captain and his subjects" (CWMA 6:78 - 24.09.1816). Six Bushmen "households" accompanied the 'captain', a forty year old man named Slinger who had "a wife and 5 children." (ibid., see also LMS 1817:29). Read noted that Slinger's "countenance and behaviour displays discernment superior to many of the nation [the Bushmen nation]" (ibid.).

Campbell passed over the ruins of Hephzibah in 1820 and there met some Bushmen who promised to inform their captain of Campbell's arrival (1822,II). Tkai, "the chief", arrived later than expected as a quarrel among his people had "required his interference." (ibid.:309). Tkai had lived his entire life at Hephzibah and he informed Campbell (ibid.) that his people had formerly been more numerous, but that some had gone north of the Orange River, while others had gone to the Colony. "Still ... many Bushmen reside in his district, but they are not fond of living in one place, they like to wander around." (ibid.:310). Unfortunately, the extent of the territory over which Tkai's people wandered was not given and it is also unclear whether Tkai and Slinger were the same person.

6.5.4. Discussion

Whether the term 'captain' was imposed by Europeans, or whether 'captains' were present in Bushmen society, which is unclear, it seems that Bushmen themselves began to recognise 'captains' among themselves, as indicated by the missionary literature. However, although Europeans may have applied this term to Bushmen because of some leadership traits which they did observe in individual Bushmen, their concept of this Bushmen captain as an autonomous leader did not necessarily match up to the perception of that person in Bushmen society. Smit, for example, made a telling comment in 1815 - referring to Uithaalder who "zoo veel als hunne Capityn is" [who is basically their captain] (Steytler 1956a:84).

Despite these difficulties with the term 'captain', references to 'captains' do allow different geographical groupings of Bushmen to be distinguished, as the 'captain' was generally regarded as the leader of a Bushmen group of 'horde'. During the Sneeuberg war, Bushmen were definitely grouped around the Roodeberg as all 'captains' encountered or referred to were resident in these mountains and it was common for Bushmen to approach traveller's through the valley from the direction of these mountains. When a fragile peace was attained after 1798, social groups were centred around Toverberg, the Orange River and the Seacow River.

6.6. CONCLUSION

The large number of observations recorded by visitors to the Seacow River valley concerning Bushmen life therefore yields a wealth of information. This data is useful not only in identifying the particular material culture items associated with the valley Bushmen, and hence potentially visible in the archaeological record, but in identifying where these Bushmen lived on the landscape.

CHAPTER 7 - INITIAL EUROPEAN IMPACT ON VALLEY BUSHMEN

7.1. INTRODUCTION

When Dutch *trekboers* started to occupy springs in the Seacow River valley, they began to have an impact on the lives of Bushmen occupying the valley. This impact was particularly marked after the Bushmen had been pacified through the policy of livestock subscription instituted on the orders of Earl Macartney (see 1.10.2.5. above) in 1798 which allowed farmers to occupy land in the valley previously unavailable to them (see 1.11. above). In the previous chapter the characteristic material culture of the original occupants of the Seacow River valley, the Bushmen, was described, along with their means of procuring food. One of the most critical ways in which the European presence influenced the Bushmen who remained within the valley was the gradual replacement of these more traditional material culture items and these food procurement practises with items of European origin and with new mechanisms of food procurement. Bushmen acquisition of European material culture, particularly in terms of clothing, guns and livestock are therefore considered below in terms of the evidence provided by documentary sources. Although the latter two items impacted Bushmen society because of their effect on traditional subsistence mechanisms, the incorporation of these Bushmen into the labour force of these expanding farms, had much greater significance.

7.2. ACQUISITION OF EUROPEAN MATERIAL CULTURE

7.2.1. **Acquisition of European dress**

This topic has been surveyed by Crass & Sampson (1993) and will be briefly summarized, with additional material not included in that paper. From the 1770's onwards, upper valley Bushmen in the service of farmers must have been given clothing, while others obtained the odd item as gifts or by theft. Gradually more European clothes were handed down by farmers, or from people passing through the valley. The Mission stations of Toverberg and Hephzibah also had an effect on dress out of all proportion to their brief existance. By the 1840s clothing could be had from village stores which grew up on the rim of the valley.

That farm laborours received clothing from early times is demonstrated by Burchell's remark that farmers "... obtain the(ir) services, as shepherds or house servants, for which they would be satisfied to receive as remuneration their food and a few old cloathes." (Burchell 1819). Much later, in the 1840s, this was still the case. Orpen remarks that "our own and our servants' shoes" were tanned and sewn on the farm "and servants leather clothes, too" (Orpen 1908:9).

Few travellers' hand-outs have been recorded in detail. In 1803, at the Orange River, "the General ordered more ample presents of cloaths, with cloth ... to be distributed among them."

Few travellers' hand-outs have been recorded in detail. In 1803, at the Orange River, "the General ordered more ample presents of cloaths, with cloth ... to be distributed among them." (Plumptre 1815,II:73). Another group was given "... buttons &c." (ibid.:75). Half a century later, buttons and needles were still among the wagon inventory of gifts listed by Cumming (1850,I:16) who travelled through the valley in 1844, so passing wagons were still a potential source of hand-outs. Bushmen also posssibly used brass buttons as trade items. Indeed, buttons appear at forager sites throughout the Cape during the colonial period (see Miller & Markell 1993; Miller in press).

The Mission stations at Toverberg and Hephzibah were also points at which the Bushmen were encouraged to adopt European dress. When Smit returned to Toverberg he distributed cloth, copper tinder boxes and finger- and ear-rings. [eenige doeken, kopere tinteldoozen, en vinger en oorringen] (Steytler 1956a:75). In 1816 when Read visited the Toverberg mission, he recorded that there were "11 families here of Bushmen and 3 of oorlams ... " (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). The "oorlams" families residing at the Mission station were probably under the most pressure to wear European clothing, although clothing was still in short supply. Corner in 1815 requested money from the directors of the L.M.S. because his journey "caused so much cloath to be worn out ... I was obliged to buy some cloathe and when I returned I had hardly a shirt or trousers to put on and as to shoes I had none a man lent me a pair to take me home." (Steytler 1956b:95-96). Consequently, few were clothed in a new way, as attested by Evans in 1815 who "saw two wild-boshesmen" from the "gathering" at Toverberg who were still in traditional garb (CWMA 6,72 - 21.12.1815).

Nevertheless, the Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle for December 1815 could report that the long-suffering Mrs Smit "had begun teaching the Bushmen's girls knitting and sewing." (EMMC 1815:516), but material was clearly scarce. In the same month her husband was asking the L.M.S for sheep so that "the skins could be used for their clothes" [de vellen tot hunne kleeding geschonken wierde] (Steytler 1956a:89). That same year Smit's wife visited a newborn baby "... lying naked between two sheep skins until the next day." (Steytler 1956a:83).

Theft of clothing undoubtedly took place, but we are obliged to go ouside the valley for a recorded example. An 1822 Commando report (Smith nd:01.03.1822) from the adjacent Nieuweveld tells how surviving women were told "to tell their husbands that if they would buy what other articles they had, no harm should be done to them." (ibid.). Articles found in the kraal included "6 hats, 10 packs of blue and green thread, 3 tan Casimer trowsers, 1 linen, 2 yellow Casimer waistcoats, 2 yellow leather trowsers, 2 coloured neck cloths, 1 1/2 elts red chintz, 1 1/2 elts muslin, 2 elts white linen, 1 blue shirt, 1 shirt white, 1 shirt linen, towels, 1 pack needles, a pair of child's shoes, 2 brass buttons, 1 pr. linen trowsers, an underwaistcoat, a roll of sail cloth" (ibid.) as well as several handkerchiefs. Although there is no proof that these were stolen (and none sought, for they had killed several of the men) the list itself shows how desirable European clothing had become by the1820s.

Instruction at the Mission stations had a lasting effect. In 1839, Backhouse (1844:340) was on or near Elandsfontein (COL.110) at the house of the "People of Colour." The woman there had been brought up at a "missionary station", presumably Toverberg, and she and a companion "were

industriously employed with their needles when we arrived" (ibid.). Many others were probably taught on farms. Thus at about the same period Orpen (1908:10) could describe his herdsman "doing his tailoring..." with no indication that the old man had been mission-trained.

Before the 1830's, all the clothing worn by the Europeans had to be made locally, or carried to the farms from towns such as Graaff-Reinet. Travelling Hawkers or smousen also sold clothes as well as cloth and sewing materials. However, from the 1830's small towns began to spring up around the rim of the valley. Colesberg was founded in 1830, Richmond in 1844 and Middelburg in 1852. Shops in these towns would have provided the farmers with sufficient clothing to allow them to clothe their servants.

7.2.1.1. *Dress of valley Bushmen after the establishment of towns*

Evidence for the clothing worn by Bushmen after the establishment of towns on the rim of the valley comes mainly from newspaper accounts. After 1860 various newspapers published 'Warrants of Apprehension', some with descriptions of clothing worn by Bushmen. Evidently dress still varied widely in the district. Thus: "a Boschjesman .... dressed in a pair of Tan colored Trowsers, unbleached shirt, no other clothing." (CA 1862:2,58) can be contrasted with "a ... Bushman, whose only earthly possessions are his dagha-pipe and the sheepskin he hangs about him" (CA 1863:3,140). In 1865 several escaped from gaol, variously clad in "a drab coloured jacket ... an old tan-coloured moleskin jacket ... a white drill jacket" (CA 1865:5,225). Two also wore old white shirts, one was in "tanned duck trowsers" and the other two in "old tan-coloured moleskin trowsers." (ibid.). Caps of some form were worn by three Bushmen: "a wide-a-wake hat", "and old skin cap" and "an old cloth cap". The latter had no shoes on when he escaped while the other two Bushmen both wore old veldschoens (ibid.). Several other Bushmen escaped from prison wearing a similar description of clothing (CA 1865:5,242). Twenty years later there had been little change. A 'Bushman-Hottentot' sought in 1885 was last seen near Naauw Poort (NOU.1) Station dressed in "a thick black jacket, light coloured moleskin trowsers and patched waistcoat of different colours" (CA 1885:24*,2089 [wn]).

Not all escapees were so extensively clad, and many were issued with "prison suits" once arrested. These were variously described as "white smock frock, white duck trowsers, black felt hat" (CA 1873:13,633) or "black felt hat, moleskin trowsers, grey jacket, stripped cotton shirt, Ammunition boots and white canvass frock." (CA 1889:28*,2314). Prison clothing was "all marked in red, C.P" (CA 1873:13,633) and some also bore a broad (red) arrow (CA 1874:14,688).

Out in the countryside, some were still scantily clad. Thieves at an unnamed valley farm left a "black and white cow-skin, of the description generally used by Bushmen." (CA 1872:12,604). Skin tattoos also appeared among the criminal classes. Thus "a Bushman ... having ... a figure of a woman on left arm." (CA 1879:19,972).

7.2.1.2. *Discussion*

Valley Bushmen were therefore wearing their traditional apparel when first observed by Europeans and they continued to wear this form of dress into the nineteenth century (see 6.2.4.). However, from early in the last century, their traditional dress was increasingly worn in conjunction with other forms of clothing, initially sheep skins and possibly clothing of European design produced from game skins. As their contact with Europeans (in the form of visitors, farmers and townsmen) increased towards the middle of the century and as the number of game and sheep available to them for the purpose of clothing decreased, so the amount of European clothing worn by them probably rose, with fewer and fewer aspects of their apparel being of the traditional form.

7.2.2. **Acquisition of beads by valley Bushmen**

Saitowitz and Sampson (1992) have considered the timing of the acquisition of beads of European origin by Bushmen, so only the most important points will be stressed here. Travellers often carried beads with them on their journeys into the interior, with the aim of giving these as gifts to the indigenous inhabitants whom they came across and so gain favour. This was undoubtedly the intention of the Governor's Council of the Cape, when they sent an ammunition wagon into the Sneeuberg during the Sneeuberg war "... To which shall be added, to serve as presents to the said Bosjesmans, on making peace with them, 30 lbs of beads of various kinds" (Moodie 1960,III:31).

Although many visitors to the valley probably gave gifts of beads to Bushmen, very few of them mentioned this practise. Barrow (1806,I) included beads among the items which he handed out to Bushmen in the lower Seacow River valley while members of Janssens party handed out beads and tobacco to Bushmen in the Sneeuberg in 1803 (Godee-Molsbergen 1932). Many valley farms may also have served as bead dispersal points, as would the short-lived mission stations (Saitowitz & Sampson 1992), although beads were not mentioned in the literature. Saitowitz and Sampson have argued that oyster white beads probably arrived in the valley after AD. 1800, as did Indian red-on-green beads. The appearance of coloured beads in the valley probably coincides with the establishment of the first towns (and hence trading stores), on the rim of the valley (ibid.).

7.2.3. **Acquisition of guns by valley Bushmen**

The first colonists to arrive in the Seacow River valley were fully armed, as were their native herdsmen. Firearms were used regularly to acquire game for food and to protect their flocks against predators and against marauding Bushmen. The latter lost little time in acquiring guns of their own, by every means possible. Westbury and Sampson (1993) have pieced together from travellers' journal fragments the processes by which European owned firearms were transferred to valley Bushmen. The following augments their account with newly discovered details, mainly from newspapers, not treated in their analysis.

During the early years of conflict (1770-1800) there were many opportunities for Bushmen to acquire guns through thefts from colonists and armed herdsmen. Bushmen servants also absconded with their guns. After 1798 and Macartney's ruling against the commando system, Bushmen were encouraged to live closer to farmsteads, and to receive subscriptions of livestock and other gifts. Bushmen access to firearms inevitably increased. By the 1820's it was relatively common for valley farmers to provide their Bushmen servants with firearms in order to protect the sheep and cattle in their care from wild animals. It was, however, the establishment of towns on the rim of the valley after 1830, that firearms became widely available to all valley residents.

A report written from the Sneeuberg in August 1780 illustrates the manner in which Bushmen generally acquired guns at that date during the decades of conflict (Moodie 1960,III). A group of robbers, one of whom "had a gun" , murdered a herdsman and the party sent out in pursuit of the thieves was then "threatened ... with 3 guns." (ibid.:103). These thieves victimized farmers in the same region a month later and murdered a "herdsman and also a slave" and "took away a gun" (ibid.). Bushmen chased by some farmers escaped into the night after having "fired three shots with a gun" at their pursuers (ibid.).

Before the June 1786 commando attack on the camp at Scheurfontein (RICH.35), spies reported to De Villiers that one of the Bushmen "met een geweer ladt gesien" [was seen with a gun] (SASA 1/GR 12/2). In November of that year "29 Hottentot young and old" fled from a farm in the Rhenosterberg and "carried off with them five guns" (Smith nd:10.12.1786). In that same year, two farmers in the district, returning from their fields came "upon the runaways in an old stone kraal and were fired upon by them" resulting in the fatal injury of the one farmer (ibid.). Three guns were reported stolen between the months of July and December 1788 according to an official list of robberies committed in the region (Smith nd:1787). These references correlate well with the arguments for the early acquisition of guns by Bushmen as argued by Westbury and Sampson (1993).

A veld-cornet report written in 1812 (SASA 1/GR 12/5 no.23) illustrates that although the number of stolen guns decreased after the Macartney Proclamation and the general peace, thefts still occurred sporadically. Thus a Hottentot servant armed with a gun had been sent to Carolus Poort (NOU.166) to fetch a wagon belonging to his master, 'Pieter Du Plessis' (probably of Elandsfontein - COL.110). Travelling over Schuil Hoeck (HAN.81) he was attacked and murdered by a group of Bushmen. His mutilated body was eventually found and although the oxen which he had taken with him were discovered close to the body, his gun had been stolen (ibid.).

Reports from the 1820's and 1830's indicate that guns were still being energetically acquired by Bushmen. An eloquent example from outside the valley is the 1822 report of a commando in the Nieweveld which attacked a camp, recovering "a powder horn with 1/2 lbs powder, 1 bullet mould, 31 bullets, a gun lock and 12 flints" (Smith nd:01.03.1822).

Another report written from 'Behind Sneeuwberg' in 1824 recorded that two guns were recovered from a Bushmen's kraal in "the Bosjesmens country" (IBB 1835:100). Several years later, 'Syverkuil', probably the valley farm Zypher Kuil (PH.177) was attacked by a group of Bushmen on

18 April 1834 (Smith nd). The culprits were tracked down to a camp on the banks of the Orange River on the 26th, but before the colonists could attack them, they had fled to the opposite bank from which they began "a violent attack upon us with muskets and poisoned arrows" which lasted two hours before they escaped (ibid.).

Two newspaper reports in the year 1866 indicate that guns were still sought after by any means. The first involves a Bushman Hottentot named Booy Danster, who was apprehended outside Colesberg with "1 double-barrelled rifle", "1 bullet pouch", "1 bullet mould" and "1 powder flask and 1/2 bag of powder" which were confiscated from him as they were assumed to have been stolen (CA 1866:6,308). Less than a month later "a superior rifle, percussion caps, and bullets" were stolen by a Bushman Hottentot also called Booy (CA 1866:6,313). The culprit had just returned from the "convict station", so was probably the same man. He was apprehended the following morning and it was later discovered that he had used the gun to murder three herdsmen who had offered him hospitality at an outpost on the farm 'Bushman's Vley' (Boschjesmans Vlei - HAN.17) the previous evening.

In 1870 valley Bushmen still had their own guns. For example, a Bushman "living off the fat of the land" (CA 1870:10,514).near Schiet Fountain (COL.35), shot and badly wounded a rival in the face, but managed to make his escape before the Chief Constable reached the scene. Again in April 1871 an employee of Mr Gentle (of Hartebeestfontein - COL.67) reported having witnessed four Bushmen "two of whom were armed with guns" slaughtering a cow on the property (CA 1871:11,539). Another cow belonging to a neighbouring farmer was killed a week later by the same armed Bushmen (CA 1871:11,540).

Although dwindling wild predators by the end of the century would have made it unnecessary to supply herdsman with guns to protect themselves, this was a slow process. As late as 1884 a Bushman employed on a farm west of the valley (Knapdaar - DEA.8) shot a "tiger" (leopard) which had been attacking sheep on the farm (CA 1884:23,2081).

Westbury and Sampson (1993) contend that "unattached Bushmen were indeed armed" based on evidence from neighbouring districts. These newspaper accounts show that this was indeed the case for the valley and that such conditions still prevailed as late as 1870.

7.2.4. **Acquisition of livestock by valley Bushmen**

The processes by which Seacow River Bushmen acquired livestock have been detailed by Sampson (1995), using better known and readily available documents. These findings are briefly summarized here, and will be supplemented by additional data from newspapers and unpublished sources.

When the first Dutch farmers occupied the upper reaches of the valley in the 1770's, Bushmen continuously destroyed their sheep and cattle. This led to many retaliatory commando's by the boers and the remains of the livestock were often found in abandoned Bushmen camps. If their livestock was not destroyed at the farm during the raid, it was usually driven beyond the limits

of European settlement. After 1790, stock theft declined in intensity although during drought years much livestock was still lost.

Earl Macartney's proclamation of 1798 spelled out a new strategy for dealing with the Bushmen - local authorities were ordered to levy sheep from farmers to distribute among the Bushmen, to remove the need to steal livestock. The security offered by this dependable source of meat encouraged Bushmen to spend more time near the farmsteads. The farmers also benefited by this closer, more peaceful contact and they were soon recruiting Bushmen as farm servants, particularly as shepherds, often providing them with food as payment. Some unattached Bushmen became client herders, caring for and finding pasturage for the flocks of farmers, particularly in dry seasons.

Some Bushmen also came to own their own flocks through three different pathways. Sheep etc. were acquired through livestock subscriptions and in this manner they built up herds. Alternatively, Bushmen in the employ of farmers built up herds through stock given to them as payment. The mission stations at Toverberg and Hephzibah provided the third means by which Bushmen became independent herders. Bushmen were encouraged to help care for the mission livestock. After the mission stations were abandoned, Bushmen were still observed with livestock in their possession.

After the establishment of towns on the rim of the valley after 1830, many of the valley Bushmen were incorporated into these urban areas. During this period of rapid change, no mention of independent herders occurs in the better known literature. This also gives the impression that between 1840 and 1890 stock theft was mainly by individuals and mainly on farms in remote and rocky terrain (Sampson 1995).

7.2.4.1. *Additional Sources on Stock Theft*

A common feature of commando reports in the late eighteenth century was an inventory of livestock remains found at attacked camps. Sightings not listed by Sampson (1995) include one by Gordon in 1777, who "found horns of oxen which had been eaten, and other bones" in 'De Schanse Kraal' on Ruigte Valley (RICH. 122). De Villiers, in 1786 at the freshly abandoned camp on Scheurfontein (RICH.35) contained evidence for the long term slaughter of cattle by the inhabitants. At this camp De Villiers observed: "veel beesten geslagt vars en ook oudt" [many cattle killed, both fresh and also old] (SASA 1/GR 12/2 pp.32). He also noted that the occupants of the camp had fled with six oxen. As late as 1824, the Veld-cornet Petrus van der Walt came across three camps containing "hides and bones" in the mountainous region where the Seacow River flows into the Orange (IBB 1835,II:5). A commando in 1834 followed a group of Bushmen stock thieves to the banks of the Orange River, where the thieves were forced to leave six cattle and 400 sheep which they could not get across the river (Smith nd).

Bushmen attached to farms (see 7.3. below) and towns (see 9.2.) and Bushmen not attached to either (unattached Bushmen - see 9.3.) continued to steal livestock until late in the

nineteenth century. Thefts of livestock by unattached Bushmen as recorded throughout the nineteenth (and late eighteenth) centuries are tabulated below (Table 7-1), and the distribution of these thefts are mapped onto the valley floor (see Figure 7-1). Although livestock thefts by farm servants or town Bushmen are not included in this table, several newspaper reports record that Bushmen servants continued to steal from their masters. The owner of the farm Klip Kop (HAN.147) is, for example, recorded as having taken three of his Bushmen employees into Colesberg to charge them with the theft of three sheep (CA 1888:27*,2279).

TABLE 7-1: Livestock theft by unattached valley Bushmen

Year	Month	Where	How many	What kind	Source
1773	April	Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)	gen	cattle	(Moodie 1960,III:65)
1775	March	Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)	200	Sheep	(Moodie 1960,III:67)
	Aug.	Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)	18	oxen	(Moodie 1960,III:43)
	Aug.	Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124)	16	cows	(Moodie 1960,III:43)
1776	Jan.	Elands Kloof (RICH.121)	gen	sheep	(Moodie 1960,III:52)
	Jan.	Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124)	23	cattle	(Moodie 1960,III:52)
	March	Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124) and Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)	8	horses	(Moodie 1960,III:54)
	nd	Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124)	6	oxen	(SASA STB/1 10/162)
1777	Nov.	Kraanvogel Valley (RICH.120)	8	cattle	(Raper and Boucher 1988,I:180)
1780	May	Sneeuwkuil (RICH.124)	gen	cattle	(Moodie 1960,III:102)
1825	May	Tweede Poort (COL.22)	3	oxen	(IBB 1835,II:5)
	May	Quaggas Gat (COL.37)	1	cow	(IBB 1835,II:5)
	May	Biscuitfontein (COL.26)	1	ox	(IBB 1835,II:5)
	May	Rietvalley (PH.125)	25	sheep	(IBB 1835,II:5)
	May	Karee Poort (PH.120)	1	ox	(IBB 1835,II:5)
	May	Bultfontein (COL.11)	1	ox	(IBB 1835,II:5)
1862	Feb.	Colesberg	14	sheeps heads	(CA 1862:2,59)
1863	Aug.	Bultfontein (COL.11)	13+4	cattle + horses	(CA 1863:3,135)
1864	Dec.	Carolus Poort (NOU.166)	1	horse	(CA 1864:4,206)
1868	June	Palmietfontein (COL.117)	5	oxen	(CA 1868:8,394)
	June	Draper's Application (COL.117)	5	cattle	(CA 1868:8,394)
1869	June	Quaggas Gat (COL.37)	1	cow	(CA 1869:9,443)
	July	Colesberg Commonage	1	sheep	(CA 1869:9,447)
	July	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1869:9,449)
	July	Colesberg	1	goat	(CA 1869:9,449)
	July	Rietfontein (COL.50)	1	sheep	(CA 1869:9,450)
	July	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1869:9,450)
	Dec.	Colesberg Commonage	3	hamels	(CA 1869:9,471)
	Dec.	Rietfontein (COL.50)	1	hamel	(CA 1869:9,472)
1870	June	Colesberg Commonage	31	sheep, goats	(CA 1870:10,495)
	July	Naauw Poort (NOU.1)	1	ox	(CA 1870:10,501)
	July	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1870:10,502)
	Aug.	Buffelsvalley (COL.69)	gen	sheep	(CA 1870:10,510)
	Oct.	Schiet Fountain (COL.35)	gen	sheep	(CA 1870:10,514)

Year	Month	Where	How many	What kind	Source
1871	April	Nachtschaalsfontein (COL.53)	1	not given	(CA 1871:11,540)
	April	Middelwater (COL.68)	1	cow	(CA 1871:11,540)
	April	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1871:11, 541)
	May	Middelwater (COL.68)	1	cow	(CA 1871:11,544)
	June	Colesberg Commonage	gen	cattle	(CA 1871:11,549)
	July	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1871:11,553)
1873	Sept.	Morgenwacht (COL.109)	10	sheep	(CA 1873:13,666)
	Nov.	Honing Krantz (COL.13)	1	cow	(CA 1873:13,671)
1874	Jan.	Colesberg Commonage	gen	sheep, cattle	(CA 1875:15,745)
1875	April	Colesberg Commonage	1	cow	(CA 1875:15,745)
1885	Jan.	Colesberg Commonage	1	sheep	(CA 1885:24*,2082 [wn])
	Jan.	Colesberg Commonage	1	sheep	(CA 1885:24*,2083 [wn])
	Jan	Colesberg Commonage	gen	sheep	(CA 1885:24*,2084 [wn])
1894	Aug.	Rietfontein (COL.50)	gen	cattle, sheep	(CA 1894:33*,1702)

Such thefts by farm labour and also by unattached Bushmen were episodic, judging by the frequency of reports in newspapers (e.g. the Colesberg Advertiser 1861-1900), and mirrored by court records (G. Silberbauer pers.comm.). There was a well defined outburst in the 1860s (see Table 7-1). "The chief depredators are the vagrant Hottentots and Bushmen, who infest and harbour in the kopjes wherever they can find a suitable place of concealment" (CA 1863:3,138). In some cases, the animals were hamstrung if there seemed any chance that their owners might recover them (CA 1868:8,394), but generally livestock was stolen "because they [the Bushmen] were hungry" (CA 1868:8,410).

Another outburst occurred in the 1880s: "in addition to the thefts committed by farm servants, there are those by native vagrants and squatters" (CA 1885:24*, 2110). This report went on to note that "in many cases the thefts are not reported." (ibid.).

The last reported case is from Rietfontein (COL.50) in 1894. The party sent out after the thief "came to a certain hill ... to a place where a fire had been made, from there to a place where the skin of a heifer was, and from there some forty yards further to a place where the carcasses of the sheep were hidden between some rocks and covered over with besom bush." (CA 1894:33*,1702).

7.2.4.2. *Additional Sources on Livestock Subscriptions*

Comments made by Maynier concerning his duties as Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet from 1786 indicate that the official policy of subscription was preceded by individual attempts to bring about some sort of understanding between farmers and Bushmen (IBB 1835:28). 'Pieter Ernst Kneger', probably the veld-cornet Pieter Ernst Kruger, was for example told to go into "the country of the Bosjesmen" in order to interview them. He was to distribute presents of "some sheep and beads"

(ibid.) and to encourage them not to steal from the colonists. Although Maynier did not give the date of this expedition, it was probably in the early 1790's.

In discussing the effects of Macartney's Proclamation, Collins noted in 1809 that "several inhabitants of the north-eastern districts appear to have exerted themselves with as much zeal to acquire the friendship of the Bosjesmen, as they before had done to blot them from the creation" (IBB 1835:39-40).

The missionaries at Toverberg (Steytler 1956a) gave the Bushmen two sheep as part of a meal in 1815, a practice which was apparently fairly common. Smit also recorded that two of the "makke or tamme boschjesmans" [tame Bushmen] were placed "als wachters by het vee" [as watchmen for the sheep] to protect them from Bushmen thieves (ibid.:85). Concluding his journal entries for 1815, Smit asked the L.M.S. to supply the mission with 400 more sheep and 10 milk cows (ibid.). The cows were to provide milk and eventually be bred as trek oxen, while only the sheep born from the original stock were to serve as "spys voor de Boschjesmans" [food for the Bushmen] and for skins to clothe them (ibid.:89). Bushmen left behind by the abandonment of the missions had thus probably acquired a sound knowledge of the skills involved in herding.

7.2.4.3. *Additional Sources on Independent Herding*

In January 1879, the Colesberg Town Ranger came across "a native squatter" who had left the service of a neighbouring farmer and had "built himself a hut and erected kraals for his stock on the town lands" (Colesberg Advertiser 1879:vol 19 no. 937). The man had apparently been residing there for about a month (ibid.). Unfortunately it is not certain whether this was a Bushman or someone of other ethnic extraction, but it does show that independent herding did survive into the second half of the 19th century.

7.2.4.4. *Livestock particularly favoured by Bushmen thieves*

Many newspaper accounts only recorded that livestock were 'slaughtered' or 'stolen', without giving any clues to what parts of these animals were preferred by unattached Bushmen thieves. When newspaper accounts did record which part of the slaughtered animal was taken by the thieves, the evidence indicates a noticable preference for the fore- and hind-quarters of both cattle and sheep. In 1871, for example, a cow was slaughtered on a farm close to Colesberg and the culprits had taken only the "hind quarter" (CA 1871:11,544), while several other accounts indicate similar preferences (cf. CA 1871:11,553; CA 1885:24*,2082[wn]; CA 1885:24*,2084[wn]). Again in 1883 "a living sheep, with three legs cut off hidden a brush or rocks" (CA 1883:23,2029*) was discovered on the Town Commonage and unattached Bushmen were blamed for the outrage. The preference for these parts was therefore apparently common. Bushmen thieves probably preferred these body parts as they were relatively easy to transport away from the carcasse and possible discovery and had a high meat yield.

7.3. FARM BUSHMEN

7.3.1. Introduction

Labour was a vital requirement of most cattle and sheep farmers settling in the valley after 1770. Staff were needed to help run the households, to act as herders and to perform other forms of manual labour. Barrow makes this clear with his observation in 1797 that "To attend his numerous flocks and herds, he [the valley farmer] must have numerous people" (1806,I:248). Most flocks were too large for the farmer and his sons to care for on their own. Burchell, for example, reported a farm with more than four thousand sheep on it while many of his neighbours had "up to two thousand more" (Burchell 1953,II:81).

From the beginning of European settlement, farm labour needs were filled by three categories of servant: Hottentots, Bushmen, and Slaves. The distinction between these three is not spelled out clearly in any contemporary document, and must be inferred from various texts. The term 'Bushman' seems to have been used to mean labour drawn from the local valley population. In the first fifty years or so of settlement, the term 'Hottentot' seems to apply to imported labour, brought up from farther south in the colony. The term 'slave' is much more ambiguous and may have covered both Bushman and Hottentot slaves (purchased farther south or incorporated from the valley population), and perhaps (very rare) slaves imported into the Colony from overseas. The term appears rarely in texts referring to well-to-do farmers, and disappears with the abolition of slavery in 1834. As the nineteenth century drew on, the term 'Hottentot' appears to gradually blur in meaning to include labourers of local origin who had become sufficiently acculturated that they were no longer distinguishable from imported labour in dress, speech and habits.

7.3.2. Early Hottentot Staff

The first *trekboers* in the Sneeuberg had primarily Hottentots in their employ, both as domestic workers and as herders. Most were probably in the baggage train of the migrant Europeans when they arrived, and had been acquired farther south in the Colony. No surviving text makes this explicit, however. The roles played by these Hottentots in the Colony's farming economy have been discussed in detail elsewhere (e.g. Elphick and Malherbe 1990) and were no different in the valley. Sneeuberg farmers used them first and foremost as herdsmen, as numerous texts make clear, starting with Van Jaarsveld's 1775 reference to oxen stolen by Bushmen thieves which were "recaptured by a Hottentot who was herding sheep" (Moodie 1960,III:43). During the Sneeuberg war, several Hottentot herdsman were killed by Bushmen stock thieves (cf. Moodie 1960,III:43,52,68).

Farmers also sent their Hottentots on commando expeditions against Bushmen thieves. Field Sergeant Carel van der Merwe of the Sneeuberg for example complained in 1779 that "but two men and ten Hottentots" had reported for commando duty (Moodie 1960,III:82). In 1780, Van der Merwe reported that a farmer "was personally commanded" to join the commando, "but, without

excuse, sent a Hottentot" (ibid.:105). By 1797, the numbers of these Hottentot servants employed on farms seem to have decreased, probably through deaths and flight from service, but this is far from clear. Barrow commented: "Hottentots are now so scarce that a sufficient number is not to be had." (1806,I:248). In 1812, Burchell, noted that "some Hottentot maids" worked "within the chimney" of the farmstead at Dasses Fontein (RICH.117), cooking for everyone present (1953,II:87). Later, Burchell was dismayed at the neglect shown for "the Hottentot servants" in the service of Jan Viljoen of Kook Fontein (RICH.126) (ibid.:126). In 1815 there was evidently still a clear distinction made between the three classes of worker, for Smit preached to groups of "Hottentots, Bushmen and slaves" on various unnamed farms along the colonial boundary (Steytler 1956a:73). Read, stopping at one such farm in 1816, commented on the good treatment received by the Hottentots in the farmer's employ (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). In 1823 Thompson noted the presence of Hottentot servants on a Sneeuberg farm (1827,I:46-47).

By the 1840s the term Hottentot may have passed into usage to mean any farm labourer who was not black. Nicholson commented in 1843 that "With considerable difficulty, I at length succeeded in getting three Hottentots to take charge of the three flocks my sheep were divided into" (1848:61). Nicholson complained about the wages which he had to pay these herders: "Their wages were nominally about 18s a month each, but in addition to this I had to find bread, corn, and meat for themselves and their numerous broods, and to make an allowance of tobacco, besides giving them pasturage for their little flocks of goats and sheep." (ibid.). In 1847 the Orpen brothers were assisted by their neighbour in finding farm servants, who Joseph Orpen described as "a typical old Hottentot named Avontuur and his wife" (1908:10). Avontuur herded their flocks while his wife apparently helped in the farmstead (ibid.).

7.3.3. **Captive Bushmen servants**

7.3.3.1. Period of conflict - 1770 - 1798

The earliest category of Bushman labour was captured during the commandos of the Sneeuberg War. Nigel Penn (1995:214) has argued that the commandos really functioned in part to create a surplus labour pool from the shattered Bushman remnants of their attacks. The leaders of the first really large commando among the Bushmen of the interior, the Great Commando, were instructed that Bushmen who were not reduced to a peaceful state or entirely destroyed were to be taken captive (ibid.). Initial orders stressed that women and children who were captured should be released while young and adult males should be given to the poorest colonists (ibid.). In reality, most of the children were given to the colonists, while women captives were given to the Hottentot servants as wives (ibid.). Few adult males were however captured and Penn has argued that this was because Bushmen either refused to be taken alive, or were considered liable to escape and were thus killed. The farmers justified the detention of the widows and children of the murdered Bushmen on the basis that it would be cruel to leave these "defenceless" people to the whims of nature (ibid.).

Valley records show that local farmers were heavily implicated in this pattern of slave raiding. Van Jaarsveld's 1775 commando alone took "of the defenceless, twenty-one prisoners" at Blauw Bank while fifteen "little ones" were taken captive after two other Bushmen camps were attacked (Moodie 1960,III:45). Later in 1775 a commando (locality uncertain) learned the hazards of capturing adult males when they "took prisoners 82" of the Bushmen thieves they had followed (ibid.:67). These managed to escape and the male prisoners attacked the wagons belonging to the colonists (ibid.). Carel Van Der Merwe in 1779 "took 5 defenceless" (ibid.:82) Bushmen alive from this camp and they were "divided among the men" (ibid.) from a camp on the left bank of the Seacow River. A second commando which followed Bushmen into the south eastern reaches of the valley later that year "took and divided among the men 7 defenceless" from another Bushmen camp. A third commando which also went out into the Roodeberg that year took "six little ones" (ibid.:85). Fifteen "little ones" were also taken captive by a commando in September 1780. Large numbers of Bushmen children were therefore being forced into the service of particularly Sneeuberg farmers in this manner.

Of the travellers, Gordon was the first to observe a young Bushman "living with a farmer by whom he had been captured on commando" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:94) while Barrow (1806,I) in 1797 visited a Sneeuberg farmer who had just returned from a commando. He had with him a "wild" Bushman with two wives, who "by lot had fallen to his share out of forty that had been taken prisoners." (ibid.:195). Even this late in the war, Barrow had no doubt that the *trekboer's* real aim of pursuing Bushmen thieves was "that of procuring children" who would then be used to "attend his numerous flocks and herds" (1806,I:248). Maynier, the landdrost at Graaff-Reinet during much of this period commented that children carried away by these commando's were "used to keep as servants." (IBB 1835:28).

7.3.3.2. *Period of fragile peace - Capture of Bushmen after 1798*

Apart from setting various precedents for the provision of livestock to Bushmen in order to bring about peaceful relations with them, Macartney's Proclamation of 1798 also stressed that "The Bosjesmen are ... not to be molested, nor their children taken from them, or made slaves or servants of, on any pretense whatsoever." (IBB 1835:53). Nevertheless, farmers still retained the captives whom they had earlier acquired. Di Capelli, for example, listed "a captured Bushman girl" as one of the occupants of a Sneeuberg farm at which the Governor's party stopped in 1803 (De Kock 1965:255). Even after this date the odd commando still captured Bushmen children. Stockenstrom, in a list of commandos carried out between 1813 and 1824 noted that the prisoners were still disposed of "according to the old custom" by which they "were distributed among the inhabitants to try to bring them to peaceable habits" (IBB 1835:56). Unluckily this document does not specify whether valley farmers were implicated in these lists. In a letter dated to May 1817 he appears to justify the continued detention of Bushmen children. Farmers had been "induced ... to procure" some of the Bushmen children owing to their (the Bushmen's) practise of killing children for whom they could not adequately provide (ibid.).

After about 1824 Stockenstrom seems to have got better control of the illicit traffic in Bushmen children, and records of Bushmen captured by farmers tail off probably because any new prisoners taken by commandos were free to return "to their kraals" according to Stockenstrom (IBB 1835:56). Bushmen captured before this date still lived with the farmers "in the same way as their Hottentot servants." (ibid.).

7.3.3.3. *Ethnic Identity of Farm Slaves*

In contrast to wine and crop farmers in the southwest Cape Colony, "amongst pastoralist farmers ... slavery was much less important." (Armstrong and Worden 1990:138). Slaves decreased the further one got from Cape Town (cf. ibid.:Table 3.9). For the Graaff-Reinet district, Dooling has shown that "slavery was not the dominant source of labour" (1989:6). By 1827, only 12% of the entire labour force of this district was made up of slaves according to official records, compared to a figure of 51% for the same year in the Stellenbosch district (ibid.). While these figures do not prove that imported slaves were present in the upper valley, they at least show that they could have been.

Several travellers referred to 'slaves' on valley farms. The first was Governor Janssen's party who spent the night with four slaves and a Bushman girl en route through the Sneeuberg in 1803 (Di Capelli 1965:255). Burchell in 1812 noted the presence of "slaves" at Dasses Fontein (RICH.177) and later at Kook Fontein (RICH.126) of three female servants, all were Hottentots "excepting one slave." (Burchell 1953,II:126), meaning of non-Hottentot extraction. In 1820 Campbell noted that Pienaar, the owner of Driefontein (COL.137), had left "a few slaves" behind to guard the homestead (1822,II:319-320). Thompson in 1823 described "a swarthy train of slaves and Hottentots" (1827,I:46-47) at a Sneeuberg farm. The implications of "swarthy" to describe non-Hottentot slaves must surely mean that they were black. By 1830, with the traffic in captured Bushmen now under control, the need for slaves was probably on the rise, which doubtless affected their price at market (see below). One family who Steedman visited in that year told him that "they could not afford to purchase slaves" (1835,I:135).

The identity of 'slaves' in the valley literature is highly problematic. Slaves in the early Cape Colony were largely derived from foreign sources such as Madagascar, the East African coast and from Asian countries (Armstong and Worden 1990), but were any of these taken to the remote northeast edges of the expanding colonial border? Probably so, but the evidence is not conclusive.

No reference to slaves has survived in any known eighteenth century valley document. The first record is by Janssens' party in 1803, who first listed the four slaves before mentioning the presence of "a captured Bushman girl" (De Kock 1965:255). That the captured girl was referred to as a "Bushman" while all the slaves had no such prefix, indicates that the individuals referred to by Di Capelli as 'slaves' were either Hottentots from farther south or possibly of foreign origin, similar to the slaves they would have observed since leaving Cape Town.

Later travellers distinguished only between slaves and Hottentots at valley homesteads. Burchell for example noted "slaves and ... Hottentot maids" at Dasses Fontein and at Kook Fontein he remarked that of the female servants were Hottentots, "excepting one slave." (1924,II:87,126). Smit in 1815, on the other hand, preached to "Hottentots, Bushmen and slaves" on the border of the colony while Read also commented on "slaves, Hottentots and Bushmen" on the farm Quaggas Fontein (COL.98)(CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). At the farm Elands Heuvel (NOU.146) in 1823 Thompson also mentioned "slaves and Hottentots" (1827,I:52). Among all available records, only the two missionaries referred to the existence of Bushmen in addition to 'slaves' and Hottentots on valley farms, but these Bushmen could have been free Bushmen, voluntarily associated with the farms (see below). It may well be that apart from the slaves referred to by the Governor's party, all the other 'slaves' were in reality captured Bushmen. They lived in a conditions similar to that of other slaves, they could be brought and sold and they could easily be differentiated from free Bushmen. It is also more likely that captured Bushmen would have been observed in valley homesteads since so many of the captured were women.

7.3.3.4. *Treatment of Captured Bushmen*

Colonial officials had stipulated that Bushmen incorporated into the labour force through capture by commandos should be treated in the same way as free Hottentots who were already in the service of the farmers (Penn 1995). This was often honoured in the breach. A female Bushman residing on a Sneeuberg farm articulated a common complaint to General Janssens. When asked whether her life with the Christians was better than that in her own camp, she replied that this was not the case: in contrast to living with her parents where "zy ... wel behandeld wierd." [she was well cared for], the colonists have often beaten her (Godee-Molsbergen 1932:184-85).

The next explicit account of maltreatment is not until 1834. A valley farmer was fined by the Protector of Slaves, Donald Moodie, for having "maltreated a slave." (Kirby 1939,I:63-64). The culprit had apparently thrown down the money for the fine and when questioned concerning excess money which he had paid he replied sarcastically "you may keep it also" (ibid.).

Treatment was not universally harsh. Smith noted that in general "a good feeling seems to exist in regard to slaves" among the farmers, some of whom had according to him stressed the desire that all practices relating to slavery be ended (ibid.). Halting at the home of a valley farmer named Jacob Joubert (Quaggas Fontein - COL.98) in 1816, Read noted that he had before then "not found a farmers family where slaves, Hottentots and Bushmen were treated so well." (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816).

7.3.3.5. *Escapees*

Although some valley farmers no doubt gained the loyalty of captured Bushmen, poor treatment at the hands of others encouraged escape. From late in the eighteenth century, Bushmen were already escaping the service of farmers. Barrow could remark that Bushmen forced into the

service of farmers who were treated badly took "the first opportunity that offers of escaping to his countrymen" (1806,I:190). Escapes must have been a regular feature of valley farm affairs. Thompson in 1823 was warned by a Sneeuberg farmer against "runaway slaves, who occasionally rush down [out of the mountains] and plunder the solitary traveller." (1827,I:47). To encourage captured Bushmen not to escape, Thompson noted that farmers used dagga "as an inducement to retain the wild Bushmen in their service, whom they have made captives at an early age in their commandos" (1827,I:52).

7.3.3.6. *Released Captives*

Slaves and/or captured Bushmen were occasionally released. As early as 1778 Gordon received from the farmer Zuurplaats (GR.35) "a Chinese or Bushman named 'Carel'" who "wished to accompany me into the country" (Raper and Boucher 1988,I:179-180) which seems to imply that he was to be released. One other reference to a "freed slave" is with Governor Janssens' party in 1803. However, this man was almost certainly part of the entourage and came from Cape Town. He was rescued from drowning (by Bushmen) when he attempted to swim over to some other Bushmen on the opposite bank of the Orange River (De Kock 1965:258-259),

7.3.3.7. *Traffic in Captured Bushmen*

Captured Bushmen were divided among commando members as commodities, and could be bought and sold as such. This continued long after the Macartney Proclamation, which was for a longtime ineffectually enforced. In 1817 Stockenstrom indicated in a letter that children were still being traded in this manner and that some Bushmen camps were known to attack neighbouring camps, murder the older inhabitants, and "dispose of the children" by selling them to farmers seeking labourers (IBB 1835:57). Stockenstrom acted against the latter practice by declaring that "no Bosjesmen child shall be received by any inhabitant from any of that tribe except with the knowledge of the field cornet of the district" (ibid.).

Campbell in 1820 met up with several Sneeuberg farmers who were returning "from the sale of a neighbouring farmer's effects" (1822,II:325). Eight slaves had been sold for "16,000 rix dollars, about 1600 pounds sterling." (ibid.). Included among the slaves sold was a woman with very young child (her "sucking child") who had been sold for 5000 rix dollars, while another small girl was sold for 1300 rix dollars and a boy for 3000 (ibid.). Given the recent trafficking, the youngsters may well have been Bushmen.

7.3.3.8. *Housing*

Shelter for farm servants, including Bushmen, differed from place to place depending on the farmer's character and wealth. In earliest times, captured Bushmen were seen living under the same not very substantial roofs as their masters. When Janssens' party overnighted in 1803 at a

Sneeuwberg farm they "huddled around a fire in a single dirty room" with the farm's German overseer, his slaves and a Bushman girl (De Kock 1965:255).

Halting at Dasses Fontein (RICH.126) in 1812, Burchell also slept in "a single room" which constituted the entire house. A large fireplace at one end of the house "served for a kitchen, where slaves and some Hottentot maids sat within the chimney cooking for both the company and for themselves" (1953,II:87). Here, the servants probably slept in "a small straw hut" close to the house where Burchell's baggage and men were lodged (ibid.:85). According to Burchell, this hut could not be termed a shelter as rain "ran through the roof upon them." (ibid.). Arriving at a Sneeuberg house a little later, Burchell's men and a young Bushman accompanying him were "comfortably housed in the 'corn-house'", which was possibly the same building occupied by Bushmen servants (1953,II.:89).

Burchell was disgusted at the poor state of the Hottentot servants and the one slave at Kook Fontein (RICH.126) where he halted on his return journey (ibid.:126). He was particularly shocked at the state of the "huts they lived in" (ibid.). Burchell himself was accommodated "in a place without a window, at one end of the house", the door of which was falling off its hinges and which Burchell said "resembled a coal-hole, both in size and colour." (ibid.:126- 127). Questioning a Hottentot servant concerning the building, Burchell was told that it had "formerly been occupied by the slaves and Hottentots of the farm, but was now only used for the accommodation of 'slagter's knegts' [butcher's travelling assistants] and visitors." (ibid.).

By contrast, J.J. Pienaar, the owner of Driefontein (COL.137) just south of Toverberg, was apparently relatively well off and Campbell was impressed by the conditions on the farm which boasted "a substantial farm-house, with barns, slave-houses and a good garden" (1822,II:319-320). Slave-houses were probably rare on other valley farms. Visiting a typical Sneeuberg farmhouse which resembled "a large barn divided into two or three apartments" in 1823, Thompson noted that the whole family slept in one of the apartments, while visitors and travellers slept in the kitchen. The servants "were moving around the embers of the fire" (1827,I:46-47), presumably evicted for the night from their normal sleeping places by his presence.

7.3.3.9. *Feeding*

Burchell in 1812 noted the along with the family, the "slaves and Hottentots" were "fed with mutton at every meal" (1953,II:81). He (ibid.) also noted at another farm that the 'slaves' and Hottentot servants cooked for their masters as well as for themselves.

7.3.4. **Bushmen in Farm Service**

After the abolition of slavery in 1834, there is no evidence of any mass exodus of captured Bushmen from valley homesteads. Many were by now old, and those captured as children were now grown up and had married other servants. Presumably the terms of employment were quietly redefined in each household, so that former slaves were free to come and go as they wished, but

most of them continued in their duties, receiving much the same food and payment in kind as before. In 1839 Backhouse learned from his conversations with the Civil Commissioner of Colesberg that "many of these people [the Bushmen] are in the service of the Boors, by whom they are generally valued for their fidelity, in taking care of their flocks and herds" (Backhouse 1844:341-42).

7.3.4.1. *In the Farm House*

Bushwomen apparently fulfilled much the same roles as they had since they were first forced onto the farms in the 1770's. Younger, unmarried women were usually housemaids and nannies. This was still the case as late as 1869, when the owners of Weltevreden (COL.156) nearly fell victim "to the malice of a young Bushman girl" who had brought a cup of coffee to one of the younger members of the family (CA 1869:9,462). Finding that the coffee was bitter, the child's father investigated and discovered that the girl had dissolved "crystals of strychnine" in it (ibid.). Later still, in 1881, two children on the farm Klip Kop (HAN.147) were induced by "their nurse maid, a Bush girl" to eat some of the berries of the castor oil plant, after which they fell very ill (CA 1881:21,1058[wn]). Married female Bushmen were also employed at farm homesteads while their husbands were shepherds. That this still prevailed as late as 1874 is shown by a newspaper report from Eenzaamheid (COL.198) where sheep were killed by jackals when the herder left them at the outpost to visit his wife "at the homestead" (CA 1874:14,701).

7.3.4.2. *At the Livestock Outposts*

There are also reports that show the women living with the herdsmen at these outposts. "Three native herds, with their wives" offered hospitality to a Bushmen Hottentot named Booy at such an outpost on the farm Boschjesmans Vley (HAN.147) in 1866 (CA 1866:6,313). As Backhouse noted (see above) adult male Bushmen were mostly herdsmen on valley farms, and this pattern persisted until at least 1864 when a young Bushman (on Falsefontein - NOU.165) was reported killed by lightning while milking a cow (CA 1864:4,207).

7.3.4.3. *Dwellings After Emancipation*

Farm servants lived either near the homestead or at remote stock kraals (outposts). Dwellings close to farmhouses probably changed little from those of earlier times (see 7.3.3.8. above). Among later travellers through the valley, only Backhouse (1844) noted them at Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73) in 1839, calling them "smaller habitations, occupied by colored servants" close to the homestead (ibid.:341-342), but with no other details.

The herdsmen and sometimes their families resided at the stock outposts. A murder report at an outpost at Boschjesmans Vley (HAN.147) in 1866 gives a particularly useful account of the dwellings (CA 1866:6,313). Two herdsmen with their wives occupied "two huts on the place."

They could also accommodate the visiting murderer and a third herdsman with his wife. They spent much of the evening gathered around a fire close to one of the huts. Survivors fled to the hut after the lone visitor opened fire, killing two herdsmen. He then set the hut on fire, killing the third herdsman, but the women fled to the homestead. These gruesome details indicate that the dwelling must have been a reed hut, and that they were beyond gunshot sound range of the homestead, as the farmer had heard nothing.

Other newspaper reports allude to these outposts. In 1871 the owner of a farm just east of Colesberg (Slingersfontein - COL.119) instructed his herdsmen (ethnicity unknown) to "let the sheep under his charge, at an outpost, sleep outside the kraal" in order to get their fleeces ready for shearing (CA 1871:11,537). A report of stock-theft from T'zamenkomst (COL.57) in 1889 also sheds some light on the role of the outposts on valley farms. The "herd [-er, ethnicity unknown] at one of the outposts has a mixed flock of goats and ewes to look after" (CA 1889:28*,2304). Needing to take the goats "further into the veld" in search of pasturage, he left the sheep in the care of three of his children, from whom they were subsequently stolen (ibid.).

Several reports also indicate that the mounted police for the Colesberg district periodically visited many of these outposts. A table (CA 1881:21,1074) detailing the duties of the mounted police between September and December 1881 indicates that the policemen visited 157 farms and 27 outposts, while a similar table for the month of February the following year shows that 39 farms were visited as well as 5 outposts (CA 1882:22,1087).

7.3.4.4. *Farm Wages*

After abolition, the remuneration for services rendered by farm servants would have remained in kind, virtually unchanged: meat and tobacco, and occasional livestock. The need to retain Bushmen using regular issues of dagga would probably have fallen away with emancipation. Cash wages would have gradually increased over kind after the establishment of the valley towns with their stores filled with newfangled English goods. By 1839 Backhouse was told that around the new town of Colesberg "in addition to their small wages and food, three or four sheep, or a cow" were given to farm servants on a yearly basis (1844:341-342).

Tobacco was also a highly favoured form of payment among the Bushmen. Before many farms had been established in the valley, travellers were giving tobacco to Bushmen and soon many travellers were being approached by Bushmen who begged for tobacco. Crossing the plains north-west of the valley in 1823 for example, Thompson was continuously approached by women out foraging on the plains who requested tobacco (1827,I). In 1836 Cornwallis Harris while in the Sneeuberg could note: "this precious weed, which may be denominated the current coin of the realm, is carried about in Africa twisted in long thin ropes, which are coiled up in rolls. A roll is considered a splendid oblation to a prince - and an inch, a handsome present to a commoner; meted out by the span in traffic, it will purchase whatever this most benighted of countries can produce." (1838:32-33). Information on cash wages paid to farm servants is scarce although two newspaper reports offer some clues. In March 1877, the Middelburg Gazette published a list entitled "Wages -

farm servants" (MG 1877:2,62). Under the general heading 'colored' the following information was given: "10s to 15s per month, 2s per diem, with food." (ibid.). 'Shearers' were recorded as receiving "6s per 100, with food", while 'shepherds' received "10s per month, with food." (ibid.).

The second report was a letter from a farmer dated to 19 August 1898 in which he complained about the expense of providing farm servants with food. He argued that farm servants got too much meat: "As a rule a boy gets from 2.5lbs. to 3lbs. of meat (in some cases more) and 1lb. to 1.5lb of meal or mielies" (CA 1898:38,1907). The farmer suggested that servants be supplied with less meat and more "meal and mielies" (ibid.). Meat therefore still formed a large part of the wages of farm labourers late in the nineteenth century.

7.3.5. Free Bushmen Living near Homesteads

Soon after the Macartney Proclamation (1798) with its orders for a peaceful coexistence and the gathering of livestock 'subscriptions' for Bushmen, the latter began to camp nearer to certain valley farmers who were more kindly disposed towards them. Collins was the first traveller to mention a Bushman who voluntarily associated himself with a valley farmer. Arriving at Carolus Poort in 1809 he found "a Bosjesman who had a short time before fled to the farmers from his kraal near the Zuureberg, in consequence ... of his wife and children having been murdered by the people belonging to it." (Moodie 1960,V:2). At this farm the Bushman soon acquired "another wife of his own nation who had been taken when a child by a commando." (ibid.).

At this stage, it becomes difficult to generalise about the relationship between these 'free' Bushmen and the farmers. Evidently it was not a formal relationship, but a loose, symbiotic one. Thompson in 1823 may have articulated it most simply and clearly. On arriving at Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) he found that "a kraal or horde of Bushmen was close by, the inhabitants of which were on good terms, or partly in the service of the colonists" (Forbes 1967,I:57). While captured Bushmen lived with the farmers in their homes or in European styled huts nearby, free Bushmen now lived in their traditional 'kraals' close to the farmsteads. Stockenstrom, travelling with Collins in 1809 reported "on every farm between the Great Sneeuwberg chain and the Orange River, we found a Bushman family, or kraal, easily maintained by the enormous flocks of sheep and game, and very useful to the farmer" (Hutton 1887:39). In this relationship, the men acted "as herdsmen" to the farmers herds and flocks, while the women fulfilled the role of "servants to the housewife." (ibid.).

Ryneveldt also observed "on the side of Sneeuwberg and the Newveld"(IBB 1835:113) at the home of Van Heerden [locality uncertain] "at the boundaries of the colony" (ibid.:113) many Bushmen "at different places, and also in the service of the inhabitants, partly tending their cattle; but who, who as yet being completely wild and bordering on barbarism, are very different from the common Hottentots." (ibid.:114).

In 1813, while a group of farmers was being preached to in a Sneeuberg farmhouse, Read preached "at the outside for the heathens" who were largely "Bosjesmans" (CWMA 5,59 - 18.05.1813). Smit and Read in 1815 regularly stopped at valley farms along the colonial boundary

(CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). Campbell's party was astounded by the many Bushmen in the service of the farmers at 'Dash Poort' (i.e. Bosch Duivens Kop - PH.123) in 1820: "They had twelve Bushwomen servants ... the men were with the cattle" (1822,II:313). The existence of large numbers of both men and women in the service of this farmer indicates that the latter probably drew his labour from family groups who had chosen to associate themselves with him, rather than from Bushmen acquired as slaves. The position of this farm beyond the colonial boundary also makes such voluntary association more viable. Later, having arrived at Driefontein (COL.137) on the eastern side of the valley, Campbell remarked that besides the slaves who had been left behind to guard the farmhouse in the owners absence, "two or three Bushmen families ... constantly reside there." (ibid.:319-20). These families were clearly free Bushmen.

By the time that Stockenstrom travelled through the valley with Bonamy in 1821-22, these informal, loose types of relationships were apparently very common. On the road from the Winterberg to the Seacow River he encountered "no Bushmen whatever living separated from the boers except one kraal" (IBB 1835:117). Apart from the latter camp, the remaining Bushmen "lived with the inhabitants, who fed them and hunted for them to keep them on good terms" (ibid.). In return, the Bushmen herded cattle for the farmers. Stockenstrom however stressed that these Bushmen were not bound by any "engagements", but they were "fully at liberty to stay as long as they liked, and to go away when they thought proper" (ibid.).

Thus, from the beginning of the nineteenth century valley Bushmen began associating themselves voluntarily with the farms for the various advantages which these farms offered, and slipped gradually into the status of retainers and/or hired hands.

7.3.6. **Labour Relations**

7.3.6.1. *Theft*

With so large a gap in wealth between farmer and servant, farm staff inevitably developed a general reputation for stealing. The valley farmer Nicholson in 1843 was lyrical on this subject: "the destructive propensities of the beasts of prey are nothing ... in comparison with those of the Hottentots and other herdsmen." (1848:62-63). Halting at Morgenwacht (COL.109) in 1856 Hamelberg was warned against leaving anything in the horse-cart overnight as some of the "kleurlingen" [coloureds] on the farm were apt to steal whatever was left behind (Spies 1952:137).

Later, newspaper reports recorded robberies by servants in the employ of farmers. In 1869 a servant on a farm in the Colesberg district employed two 'Bushmen Hottentots' to herd a flock of goats while he was visiting a neighbour (CA 1869:9,453). The servant left the two with enough food, but on returning, he found that they had slaughtered one of the farm owners' goats (ibid.). In 1876 a goat and 13 sheep were reported stolen from the farm Oppermans Kraal (HAN.91) in mid-valley by a herdsman (named Isaac Sekow) from a neighbouring farm (CA 1878:18,920). In 1888 "Mr G.B. Murray, of Klipkop took three sheep killers into Hanover last week. They were all bushmen in his own service." (CA 1888:27*,227). The culprits had slaughtered the sheep late one

afternoon and confessed to the crime when they were found out. One of the thieves "had thrown them into the river and forgotten to sink them, so they were floating." (ibid.). Lists of farm servants convicted for livestock theft were published in local newspapers. "The smallness of the wages and the insufficiency of the food supplied by the farmer to his servants" were often listed as the reasons behind these thefts (CA 1863:3,136).

7.3.6.2. *Alcohol*

Overindulgence in alcohol was another problem particularly associated with farm Bushmen. The latter appear to have generally acquired liquor at 'canteens' in the surrounding towns, often returning to their residences on the farms in an inebriated state. In 1869 a Bushman was found dead on the road from Colesberg to Burghersdorp, shortly after he was observed in Colesberg in an intoxicated state (CA 1869:9,454). A similar tragic incident was reported on in 1874 under the headline: "A victim of Cape Smoke" (CA 1874:14,695[wn]) - a Bushman Hottentot employed on Klip Kop (HAN.147) was returning home when he fell off the wagon which subsequently rode over him. His death was attributed to having drunk too much Cape Brandy (ibid.). In 1879, a "gentleman of the Bushman persuasion, from a neighbouring farm" visited the Colesberg on a Monday and "as is the custom of his race, patronized the canteens pretty liberally." (CA 1879:19,970). This Bushman then mounted his horse and raced up and down the streets of Colesberg, leading to much alarm and his eventual arrest (ibid.)(CA 1865:5,231; CA 1867:7,365).

Between September and December 1881, the Colesberg mounted police visited 157 farms and 27 outposts and arrested a total of 65 people, 42 of which were charged with being "drunk and disorderly" (CA 1881:21,1074).

7.3.6.3. *Cannabis*

The smoking of cannabis (*Cannabis sativa*) or what was generally referred to as dagga, was a common pastime of Bushmen farm servants. Sampson (1993) has briefly reviewed dagga dependency of Seacow River Bushmen, and the following adds supplementary records not mentioned in that paper. In 1812 Burchell saw "dakka" at Kriegar Fontein (RICH.73). In 1815 Smit recorded that "dagga" was one of the items demanded by a Bushmen captain visiting the Toverberg mission from the Seacow River (Steytler 1956a:86). Later that year the farmer 'Jubert' (of Quaggas Fontein - COL.98) gave Smit "een quantetijd dagga" [a quantity of dagga] to give to the Bushmen at the mission (ibid.:87). Thompson saw 'dacha" on the rafters of Elands Heuwel, grown to retain captured Bushmen by addiction.

In 1892 the editor of the Colesberg Advertiser reported that "Dagga smoking" was on the increase in that district (CA 1892:31*,1562). He noted that 'dagga' was "constantly sold by the muid sack on the market, dried and ready for smoking" although it was also commonly grown in town and farm gardens. According to him, Hottentots and Bushmen were the principal smokers of cannabis, but that this habit decreased their productivity. "The best of servants become hopeless

when they take to dagga smoking" he noted (ibid.). "The smoker constantly slips away from his work to have a suck at his pipe in the ground, and when he is quite intoxicated he often begins shrieking and screaming like one possessed." (ibid.). The newspaper editor called for a law to prevent the growth and sale of that plant (ibid.). Sampson argued that two factors - the poor productivity resulting from the misuse of this plant and the imposition of new moral standards through the existence of churches and shops in the new towns - could explain why "between 1850 and 1900 cannabis-growing was driven underground". Indications are however that low productivity rather than moral issues were responsible for the crackdown on the growing and smoking of cannabis and that such restrictions were only set in place very late in the nineteenth century.

7.3.6.4. *Labour Contracts*

Contractual agreements between farmers and their servants differed widely from farm to farm, but it appears that many farmers thought that their servants were indentured to them. Many servants thought the opposite, for Bushmen farm servants were inclined to leave the service of their employers with little or no warning. In 1862 a Bushman was arrested and charged for theft and escaping from his master's service (CA 1862:2,74). He had apparently absconded with some of the farmers belongings (ibid.). This was apparently a fairly common occurrence as again in 1865 "een Kleine Bosjesman genaamd Andries" [one small Bushman named Andries] unlawfully left the service of a valley farmer (CA 1862:2,74). In 1876 a Middelburg farmer published a demand that the Government instruct Bushmen and Hottentot farm employees "onder conrakt te laten werken" [to work under contract] for the farmers (MG 1876:1,20). The servants would then be encouraged to be more obedient and they too would benefit from the relationship (ibid.). The authorities also viewed such agreements like indentured labour. In 1879 a Warrant of Apprehension was issued for a Bushmen who had absconded from his masters service (CA 1879:19,972).

Verbal agreements between Bushmen employees and European employers were probably the primary form of labour contract practised on valley farms. In 1880 a farmer wrote to the Colesberg Advertiser complaining against a local court ruling concerning one such contract. A Bushman servant "had deserted his master and when apprehended denied having a contract." (CA 1880:20,995). The farmer then brought two witnesses from his farm to court. They claimed to have heard the verbal contract between the Bushman and the farmer being made. The magistrate however ruled against the farmer, accusing him of telling the witnesses what to say (ibid.).

It seems, however, that farmers thought nothing of breaking the contracts when it suited them. For Bushmen servants themselves, employment on the farms was far from stable. During drought years farmers discharged Bushmen and Hottentots from their service "because they had no food to give them" (CA 1866:6,307). According to the editor, theft increased dramatically because these servants then had to find other means of survival (ibid.). The occurrence of disease also led to the discharge of farm servants. A correspondent from Colesberg for example noted in 1859 that

"since the breaking out of small pox, many farmers have thinned the ranks of their domestic servants by sending them adrift, keeping merely such as are herds" (GRH 1859:7,372).

7.3.6.5. *Loyalty*

Despite all the apparent problems, many Bushman servants served their employers faithfully for long periods of time. An early Agricultural Show held in Colesberg rewarded loyal servants with cash prizes - in 1862 the prize of two pounds "for the best servant" was awarded to a man named Spogter (CA 1862:2,65) while in 1863 Karel, who had served on Riekertsfontein (COL.95) for 19 years, received this prize for his long service (CA 1863:3,118[wn.]). In 1864 Spogter was again rewarded with one pound for 50 years of service to a local farmer (CA 1864:4,168). As late as 1894 the Colesberg Advertiser quoted the Cape Times as reporting that "There is a Bushman living at Doornkloof in the Colesberg district who is said to be 124 years of age." (CA 1894:33*,1696). Doornkloof was probably the valley farm Doorn Kloof (COL.5) at the confluence of the Seacow and Orange Rivers.

7.3.6.6. *Scarcity of servants*

From 1864 large numbers of reports indicated that farm servants were becoming more and more difficult to find. In June that year an unnamed farmer spent two days in Colesberg searching for servants as his had all left him without notice (CA 1864:4,181). After two days of fruitless searching he eventually returned home with a convict from the prison (ibid.). After 1873, complaints about the scarcity of farm labour became very common. An editorial in the Colesberg Advertiser notified the public that if anyone was "desirous of obtaining servants" from St. Helena, they should contact him at the newspaper office (CA 1873:13,651). A common complaint was not only the scarcity of servants, but "the very unsatisfactory character of the services of the few they are fortunate enough to secure" (CA 1874:14,701). In 1875 farmers again complained at the lack of available servants and talked of having to scale down their flocks and herds and perhaps keep ostriches instead (CA 1875:15,767). Large numbers of unemployed individuals were potentially available for such service, but farmers complained that these people either "demanded exorbitant wages" or were merely "lazy loafing natives" unwilling to work (ibid.). In 1877 farmers complained at the lack of domestic servants (CA 1877:17,840) and in 1880, a report commented that "Native servants are scarce in these parts although natives are plentiful." (CA 1880:20,1006). Similar complaints occurred periodically in the newspapers until the end of the century.

CHAPTER 8 - MISSION BUSHMEN

8.1. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) targeted Bushmen in the Cape Colony as a group who 'needed' to hear the gospel. Their first two mission stations were established at Bly Vooruitzichts Fontein and at Sakriver in the Roggeveld, both aimed at securing peace between Bushmen and Dutch farmers. Their plan was to provide an alternative to theft as a means of livelihood for Bushmen, but they both ended up with a mainly Hottentot membership and the Bushmen remained at large (Schoeman 1993).

Next, they tried to establish mission stations at Toverberg (in 1814) and at Hephzibah (in 1816) in 'pure' Bushman country where no Hottentots had been seen. An 1815 report to the L.M.S. Directors shows their goals were much the same, namely to: "deprive the Bushmen of that savage ferocity by which they have been hitherto distinguished, and reconcile them to the white men, against whom they had a peculiar enmity; while it will greatly facilitate the journeys of Missionaries and others, who hitherto have been obliged, for safety, to travel in large companies." (LMS 1815:18).

8.2. TOVERBERG MISSION STATION

Mr Campbell and the missionary Read had apparently decided on the site for this station in 1813, but whether they specified its exact position remains unclear (see CWMA 5,59 - 18.05.1813; LMS 1815:18). Early field reports (LMS 1815:18) identified it as 'The mission to the Bushmen at Vanderwalt's Fountain', which would have placed it at the foot of the Perdeberg close to, but outside modern Colesberg. All later reports indicate it was positioned in the narrow, rocky defile now accommodating Colesberg village. The missionary assistant Corner first complains of the difficulties in laying out the mission "in consequence of the place being surrounded with hills" (Steytler 1956b:96). John Evans referred to the position of the mission station as a "local disadvantage" in that it was in a "narrow spot surrounded by mountains 300 yards wide and about half a mile in length" (CWMA 6,72 - 21.12.1815). Oral tradition within the town has it that the mission occupied the space now taken by the Colesberg Museum, but documentation for this has yet to be researched.

The L.M.S. first wanted to call this station 'Blyvooruitzigt' like their first mission in the Roggeveld. Although the Graaff-Reinet Landdrost, had agreed to this name (Schoeman 1993), it seems never to have been used, perhaps because 'Toornberg' or 'Torenberg' or 'Toverberg' and even 'Thornberg' (ibid.:224) were in such common use to describe the very prominent conical koppie nearby. In 1816 Read, who thought that 'Toornberg' meant 'Wrath Mountain', renamed it

'Grace Hill' translated as 'Genade heuvel/Berg' (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). Although the LMS literature continued to use this name, local sentiment was firmly against the change so that 'Toverberg/Toorn Berg' has prevailed while 'Grace Hill' survived only as long as the mission itself. Erasmus Smit arrived there on 29 September 1815 and was greeted by "upwards of five hundred" Bushmen who had gathered there to meet him (LMS 1815:18). He was away between 24 October and 21 November while he went to Graaff-Reinet to fetch his wife and children (EMMC 1815). They continued to work among the Toverberg Bushmen until 20 January 1816 when trouble began (Steytler 1956a) and on 26 January they left the station and crossed over into the Colony where they seem to have moved aimlessly from farm to farm, returning to Graaff-Reinet only on 23 March (ibid.). There, Smit met up with Read and Corner. Although Smit apparently wanted to move the mission elsewhere, he was persuaded to return to Toverberg, taking Corner along as his assistant (ibid.). They arrived back on 13 June 1815, and were greeted by a smaller number of Bushmen than before, but were able to stay. Corner left Toverberg in September 1816 to establish the mission station at Hephzibah, but Smit continued until 17 March 1818 when the colonial Government ordered him back to the Colony (Schoeman 1993).

8.2.1. **Hottentots (oorlams)**

Smit and Corner were aided in their ministry by several Hottentots whom they brought from Graaff-Reinet. A letter by Smit (1 January 1815) mentions "Basterd Hottentotten (die my toegestaan waaren door zyne Exceltie den Gouv. Lord Somerset mede uit de Colonie to neemen)" [Bastard Hottentots (who had been donated by the Governor Lord Somerset to take out of the Colony)] in the congregation (Steytler 1956a:69). During the troubles before their flight of 26 January, Smit (ibid.) repeatedly reported incidents where his helpers were threatened by the Bushmen. They fled with him, and evidently returned to Toverberg in June 1815 , since Corner took "drie van de Basterd Hottentotten" (ibid.:76) on a hunting trip, soon thereafter. They were also sent to shoot game and to herd the small flocks of the mission (ibid.).

There were 13 in all (i.e. three families) in 1816 (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). of which "seven of the Hottentots nation" (CWMA 6,77 - 17.09.1816) were baptised at the station, although Read reports only six 'oorlams baptised (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). This is the first recorded use of the term 'oorlam' at the mission. Legassick (1990:368-9) quotes an 1805 source for 'oorlams' meaning "Hottentots who come from the upper country [i.e. beyond the 'frontier'] and are born and bred with the farmers; most of them understand and speak the low Dutch language." These mission Hottentots were therefore undoubtedly the same group of people referred to as oorlams.

8.2.2. **Bushmen**

Bushmen from regions surrounding Toverberg were attracted to the mission by the food and tobacco provided by the missionaries as well as by a desire to escape the service of farmers. Like

many of the earlier travellers to the valley, the missionaries gave the Bushmen gifts of food and tobacco "...zoo lang zy by ons aan torenberg zich ophielde woonden zy de middelen by, en kwaamen des avonds in de kerk" [as long as they remain with us at Torenberg, attend the services and come to church morning and evening] (Steytler 1956a:78). However, these 'retained' Bushmen soon became jealous of visiting Bushmen who continued to receive handouts. They demanded more food and tobacco for themselves or they would leave (ibid.:70). It is not clear whether they made good their threat, but in August a Bushman again complained that he was not getting enough food and tobacco and he tried to persuade the others to leave with him (ibid.).

Meat was also provided erratically for them and was highly prized. In June, Corner (Steytler 1956b) returned from the Orange River bringing the carcass of a hippo, the flesh of which was divided between the Bushmen and the Hottentots (ibid.). On 24 August, Bushmen staying at the mission approached Smit to inform him that they would leave the mission "als ik hun geen vleesch wilde geeven" [if he (Smit) did not give them meat] (Steytler 1956a:81). The mission Hottentots were then despatched to hunt wild game. When some meat was brought back to the mission that evening a large number of 'wilde Boschjesmans' arrived at the mission (ibid.). When Corner presented some Bushmen with a sheep in December 1815, "they were very glad as if they were received into paradise." (Steytler 1956b:103).

Corn was made available to the Bushmen on a more regular basis. In July 1815, Jan Goeyman (a second missionary assistant) arrived at Toverberg from Graaff-Reinet where he had obtained a supply of corn (Steytler 1956a). The corn was paid for by the L.M.S. as it was intended "voor de Boschjesmans" (ibid.:79). A daily ration of this corn was given to the Bushmen to prevent them stealing mission sheep and cattle for food (ibid.). Within a month Smit began to prepare the ground for the growth of his own corn. From some local farmers he borrowed a ploughshare and he then ploughed enough land to sow two 'muid' (three-bushel bags) of corn seed, the fruit of which was to feed not only Smit, but also the Bushmen and so lessen the burden on the L.M.S. funds (ibid.). Tobacco and cannabis were also regular issues, and were used to pay Bushmen to perform small tasks. On 10 August Smit wrote that "sommige van onze Boschjesmans" [some of our Bushmen] helped him to clear roots and tree stumps from ground which he intended to plough (ibid.:80). For these and other small tasks he "gaf hun tot betaaling koorn tabak en dagga." [gave them corn, tobacco and dagga as payment.] (ibid.).

Friction with white farmers moving into the region, particularly over the issue of Bushmen servants absconding to the mission stations, has been listed as one of the primary causes for the decision of the colonial Government to recall the LMS missionaries from beyond the colonial boundary in 1818 (Schoeman 1993). Although this was no doubt a source of tension, only one incident of this nature was recorded by the missionaries themselves. Soon after his arrival at Toverberg in June 1815 Corner commented that "A Woman came complaining of ill treatment of her and Husband by a Farmer; expressed her desire to stay at the institution." (Steytler 1956b:96). Promising to return the following day, she set out "to fetch her things from the fields where they had lodged" (ibid.). She complained that a farmer had flogged her husband and that this farmer had "detained her two children." (ibid.).

Although "upwards of five hundred" Bushmen had waited at Toverberg to greet Smit on his arrival there in 1814 (LMS 1815:18), not all of these can be designated 'Mission Bushmen'. Read commented in 1816 that "There are 11 families here of Bushmen and 3 of oorlams. In the neighbourhood is four kraals of Bushmen, containing about 300 Bushmen, ... besides numbers over the Cradock River." (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). Indeed, this reference illustrates the two primary divisions which soon began to emerge between the Bushmen of the region in relation to the mission stations: Bushmen visitors to the mission and Bushmen constantly residing there.

8.2.2.1. *Early days (29 Sept. 1814 - 26 Jan. 1815)*

Bushmen visitors

The language barrier was the first problem to be overcome. Although Smit tried to meet with some Bushmen during his first few days at Toverberg in 1814, he "could not speak to them from want of an interpreter." (EM 1815:516). On 2 October he met a person who "spoke their language" and was thus able to address the Bushmen (ibid.). After fetching his wife and children, the number of Bushmen increased and communication went smoothly; they "seemed to rejoice at the instruction they received." (ibid.). However, on new years day 1815 he was again without an interpreter (Steytler 1956a) until 11 January when he met a Bushman "aan die de duitsche taal vry wel konde spreeken" [who could speak the Dutch language well] (ibid.:70).

Through this man, he began to challenge key Bushmen beliefs, starting with the Bushmen understanding of death. According to Bushmen custom, when one of their members seemed about to die, they left him or her and walked far away (ibid.). Their vision was that "het veld dat Groot en wyd is ... is nog vol boschjesmans zy kunnen niet doodgaan" [the veld is big and wide and is still full of Bushmen who can't die] but rather travel to a region far away where they can't be seen (ibid.:70). Smit's insistence that they die only once and are then judged went down very badly. The Bushmen became rowdy and dissatisfied as a result (ibid.).

A second flare-up occurred when a Bushmen baby was born on 19 January 1815. The mother intended to abandon the child in a hole in the ground, since she had other children not yet big enough to walk. Smit intervened, and the Bushmen again began to threaten the missionaries, demanding that they leave Toverberg, which they soon did (ibid.). During this first period, it is not clear that any Bushmen were living permanently with the Missionaries. The school and the church services (cf. EM 1815:516) may have been attended by visitors. Even the mother who bore her child at the mission (cf. Steytler 1956a:70) was probably an overnight visitor.

8.2.2.2. *The mission station established (13 June 1815 - 17 March 1818)*

Permanent Residents

The Bushmen who greeted Smit and Corner when they arrived back at Toverberg on 13 June 1815 were apparently pleased to see them. Thereafter, the gradual recruitment of permanent

residents at the mission can be inferred from text fragments. Evidently the first was the woman who had escaped the maltreatment of a farmer (see above) and who now vowed to stay permanently at the mission (Steytler 1956a). Unfortunately, Smit's journal does not mention whether she had returned with her husband, whom she had earlier set out to fetch. Nor is there further mention of her children, who were apparently still held captive by the farmer. For the first several days, the missionaries battled against Bushmen thieves who kept on stealing sheep and cattle. Soon, however, "vier of vyf Boschjesmans nog op de plaats die reeds een afkeer van't steelen scheinen te hebben verkreegen" [four or five Bushmen at the mission who no longer stole] wanted to go after the thieves and make them pay for their crimes (ibid.:76). Smit persuaded them "om hier by het woord van God te blyven" [to stay here at the word of God] rather than to leave the mission (ibid.). The settlement of Bushmen at the mission stations had thus begun.

By 25 June Smit (ibid.:77) remarked that three more "van onze Boschjesmans" [of our Bushmen] along with the five mentioned above listened to his teaching "met betraande oogen" [with tears in their eyes]. In July two Bushmen thieves were apprehended and brought before "the Bosjesmen that are constantly with us" (Steytler 1956b:98). On being questioned concerning how the thieves should be punished, the latter Bushmen replied in broken Dutch that the thieves "must be chastised" as "they be rogues." (ibid.). The missionaries then gave the thieves over to the Bushmen to punish them as they saw fit. Their fate is not recorded. On 10 July some of "our Bushmen" warned the missionaries to be on their guard "as they had observed some villains lurking on the adjacent Mountain" (ibid.:99). A week later, the mission Bushmen informed Smit that some Bushmen from the other side of the Orange River had threatened to kill them (ibid.). By now there was obviously a growing divide between the mission Bushmen and those on the periphery of the settlement. Those at the mission are called "onze Boschjesmans" [our Bushmen] or "vaste Boschjesmen" [permanent Bushmen] (Steytler 1956a:80 and ibid.:81).

However, there was little real growth in the first year. In December 1815 when Evans visited, still only "five bosjesmen continue to abide with him [Smit] and others coming occasionally." (CWMA 6,72 - 21.12.1815). The following year, however, Read could report "11 families" of Bushmen at the mission station when he baptised their 'captain' Uithaalder (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816; cf. CWMA 6,77 - 17.09.1816). At this date "three more Bushmen ... were seeking salvation in Christ." (ibid.). Unfortunately no records have survived after September 1816.

Even the 'vaste' Bushmen left the mission to forage, but the difference was that they asked leave to do so, as on 30 August 1815 when they got Smit's permission for a two month trip (Steytler 1956a:81-82). It seems that on these trips they would also returned to the mission to attend Sunday services. On one such visit they reported that Bushmen on the banks of the Orange River planned to steal sheep and cattle from the station (ibid.). Thus when these 'vaste' Bushmen led by Uithaalder returned on 27 October, some of them re-established themselves near the mission sheep kraals to prevent the threatened predations.(ibid.). It is also mentioned that Uithaalder's actions in trying to prevent this theft resulted in conflict between the 'vaste' Bushmen and the potential thieves (ibid.). This conflict has been dealt with elsewhere (see Chapter 6).

The impact of the mission on its 'vaste' Bushmen was the greatest. The view of Uithaalder, the 'captain' of the mission Bushmen, was recorded by Philip in 1825 concerning the activities of Smit. He said that Smit "condescended to live among us, to preach the word of God, and to teach us to read, and to refrain from doing any harm to any body."

Habitual Visitors

Far more Bushmen merely visited the mission to attend services and/or to get access to food and tobacco. Smit, summing up in 1815, wrote: "In dit jaar zyn er verscheidene boschjesmans by het Instituut aangekomen, als op een bezoek zonder dat zy Echter hunne vaste woonplaats op het Instituut genoomen hebben" [In this year various Bushmen have come to the Institution, often on a visit without establishing themselves permanently at the Mission] (Steytler 1956a:88). This was probably because Smit did not have enough food to sustain them (ibid.). Such visitors were called 'wilde Boschjesmans' (ibid.:78) or 'vreemde Boschjesmans' (ibid.:81).

At different times, several camps of visitors were situated around the station (see 6.4.1.4.) but the scheduling of visits appears to be random. In 1815 there were three Bushmen camps (ibid.:80) and in September 1816 there were "four kraals of Bushmen" (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816).

8.2.2.3. *Impacts on their Belief System*

Only a few of the valley travellers alluded to the original beliefs of the Bushmen whom they encountered. Di Capelli, for example, remarked: "Religion they have none, but a belief in sorcerers with power to produce rain, wind and thunder." (De Kock 1965:258-59). Lichtenstein made a similar observation concerning the beliefs of the Bushmen they encountered on the banks of the Orange River. He noted that "they are exceedingly superstitious, and there are among them, ... people who are considered as magicians, and who are believed, to have the power of commanding rain, wind, and thunder, at their pleasure." (Plumptre 1815,II:77). Lichtenstein's informant told him that his wife had been such a great 'magician', but that her prophecies later all proved false whereupon she was put to death by the other Bushmen. The informant told how "He himself, for fear she might trouble him after her death, had dashed the head of the corpse to pieces with large stones, then buried her, and for greater security, made a large ? [Plumptre's question] over the grave ..." (ibid.).

Smit and Corner (Steytler 1956a; Steytler 1956b) in trying to reach these Bushmen with the message of the gospel, inadvertently mentioned some of their beliefs. Corner, for example, while hunting on the banks of the Orange River commented that one evening the moon shone very brightly and "the Bushmen were singing; all in a sudden it disappeared which caused a great noise." (Steytler 1965b:97). It was a lunar eclipse. Corner then went up to them and requested silence, questioning them about the significance of the moon to them. He asked them "if they acknowledge any secread [his spelling] honour to the moon in a very faint and indifferent manner they answered

yes." (ibid.). Smit (Steytler 1956a) alluded to another episode in which Bushmen singing is once again connected to moonlight. One evening when the moon was shining, thirteen of the mission occupants wound their way about the mission station, singing their gospel songs, and visiting the three Bushmen camps in the vicinity of the mission station. The result, Smit noted was that "hunne Gezang en geschreeuw Somtyds geheele nachten door, van toen af hebben na gelaaten" [they no longer sung and screamed as they had (often for the whole night)] (ibid.:80), but instead sung the songs which the missionaries had sung.

This singing and screaming through the night seemed to be a feature of those Bushmen not associated with the mission and deemed 'wilde Boschjesmans' [wild Bushmen] by Smit (ibid.:81). Two weeks after Smit had commented regarding the singing and screaming, the mission station was visited by some "wilde Boschjesmans deze waaren den Gantsche nacht zeer ydel en Baldadig, Raaste zongen en Schreewende de eene boven den anderen." [wild Bushmen who the previous night were rowdy and raucous, singing noisy songs and screaming one louder than the next] (ibid.). This singing and screaming could be references to the belief system of the Bushmen and these noises could possibly be indicative of a trance dance.

Although some Bushmen appear to have readily accepted the message preached by the missionaries (that is, after their initial opposition to Smit), the small numbers of Bushmen counted as 'onze' [our] Bushmen or mission Bushmen indicates that they were in the minority. Corner for example stressed his frustration in trying to lead a church service when he went hunting close to the Seacow River as "at the time of worship they [the Bushmen] were making a noise being between 30 and 40 feet from us behind a bush" and even when he called them closer and spoke to them "they were talking the whole time of service." (Steytler 1956b:103).

8.2.2.4. *Learning New Subsistence*

Uithaalder told Philip that Smit "taught us to cultivate gardens, he gave us seeds to plant them, he showed us how to grow potatoes, and ploughed land, which he sowed for us; and when the harvest came, he taught us to cut down the corn, and divided it among us" (Philip 1828,II:50-51). Their willing participation in this process is called into question by Smit's journal. On 31 October he was preparing a field to plant pumpkin seeds, "byzonders voor de boschjesmans" [primarily for the Bushmen] (Steytler 1956a:85). When the mission Bushmen were asked to help in this task, only two of them actually arrived while the others either "liepen het veld in" [disappeared into the veld] or sent the interpreter to tell the missionaries they must plant the seeds themselves (ibid.:85).

Bushmen also aided the missionaries in the care of their sheep. In July 1815 Corner noted that two Bushmen were "working on the cattle kraal." (Steytler 1956b:99). In August Smit provided meat, hoping that once their hunger for meat was satisfied they would help care for the sheep (Steytler 1956a). In November two "makke of tamme Boschjesmans" were employed as "wachters by het vee" [shepherds for the sheep] which he had moved to a nearby fountain in an effort to prevent Bushmen thieves from stealing them (ibid.:85). Smit visited this "vee plaats"

[livestock place] and there helped lead the water out of the fountain so that "de wachters daar voor hun thuinen kunnen aan leegen." [the shepherds could situate gardens near the fountain.] (ibid.:86). This is probably an example of an early outpost, probably located at Van der Walts fontein.

8.2.2.5. *Education*

Smit had established a "school" which "had several scholars" during November of his first year at the mission (EMMC 1815:516). Whether Bushmen children were included among these scholars is not recorded. In July 1815 Smit made "een Nieuw Alpha Betha of ABC voor het daaglyksche leerschool" [one new ABC for the daily school] which at that time was lacking such teaching materials and other books (Steytler 1956a:78). This indicates that these lessons were being taught on a regular basis. Smit later related how the occupants of one Bushmen camp still refused to attend any of the services or the school lessons (ibid.). In 1816 Read supplied Smit with "Spelling Books, Paper, Pe[n]sels, Pens, Ink, &c" obviously intended for the school (CWMA 6,78 - 17.09.1816). Smit's wife also taught "the Bushmen's girls knitting and sewing" (EMMC 1815:516). Indeed, Backhouse noted the effects of these lessons 25 years later when he halted at the home of "some People of Colour" on Elandsfontein (COL.110)(1844:340). One of the women living there had been brought up at a missionary station and "could read" and her and another women working with her "were industriously employed with their needles" when Backhouse arrived at their residence (ibid.).

8.3. HEPHZIBAH MISSION STATION

As Hephzibah is farther out of the valley than Toverberg, this mission station is only discussed very briefly. Hephzibah was also called 'Renosterfontein' or 'Tkannee', and was located on Rhenosterfontein (PH.61) in or near modern Petrusville (see 3.10). Read decided to establish a mission station there in September 1816 and sent Corner and Jan Goeyman to run it. Read and Corner arrived at the site on the 21st (CWMA 6,78 - 24.09.1816). Although they had heard that "300 Bushymen inhabit the spot" they met none (ibid.). They then fetched an interpreter, called Cupido, from Toverberg, who soon found some Bushmen. Initially, only a man named Koggelman and his wife came to the mission, but soon Koggelman went out "to fetch the captain and his subjects" (ibid.). Six households, including that of the 'captain' Slinger settled themselves near the dwellings of the missionaries (see 6.3.5. above). This group adapted more readily than those near Toverberg. To Read, they seemed more "obedient"(ibid.). Slinger took a clear lead: "All the Bushmen must come to hear this great word. I must have a house built by the word and my children must be taught &c" (ibid.: also LMS 1817:29).

Tobacco was undoubtedly one of the attractions that led Slinger and his people to this mission, as Read wrote that he "was remarkably pleased with a piece of tobacco the length of my forefinger and seemed abundantly paid for the ground we had taken possession of" (ibid.). Indeed,

this captain told Read that the Bushmen never received such a piece of tobacco from the farmers (ibid.). They were also promised "that they would not need to dig nests and depend on poisoned arrows for animal food as the Brethren would get their game shot for them with their guns." (ibid.).

As with Toverberg, no record of the events of 1817 at Hephzibah have been found.

8.4. THE CLOSING OF THE MISSIONS

In March 1817 Corner left Hephzibah for Graaff-Reinet where he intended to have a child baptised (Schoeman 1993:229). There, he met the Cape Governor, Lord Charles Somerset, who recalled him within the limits of the Colony, saying that the missionary institutions to both the Bushmen and Griqua nations were detrimental to the Colony. Corner was consequently forbidden to return to Hephzibah and his work there thus came to an end (ibid.). Smit, on his part, did not receive this decision as gracefully as Corner had and followed the Governor to Tulbagh where he pleaded the case of Hephzibah (ibid.). His pleas fell on deaf ears, and Smit returned to Toverberg. He, himself was ordered to leave on 17 March 1818 (ibid.).

Three main reasons have been proposed by Schoeman (1993:221) for the dissolution of these mission stations: "the animosity of the governor, Lord Charles Somerset, towards the LMS; disorder in the society itself; and friction with white farmers who were moving into the area beyond the colonial boundary." Indeed, these three factors probably worked together to make the continued existence of the missions untenable. The mission stations had been established to 'civilise' the Bushmen, but farmers moving into the area were apparently fearful of competition with these Bushmen, who, if 'civilised', would pose a greater threat. Backhouse alluded to this competition when he noted that: "as the Bushmen began to be a little civilised, the Boors began to come more into the Colony, and to fix themselves at the various fountains." (1844:343).

8.5. THE AFTERMATH OF ABANDONMENT

Uithaalder told Philips "many Bushmen's hearts were sore pained" when Smit was forced to leave them and that they "wept much" (Philip 1828,II:51). The mission Bushmen "remained on the land of our forefathers" where they continued to cultivate their gardens and pray for Smit's return (ibid.). "Some moons" after Smit had been removed, however, "the boors came and took possession of our fountains, chased us away from the lands of Toverberg, and made us go and keep their sheep" (ibid.). Uithaalder told how he was flogged with a sjambok after three of Van der Walt's sheep, which he had been herding, were found to be missing (ibid.). Van der Walt then apparently drove Uithaalder, his wife and children from the farm and the family settled themselves at a small fountain near Toverberg "where a few Bushmen once lived" (ibid.:51-52). This was probably Van der Walts fontein close to modern Colesberg, where the 'wachters' for the mission

had resided. Soon, however, Van der Walt drove the family away from the fountain and asserted that "Bushmen should have no fountains in this country, and that they should have no pools but the rain-water pools out of which to drink." (ibid.:52). Uithaalder then entered the service of 'Louw Steyns', where he was again blamed for the disappearance of a sheep. He therefore fled with his family from the farm and went "to live among the mountains, and to subsist upon roots and locusts" (ibid.:52).

Other mission Bushmen probably had similar oscillating fortunes, moving between employment on the farms and roaming about the countryside. Four of the latter, unattached Bushmen, ran to greet Campbell when he passed close to the site of the Toverberg station in 1820 (1822,II:316-7). One who identified himself as the 'chief of the Toornberg Bushmen' was Na-a-kaw who told Campbell that only he and his brothers Jacob and Isaac continued to pray, and that "the first and greatest thing he wanted was a teacher to come and reside with him and his people." (ibid.:318).

In 1822, Faure also came across some unattached mission Bushmen living at Toverberg (possibly at Van der Walts fontein) where they cultivated "a beautiful garden, an excellent vineyard, fine wheat, &c. &c." (in Philip 1828,II:26-27). Also, they "had acquired very rational ideas of the principles of the Christian religion" and were trying to preach to other Bushmen (ibid.). The children could sing hymns and had made progress "in spelling and reading." (ibid.).Campbell baptised two children "of native parents, who were members of the church at Toornberg, previous to its suspension." They were then employed on Driefontein (COL.137), and they associated with other mission Bushmen as frequently as they could "for reading of the scriptures, and for prayer" (ibid.:322).

The 'People of Colour' whom Backhouse (1844:340) encountered on Elandsfontein (COL.110) in 1839 were also apparently mission Bushmen, then in the employ of farmers.

Although Corner's failure to return to Hephzibah must have caused great consternation, there is no record of what the residents did next . 'A pious individual' who passed through Hephzibah (a year after Corner's disappearance) reported: "At poor Hephzibah we found a few who sung and prayed, notwithstanding they have no Missionary, and who said that they were determined to pray until the Lord should again send his word among them" (LMS 1819:74). More ominously "not the smallest vestige of house or garden remains; all is destroyed." (ibid.) and most of the families "fled to the mountains" (ibid.). When Campbell approached Hephzibah in 1820, several Bushmen and women greeted him with delight. He camped on the site and noted that "The ruins of their oven remained, and the ditch by which they had led water from a fountain to their fields and gardens could easily be traced." (ibid.:308-9). These Bushmen soon summoned their 'captain' Tkai. On his arrival Tkai shook hands with the members of Campbell's party and greeted them with 'Good day' in Dutch. Tkai told Campbell how he admonished his people when they fought or tried to kill one another and exhorted them to live in peace with one another, and "to pray that they may become better acquainted with the scriptures (ibid.). Questioned as to whether any of

his fellow Bushmen prayed, Tkai "pointed to one sitting next the door, and to another near to me [Campbell], and said that they prayed, but no more, except himself." (ibid.:310).

In 1825 Melvill (1825:2) halted at a Bushmen camp a little distance from the wagon track on the western side of the Seacow River, probably in the vicinity of Ganzengat (COL.23) in the lower valley. The camp was occupied by Bushmen who had formerly belonged to the Hephzibah mission. Melvill gave a brief description of the camp: "On the brow of a hill were seen grazing a flock of goats, and a number of young kids were tied to stakes round about their huts." (ibid.). One or two of the Bushmen spoke "a little Dutch" and expressed their sorrow that the mission had been abandoned (ibid.). The Bushmen at Hephzibah had therefore apparently not continued in the ways which the missionaries had taught them to the same extent as the Toverberg Bushmen. Hephzibah's position further from the Colonial boundary also meant that these Bushmen were not dispossessed of their land as quickly as was the case with their Toverberg counterparts. In many case, the Hephzibah mission Bushmen seem to have gone back to their former way of life once the missionaries had gone.

8.6. DISCUSSION

The mission Bushmen remained on or close to the station sites, cultivating the gardens and herding the livestock which the missionaries had probably left them. Bushmen without such strong connections to the mission continued their hunting and gathering. Na-a-kaw was apparently a member of the latter group. As farmers moved into the vicinity of the mission stations, they forcibly removed the mission Bushmen, as happened with Uithaalder. Displaced mission Bushmen either entered the service of the farmers voluntarily (as at Driefontein) or they were forced into the farmer's service (as at Van der Walts fontein). Mission Bushmen who escaped this form of service returned to hunting and gathering. Tkai, had apparently succeeded in this, but Uithaalder's friend Whitbooy (with his family) was killed "whilst taking shelter among the rocks" from farmers who had come to force them into their service (Philip 1828,II:51). Any one of these groups of Bushmen was however apparently able to enter or leave the service of farmers and take up or leave their hunter-gatherer lifestyle as they saw fit, or as circumstances dictated (e.g. Uithaalder). Some mission Bushmen later made their way into the towns springing up around the valley. The Colesberg Advertiser, for example, wrote an article about "Old Danster, a tough, wizened little Bushman of great age", who died in the Colesberg prison in September 1893 (CA 1893:32*,1650). The reporter noted that the old man had "learnt his Alphabet at the Mission School" which was on the site of the town before it was established. Although Danster had "never got further than his alphabet, he retained it in his memory to his very last." (ibid.). During the few years before his death, Danster had periodically arrived at the office of the Colesberg Advertiser, requesting a lesson book so that he could further his studies. Each time, the Advertiser staff had given him one of 'Mother Siegel's Almanacs', with which he had "departed highly pleased and satisfied" (ibid.). Sadly, the "poor old oddity is no more", concluded the article (ibid.).

CHAPTER 9 - TOWN BUSHMEN

9.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the fate of valley Bushmen who did not become farm servants, or who failed to remain in farm service. Most of them were assimilated into the rapidly growing frontier towns springing up around the valley. There, they lost their ethnic identity, becoming part of the larger so-called 'coloured' community. The last 'wild' Bushmen were ultimately driven by circumstance towards the town commonages where they could still eke out a sort of independent living.

9.2. IN COLESBERG

Although Bushmen moved to all the growing frontier towns surrounding the Seacow valley (Colesberg, Middelburg, Richmond and Hanover), travellers seldom mentioned their presence. The main source of information on these people is the local newspapers. Because such newspapers were established long after the foundation dates of all four towns, there are gaps in the early histories of each community's development. Editors varied in their interests and some clearly thought the non-white community, let alone resident Bushmen, to be of no interest whatever. Ultimately, information on town Bushmen comes almost exclusively from Colesberg.

As a source of information, Colesberg is outstanding on several counts. There had been a consistently high density of Bushmen in the vicinity even before the mission station. The mission had attracted still more Bushmen to the surrounding countryside. Colesberg was the first town to be founded (1830), and it was on the frontier of the Colony for the longest period, consequently farms surrounding the town had many Bushmen staff. Colesberg also started the first newspaper (1861), early enough for it to contain records of unassimilated Bushmen living in the townships. Furthermore, the paper was run by a series of editors who took at least some interest in events in the townships. Newspapers in the other towns all started too late, with editors too indifferent to their own townships, for there to be any mention of Bushmen.

During its earlier days, most travellers had to pass through Colesberg to get to the north. Among these was Burrow, who gives a vivid early account of Colesberg society in 1834: "the fat Booer with the Vrowe and tall lanky Noois stalking about and looking down upon the Hottentots who may have a little money." (Kirby 1971:15-16). Evidently the local population had been swiftly caught up in the new cash economy that overran valley society as soon as stores were opened for the first time. Burrow's "Hottentots" no doubt included town Bushmen, possibly some farm Bushmen, and possibly even unattached Bushmen (see below). There are hints elsewhere in his

narrative that he also could be referring to the Cape servants in his own party. This kind of vague ethnic labelling is a recurrent problem in trying to pin down the record of town Bushmen.

Another label soon came into use. Backhouse reports that the Dutch Reformed minister had begun to hold church services for 'Hottentots' in 1839, a practice strongly opposed by his Dutch congregation. They were told "that if they would not suffer him to teach the Coloured People in the `kerk', they should find him some other place" (Backhouse 1844:344-345), which was promptly done. Here, the umbrella term 'coloured' is being used for the first time by a valley visitor to distinguish local Hottentot and/or Bushmen from 'black' or 'kafir' meaning Bantu-speaking immigrants from the eastern districts.

In 1848 Dr. Orpen lists the ethnic mix as: "Hottentots, coloured and black, or temporarily-resident aliens and foreigners from the interior" (Le Fanu 1860:141-142). Here the term coloured seems to mean mixed-race individuals, and Bushmen are not specifically mentioned. Not until 1861 do we have a list that itemises them: "the Half-caste, the Fingo, the Mosuto, the Hottentot, the Bushman" (CA 1861:1,12). The proliferation of specific references to 'Bushmen' as present within valley towns during the early 1860's hints at an influx of Bushmen into the towns. This coincides with a bad drought which crippled the agricultural economy of the region at the beginning of the 1860's (see 5.2). Bushmen in the service of farmers no doubt lost their jobs during these difficult times.

The influx could have been prompted also by the increased pace at which unclaimed Government ground was being taken up in the 1860's, owing to a flurry of Government regulations concerning the disposal of this land (see 1.11). While it is possible that 'Bushmen' were mentioned more frequently in the newspaper because the current editor was more interested in them than his predecessors, these background circumstances must have played some role in shaping the data.

In these reports, Bushmen identity is further masked by terms that describe their condition and habits. Of more interest to editors was that they were a visible, possibly dominant, component of the unemployed members of the native community (often called 'loafers') who survived by stealing from town dwellers and from neighbouring farmers. A good example is the 1862 article on a stock theft by two "Bushmen" at Slingersfontein (COL.119) on the outskirts of town (CA 1862:2,81). The fact that they sold two sheep carcasses at the Colesberg Market and 10 more were "disposed of in the ... Camp." (i.e. the non-white settlement) indicates that these were clearly town Bushmen.

9.2.1. **The Camp**

The Camp, as another article explained, was "the usual place of resort for the thieves" (CA 1863:3,122). Also called the 'Camp Ground', it was a place where "all the worthless congregate together, and the nightly carousing is truly shameful and disgusting." (CA 1862:2,79). Its occupants were "the most desolate and reckless of the community, having no ostensible way of living" (ibid.). This was also a place where "all the loose and wundering portion of the community of

all colours, find a ready and convenient asylum, pro tem. for the indulgence of their inclinations." (ibid.). Undoubtedly Bushmen still formed a majority of this 'loose and wundering portion' but this is nowhere spelled out.

The location of the camp was known to all, so it was never specified in print. However, a thief was ambushed by waiting police as he tried to enter the Camp "endeavouring to hide himself by walking in the ditch which runs through this Den" (CA 1863:3,107). The ditch was certainly the narrow defile that runs through the centre of Colesberg today from south to north. This slum must have expanded greatly over the next 30 years. By 1898, the "Cape Police were stationed on the hills surrounding the camp to prevent any natives from escaping" (CA 1898:38,1923). They must have been close to the perimeter because "the hills rise in terraces to the height of a few hundred feet, and the crevices are occupied by hundreds of Hottentot huts" (CA 1893:32*,1630), the occupants of which "are sharply looked after by the Municipality" and "the spaces are kept fairly clean." (ibid.). "At dusk the hills present a curious spectacle. Dung fires are lighted in the huts, and the curling columns of smoke appear as evidence of the existence of so many small craters, the huts being hidden from town view." (ibid.). Lowreyville, the modern 'coloured township' for Colesberg (Anon.:1992) is situated between such low hills north of Colesberg, just outside the town and its setting corresponds well to the above descriptions of the Camp. The channel mentioned above extends into this settlement, and this ditch is known to have followed a similar course in the nineteenth century. Another modern township called Kuyasa (Anon.:1992) lies to the east of Colesberg and is further away from the town ditch.

9.2.2. Bushman Thieves in Colesberg

In this hopeless setting, the term Bushman was becoming almost synonymous with the word 'Thief'. In July 1869 the Colesberg market house was broken into, and part of a bag of wheat was stolen (CA 1869:9,447). The following morning, the spoor of the thieves were followed to the "huts of some Bushmen Hottentots." Several were apprehended, but the chief suspect, "a Bushman named Tovie or Toby" who was also wanted for livestock thefts, managed to escape. It is interesting to see the resurgence of the 18th century term 'Bushman-Hottentot' which had fallen into disuse for almost a century. By now it has the connotation of 'Hottentot Thief'.

Later, in May 1870, a thief stole a gun and a sword-stick from a gunsmith's workshop (CA 1870:10,493). It was surmised that Andries Toby was implicated as the hole made to enter the workshop "was too small to admit the body of a full sized man." (ibid.). Two weeks later, Toby was almost captured soon after he and an accomplice (named Windvogel) had stolen 31 sheep from the town commonage (CA 1870:10,495). Windvogel was captured and the gun was recovered. During the following week forty pounds of merchandise was stolen from a house in the town and Toby was again the prime suspect (CA 1870:10,496). The chief constable then positioned himself "on a stone near the Camp" watching for Toby, whom he captured on his way to visit "his better half, who resides at the Camp location" (ibid.). Toby then "volunteered the information that two of his companions were in hiding in a certain 'kop'" (ibid.) which cannot be identified..

Stock was also stolen by town servants. In September 1875 a Bushman herdsman (named Daniel) employed by a Colesberg store owner to herd his sheep on the town commonage absconded with them (CA 1875:15,764). The sheep were subsequently discovered "in a kraal at the Native Location"(ibid.) and the herdsman captured.

Household contents were also favoured by thieves and The Masonic Hotel was a particular target. In 1868 several personal articles missing from a room there were recovered in the possession of "a Bushgirl" (CA 1868:8,398). In 1886, the proprietor was awakened by a noise and "his hands came in contact ... with some corduroy trowsers worn by an individual who must have been making his way across the room on hands and knees" (CA 1886:25,2152). After a brief struggle, the stranger was found to be "a small sized but able bodied Bushman" who had hidden under the bed during the day with the aim of stealing jewellery and money (ibid.).

9.2.3. Bushmen 'Loafers' in Colesberg

A newspaper article in 1875 articulates the common perception of "the hordes of thievish Bushmen and Hottentots who squat about the locations doing no work, and living by dishonesty" (CA 1875:15,773). A common complaint was that: "Native labour is exceptionally scarce here just now, and a servant is hardly to be had 'for love or money'" but that "loafers are by no means scarce." (CA 1873:13,638). The unemployed were usually painted as preferring "a life of laziness, basking in the sun, or lolling about in the vicinity of our numerous canteens by day" in contrast to the few natives who were willing to "work for their living" (CA 1869:9,444). "Colored 'pussons' by the score will be met with in and about the streets of Colesberg" according to a later report, but anyone requiring a servant was likely to find that "although the majority of those to be met with have no regular employment, not one in a hundred is willing to enter service." (CA 1880:20,1006).

9.2.4. Bushmen Servants in Colesberg

A distinction was soon made between the criminal elements and those "decent and orderly" persons who fell within "the respectable portion of the coloured classes" (CA 1863:3,122). Bushmen servants in the towns were rarely mentioned, unless they were apprehended by the police. However, one young boy "of the Bushmen persuasion" who worked as a "errand boy and light porter" for a shop in the town is reported as a victim: he was robbed of a basket of meat *en route* to his employer's establishment (CA 1884:23*,2059[wn*]).

There is a useful list of servants' tasks performed in 1863: "[men] ... herd our cattle and sheep, make our bricks, drive our wagons, groom our horses, load up and load off our wool; whilst the [women] ... wash our clothes, nurse our children, and cook our food." (CA 1863:3,132; repeated in CA 1867:7,368). By 1889, some of the coloured community (among whom Bushmen are never specifically mentioned) were joining the artisan classes: "Now ... we find coloured shoemakers, saddlers, blacksmiths, confectioners, greengrocers, &c., plying a brisk trade" in the town of Colesberg (CA 1889:28*,2339).

These non-whites must have become employers in their own right. They also tended to move away from the Camp. While the residence of a 'coloured man' "was in his own straw hut among the hills", by 1889 "Now a stroll through our streets shows many of the houses of the town occupied by natives" (CA 1889:28*,2339).

They were certainly preyed upon by those from the Camp. In 1879 a townsman "whose two native servants have their respective quarters in Campbell street" paid a visit one evening to their "rooms" at midnight (CA 1879:19,945). "He found his servant and family jammed into the corner, whilst the entire floor of the small room was covered with the recumbent figures of a score or so of the loafing fraternity, who had first forced the door open and then taken possession of the place."(ibid.). The unwelcome visitors "lay packed like sardines." His servant welcomed his appearance, explaining that the violent words and gestures of these visitors made him fear for his life. After evicting the unwelcome boarders, the townsman went at once to his other servant, only to find him living under similar conditions (ibid.).

Hygiene was a major problem: "another nuisance which requires prompt attention, is the number of natives who are occupying house and rooms in various parts of the town, which are totally unprovided with latrine accommodation."(CA 1887:26*,2190). "Perfect rookeries exist in some parts of the town, whilst in other localities single families are located." (ibid.).

Buildings in the Camp were insubstantial and soon decayed. When the Resident Magistrate "caused 4000 bundles of thatching to be cut and brought to the location" (CA 1862:2,81) the bundles lay where they were deposited for some time and only gradually disappeared. "Galvanized iron" was available from Colesberg stores as early as 1863 (CA 1863:3,153) but was probably too expensive for the natives. From 1879 corrugated iron became widely available at Colesberg stores (CA 1879:19,946), and must have become gradually accessible to the Camp. Servants' dwellings in town were probably made out of stone or brick.

9.2.5. **Aspects of Bushman Life in Colesberg**

Particular aspects of Colesberg life would have affected the Bushmen living there. These included laws on their freedom of movement, poverty, alcohol, disease and racism. Schools and churches, although not malevolent in intent, assisted in merging them into a homogenous, non-white subclass, and stripping them of the last shreds of their ethnic identity. These forces affected the rest of the non-white population to much the same extent.

9.2.5.1. *Restrictive Laws*

Repeated calls were made by the white residents on the Town Council and even on the Colonial Government to take a firmer stand against the non-white inhabitants of the town. Resident Bushmen and Hottentots were particularly regarded as a threat to the stability of the whole district because of their criminal activities, their poor work ethic and their misuse of alcohol. Most of these petitions were aimed at ridding the Camp of 'loafers.'

Regulations tried to dictate who might live there and what kinds of dwellings they could occupy. The first evidence of this movement comes in 1871 when steps were taken "for framing and enforcing regulations for the native locations here" (CA 1871:11,552). The new regulations were to "induce cleanliness" and to 'rid' the neighbourhood "of the many vagrants who infest the camp" (ibid.). Soon, a list of "rules framed by the Municipal Commissioners of Colesberg for the native locations" was published (CA 1871:11,553). Of these "the dimensions of a building plot" were limited to less than "twenty yards square" and the prospective occupant had first to obtain permission to settle from the Superintendent, who would designate the plot (ibid.). The number of people occupying the site and the number of livestock kept by them was to be recorded. A monthly rental of one shilling and six-pence was to be paid in advance and, most significantly, no occupant "shall acquire any real right or title to the ground." (ibid.). Plot-holders were supposed to erect "a substantial hut or dwelling" on the site and at all time keep this "in good order." In addition, the occupant could not remove his hut without permission (ibid.). Strangers could not stay in the Camp for longer than 48 hours without the permission of the Superintendent (ibid.).

The regulations were largely ignored. Eleven years later (1882) an editor is again on the war-path: "What we would suggest with reference to native locations is, that if possible, they should be set apart, one for Basutos, another for Hottentots, and so forth, and that for each location or subdivision a resident headman or superintendent should be appointed, to see that the bye-laws framed to meet the case are enforced, and generally to keep order." (CA 1882:22,1080). Two years after this ominously prophetic wish, the Town Council accepted a motion that "it is necessary that all natives as far as possible be compelled to reside at the Native Location." (CA 1884:23,2065[wn]).

Inevitably, this policy could never be strictly enforced, but it did provide the justification for further harassment of the non-white population by the authorities. In 1896 the Town Council passed a curfew: "no native, such as Kaffirs, Fingoes, Hottentots and the like, shall be allowed in the streets or Public Places within the limits of the town between the hours of 9 pm and 4 am, without a written pass from their employer" (CA 1896:35,1777). Then came the forced removal of non-whites who had occupied land closer to town, in Durban Row (CA 1899:39,1969). The same article notified the public of an edict which specified that it would be henceforth "undesirable that Natives and others should be allowed to squat and to build huts on Municipal property" (ibid.).

9.2.5.2. *Food Prices and Wages*

The price of food in Colesberg fluctuated with the market. As early as 1839 Backhouse commented that "Bread was exceedingly dear" and that brown loaves weighing about two pounds cost him "1s 8d. each" while meal was "75s per muid, of one hundred and eighty pounds." (1844:345). Thirty years on (1870) a local newspaper trumpeted "living here is not expensive and most supplies can be obtained cheap" (ENMA 1870:1,2). Two pound loaves were down to 1s and meal was down to 40-50s. Mealies sold at 20s and 25s; seed oats for 30s to 40s; "good and fat"

meat was between 3d and 4d per lb.(ibid.). This was probably self-serving, since Colesberg was "a much dearer place to live in" (Lycett 1867:17) than neighbouring Middelburg.

The unemployed suffered accordingly. The editor complained that "an idle vagabond" which he had hired "to do some trifling job" was paid sixpence for one hour's work, but yet had the audacity to demand a shilling. "He became abusive, and heartily cursed the European population for expecting a coloured man to work for nothing" (1871:11,542). Naturally, artisans fared better. In 1877 Bricklayers received 12s per day, Carpenters 10s per day and Smiths 10s per day (MG 1877:2,62).

No data on house servants' wages have been found, and it remains uncertain whether their pay was on a par with those of farms (see 7.3.4.4).

9.2.5.3. *Alcohol*

Dr. Orpen could comment of the 1840's that "almost all the Hottentots, with scarcely a single exception, are drunken - men and women equally" (Le Fanu 1860:161). This ready market for alcohol meant that many Colesberg whites applied for 'Retail wine & spirit licences' - a total of eleven in 1861 alone (CA 1861:1,11). By 1863 drunkenness had become a major problem and the 'Native Teetotal Society' was founded, its first meeting well attended by whites and coloureds alike (CA 1863:3,139; 1863:3,141). Within a year, another public meeting was held to discuss the "drunkenness and vice so prevalent among the native population of the town." (CA 1864:4,193[wn]). It was noted that at least "six thousand pounds, in ready cash" was spent "during the year by the natives at the canteens" (ibid.). At a subsequent meeting "five respectable coloured men" were named as "unpaid temperance agents" (CA 1864:4,198). They were to go "into the nooks and corners of the town" to encourage abstinence among their people (ibid.).

Although cost was on the side of these brave persuaders - in 1870 a bottle of beer cost 2s 6d while milk cost only 6d (ENMA 1870:1,2) - they are not heard of again. Instead, natives were as ever "disturbing peaceful inhabitants by their shouts, boisterous conversation, laughter and other unearthly noises." (CA 1873:13,664). As before, they "wander about in a more or less drunken state" (CA 1887:26*,2190). Cost alone dictates that they must have been brewing their own native beer besides attending the canteens. Indeed, a newspaper article in 1884 reported that "an extensive illicit traffic in Kafir Beer is carried on by Kafirs in the camp-location" (CA 1884:23*,2078).

9.2.5.4. *Epidemics*

Some idea of the prominent diseases which would have affected the non-white populations of valley towns can be gleaned from newspaper reports. A smallpox epidemic broke out in the Graaff-Reinet district in 1858 (GRH 1858:6,326) and by 1860 hundreds of people in the Colesberg district were suffering (CA1861:1,1). A year later only one person in Colesberg was still suffering from the disease (CA 1861:1,2) and by the end of January even this patient had been discharged

from Hospital (CA 1861:1,4). Over the 18 months which the epidemic lasted in the district, a large portion of the native population contracted smallpox. "Of the white [town] inhabitants but few took the disease - of the coloured there have been about 500 cases, of which 150 were fatal." (ibid.). These figures would have been much lower if the patients "especially those of the Hottentot race" were not so weakened by excessive drinking that they were more susceptible to the disease (ibid.).

D. Slome, an anatomist, published details of an excavation of graves located close to Colesberg which was carried out in the 1920's (Slome 1929,I:33). The excavator of these remains noted that: "These skeletons are the remains of what are supposed to have been Cape Bush people, who died during the smallpox epidemic of 1866." No cases of small pox were however reported in the Colesberg newspapers for that year, so the remains excavated could have been those of Colesberg inhabitants who died in the 1861 epidemic. The ethnic composition of the skeletons recovered from the fifty-five graves excavated suggest that the victims were occupants of the ethnically diverse Camp population: "Many of them [the skeletons] are good Bushman types, quite like the Kalahari Bushman and the Strandloper. A few are Bantu (Kaffir) in type, and there may be Hottentot types." (ibid.:34). One of the skeletons apparently had some European blood.

Smallpox was not reported again until 1885 when a Police raid on the Camp discovered "a Kafir named Zwartbooy ... lying ill", apparently suffering from small pox (CA 1885:24,2084[wn]). Several huts surrounding that occupied by the sick man were burnt down, and people living in the immediate area were "placed in quarantine and closely guarded by day and night." (ibid.). The disease was contained and apparently did not reoccur during the rest of the century.

An outbreak of measles was also reported in June 1861 "among white and coloured" and the death of a three year old soon resulted (CA 1861:1,25). In November that year the owner of Wild Fontein (NOU.144) lost seven children and grandchildren (CA 1861:1,47), but the disease was not reported again in the town. It did more harm in Richmond where it "made its appearance among the Kaffirs and Hottentots." (CA 1861:1,45). In 1874 measles was again prevalent in Colesberg district, but no cases were reported in the town (CA 1874:14,710). A new epidemic appeared in Colesberg in 1887 where it "hangs like a funeral pall over the town" (CA 1887:26*,2223). No more references to this disease occurred for the remainder of the century.

1880 marks the first mention of diphtheria: "we consider it our duty to the public to state that several cases of diphtheria have recently occurred in this town and district."(1880:20,1008). The number of victims is not given. In September 1886 Diphtheria was reported from Quaggasgat (COL.37) and in February 1887 it was reported in the town (CA 1887:26,2190). "At present Diphtheria is spreading among the colored inhabitants to an alarming extent"(ibid.). Of course fears were expressed that it would be carried into white households, and "At the present time there is a serious case in a native family residing near the Public School Room" (ibid.). The next year, children in the district were still "dying after very short illness" (CA 1888:27*,2238). In 1890 diphtheria was reported (CA1890:29*,2361) and again in 1895 (CA1895:34*,1753). The effect which this disease had on the native population was, however, never discussed.

Syphilis apparently first became a problem in 1878 when a newspaper reported that "syphilis is prevalent among some of the colored inhabitants" (CA 1878:18,883). It is, however, not mentioned again until 1896 (CA1896:35*,1801) when "between twenty and thirty natives" were reported as suffering from the disease and measures to curb its spread were called for (ibid.).

9.2.5.5. *Race Attitudes in Colesberg*

An 1863 editorial is revealing about white attitudes towards town Bushmen: "We cannot get rid of them. They are as much a part of the nation as ourselves, and could we banish them altogether from among us, it is doubtful whether such a step, supposing it to be right and just, would be an advantage to us." (CA 1863:3,132). Later in the same article, the editor remarked that: "We may not be able to show a Hottentot that he may rise to the position of a white man, but we may be able to convince him that by conducting himself well he may rise to the level of another Hottentot both in character and in knowledge." (ibid.).

By 1889, notions of a legal segregation were becoming mildly worrying to the white townspeople: "There is no punishment here for a marriage between a white person and a black one ... nor would a tradesman or shopkeeper be likely to refuse to serve a coloured person because of his colour." All classes in the railways were open to any paying customer provided that were "clean and behave themselves." (1889:28*,2339). Colesbergers, the editor pointed out, were less exclusive than the Americans, and "whether it is advisable that we should continue so are doubtful questions" (ibid.).

9.2.5.6. *Schooling*

In spite of a poorly attended school for coloured children visited by Backhouse in 1839 (1844:344), there was little headway made in providing formal education. In 1863 there were about 1000 non-whites in Colesberg, six out of ten of which "never enter church, chapel or school." (CA 1863:3,140). The secondary school established several years later (CA 1870:10,477) does not enumerate which, if any, of its pupils were Bushmen children.

9.2.5.7. *Churches*

The Dutch Reformed Church first rented a house in Colesberg for non-white services, and the LMS took over its running (Backhouse 1844:344). A new chapel was built by 1848 for "the blacks, Hottentots, Bechuanas and Zulus"(Le Fanu 1860:149). In 1861, the coloured congregation met with other church members in the more neutral territory of the Colesberg government offices for a "united prayer meeting" (CA 1861:1,4) leading to pious hopes that "the prejudices against caste and colour are rapidly melting away under the genial of a reviving and earnest Christianity." (ibid.). As shown above, white sentiments were drifting firmly in the opposite direction.

9.3. UNATTACHED BUSHMEN

The last of the 'free' Seacow River Bushmen were those of the lower valley who were still outside the Colony until the early 1820s. However, their Pre-Contact way of life had already been massively eroded by the missions and by the proximity of European farmers. The extent of that erosion is vividly revealed by Stockenstrom in 1822 when he assured the authorities that expanding the Colony up to the Orange River would not encroach "on any one kraal of the neighbouring savages, except such as live on peaceable terms among the colonists, are dependent for their subsistence on the latter, and considered under the protection of our laws." (IBB 1835:123).

When the border was moved, more farmers streamed into the valley and took legal titles to lands north of the old boundary. Pressures also caused older Crown lands to be leased. Although the lower valley Bushmen lost hold of their waterholes, they were not driven off the land. In 1826 Stockenstrom reported "there is not even a stagnant pool that keeps rain water for any length of time which is not regularly occupied [by a farmer]; so that of course no spring remains vacant" (IBB 1835:118). In his view, the first consequence of this seizure was that "in the whole extent of country from the Winterberg to the Seacow River, we found no Bushmen whatever living separated from the boors except one kraal in some rocks, far from any spring of water, consisting of about a dozen men, women and children" (IBB 1835:117). If we allow that Stockenstrom stuck mainly to the Public Roads during this busy time in his career, his observation must be viewed as a sample. The implications of his statement are that there were similar pockets of unattached Bushmen scattered over much of the valley, and that the density of these pockets would increase towards the Orange River.

An early example of such a pocket was the ex-Toverberg Bushman named Uithaalder who, with his wife and four young children, were "necessitated to live among the mountains, and to subsist upon roots and locusts" (Philip 1828,II:52). Such unattached Bushmen came to be called 'squatters', 'vagrants' or 'thieves' and met with universal antagonism from the trekboers. Such was "the loose living and wandering life of Bushmen and Hottentots, with the accompanying evils" (CA 1862:2,65) that they were hounded continuously, being "known to farmers and Field-cornets"(ibid.) who were their main pursuers.

9.3.1. **Unleased Government Land (Crown land)**

By the time that Colesberg was established in 1830, much of the land in the valley was occupied by farms. Less desirable (i.e. waterless) land between the farms, however, was still not legally owned and it was on these pieces of Government Ground or Crown land that unattached Bushmen still resided late into the nineteenth century. But Crown land was gradually being passed into private ownership. This is why Backhouse could remark as late as 1839 that "there were at this time, in the district of Colesberg, many little kraals of Bushmen, who were living where their sires had lived from time immemorial; but when a colonist obtained land from the Government, in a

place so occupied, it was measured to him, and these Aborigines were driven off." (1844:342). Had he known the real state of land tenure affairs in the district, he would have realised that his next suggestion was far too late: "before making such cessions of land, it should be ascertained, if any Aborigines were living upon it, and if any were found, that the land should be measured and secured to them." (ibid.).

That Bushmen were occupying Government land was probably common knowledge at the time. In 1853 the Graaff-Reinet Herald called for the imposition of a Vagrant Law so that farmers could protect their property "from the constant loss occasioned by the squatting of idle persons on the Government lands ... living as they do without labour of any kind" (GRH 1853:2,62). The editor of the newspaper noted that primarily Hottentots were guilty of living in this way. As this editor never referred to 'Bushmen', as such during his whole tenure at the paper, it can be reasonably assumed that he meant Bushmen as well. In 1860 the sale of Government land in the district was lauded because "these lands can no longer remain the occasional haunt and refuge of colored vagrants" (GRH 1860:8,450).

In the lower valley, "some Bushmen who were squatting on Government ground" close to 'Baver's Pan' (CA 1866:6,314) were questioned during an investigation of the movements of the Hottentot Bushmen murderer, Booy (see 7.2.3.). Baver's Pan is situated on Hanekamps Kuil (PH.171) just adjacent to the valley farm Van der Walt's Leegte (PH.172) on the western rim of the upper valley. Although both farms were unoccupied at that date, it is probable that the Bushmen were squatting alongside the pan on the first farm.

In June 1869 a general complaint was made against "native squatters" (CA 1869:9,444). "Some portions of the unleased Crown lands are said to be infested by them" commented the editor (ibid.). They were guilty of "blackmail on the stock of neighbouring farmers" and should be prevented from roaming about the countryside.

9.3.2. **Inaccessible Areas on Farms**

Unattached Bushmen favoured mountainous, rocky environments where they could escape notice. Thus, the 'pious individual' who visited Hephzibah a year after it had been abandoned (1818) noted that the "poor Bushmen had fled to the mountains" (LMS 1819:74), indicating illegal seizure of the mission fountain even before the Colonial boundary was moved. The setting mentioned here echoes Stockenstrom's 1824 observation that the lone group was "among some rocks, far from any spring or water" (IBB 1835:117). This is again echoed by Steedman at Carolus Poort (NOU.166) in 1830 who noted that "their dwellings are in the most barren and desolate parts of the interior, amidst mountains and inaccessible rocks." (Steedman 1835,I:147).

Farms around Colesberg are the best documented. The first of a string of newspaper articles tells of Bushmen who had stolen 14 sheep heads from the 'Butcher and Baker's Shop' and robbed a bee hive in a Colesberg garden. They were followed "through a kloof to a range of kopjes" where the spoor was lost (CA 1862:2,59). This range was on the east side of Kuilfontein (COL.115)

"about the flat between these kopjes and Platberg - a favourite haunt of the Bushmen" (ibid.). Platberg is the flat hill forming the eastern border of the farm Constantia A (COL.185), south west of Colesberg.

In April that year a farmer named 'Van Aswegen' on a farm (ownership unrecorded) adjoining the town commonage was out hunting (CA 1862:2,66). Not far from his homestead he saw a flock of sheep which did not belong to him so went to see whether they were marked. Climbing a koppie after them, he smelt a fire close by, and moving around a large rock came face-to-face with two Bushmen. Although the English and Dutch versions of this story differ, it seems that one of these Bushmen threatened to fire an arrow at him (the Dutch version argues that an arrow was fired, but went through Van Aswegen's hat) and that Van Aswegen responded by shooting that Bushman dead (ibid.). The second Bushman had meanwhile picked up an assegai and was attacking Van Aswegen with it when he managed to hit his attacker in the face, and finally kill him with some stones (ibid.). When Van Aswegen took the Justice of the Peace to the site of the conflict, they found "a great deal of blood', but discovered that the bodies had been removed, supposedly by "the remainder of the gang infesting the koppies." (ibid.).

In January 1863 vagrants "who secrete themselves in the koppies" were blamed for the high percentage of stock thefts from farmers on land adjacent to the town commonage (CA 1863:3,107). "The chief depredators" of these stock thefts "are the vagrant Hottentots and Bushmen, who infest and harbour in the kopjes wherever they can find a suitable place of concealment, to carry on their work of destruction" stressed an article in August 1863 (CA 1863:3,138). In September an unnamed farmer surprised a Bushmen stealing from his sheep kraal, but he got away (CA 1863:3,142). With a companion, he then stole a sheep from a neighbouring farmer but finding it thin, they returned to select a better one (ibid.). Editorials railed against these Bushmen: "the most dangerous character in a community is the man that has nothing to hope for and nothing to lose. A raw, untutored Bushman ... has no point to climb to - no hope in the future. He has nothing to lose and but little to gain" (CA 1863:3,140).

No mention of unattached Bushmen can be found in records covering the next five years. Then, in 1868, Bushmen were again accused of slaughtering sheep and cattle near Colesberg (CA 1868:8,410). A young Bushman charged with this crime explained that he and his two companions slaughtered because they were hungry. They could finish an ox in a day and indicated that three sheep a day "was a moderate allowance." (ibid.).

In 1869 more livestock thefts were attributed to Bushmen. In June a heifer was killed by Bushmen on Quaggasgat (COL.37), with one Bushmen successfully resisting those pursuing them (CA 1869:8,443). In July, black herdsmen on the town commonage were accosted by two Bushmen who tried to distract them from their task (1869:9,447). Noticing that the sheep were growing restless, the one herdsman went to them and discovered a third Bushmen "lying across a sheep which he had caught from the flock, he evidently having 'stalked' it through the bushes." The herdsmen then went for help, but returned to find all the Bushmen and the sheep gone (ibid.). Two weeks later, a black servant observed two Bushmen cutting up the carcass of a cow near Van der

Walts fontein, but realising that they had been noticed, they fled the scene (CA 1869:9,449). The same day two Bushwomen and one Bushman were taken to Colesberg from Rietfontein (COL.50) where they were seen about to slaughter a sheep (CA 1869:9,450).

Similar episodes were reported in 1870. Bushmen were still living between the koppies around Colesberg at this date. For example the thief Toby, captured here in June 1870, told the police that "two of his companions were in hiding in a certain 'kop'" (CA 1870:10,496). Sporadic slaughter of animals grazing on the town commonage was blamed squarely on the Bushmen "with whom this neighbourhood is infested"(ibid.:502). In August, the Chief Constable was called to Buffelsvalley (COL.69), a farm adjoining the Town Commonage, where "a number of Bushmen ... were located ..." (ibid.:503). Six were arrested at the seep called 'Klipkuil' on this farm (ibid.), probably the 'kuil by regen' marked at the farm's south corner bounding on the commonage (S.G.dgm.no.363/1836). More thefts were reported in 1871, purportedly by "the same band of thieving Bushmen" (CA 1871:11,541). Four Bushmen killed a cow on Hartebeestfontein (COL.67) in April (CA 1871:11,539). Two of them killed another cow on Middelwater (COL.68) two weeks later (CA 1871:11, 541). Nachtschaalsfontein (COL.53) was repeatedly raided (CA 1871:11, 539), prompting the headline "BUSHMEN AGAIN" (e.g. CA 1871:11,553). Although "the hills around the town" (ibid.:542) or "the koppies" (ENMA 1871:11,34[wn]) were known to harbour them, nothing was done to root them out. Either stock thefts ceased to be newsworthy, or the spate of thefts abated.

In 1874 we again hear that "there are a number of miserable specimens of the Bushmen race who haunt the hills about the commonage" who were still stealing sheep of which "only a tithe ... is ever reported." (CA 1874:14,682). Ways could not be found to get these "loafing, thieving, vagabonds" (ibid.) to abandon their camps and enter the service of farmers and townsmen (ibid.). In February, two Bushmen living on the Platberg at Constantia A (COL.185) were singled out as the main culprits (CA 1874:14,684). Feelings against them still ran high a year later: "Residents in this part of the Colony would not object to the Bushmen race disappearing altogether. They are a worthless set, who only live to be a curse to their European neighbours."(CA 1875:15,773).

The reason for the sudden upsurge in references to Bushmen after 1868 is unclear, although the bad drought affecting the valley between 1872 and 1875 (see Table 5-1) could explain the later references. Bushmen living off the land would have probably resorted to theft more frequently during periods of drought because of the decrease in available resources. Bushmen then submerged as newsworthy material for the next four years.

In 1879, Bushmen resurface only briefly as "squatters and loafers of the Hottentot and Bushman race" who were still "allowed to infest the ... commonage." (CA 1879:19,945). This may imply that they were no longer camped out in the hills but were now in squatter camps on the flats just outside the town. After this one entry, this time just following a period of drought (see Table 5-1) the newspaper is silent again for three years.

In 1882, we again hear that there are "stray natives, principally bushmen &c., who lead a nomadic life" (CA 1882:22,1080). In November 1884, Thomas Bedford, the owner of

Nachtschaalsfontein (COL.53) was still being "victimised by natives, presumably Bushmen" (CA 1884:23*,2073[wn]). They killed his ostriches, stole feathers, and especially the eggs which they promptly baked over open fires. "Part of Nachtgalsfontein is very rugged and mountainous, offering a safe asylum to both Bushmen and Baboons" (ibid.).

"The bushmen and hottentots" who "roam about or lurk among the hills" and "wander up and down on the face of the earth seeking what they may devour" are once more accused of stock thefts in 1885 (CA 1885:24, 2119). In July "one or more rascals, probably a family of Bushmen" were attacking flocks on the town commonage (ibid.: 2107). The flocks of Mr. Gentle of Hartebeestfontein (COL.67) again fell victim to these thieves. The editor speculates that "were Gentlesberg [the Platberg] explored the culprit would be found lurking in one or other of its snug recesses." (ibid.). In the same month a herdsman employed on 'Wolvefontein' (this was possibly a fountain on Ventersfontein - COL.146) repeatedly saw "a Bushman wandering about the veld" (CA 1885:24*,2109). The owner eventually found the Bushman lying dead in the veld, succumbed to old age and exposure (ibid.). The corpse of another aged Bushman, dead of age and hunger, was found on the town commonage in September (CA 1885:24*,2118). It was assumed that he had been abandoned by his companions when he could no longer fend for himself (ibid.). The period between 1882 and 1885 was again marked by severe drought, no doubt the reason for the large number of references to Bushmen at this time.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, references to unattached Bushmen become even scarcer. In August 1894 "Booi Lynx, a wizened little Bushman" was charged with sheep stealing (CA 1894:33*,1702). A herdsman on the farm Rietfontein (COL.50) informed the overseer that the spoor of someone who had driven away several sheep was visible in the veld. They followed the spoor to a koppie whereupon the dog led them first "to a place where a fire had been made" and then to "where the skin of a heifer was" (ibid.). Forty yards further, they found the carcasses of the sheep hidden between some rocks and covered over with "besom bush." Booy Lynx was eventually found hiding behind a rock (ibid.).

Unattached Bushmen were never mentioned by name again although squatters were still reported to be residing on the town commonage (CA 1896:35*,1801), a problem raised at a Town Council meeting two years later (CA 1898:38,1923).

9.3.3. **Treatment and Numbers of Squatters on the Town Commonage**

In July 1869 "thirty-five Bushmen, squatters on the town lands" were arrested (CA 1869:9,448). Fourteen of those who were found to either have employment or obtained positions during the course of the day were freed, while the remainder were brought before the acting Magistrate and charged with contravening "the 11th Section of Act no. 22 of 1867" (ibid.) which discouraged vagrancy. Several more Bushmen found employment before they were sentenced and were therefore released, while others were freed to return to their 'masters' on farms in the region (ibid.). "A few old and decrepit specimens who were known to do little jobs about town were also

liberated" while those remaining were sentenced to up to a week of hard labour. An equal number of Bushmen were understood to be "still lying about the koppies" (ibid.).

Again, in April 1871, several town constables "made a raid on the Bushmen squatting about Colesberg" on the "hills around the town and the various locations"(CA 1871:11,542) i.e. the Town commonage and the Camp . Of the sixty-five originally apprehended, several who could find work were liberated as were the rest after having promised to leave Colesberg immediately in search of work (ibid.). By May they were back again and over sixty Bushmen were brought before the Resident Magistrate as they had been found squatting on the town lands (ENMA 1871:2,34[wn]). The reporter added that it was little wonder that such a large amount of stock theft took place "whilst such a troop of these people is inhabiting the koppies without any means of living except by stealing." (ibid.). Nothing more was done about it.

By 1879, the number of Bushmen squatting on the town commonage had decreased noticeably as in March that year the Town Ranger apprehended "about 20 squatters, principally Bushmen" who were charged (CA 1879:19,946). They were never mentioned again.

CHAPTER 10 - THE COUNTRYSIDE IN AD. 1870-1900

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Only a few, tiny pockets of Bushmen therefore retained their autonomy, free of both farms and towns and these continued to live off the land. The way of life of these unattached Bushmen was, however, seriously curtailed when farmers began to occupy the last of the waterless Crown Land, thanks to borehole technology and the introduction of wind-mill pumps. Freedom of movement between the shrinking patches of Crown land was also seriously curtailed when farmers began to fence in their land.

10.2. UNATTACHED BUSHMEN ON THE FARMS

Newspaper references to unattached Bushmen living further away from the towns are scarce, probably because they were hardly ever reported to local authorities, let alone to distant town newspapers. However, one report has come to light of a 'wild man of the mountains' captured on 'Cephanefontein' which must be Cephanjes Poort (MID.143) in January 1876. The owner suspected that someone was "hiding in a kop" where he found the spot where a sheep had recently been slaughtered as well as a place where the meat had been roasted and eaten. He then came upon a man "crouching under a stone in a state of nakedness" (ibid.) This man said he was searching for oxen and demanded some tobacco. He then ran down the mountain, tripped and fell, and was captured. The remainder of the meat was discovered cut up in chunks and stored in a wool bag which had also been stolen from the farmer. The man admitted "that he had been living for four months in the mountains and had led a hard life of it." (ibid.). He had apparently stolen several sheep during that time with the help of an accomplice (ibid.). Although this man was termed a Hottentot going by the name of Plaatje, the usual labelling ambiguity applies.

Such incidents must have been common throughout the surrounding districts, but seldom reached the ears of newspaper editors. While only the circle of farms surrounding Colesberg town have entered the records, comparable events must have occurred over much of the Seacow valley as well. Small groups of unattached Bushmen held out in hilly niches across the whole landscape until late in the nineteenth century. Although they concentrated on public lands, they also lived in remote rocky places on private land.

There are also hints that they must have visited and sometimes stayed with the squatters and the residents of the town slums. These "stray natives, principally bushmen ... lead a nomadic life, and find the neighbourhood of the native dwellings adjacent to this town a convenient spot on which to take up a temporary residence." (CA 1882:22,1080). At farms beyond the reach of the

Colesberg newspaper (about 20 kilometres radius), they must have interacted with farm labourer communities near homesteads in much the same way.

10.3. IMPACTS ON WATERHOLES

From the beginning, the trekboers "consider[ed] themselves as having the most undisputed right to their fountains" (Philip 1828,II:31-32) consequently "the land possessing springs of water has been measured and given to them in perpetual quit-rent." (ibid.:37). The Bushmen who had ancestral rights these fountains, like Na-a-kaw who "drank the waters of the Sea-cow River, of Vander wault's Fountain, &c." (Campbell 1822,II:318) were driven off. Stockenstrom's glib explanation was that: "the springs are of no further use to them than to fetch their water at, and near them to lay in wait for a favourable shot at the game that came to drink; consequently when the colonists settled among them, they found it better to leave their haunts and go and live and hunt with the intruders." (IBB 1835:118).

10.3.1. **Earth Dams**

As demand for water around the best fountains increased, measures were slowly introduced to supplement the water supply and to better conserve the scanty runoff. Earthen dams had been built from early in the nineteenth century. In 1826 Stockenstrom noted that farmers in the region were able, "by making ponds, and intercepting occasionally rain water in dams," (IBB 1835:118) to support their flocks. Farmers built dams and weirs along the main tributaries of the Seacow River and wherever else the landscape made this possible. When Backhouse passed over Mooyfontein (now Morgenwacht - COL.109) in 1839 he found a farmer building a dam, "and thus advancing from the state of his forefathers, more rapidly than many" (1844:339). By the 1870's dams were commonplace as illustrated by reports of up to five dams along the Seacow River bursting after one large rainstorm (e.g. CA 1872:12,627). 'Dam-scrapers' also became common equipment included in lists of farm implements advertised for sale (cf. CA 1883:23,2037).

At most fountains, the first dam was built immediately upslope from the fountain eye in order to hold runoff so that it could soak in to increase fountain runoff. Ruins of these dams are found at almost all fountains, and many have been refurbished several times in the past. Only functioning specimens are plotted on the 1: 50 000 scale topographic maps of the area. Every earthen dam in the valley has burst at some time in the past, spewing ground into the spring eye below, and often ruining arable land laid out beyond the spring eye. The eye would be dug out again, but many lands were abandoned once they were covered with mud and gravel. Spring eyes supported the most diverse Karoo plant life and must have promoted concentrations of edible geophytes. Although small in area, the damage caused by these repeated spring-dam breaches has permanently devastated the plant cover. (G. Sampson pers comm.)

10.3.2. **Opening Fountain Eyes**

Once a dam was thrown up near the fountain, the spring eye itself would be widened by hand in an attempt to increase output. Only one report of this commonplace tampering has survived. Joseph Orpen (1908), on Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) in 1847, "sallied forth with crowbars, pick axes, drills and sledge hammers of the largest size, to open up the spring which oozed from cracks in and above an ironstone dyke" (ibid.:11). One particular rock was particularly unmanageable, and the brothers decided to bore into it and blast it out, presumably using dynamite. They had only just started to bore into the rock when their neighbour arrived on the scene, and on seeing what the brothers were trying to do, he picked up the sledgehammer and pounded the rock until it cracked, using the crowbar to remove the smaller pieces (ibid.:12). The ease with which he opened the spring-eye, indicates that such an exercise was not uncommon. Nearly all good fountain eyes bear the scars of these activities today (G. Sampson, pers. comm.)

Newspaper accounts of blasting accidents also show that it was common practice. In 1884 a man, working "at opening a fountain" on a Colesberg farm, got so drunk that he attacked the members of the household, flinging a lighted piece of dynamite into the room (CA 1884:23*,2081). A year later, two brothers were employed "in opening a fountain" (CA 1885:24*,2125) when they bored three holes in a rock, charged them with dynamite and lit the fuses. Two of the charges went off, but the third failed to do so, exploding in the face of the brother who investigated the problem.

The over-exploitation of fountain eyes was a common cause of farm failure as the water table was overtaxed in this way and was thus lowered to a point where the spring would no longer flow. For example, in the late 1840's Orpen was forced to leave Taaibosch Fontein (HAN.41) as "the springs, which ran strong when the farm was bought, dwindled" (1908:20-21).

10.3.3. **Failure of Well Digging**

In the 1850's, farmers began to investigate the possibilities of digging artesian wells on their farms, but Andrew Geddes Baine (in GRH 1858:6,302), after considering the geology of the region, warned that artesian wells would be useless. He instead suggested that farmers "dig to where there is sufficient depth of alluvial soil ... where they will have every chance of getting brakish water" (ibid.). It would have to be pumped up to the surface. First, it was necessary to discover where underground water could be tapped. A category of men, known locally as 'Water-Finders' (e.g. CA 1868:8,392), began to tour the north-eastern districts offering their services. The most successful of these men was a 'Mr. Cole' (CA 1865:5,209) or 'Karl Kohl' as he was otherwise known (CA 1865:5,230). Cole "pointed out to certain farmers various spots on their farms where water may be obtained at a moderate depth" and generally water was found in the stratum and at the depth that he had foretold (CA 1865:5,209). The Colesberg Advertiser published regular updates on where Mr. Cole was going to be, so that farmers could contact him (e.g. CA 1865:5,230; 1868:8,392; 1868:8,399). The trouble with wells was that no technology existed for raising the water except by hand and this was never enough except for household use.

Consequently wells never caught on among Seacow valley farmers, and ruined wells are absent from the cultural landscape.

10.2.4. **Drilling**

10.2.4.1. *Technology*

During the drought years in the late 1870's, the Colesberg newspaper noted that it was a common sight to "see a farmer driving out of town with a number of boring irons fastened along the pole and under the body of his cart." (CA 1878:18,926). The same article noted that hundreds of likely spots had been and were then being bored for water. The recurring problem throughout this period was the difficulty experienced in lifting the water to the surface. An editorial published in 1885 summed up the situation regarding boring: "In these parts, borings for water are pretty common, but anything like deep boring has not yet been attempted. An ordinary jumper is the usual boring implement and the extreme depth of bore about 20 feet. Many farmers are content to bore, with infinite labour, through the solid rock, to a depth of from 10 to 20 feet, when if water is not reached, they abandon the attempt and try again in another locality. Sometimes, and far more often than might be expected, a certain measure of success is attained and the farmer rejoices accordingly, but often there is either utter failure, or, if water is struck, it is but in limited quantity and will not rise to the surface ..." (CA 1885:24*,2088).

The 'Antipodal Wellboring machine' made its first appearance in 1886, and was capable of boring a hole up to 60 feet deep (cf. CA 1886:25*,2170; 1887:26*,2205). Using a similar machine, the owner of Hamelfontein (COL.10) was able to bore three holes, each six inches wide and roughly 40 feet deep, out of which a total of thirty square inches was running at the time the newspaper went to press (CA 1887:26*,2228). By 1892, a Government bore weighing more than 6000lbs was doing its rounds of the valley farms (CA 1892:31*,1573). The use of the bore was free of charge, although the farmer had to provide the man in charge of the machine with board and lodging and the necessary labourers (cf. also CA 1892:31*,1577; .CA 1892:31*,1607).

10.2.4.2. *Wind Pumps*

Attempts at harnessing the energy from the wind blowing through the valley began early in the nineteenth century with Joseph Orpen erecting a "wind-mill" in 1847 to grind corn (Orpen 1908:14). Orpen described how he aimed to build such a mill: "I would tie whipsticks, of six foot in length, to the four spokes of the iron hand-mill wheel and a four foot whipstick 'bowsprit' as a prolongation of the axle and 'stays' and four russia duck jib sails, six foot long by four" (ibid.). His brothers laughed at the idea, but Orpen (ibid.) spent the week "sewing the sails and erecting the mill on a pole so that it could be trimmed to face any wind". When his family arrived to see the complete 'wind-mill', "it was spinning round beautifully," and soon all their corn had been ground (ibid.). In 1871 the first indications of the use of such a technique to raise water appeared when a Hope Town resident was reported to have invented a machine that would allow "a large and

continual supply of water" to be "raised to a great height from rivers, fountains, &c" without motive power (CA 1871:11,547). This however received no attention in the valley, presumably because adequate boring machinery was not yet available.

In April 1885, the Colesberg Advertiser noted that: "Hitherto, wind-mill pumps have not been tried here, but if we are rightly informed, they will be tested ere many months have passed away." (CA 1885:24*,2096). A few months later, in October, the same newspaper noted that wind-mill pumps were being used on many farms between De Aar and the Orange River, but the number of wind-mill pumps being used in the Seacow River valley was undoubtedly minimal. By November 1885 a farmer living east of the valley (on Niewe Fontein - COL.136), was congratulated for "having erected the first windmill pump within a radius of at least 30 miles around the town, if not, as we believe, in the Colesberg district." (CA 1885:24*,2128). Soon, by June 1886, James Macfarlane, a Colesberg merchant was advertising 'Farrar's Patent Simplex Windmill Pump', which had not only won prizes at the Port Elizabeth Agricultural show in 1884, but had received the only Gold medal awarded at the 'South African Exhibition' (CA 1886:25*,2158). An immediate consequence of the new technology was that water-points could be established on 'useless' (meaning waterless) Government Ground (Crown land). These havens for the last unattached Bushmen quickly rose in value and were sold off to private ownership.

Another important consequence was that more and more wind-pumps were built around the fountain eyes at old established farmsteads. The local water-table, already lowered by spring eye widening, now became permanently lowered so that most fountains no longer flow freely at the surface at any time. However, no documentation has come to light of this slow disappearance of surface water thanks to overzealous borehole installations at farmsteads.

10.4. THE ARRIVAL OF FENCING

Fencing was the last major European impact on the environment of the valley Bushmen. Game animal movement could at last be contained and the last small herds were more easily killed off. For the unattached Bushmen's own movements, fences were no more than a minor irritation, but for the policemen who had to bring them in, fences would have become a serious obstacle which escaping Bushmen could quickly turn to their advantage. However, fences also make more landmarks on a featureless terrain, giving more points of reference by which their pursuers could exchange accurate information about the whereabouts of thieves. We can only speculate on the effects of fencing on the dwindling morale of Bushmen in their refuges. As physical evidence of the erosion of their freedom, the wires must have been a depressing sight. Fencing was a controversial issue among valley farmers who argued back and forth about its merits. One advantage of fencing was that: "De plaats zal veel meer vee houden" [The farm would hold more stock] (CA 1872:12,800[wn]) while another was that these livestock "zal in veel beter toestand blijven" [would stay in a better condition] (ibid.). Fencing would also protect sheep from diseases such as 'Brandziekte' as healthy livestock would be unable to come into contact with diseased animals.

Farms would not be trampled as badly by the livestock, nor would the vegetation be drained of its goodness as dung would fertilise the soil, rather than merely filling up the sheep kraal. Wool yields would be better: "wol zal een derde in gewigt vermeerderen" [wool would weigh one third more] (ibid.) and the value of sheep would increase. Less herdsmen would be needed, as one man would be capable of doing the work of three or four; smaller farms could make do without non-white labour; while the theft of stock would be curtailed (ibid.). Supporters were very pressing. The Colesberg Advertiser quoted another source as proclaiming in 1875 that one of the most prosperous farmers in the Karoo told them: "that unless fenced in, within ten years many of the Karoo farms will be scarcely worth owning" (printed in CA 1875:15,763).

However, expense was the biggest disadvantage. A farm of 1820 morgen (about half the size of the conventional valley farm) would cost up to seven hundred pounds to fence (CA 1872:12,800[wn]). The owner of Drooge Fontein (MID.42) in the Middelburg district (outside the valley) listed the local cost of fencing as "1s. to 1s. 6d. per yard" (CA 1877,841). At this price, people asked themselves if fencing was really be suitable for sheep farming. Wire-fencing as constructed in other well watered districts with smaller farms would not be suitable for large enclosures for sheep and goats which would force their way between strands of the fence (CA 1877:17,835).

Most discussion revolved around the bill tabled in parliament in April 1875, the Fences Bill (CA 1875:15,747). If this became law, farmers would be required to fence in their entire properties, a notion rejected by many valley farmers owing to the high cost involved, and their currently poor financial positions (CA 1888:27*,2246). Valley farmers were first made aware of wire fencing with an 1865 report of a Lower Albany farmer who had imported "ten miles of stout wire ... for the purpose of making kraals or enclosures for sheep." (CA 1865:5,253). Although James Lycett told his sister in an 1864 letter that he had recently visited one of the best farms in the Middelburg district which had "any quantity of excellent land that had once been fenced in." (Lycett 1864:10) he is probably referring to dry-stone ostrich walling at Tafelberg Hall (cf. Noble 1886:241-243).

The first advertisement for "Omheining draad" [Fencing wire] appeared in the Colesberg Advertiser in April 1877, although the advertiser was himself from Ventersburg (CA 1877:17,848). From then on advertisements for fencing appeared more regularly (e.g. CA 1877:17,869), although it was only in March 1878 that fencing was advertised by a Colesberg merchant, James Campbell (CA 1878:18,891). Campbell advertised "Fencing wire ... imported to order, at a moderate commission." (ibid.). Other merchants soon caught on, with Draper & Plewman, also from Colesberg, advertising "Best annealed fencing wire" in April 1878 (CA 1878:18,897). "Ready made wire fencing", was advertised in January 1879 from T. Leviseur of Colesberg (CA 1879:19,936). It consisted of "six strands of No. 10 annealed wires, firmly stapled to pickets 1 by 1 1/4 inches, and four feet long; usually made intersections of from 35 to 45 yards, rolled up into bundles for convenience of transportation." (ibid.). Fencing was advertised frequently from then on (e.g. CA 1879:19,947; 1881:21,1056) with a local farmer making good use of the opportunity and advertising: "Extra Goede Palen ... goed voor omheinings doel einden" [Extra good poles ... good for the purpose of fencing] (CA 1882:22,1086).

Advertisements for public sales of property belonging to farmers began to include "yzer draad" or "iron wire" in the list of goods for sale (CA1882:22,1089; 1883:23,2028*; 1883:23,2037; 1885:24*,2119), but fencing was not yet universal. At Kuilfontein (COL.115) Cronwright-Schreiner (1925) "shot springboks, which were still uncamped and numerous" in 1880 and 1881. By 1886 when he went insolvent, "200 fencing poles" were included among the farming implements being sold off (CA 1886:25*,2145). In the following year (1887), the owner of Nachtschalsfontein (COL.53), bordering on Colesberg, requested permission from the Town Council to run a fence along the length of his property adjoining the town commonage. Council agreed to pay half the expenses. Other farmers with farms adjacent to the commonage followed this precedent (CA 1887:26*,2234; 1889:28*,2330; 1889:28*,2333; 1889:28*,2336) with the fencing of the entire commonage finally being completed by December 1894 (CA 1894:33*,1717). Farmer's adjoining Hanover also began to initiate the fencing of the Hanover commonage, with a meeting being called in September 1890 for that purpose (CA 29*,2374). The decision to apply the Fencing Act to the district of Colesberg was finally made by the Colesberg Divisional Council in December 1891 (CA 1891:30*,1558), and Hanover's Divisional Council followed suit at roughly the same time (CA 1891:30*,1557). Fencing had therefore become relatively common by the end of the 1890's, leading the Colesberg Newspaper to voice a complaint concerning the number of gates constantly left open "as fencing becomes more general in this country" (CA 1889:28*,2317).

An individual travelling to T'zamenkomst (COL.57) from Colesberg in 1892, noted that "Omheinen wordt meer en meer den orde van den dag. Groot gerief voor den boer, maar lastig voor de reiziger." [Fencing is becoming more and more the order of the day. Very convenient for the farmer, but annoying for the traveller] (CA 1892:31*,1596). He saw three gates between Colesberg and T'zamenkomst and at least one fence that was still without a gate. T'zamenkomst itself was "nu omheind en verdeeld in verschiedene kampen" [now fenced and divided into a number of camps] (ibid.). Most of the valley farms were therefore surrounded by fences by the mid-1890's, a point further illustrated by the Colesberg Advertiser which laughed off reports from another newspaper that there were trekbok (migratory springbok) in the Colesberg district, writing that: "It puzzles us to know how these bucks manage to 'trek' when the whole country is traversed by a network of wire fences" (CA 1893:32*,1642). Because of the high cost of fencing and gates, many roads passing between homesteads and farms were closed. In 1889, for example, the owner of Groot Halfakker warned the public that the private road to his homestead "is now closed by a seven wire fence, and the road to the homestead now comes around outside the fence" (CA 1889:28*,2311). The cutting of fences closing off such roads soon, however, became a common offence, and a nuisance to farmers (e.g. CA 1897:36*,1864).

By the late 1890s farmers could then keep much tighter control over their herds, could monitor predation more systematically, and could more easily determine the movements of unattached Bushmen or vagrants through their farms. Fencing also reduced the need for herdsmen, probably resulting in the retrenchment of some farm servants who then drifted into the valley towns.

CHAPTER 11 - CONCLUSION

The effects of European expansion on both the Seacow River valley habitat and its Bushmen inhabitants were prolonged and complex. Trekboers did not simply move into the valley, destroy the natural resources and drive out the Bushmen in a single stroke. Rather, items were removed from the habitat piecemeal and at different rates, while the Bushmen were never driven out, but instead disappeared into different nooks and crannies of frontier society where they were given new names, new clothes and a new identities. As the eighteenth century changed to the nineteenth, and the latter dragged on, their roles in the frontier society changed subtly or suddenly in different parts of the valley, as circumstance dictated.

Those changes and their controlling circumstances are summarised below, followed by and attempt to generalise from these observations in the form of a 'ring model' that predicts what happens to Bushmen and where they end up in an advancing trekboer frontier. Finally, a test of this model is carried out using the archaeological remains from the Post-Contact levels of the excavated rock shelters of the upper valley.

11.1. THE GAME EXTERMINATION

The most visible and dramatic impact of the trekboers was the destruction of the big game herds, a primary food base for resident Bushmen. In 1797 one could still see "on every side .. a multitude of wild animals, as gnoos, and quachas, and hartebeests, and springboks; and in such large troops as in no other part of the country had yet been observed by us" (Barrow 1806,I:208). A century later these had been whittled down to one species: "... along beaten tracks, we saw a good many springbucks" (CA 1892:31,1561[wn]). The timing of the destruction of the other species is summarised in Table 11-1 & Table 11-2).

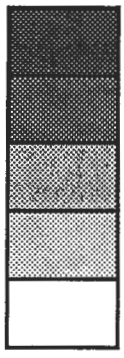
11.1.1. **Ungulates**

11.1.1.1. ***Ungulates gone from the valley by the end of the 19th century***

Modern place names named after other ungulates, especially hartebeest-, eland- and quagga- bear mute testimony to their earlier presence on the landscape. The red hartebeest (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*), already rare in 1844, had evidently disappeared from the valley when newspapers began in 1861. The eland (*Taurotragus oryx*) is gone from the record by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Blesbok (*D.d. philipsi*) numbers were never very high, but they were still present in 1839, finally disappearing around the early 1850's. Both the quagga (*Equus quagga*) and the wildebeest (*Connochaetes gnou*) disappeared at around 1860. Of the quagga, only few were present by 1847 and a small relic herd was seen in the care of a farmer in 1872, after which the

record is blank. Gnu or black wildebeest were rare by the late 1850's, but lingered on until 1883 when one last specimen was shot by a valley farmer. The hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) gave its name (Seacow, Zeekoe or Seekoei) to the valley but was almost gone by 1820 and certainly gone by the late 1830's. Warthog (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) disappear from written records after 1800. Gemsbok (*Oryx gazella*) and buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*) may have been misidentifications by their one-time observers (these two animals are therefore omitted from Table 11-1).

KEY TO TABLE 11-1 & TABLE 11-2



Animals occurring in very large numbers

Relatively large numbers present

Animals observed regularly on the landscape

Animals rare or in low numbers on the landscape

Animals no longer present on the landscape

TABLE 11-1: Timing of last written records of ungulate species

	UNGULATES/ARTIODACTYLS									
DATE	Red harte-beest	Spring-bok	Eland	Blesbok	Rhebok & steenbok	Duiker & Klip-springer	Quagga	Wilde-beest	Hippo-potamus	Warthog
1770										
1780										
1790										
1800										
1810										
1820										
1830										
1840										
1850										
1860										
1870										
1880										
1890										

11.1.1.2. *Ungulates which survived to the end of the nineteenth century*

Springbok (*Antidorcas marsupialis*), supplemented by the vast trekbokken migrations from the north west, were never exterminated, and numbers only seriously declined after 1890 when fencing became more common. The grey rhebok (*Pelea capreolus*), mountain rhebok (*Redunca fulvorufula*) and steenbok (*Raphicerus campestris*) also survived into the twentieth century. They seem to have shared similar fortunes within the nineteenth century valley. All three species did not originally occur in very high numbers and by 1892 the quantity had decreased to the extent that they had to be protected by law against the ravages of hunters. Klipspringer (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) and duiker (*Sylvicapra grimmia*) were probably present in very low numbers, but were hardly ever noticed.

11.1.2. Primates

Both primates present in the valley during the nineteenth century survived into the next. The Samango monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*) occurred in small numbers in the thorn-choked gorges of the lower valley, and has survived there virtually unmolested by humans into the twentieth century. Likewise the more numerous chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*) also survived into this century, despite the periodic extermination of large numbers of them by farmers.

11.1.3. Carnivores

11.1.3.1. *Carnivores gone from the valley by the end of the 19th century*

As the ungulates declined, so the food base of attendant carnivores was also whittled away, forcing them to rely more heavily on domestic flocks, which in turn accelerated their own extinction at the hands of the trekboers. Lions (*Panthera leo*) were the first to go. By 1834 there were no more around Colesberg and by the mid-1840's sightings were generally rare. The last must have been shot out by the 1860's. Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) was recorded only once (1797) and must have been rare at all time. Brown hyaenas (*Hyaena brunnea*) also became very troublesome in the 1840, coinciding with the decline of the lions. Their numbers were gradually reduced to total extermination before the nineteenth century ended.

11.1.3.2. *Carnivores which survived to the end of the 19th century*

Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) may have proliferated in the 1850s as the last lions were being removed, and they managed to hold out in the mountainous areas to the end of the nineteenth century and beyond. Records of the African hunting dog (*Lycaon pictus*) also tail off shortly after the lion had gone from the valley, but a few lingered on as their destruction was still being called for in 1894. By 1892 the African wild cat (*Felis lybica*) population within the valley had also been wiped out. A few wild cat probably survived in protected niches within the valley into the twentieth century. Both the black-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*) and the caracal or red-cat (*Felis caracal*) were causing more complaints from farmers in the 1840's onwards. Both species were slowly

returning each night to kraals further trampled the [illegible]

sheet erosion and permanent loss of soil cover.

Away from the homesteads and kraals and out in the unsettled veld, the palatable grasses and shrubs were eaten down to ground level and held there by the highly selective grazing habits of the numerically dominant sheep. The process was still further intensified by the introduction of merino sheep. Unpalatable species filled the niches left by those plants held down, and soon grew to dominate the community. With the 'lawnmower' effect of wild game now gone, rank bushes

were no longer grazed down periodically, and could grow to unprecedented heights, so that palatable species could never return, even where the veld was rested. Fencing further intensified the process, and wind-pumps created new bare patches while rapidly lowering the water table to the point where almost no fountain flowed unaided at the surface.

Sadly, travellers' knowledge of local grazing ecology was so scanty that very few intelligent observations of this long process can be culled from the record. Such as it is, the record tells us that from the beginning of settlement the valley was already dominated by Karoo scrub species interspersed with patches of grassveld. The pattern of markedly long cyclic drought was clearly understood by the 1840s and shorter cycles by the 1860s It was common knowledge that the grass disappeared in droughts and returned when it rained. It was also common knowledge that the great springbok migrations were drought-driven, as were the locust infestations. Overall, the record neither supports nor refutes the much debated Acocks model of historical expansion of Karoo scrub over grass cover.

11.3. IMPACTS ON THE BUSHMEN

11.3.1. **Early impact on the Bushmen**

11.3.1.1. *1770 -1798 - The Sneeuberg War*

When the trekboers first attempted to settle in the high valleys of Sneeuberg mountains, including the headwaters of the Seacow, in the 1770's they met with fierce opposition from the Bushmen who lived there. Bushmen killed their livestock, murdered their herdsmen and threatened their lives. The trekboers responded by sending out punitive commandos to recapture livestock, kill the thieves and capture Bushmen, especially children, for enslavement to cope with chronic labour shortages on their farms.

Bushmen camps were generally situated in protected areas close to water. Favoured areas were the rugged Roodeberg mountains to the south-east, but there were also camps scattered about the plains. Certain camps saw large gatherings in late winter or early spring. Most Bushmen encountered and captured at this time identified themselves with one or another 'captain' living in the Roodeberg and there are hints that the whole valley was briefly under the command of one of these captains. The Sneeuberg itself may have been abandoned by Bushmen, and settlement in the valley is scantily recorded because Bushmen generally fled on the approach of travellers. At the same time, European occupation was restricted to the upper valley and usually failed, The middle of the valley was occupied by a group of farmers at the end of this period, but tension was still high.

11.3.1.2. *1798 - 1824: The Waterhole Seizures*

Earl Macartney's policy of livestock subscription brought about a measure of peace between Bushmen and farmers. European expansion into the valley accelerated rapidly in response. As

waterholes were taken over, local Bushmen either entered the service of farmers, associated themselves with the mission stations, lived on land between these farms or kept ahead of the slowly expanding Colonial Frontier.

The Colonial boundary, which had been fixed at Van Plettenberg's beacon in 1798 restricted European expansion to just the upper and middle valley, and Bushmen camps were mostly seen just beyond the boundary in the lower valley. Numbers in camp were fewer than those attacked formerly in the Roodeberg. Now, camps were seen on: the Seacow River, Toverberg and the Orange River. There were still 'captains' : Uithaalder for the Toverberg, possibly Na-a-kaw for the Seacow River; possibly Witbooy for the Orange River east of Van Plettenberg's beacon and Tkai (Slinger?) for the region to the west, around Hephzibah. When the colonial boundary was expanded to the banks of the Orange River in the early 1820's, these Bushmen were either forced to move north of this river, or they remained within the Colony where they adopted any of a number of roles.

11.3.2. **Role Changes of Frontier Bushmen**

11.3.2.1. *1770 - 1798: Slaves*

During this violent period Bushmen were forced into farm service. Men generally escaped, so were killed rather than captured. Women and children were less liable to escape, although some were rescued by their men-folk. Many farm 'slaves' noted in the records were Bushmen. They were bought or sold by the farmers, some escaped, some were recaptured and very few were freed in later life. They fulfilled mainly household tasks, and growing boys were eventually entrusted with the care of sheep or goats. They were seen to sleep in a small, dilapidated, single room building close to the homestead, or in the homestead itself.

11.3.2.2. *1798 - 1834: Unattached Bushmen at the Homestead*

After the Sneeuberg war, commando raids decreased and were designed mainly, some say entirely, to acquire Bushmen labour. For a while, an elicit traffic in Bushmen children sprang up, and took some years to stamp out. With the feeding scheme in place, Bushmen began to associate themselves with the farmers on a voluntary basis, living in their traditional 'kraals' or camps close to the farmsteads. This was not a formal relationship, but rather a loose, symbiotic one, with the Bushmen being allowed to move about as he pleased. These 'free' Bushmen performed a wide range of tasks for the valley farmers, with the women working in the farmer's household and the men often being responsible for herding the farmers flocks. In return, farmers fed and hunted for these Bushmen.

11.3.2.3. *1834 - 1900: Emancipation, Wages, and Dependence*

There is no evidence for any mass exodus of captured Bushmen from the farms after the emancipation of the slaves in 1834. Many captured Bushmen were probably either old, or they had

grown up and married other farm servants. Most captive Bushmen therefore remained on the farms, receiving much the same food as before, but now formally earmarked as "payment in kind." This subtly repositioned their relationship so that partly cash wages could be quietly adopted a few years later when currency and a cash-based economy swept the valley with the first valley towns and their stores. Farm Bushmen continued as before. Herdsmen were by now often established at outposts on these farms, where they cared for the flock nearer to the available forage. Some Bushmen farm servants therefore lived close to the homesteads on these farms or at these outposts, further away from the farm house.

By mid-century, the freedom of movement of unattached Bushmen camping around the homesteads were no more restricted, but their food base was becoming heavily undermined. Dependence on handouts was by now a generation deep and more and more time would be spent at the homestead. Camps became shanties, which eventually became huts. Less and less time was spent in the veld either foraging or hunting. Those who had lived close to these farms gradually slipped into the status of retainers or hired hands on the farm.

11.3.3. **Impact of The Missions**

The mission stations at Toverberg (est,1814) and Hephzibah (est.1816) trained a small cadre of Bushmen to manage livestock, grow crops, build houses, read, write, sew and to live like Europeans. While they utterly destroyed the ethnic identity (and belief system) of this small group of fully committed converts, they also familiarised up to a thousand others with many of the above skills. These were Bushmen who treated the stations as just another resource and milked them for whatever hand-outs could be obtained. During the short life of the stations, tensions between the fully committed members and these hangers-on increased.

After the closure of Toverberg, most of the mission Bushmen continued to cultivate their gardens and retained small flocks until forced into service by neighbouring farmers. One who worked for a while was unfairly punished, so he returned to hunting and gathering to maintain his freedom. Other mission Bushmen entered the service of farmers voluntarily. The Bushmen from Hephzibah were exposed to mission influences for only a few months, and soon took up their hunter-gatherer way of life, as did the casual visitors to Toverberg.

11.3.4. **Lure of the Towns**

Poor farms with weak fountains regularly failed during droughts. The farms were abandoned by their owners, families of full time Bushman labourers found themselves without work, and drifted to the towns where they set up camp on the commonage or found shelter with others already housed in the slums. Between droughts, disputes no doubt arose on the farms, leading to dismissals and voluntary departure from the farms. There must have been a steady trickle of farm Bushmen heading for the towns. Records of these gradual shifts are very scanty, but the forces at work then

were doubtless the same as they are today. We know it was happening in Colesberg, and extrapolate to Richmond, Middelburg and Hanover.

The number of casual hangers-on around the farmsteads was dwindling as more of the semi-independent families were absorbed into the labour pool. During droughts and farm failures, the last of these unattached Bushmen would also have headed for the towns as there was nothing to eat in the veld. No records have come to light that show ex-farm Bushmen returning to the farms once droughts were over and prosperity returned.

Once in town, Bushmen became servants to town homes or they became 'loafers'. There are no data to show what the rural occupations of these two classes had been, but common sense dictates that many loafers had been unattached or semi-attached to farms in the country. Good farm servants would be passed on to new employers in town who were always on the lookout for trained, reliable help. Inevitably, servants became better integrated into the town community, becoming part of the ethnic and linguistic mix. Their Bushman identities were lost more quickly as they joined the growing underclass of 'coloured' people. Many 'coloureds' lived in town, although some had their own places in the location just outside town. Bushmen 'loafers' on the other hand were individuals who did not do any recognisable work, but instead hung about the streets and the location. Most of the criminal activity of the town and district was blamed on these individuals. Within the towns, Bushmen were susceptible to alcohol misuse, and the poor conditions in these slum areas made the impact of epidemics on the non-white population very heavy.

11.3.5. **Unattached Bushmen**

Small pockets of unattached Bushmen neither entered the service of farmers, associated themselves with the mission stations, nor moved into the towns. Instead, they lived on Crown Land not yet occupied by farmers. When that went, they dwelt in inaccessible (usually mountainous) areas on exiting or new farms. Here, their hunter-gatherer way of life was further reduced and distorted by the European presence. Although they lived off the land, they often subsisted off livestock which they stole. They wore European clothes, carried guns, owned metal utensils and some probably had cash. After 1860 the new wire fences started to finish off last of their wild game, then the borehole technology after 1880 opened up the last remote to the enterprise of young aspiring farmers. By the 1890's, any remaining unattached Bushmen had been forced off the land and were in gaol or in the slums. After 1894 squatters were increasingly reported on the Colesberg town commonage. No mention of 'wild' Bushmen is seen again.

11.4. RING MODEL

Any attempt to model the process of Bushman acculturation in the evolving frontier society of the northeast Cape, is best done in terms of changing roles through time (see Table 10-3).

Table 10-3: Different roles played by Bushmen within the Seacow River valley

CENTRE	INNER RING	SECOND RING	OUTER RING
Farm	* Captive Bushmen * Farm servants * 'Hottentots'	* Free Bushmen	* Hunter -gatherers * Unattached Bushmen
Mission	* Mission Bushmen	* Habitual visitors	* Hunter-gatherers
Town	* Bushmen servants * 'Coloureds'	* Bushmen 'loafers' or thieves	* Unattached Bushmen * Squatters or vagrants
Similarities	* Integration into colonial society * Loss of Bushmen identity	* On periphery of colonial society * Retain identity * Later in 19th century - negative connotations	* Outside colonial society * Maintain independence * Later in 19th century - gradually reduced in number

A model useful to archaeological studies, especially spatial analysis, would be one that portrays the distribution of Bushmen in various roles around the Europeans centres, be they farmsteads, mission stations, or budding towns. Useful heuristic devices in this model are three rings that would have existed around any of the three hubs (Figure 10-1).

On valley farms, the inner ring is occupied by farm labour, initially captive from commandos, later to become hired servants after emancipation. Khoi servants brought in from farther south with the first settlements also occupied this ring, especially on the richer farms. They were not augmented as time passed, but were supplemented by Bushman staff. Khoi and Bushmen servants rapidly merged through intermarriage, all of them becoming 'Hottentots' in the eyes of the farmers. They lived in or next to the farmstead and radiated out from it in the course of daily work. This inner ring was formed during the Sneeuberg war.

At the end of the war, a second ring began to form around farmsteads. This contained the Bushmen who camped in the koppies overlooking the farmstead and who came and went as they pleased. They lived off hand-outs from the farmer and also off the veld, sometimes decamping for long periods to collect wild foods, then returning to the farmstead when such foods were out of season. Individuals took on casual jobs as needed in exchange for tobacco and gifts. Those so inclined, spent more and more time in the inner ring and less and less in the outer ring, some eventually moving full time to the inner ring. Others less inclined to work oscillated between the second and outer rings.

The outer ring was occupied by Bushmen who continued to live off wild plants and animals and had little contact with the farms. Individuals were free to visit the second ring encampments, thus exposing themselves to increased farm influences. Through time, as Europeans expanded into the valley, the number of outer ring members decreased, leaving only residual pockets on either Crown Land or in inaccessible places on farms. By the 1890s they were reduced to isolated individuals or pairs.

Bushmen near mission stations towns can be fitted into a similar three ring arrangement. Nobody was fixed for life within any ring, not even the inner ones. Bushmen passed through the rings, as they moved from one category to another. Hunter-gatherers moved to the farms, while farm servants escaped to the towns or even to the third ring. Uithaalder's experiences illustrate this well: he started off as a hunter-gatherer (outer ring) became a mission Bushmen (second ring), then lived in the way that the missionaries had taught him (second ring) until he was forced to work on farms (inner ring). He escaped and became a hunter-gatherer again (outer ring). Whenever the farm, the mission station, or the town location failed, or became a hostile environment for some reason, people would be forced to align themselves with a new centre, to relocate in one of the rings, and to move back and forth through them. Collapses of any hub were generally caused by drought, bankruptcy or death. The missions were closed by the authorities, slums could become hostile because of epidemics or the police.

11.5. APPLICATION OF THE RING MODEL TO ROCK SHELTERS

One question remains: did Bushmen in different rings leave different archaeological traces of their presence? If so, then it should be possible to explain some of the variability in European residues found in the upper levels of rock shelters in the upper valley. The manner in which their different roles in each ring should appear in the archaeological record is tabulated below (see table 11-4). The nature of the marker artefact assemblage for each role will be heavily influenced by the nature of the nearest centre (farm, mission or town). The marker assemblage composition will also reflect the foundation date of that centre.

TABLE 11-4: Tentative model for the appearance of these categories within the archaeological context

	INNER RING	SECOND RING	OUTER RING
GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION	Close to the centre	Access to the centre, with s symbiotic relationship and relative freedom of movement	Some distance from the centre - general avoidance of this centre
EXPECTED ARTEFACT CONTENT	Many items of European origin	Fewer items of European origin	Very few items of European origin - items usually received as gifts or obtained through theft
EXPECTED DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK CONTENT	Increased density of domestic livestock - including a wide range of domestic remains	Domestic livestock present - not in as great a variety	Fewer domestic livestock remains - these are usually obtained through theft, therefore often hind or fore-quarters of sheep or goats - other domestic animals not included in these remains
EXPECTED NON-DOMESTIC FAUNAL CONTENT	Decreased density of non-domestic faunal because of an increase reliance on foodstuff provided by the centre	Non-domestic faunal remains present, but declining as these game animals decrease in number on the environment	Increase in non-domestic fauna, particularly smaller mammals and OES.
EXPECTED TRADITIONAL CONTENT	Decrease in stone tool and pottery production	Stone tool and pottery production still evident	Stone tool and pottery production still dominant

Using these test implications, attempts follow to identify which categories of Bushmen occupied the nine excavated rock shelters in the Seacow River valley.

11.5.1. **Volstruisfontein shelter**

Volstruisfontein shelter is too far from the homestead (3.3 kilometres) to have been occupied by either farm servants or second ring Bushmen and the steep talus slope leading up to the shelter makes its' use as a livestock outpost unlikely. This is confirmed by the lack of a dung deposit in the shelter and by the lack of substantial stone walling. The two periods of occupation were roughly 1850 - 1880's and 1890 - 1910. During the earlier period, the site was probably occupied by outer ring Bushmen (this is rather late for free Bushmen). This is indicated by the absence of many European items (those which were there were possibly stolen) and the increase in fragments of ostrich egg shell pointing to the effects of game herd annihilation, also reflected in the decline in faunal density in the deposit. Bushman movements may also have been restricted. This farm was owned by Willem Viljoen from 1835 to 1880 (S.G.GR.Q.4-4), and he was possibly friendly towards these Bushmen. The new farmer, Johannes Jacobus Nieuwoudt (ibid.), may not have shared his attitude and therefore forced these Bushmen to leave. Alternately he could have recruited them as labour so that they moved to inner ring status.

In the uppermost (1890-1910) layer, the absence of stone tools, OES and pottery (except a few churned up from below) during the later period indicates that the site was occupied by inner ring servants. They could have been fencers, or herdsmen, or a temporary hunting party; all of whom needed to spend nights away from the homestead while on duty. There is an outside chance that these were isolated outer ring Bushmen, but there were so few of these fugitive stock thieves left by now, that the odds are against this interpretation.

11.5.2. **Haaskraal Rock Shelter**

Haaskraal shelter is situated further away from the farm homestead than any of the excavated sites (about 4 km from three centres). Although it could not occupied by house or farmyard servants, it was almost certainly never used by Bushmen herders, even though a large stock kraal and shepherd's hut are in full view of the shelter. Three groups of European artefacts were identified - the lowermost included only glass beads of the first half of the nineteenth century, with sheep, cattle and (rare) chicken, turkey, horse and donkey. The best fit would be with second ring Bushmen receiving regular meat handouts (forelimbs prevalent) from the farmer, but not much in the way of gift items.

The next layer also has glass beads, this time with a mid-nineteenth century dating range. Only sheep and cattle remains come from this layer. Identifying the category of the people responsible for these remains is difficult, although two possibilities suggest themselves. One is that the second ring Bushmen who camped here were being drawn into the inner ring more often and

spent more time at the homestead. The second possibility is that the farmer was no longer supplying them with as much meat as before, consequently they were spending less time there.

The most European goods, mainly metal fragments come from the top layer and fall within a dating range that post-dates the 1850's. Sheep, cattle, and chicken remains all came from this younger layer, but the amounts of indigenous artefacts and game remains decrease only gradually towards the top. While it is tempting to suppose these were the same people that used the kraal and the herders hut beyond the shelter, the latter's (rare) artefact associations suggest an end-century date. The occupants of the site were probably late second ring Bushmen who were dependant on the occasional generosity of one of the three nearest farmers. By this time, the wagon-track network was developing to extent that wagons could have approached the shelter, so travel time would have been reduced, especially to Zoete Valley (RICH.115). All three of the farms bordering this site, Haase Kraal (RICH.75), Welgelegen (RICH.74) and Zoete Valley (RICH.115), have relatively stable ownership histories, all being surveyed in the early 1840's and remaining in the hands of one owner until the mid-1860's. Although this could indicate why there is no archaeological deposit at the site post-dating this, it does not shed any new light on the relationship between the Bushmen at the site and the neighbouring farmers.

11.5.3. **Bloubos Overhang**

The sample from this small site is too small to allow any conclusions to be made.

11.5.4. **Driekoppen Rock Shelter**

Although Driekoppen Rock Shelter is located near to the homestead of that name (1.1 km), this land was unoccupied Crown land until late in the nineteenth century. Until then, this site must have been used by outer ring Bushmen who acquired very few European items. As a single track ran near to the site, shelter occupants could have dunned (rare) passers-by for such gifts. The three Post-Contact layers contain small assemblages dated to the 1810 - 1840 range; a mid- to late nineteenth century range and a post 1850 range. Like at Haaskraal, the older two layers contain only beads along with mainly sheep and goat remains. As these remains were overwhelmingly composed of heads and feet, they may have been offal passed on from more distant farmers, or from the road traffic.

Driekoppen is exceptional in so many ways that Pease (1993) has proposed it as a major trance-dance centre for those on the plains of the upper valley. Its remoteness from European settlement would certainly have encouraged its use in this way. That none of the artefacts post-date 1860 when the Crown Land was first occupied by farmers (cf. S.G.dgm.1362/1860) indicates that Bushmen were forced to move with the settlement of these farmers on the land.

11.5.5. **Abbot's Cave**

The abundance of European artefacts in the deposit at this site, along with the relative proximity of this site to the homestead (about 2 km) clearly identifies it as a site occupied by second ring Bushmen, on the way to becoming full-time farm servants. Zaay Fontein homestead is visible from the cave mouth. Hendrik Petrus Coetzee was the fist farmer to obtain this farm in perpetual quitrent in 1842 (S.G.COL.Q.5-65). In 1862, the farm was subdivided, between two new farmers and in 1882, further subdivisions took place, again between new farmers (ibid.). The 1810 - 1840 dating range for the lowermost group of artefacts as well as the thick OES lenses in which these artefacts occur, indicate that the occupants of this site during this period were free Bushmen who retained their independence for a time (second ring). The sheep and goat remains recovered from the deposit were probably given to these Bushmen as food in return for services rendered. In the next layer (mid- to late nineteenth century) these Bushmen appear to have gradually entered the service of the farmers as is indicated by the increased abundance of European artefacts and the decline in game remains and OES. The thick deposit of dung overlying the remainder of the deposit confirms that the free Bushmen were now entrenched as farm herdsmen. They probably nurtured their own small flock in the cave.

11.5.6. **Lame Sheep shelter**

Only a few bits of fencing wire, all datable to the late-nineteenth century were recovered from this site. These artefacts were recovered from behind a dry-stone wind break and must result from the activities of the farm servants who enclosed their sheep at Abbot's Cave. Hind limbs and feet in the domestic faunal remains compliment the forelimbs found in the next door cave. This possibly reflects family divisions of whole carcasses from their own little flock.

11.5.7. **Leeuhoek Rock Shelter**

The close proximity of this shelter (a few hundred yards) to the homestead clearly indicates that this shelter was occupied by second ring Bushmen or even by farm servants. Two, rich Post-Contact layers date to 1840 - 1860 and to 1880 - 1910. Hearths and thick OES lenses in the lower layer suggest the presence of second ring Bushmen. The 1880 - 1910 layer was undoubtedly by farm servants, who were no longer living off the land at all, but instead received their food from the farmer including rare cattle and chickens. The setting an architecture of the site suggests it was used by guards, posted to fire on baboons which would have regularly raided the wheatlands in front of the shelter. Of major interest is that stone tool production did not decline in these Post-Contact layers, hinting at the presence of outer ring visitors to the shelter who probably camped on the hospitality of the servants. A change in the ownership of Leeuw Hoek (MID.61) could explain the gap in these dating ranges. Isaac David Vorster owned the farm from 1841 to 1871 (S.G.Col.5-52) and it is possible that the second ring-Bushmen living at the shelter were driven away when the new owner (Nicolaas Willem van der Walt) arrived there in 1871.

11.5.8. **Van Zyl's Rus Shelter**

This small overhang is 2,5 kilometres from the nearest homestead and yielded only a small number of European artefacts. The scarcity of European artefacts in the lowermost layer at this site (datable to the mid-nineteenth century) and the very nature of these artefacts (a clay pipe, a boot grommet and a farrier's spike) indicate that outer ring Bushmen were occupying this site. That these artefacts did not include ceramic or earthenware further supports the interpretation. The abundance of fore and hind limb elements in the domestic fauna recovered hints at stock theft, where the axial skeleton is abandoned or buried. The upper, 1890s layer which is tied into the base of a low dry-stone windbreak sees a sharp drop in indigenous artefacts and OES. Possibly a lone outer ring Bushman is responsible for this final layer.

11.5.9. **Boundary Shelter**

The earliest recorded Post-contact artefacts were recovered from this rock shelter. It was located 1,9 km from the homestead at Hartebeestfontein (MID.68) and it overlooked a main road. The lowermost artefacts come from a hearth dated to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The uppermost group dates to the late nineteenth century. Bushmen hunter gatherers probably used this place in the Sneeuberg wars, and the position of this site corresponds nicely to the mapped localities of Bushmen camps during this period (that is, the Roodeberg). The few metal artefacts recovered from the upper layer, attributable to the late nineteenth century, indicate that either farm servants or second ring Bushmen occupied this site.

11.5.10. **Discussion**

The evidence yielded by the documentary sources place these archaeological sites within an historical context, and suggest a social hierarchy of Bushmen categories who may have used the shelters. The archaeological remains add many further insights into these people nor available from the documents. Only Boundary Shelter may have yielded material from the time of the Sneeuberg war. No others reflect a certain European presence earlier than the 1830s. Those with lower levels containing only glass beads and livestock probably belong to the early period of European expansion into the valley, before the towns. The bulk volume of European goods in the upper volume was probably so low at this time that nothing from the kitchens was yet 'trickling down' into Bushman hands. With the coming of the stores and their 'cheap English goods' the European presence becomes registered more firmly in the shelter record.

11.6. CONCLUSION

The Bushmen of the Seacow River valley did not simply disappear, neither were they driven or killed off. Although the colonial expansion murdered many of them, mutilated their habitat, and all but destroyed their food base, they held on in considerable numbers and responded in various ways to whatever the Europeans would fling at them. When physical resistance failed, they took up positions in every frontier niche that was open to them, and retained their identity to the very end of the nineteenth century. They are still present in large numbers in the living community. What destroyed their identity was the shift in labelling as they were removed from the countryside -- first called 'Hottentots' when they became farm servants, they were later mislabelled 'loafers', then 'thieves', then 'coloureds' as they joined the town communities. The persistence of their physical presence is clearly documented in the records. The persistence of their native material culture is just as clearly documented in the archaeological record.

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DEEDS OFFICE INFORMATION, CAPE TOWN (SURVEYOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE)

S.G. Dgm.
= Original Survey Diagram (no. & year)
S.G. FH.
= Freehold Farm
S.G. Col.Q
= Title Deed Information for individual farms (perpetual Quitrents)

S.G. Dgm. 168/1824
S.G. FH. 1/1/3/1//1827
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SOUTH AFRICAN STATE ARCHIVES

1/CBG
= Colesberg Quitrent Registers
1/GR
= Veld Cornet Reports
1/STB
= Stellenbosch Archival Documents
J = Opgaaf Rolle (Tax Records)
LBD
= Reports upon land
M = Maps
RLR
= Oude Wildschutte Boeken

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CWMA
= Council for World Mission's Archives

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