

**MONTAGU'S ROADS TO CAPITALISM:  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF LANDED PROPERTY IN THE CAPE COLONY, 1845**

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The gentry of the Cape Colony were able to maintain their domination over the countryside of the colony as a result of their control over both labour and land. Until 1834 the former was guaranteed, in part though not totally, by the institution of slavery and by the quasi-legal methods used to retain many of the nominally free in bondage. After 1834 (or, to be more precise, after 1838, with the ending of the period of "apprenticeship" during which the ex-slaves were required to work for their former owners) many of the informal means of control were maintained. Equally important, though, was the near-monopoly which the farmers were able to maintain over the land of the colony. This allowed them largely to exclude the labourers from independent access to ground on which they could grow their own food, or keep their own stock, so that they had no option but to work for the farmers, for much of the year at least. The mission stations could provide accommodation for the families of some of the workers - and, as in the United States, emancipation allowed the partial withdrawal of women and children from the agricultural labour force - but were never large enough to allow anything like full subsistence to their residents. Thus only a few areas of mountain slope and semi-desert were outside the supervision of the farming community, and these areas, though still registered as crown land, were under continual attack from the farmers, as much to give them control over their unruly inhabitants as to engross the land for their farming operations. [1]

If their near monopoly on land gave the farmers a significant weapon in their struggle for control over those they hoped would be their labourers, then the distinctions in the value of land, which evidently was determined both by its acreage and by its productivity, were the crucial determinants of stratification within the farming community. Within each district a relatively small group of men were seen as the leaders of society, holding civil and ecclesiastical office and generally dominating the district's affairs. [2] This pre-eminence derived from their landed wealth, relative to that of their fellows.

Each district did not run the same course, however. It is unjustified to extrapolate the agrarian history of the Cape Colony as a whole from the experience of Stellenbosch district, or Graaff-Reinet, or wherever. Of course, it may be the case that certain uniformities of trajectory, though not of timing, can be discerned between the various parts of the colony. Indeed, I have argued that this is indeed the case, at a certain level of abstraction. [3] However, this is a matter for empirical investigation, not for a priori reasoning. In particular, in the first half of the nineteenth century, there were probably variations to be found between the old agrarian heartlands of the South-West Cape, namely the Boland, the Swartland and, to a certain extent, the Overberg [4], and the more recently conquered, largely wool-producing areas of the Eastern Cape. [5] Moreover, potentially, distinctions can be made between the areas where the English 1820 settlers established themselves, particularly Albany district, and the rest of the Eastern Cape.

Some evidence on these sorts of questions is provided in this paper. It derives from a valuation of all the land and buildings in private ownership within the colony, thus apparently excluding mission and other ecclesiastical land. This was made in 1845, on the initiative of John Montagu, the colonial secretary in Cape Town, to provide the basis for a rate on immovable property which could be used to finance the improvement in the colony's roads. [6] Since by the 1840s there had been a market in land in the Cape Colony for more than a century and since the gradual abolition of the loan place system, which had begun in 1814, had been completed, this was an obvious way of generating new revenue.

Obviously, historians cannot choose the moment at which this sort of source is produced; nevertheless 1845 is not a bad moment to undertake the sort of analysis which is afforded by the valuation, although it was a year of drought, at least in the east. In the first place, the colony had been at peace, relatively speaking, with the Xhosa for nearly a decade, so that land values were not distorted by war-time destruction. Secondly, the emancipation of the slaves had been completed in 1838, so that the area of the colony which had relied on slave labour most, namely the south-west, was coming to terms with a system of labour organisation which did not include slavery. Thirdly, there had been time to allow for the readjustment following the exodus of numbers of Afrikaners (but probably not that many landowners) during the Great Trek. [7] Finally, the expansion of wool production in the Eastern Cape, with its associated rise in property values and land speculation, was under way. Thus an analysis of the valuation allows of a partial investigation of the structure of the landowning class of the Cape Colony at an interesting moment in its development, although the conclusions would be strengthened if a subsequent revaluation could be found, so that comparisons could be made.

The first half of the nineteenth century had seen an expansion of all sectors of the Cape's agricultural economy. [8] Wine production was on a plateau, at approximately ten million litres, which was not significantly larger than the level of the 1820s, when the Cape wine industry enjoyed a short-lived boom. Wheat production, on the other hand, had increased by about a quarter over the same period, and had moved out beyond the mountain ranges which had formed the major barriers to bulk agricultural production until the early nineteenth century. In particular, Swellendam had become by far the largest grain growing district, whereas in the eighteenth century the Dutch had not even bothered to collect production figures and taxes from east of the mountains. This was made possible by the opening up of coasting traffic into such now forgotten harbours as Port Beaufort at the mouth of the Breë river. Wheat, however, was not the only grain crop of importance. Indeed, it provided only just under 60 per cent of the value of the grains grown in the Colony in 1845, according to the official figures. The other 40 per cent consisted of barley, rye (a very small proportion), oats and oat hay. [9] Even though the figures are suspect in the extreme, especially the ten million pounds weight (just under five thousand tons) of oat hay said to have been grown in Albany district, they nevertheless point to the importance of fodder crops, particularly for sale to the British army. Particularly in the frontier districts of Albany and Somerset a very great deal of the agricultural, as opposed to pastoral, activity went into supplying the army.

This points to an important facet of the Cape's economy in the mid-nineteenth century, namely the enormous importance of British military disbursements. This can be seen by examining the colonial balance of trade. On the one hand, wool production and exports were increasing rapidly. In 1845, for the first time, wool exports through Cape Town exceeded those of wine, but were only just over half of those through Port Elizabeth. In total, wool exports from the Cape Colony in 1845 were worth £176,741 or approximately 41 per cent of the total exports, a proportion which would rise to about two-thirds a decade later. However, the Cape exported only about 43 per cent by value of what it imported. The balance of trade was wildly in the red, to the tune of more than half a million pounds. Nor was this an isolated phenomenon. For decades the Cape exported about half of what it imported without this causing any apparent balance of payments crisis, or other economic difficulty. The shortfall was made up by what amounted to capital transfers to pay the British army and naval establishments. [10] Without the continual threat of frontier conflict the Cape would have been economically a far poorer place. [11]

It is against this background that the valuation of 1845 can be discussed. A number of versions of it exist. Two tabulations from it were made shortly after it was compiled, and these are reproduced (with the correction of one trifling arithmetical error) in Tables I and II. They were made for different purposes. Table I, which gives the total rateable value of each district, was published to provide an indication of the base from which the Road Board could raise revenue, and also to justify the allocation of the Board's resources to the various

districts of the colony, an important matter given the continual strains between the Eastern and Western divisions. Table II, on the other hand, was a tabulation produced for the debates on the level of the qualified franchise. The Road Board rates gave the politicians and officials of the mid-nineteenth century a rough approximation of the number of men who would receive the vote, or who had the right to be elected, and their distribution across the colony, at each of the proposed levels.

The rating had one major disadvantage for this purpose, and for those of historians, in that it recorded the value of individual properties, as recorded in the Land Office, and not property owners. Thus the slum empire of J A H Wicht was represented by the seventy properties or more in the poor quarters of Cape Town which he owned, and not by a single consolidated figure. [12] More problematically, the building up of large estates by the purchase of a number of farms, should it have occurred, does not show up in this sort of cross-tabulation. It is thus impossible purely on the basis of this presentation of the Road Board's figures to see to what extent the growth of the wool industry, for instance, was leading to the expansion of the land ownership of those who were succeeding in this branch of business and to the squeezing out of those who were unable to jump on the wool wagon. Nor is the existence of relations of tenancy, multiple ownership or heavy mortgaging, for instance, evident in this form.

Some of these deficiencies can be remedied, in large part, by the examination of the original registers which are held in the Cape Archives. [13] These, unfortunately, are not complete. The ratings for the municipalities of Cape Town and Grahamstown were not redone for the Road Board, and the originals for these two towns are to be found in the respective municipal archives. [14] More seriously, the records for Swellendam district seem to be missing entirely, which is most unfortunate as the southern plains were the major growth area for cereal production and the first part of the colony in which wool production became fully established. Nevertheless, Swellendam contained only about 10 per cent of the value of the colony, and 6.6 per cent of the properties, so that its absence is not a disaster.

The original registers not only record the veldcornetcy and name of each property and its value, but also the name of the owner and in general whether he was also the occupier of the farm or house. [15] They do not give the acreage of a property, except in rare circumstances (generally to note town or village *erven*). However, seeing the wide discrepancies in the use that could be made of a given unit area of ground, depending on its location and natural endowments, this is not such a problem, and throughout this paper all calculations will be in terms of values, not of acreage. If the owner was not himself the occupier, then the occupier's name and the owner's place of residence are given. A few farms were described specifically as being unoccupied or as being occupied by servants (presumably as opposed to tenants). Frequently, there is no evidence of anyone but the owner being on the land, although it was not the owner's place of residence. Most often such farms are adjacent to each other in the lists, though this does not mean that they were physically neighbours. The clear indication is that what were judicially separate entities were being worked as a single unit. On the other hand, multiple ownership was also recorded, together with whether or not all the owners were present. At times, notably for George district, a certain amount of information on the crops grown on the farm is also given. [16]

For the purposes of this paper a sample was drawn from the register for further analysis. For this, 37 of the 151 (24.5%) veldcornetcies were chosen by the use of a table of random numbers. These included 20.6% of the properties in the colony, excluding Swellendam district and Cape Town. Cape Town was excluded because of the differing administrative structure of the town and because I wished initially to concentrate on rural or small-town properties. Grahamstown, on the other hand, was included in the universe from which the sample was drawn, although in the event it did not turn up. In Table III the percentage distribution of the property values in the sample and in the total population are given. From this it can be seen that the sample gives a fairly accurate approximation to the population as a whole, but that the two extremes are somewhat under-represented. The reasons for this have

to do with the difficulties inherent in using a cluster sample in a situation where particular values are concentrated in specific clusters, which might not necessarily appear in the sample.

An examination of the basic tables shows much that is of considerable interest. First, there is the concentration of landed values in and around Cape Town. Cape Town and Green Point by themselves contained 22 per cent of the value of the colony, and the neighbouring veldcornetcies (sic) of Rondebosch and Wynberg undoubtedly also were very valuable. Indeed, Cape Town and the Cape district between them contained 72 per cent of all the colony's properties valued at over £3000, and those in the District were largely concentrated in Cape Town's suburbia, rather than in the wheat-growing areas of the Tjiggerberg and Swartland. [17] On the other hand, the properties with the lowest values were disproportionately to be found in Cape Town, Albany and, to a lesser extent, Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the towns contained a large number of very small and decrepit properties. This is evidently the case in Cape Town, with its cheap and nasty slums alongside Table Bay, and in the low-cost hire houses in what was to become District Six [18], and probably also accounted for the low average values of the Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth district. It could also be the case in the colony's dorps. Thus 40 per cent of the properties in Fort Beaufort veldcornetcy, many of which were rented to officers in the British army, were worth less than £200, while the *erven* in the dorp of Richmond, in the Uitvlugt veldcornetcy of Graaff-Reinet, which had only recently been laid out, averaged no more than £71. In the more established villages, property values were rather higher, though. Thus the 37 properties in Wellington of one acre or less averaged £157.

In the case of Albany special factors were at work. It may be that the original plots granted to the 1820 settlers, which were generally small, had not yet been consolidated, which would have had the effect of increasing the number of low-valued properties in the district. Much more important, however, was the inclusion of the Kat River Settlement in Albany district. The great majority of the district's low-valued plots were to be found in the settlement. Thus the only Kat River veldcornetcy in the sample, that under Andries Pretorius, which included Maasdorp, Fairbairn, Readsdaale and Philipton, averaged only £104 per plot, less than half of the average for any other veldcornetcy which was investigated. [19]

The exceptional nature of the returns for Albany, Cape Town and the Cape division, and the importance of the extremes in the distribution of values in these districts, can be confirmed in another way. As is shown in Table IV, when the Gini coefficients of inequality are calculated, only these three districts give results which are higher than for the colony as a whole.

For the rest, the tables confirm what would otherwise be suspected. Land values were highest in the agricultural south-west of the colony. The figures for the Cape division were probably dragged down by the effect of the sandveld farms inland from Saldanha Bay, while, on the other hand, the average for the Koeberg veldcornetcy, at £1090, was one of the highest in the sample. The very highest were to be found in Stellenbosch district, with the Mosselbanks River averaging £1169, Groot Drakenstein £1127 and the Bottelary £1075. The old wine-farming areas were clearly still comparatively very prosperous. [20] Swellendam district, too, was apparently wealthy, as might be expected given growth in grain and wool farming in the area. Although it did not have the highest average value of any district, being somewhat behind Stellenbosch, it did have the highest modal value, being the only district where this was over £1000, and it also had the largest number of farms worth £3000 outside the immediate environs of Cape Town. Since Swellendam was a region of old loan farms, of much greater dimensions than the freehold farms of Stellenbosch and the Cape, presumably those farmers who had managed to convert these into grain and sheep, or indeed horse-breeding, estates had done very well, and had driven up the value of their property. [21]



In the essentially pastoral regions outside the south-west, the longer settled areas of Clanwilliam, Worcester and Beaufort districts were in general worth less than the area in process of becoming the Cape Midlands. Both Graaff-Reinet and Cradock district had an average valuation considerably above those for the more westerly regions of the Karoo, the Bokkevelde, Roggevelde and Hantam. This would also have been the case for Albany and, presumably, for Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth, if the averages for these districts had not been dragged down by the factors discussed above. At the level of the veldcornetcy the prosperity of at least parts of these districts is clear. Koenap, immediately to the north of Grahamstown, had the highest average value outside the south-west, at £898, and it was closely followed by Buffelshoek, in Graaff-Reinet district, with £896. At the bottom end of the scale, however, was Colesberg district, between the Sneeuwberg and the Orange River, which, even though it had the largest number of sheep in the colony, still only had a very small proportion of merinos, about 9.5 per cent of the total. [22] Clearly, the rise in land values which accompanied the introduction of woolled sheep to the Eastern Province had yet to reach north of the Sneeuwberg. A decade later, it had penetrated deep into what was by then the Orange Free State. [23]

This material clearly demonstrates that the great landowners of the east had not engrossed large blocks of the countryside and had it registered as single farms. However, as has already been mentioned, the summary figures do not allow the exclusion of the possibility, or for that matter the demonstration of the fact, that certain individuals had been able to acquire large numbers of farms and so dominate the economic life of a particular region. In order to decide between these alternatives, it is necessary to return to the original records.

When this is done, certain trends become evident. First, in the agricultural south-west, owner occupancy was almost universal. In Stellenbosch district, it was not considered necessary to note the owner's residence, since it was assumed that he would live on the farm, while in four out of the five Cape District veldcornetcies in the sample owner occupancy was virtually universal. (The exception was in the arid north-west of the district, where, for instance, the six farms which made up the Langebaan peninsula were all owned by the same man.) The Kat River was also an area of owner occupiers. Elsewhere the pattern was far more variegated, and it is probable that the sampling procedures have failed to reveal the full pattern. Certainly I am unable to explain all the differences that show up in the full tabulation, given as Table V, and it would be tedious to translate all the detail into words. Some points, though, are clear. Land occupied exclusively by servants was to be found only in Graaff-Reinet district and in parts of Uitenhage. Land which had been claimed but was not occupied was only to be found in the east (with a tiny exception in the Nieuwveld of Beaufort District). Presumably it was only there that this sort of speculative claim was thought worth while. The other distinctions are less easily explicable. In the arid north-west, for instance in the Cold Bokkeveld, Namaqualand and the Camiesberg, farmers needed two farms, or guaranteed access to *trekveld*, in order to survive, and so the level of owner occupancy was low, but why a fifth of the Camiesberg was let out to tenants and none of Namaqualand is mysterious. There may, of course, have been differences in the registration practices. Similarly, in Somerset district, the two neighbouring veldcornetcies of Zwagershoek and the East Riet River show different patterns of tenancy, which perhaps is connected to the later conquest of the latter region, to the east of the Great Fish River. [24] Again, in George district, the veldcornetcy of Mossel Bay on the southern plains shows a considerable family likeness to the outer portions of the south-west Cape proper, and would presumably have shown even more to Swellendam district, if the data for that area had survived. The veldcornetcy of Attaquas Kloof, on the other hand, which was no more than forty kilometres to the north of Mossel Bay but across the mountains in the Little Karoo, was already showing the Byzantine intricacies of tenure which the area was to exhibit in the early twentieth century and which would contribute to its being one of the main locations of the "poor white problem". [25]

The most interesting veldcornetcies in the sample, in terms of land engrossment, absentee landlordism and speculation, would seem to be the Coega, at the mouth of the Sundays River

in Uitenhage District, the Koenap to the north of Grahamstown in Albany, and, surprisingly, the one identified in the records as Alewyn Smit's, which covered an area around Beaufort West and the southern slopes of the Nieuwveld. I therefore propose to examine each of these areas in somewhat more detail, and also that of Buffelshoek in Graaff-Reinet, as a sort of control.

The most notable feature of the Coega was the great proportion of the veldcornetcy which had come into the hands of J G Cuyler, the well-known (or better, perhaps, notorious) ex-landdrost of Uitenhage. He owned just under a quarter of the veldcornetcy, with an estate worth in total £4200, more than three times that of any other resident. Indeed, while he was landdrost, it was held by some that his landed possessions compromised the disinterestedness his position required. [26] Another £7150 (or 41 per cent of the veldcornetcy's value) was owned by non-residents, who generally lived in either Uitenhage or Port Elizabeth, although there was one man who was at the time in England who possessed over £1000 worth of the area. In general, they had not put tenants on their farms, and in only two cases is it definitely stated that the farm was under the care of "servants". Exactly how the farms were exploited is not clear, but it may be that even so close to Port Elizabeth they were being held speculatively, waiting for the land price to rise. More likely, however, is the possibility that the grazing was "sour", and that the farms were only occupied during the summer rains.

In the Koenap, too, a large proportion (35 per cent, which was worth £14,800) of the equity was owned by men who lived outside the veldcornetcy. Indeed 24 per cent was owned by residents of Grahamstown and 11 per cent by a single man. However, almost all of this land was occupied and presumably out at rent. There was only one farm, worth £500, which was unoccupied and whose owner was specifically stated to live outside the Koenap, although the residences of the owners of the other four farms (worth in total £2050) which were not occupied is not given. In at least three cases the occupant of a farm was a member of the family of its owner. All the same, the evidence is that outsiders were acquiring the land in this rich sheep-farming district, not only for the purposes of speculation, but also to rent it out. On the other hand, a majority of the value in this veldcornetcy was clearly in the hands of its residents, who owned eleven of the eighteen estates (often comprising more than one farm) which were valued at over £1000.

In Alewyn Smit's veldcornetcy, in the Nieuwveld, on the northern edge of the little Karoo near Beaufort West [27], a large proportion of the land, 67 per cent in total, was in the hands of men who owned more than one farm in the division. Indeed about 600 square kilometers, worth £4375, or 19 per cent of the division's equity, was owned by a single man, George William Prince. This made up thirteen of the twenty-two farms, measuring in total around a thousand square kilometres, which he had purchased for £6380 in January 1841, in partnership with two other Cape Town merchants. This large estate was sold as a single lot by a speculator who had acquired the farms of men who had joined the Voortrekkers in Natal or the Orange Free State. [28] Prince was recorded as living at Steenrotsfontein in the veldcornetcy itself, so it would appear that he was actually farming the land, or at least part of it, and not merely waiting for the price to rise. Indeed, relatively little of the veldcornetcy's equity (18 per cent, or £4232) was owned by men who lived outside its borders, and many of these were residents of the neighbouring dorp of Beaufort. Obviously, there was a move towards consolidation, but not towards absenteeism.

Nevertheless, even in the new wool producing districts, land consolidation and absentee ownership were far from regular. The veldcornetcy of Buffelshoek, in the south-east of Graaff-Reinet district, shows a very different pattern, though one which was probably more typical in 1845 than those of the areas close to Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth. [29] Virtually all the farms were owner occupied, there was little land consolidation and under 5 per cent of the equity (£1025 out of £20625) was owned by men who were not residents of the veldcornetcy. Nevertheless, the average value of the properties in Buffelshoek was, as has been pointed out, the second highest of any veldcornetcy outside the south-west Cape, and only £2 behind the highest, the Koenap.

In conclusion, then, the old agricultural heartland of the South-West Cape showed a consistent pattern of owner-occupants, who were no doubt generally members of the families which had dominated the region for generations. [30] Outside the Cape and Stellenbosch districts, however, matters were much more diverse. In some areas, owner occupancy was virtually universal, in others a high proportion of the land was engrossed by a small number of men, either for their own use or to be rented out to tenants.

In some ways this is a depressing conclusion. It would seem to suggest that the grid which has to be used to understand land ownership in the Cape Colony cannot be on the scale of the region, or even of the district. Rather it would be necessary to work at the level of the individual veldcorneity. At any rate the sample needed to be used would have to be considerably larger. In addition, the probabilities are that labour organisation would be almost as variegated. [31]

On the other hand, from this very diversity a most important conclusion can be drawn. When the agricultural history of South Africa, or of any significant portion of it, is examined in detail, then it becomes clear just how great were the differences between the various parts of the country at any given time. Certain universals are evident. The exploitation of the mainly black labour force has been general, although at different times and in different places it has taken a variety of different forms, from slavery to share-cropping to wage labour. [32] Eventually all parts of the country were brought into the nexus of markets and credit, though at widely varying rates and periods. By the mid-nineteenth century, and indeed in general much earlier, virtually all the Cape Colony as then defined had come within that nexus. But the point is that this happened in a number of ways and with great differences of timing. The variations were to be found not just between the main agricultural regions of the colony but within them. Obvious distinctions can be drawn between the south-west, the north-west and the east, but also between Albany and Graaff-Reinet, even between the Zwagershoek and the East Riet River in Somerset. In this paper this has been shown to have been the case with regard to the distribution of landed property, but similar, if not so finely textured, differences are apparent in any facet of the colony's and the country's agricultural history.

The question which this raises is obviously the extent to which the various profiles revealed by the 1845 cross-section merely represented different moments in a single developmental cycle of agrarian exploitation. Are the distinctions that can be observed merely the result of, on the one hand, the century and a half which separated the conquest of the far south-west from that of, say, Colesberg district, and, on the other, of the different lengths of time which elapsed between that initial conquest and the area's full incorporation into the market economy? The latter differences were determined by access to coastal markets and the regions' varying suitability for particular systems of agricultural production. The use of the concept of the developmental cycles, initially developed for the study of family structures, does allow the simplification of the complex data, but not into a single model. Rather there were at least two distinct cycles in operation, which the rating intersected at varying points in their trajectories. The two cycles led eventually to the same outcome, namely the division of the countryside into holdings which in general were directly managed by their owner and his family. In the longer settled districts of the colony this had been achieved long before 1845. Elsewhere, a distinction can be observed between, on the one hand, those parts of the country where claims to and exploitation of the land were contemporary and intertwined and, on the other, those areas where it was possible to make speculative claims to land well in advance of its full economic utilization.

The single most important reason determining which of the two models obtained in a given area was the date of its conquest. The changes in land tenure arrangements introduced by Governor Sir John Cradock in 1814 were crucial in this. [33] Those areas settled before then, such as the south-west Cape proper, those districts such as Worcester and Clanwilliam (and probably Swellendam) which immediately adjoined it and the old core of the Graaff-Reinet district in the Sundays river valley, followed the first course with relatively little speculation

in land. [34] In regions which were more recently conquered, or at least settled, such as Uitenhage, Albany and much of the Fish River valley, and also in much of the drier central Karoo, including Beaufort and the south-west part of Graaff-Reinet [35], it was possible for the rich and the well-connected to acquire land in the expectation, generally justified, that its value would rise. This pattern was also to be followed further north, after the establishment of the Orange River Sovereignty (later the Orange Free State) in 1848. [36] The slow transfer to commercial pastoralism thus post-dated the acquisition of the land, whereas in the older areas of the colony land-ownership was immediately accompanied by the introduction of an admittedly less intensively commercial exploitation. Clearly the changes in the form of the colonial state, as British rule became more entrenched, and of the extent to which this could be exploited for individual gain, were crucial in determining this. The parameters of gentry control, and the nature of the ruling gentry class, in the east were thus different from those in the west, with evident political consequences. [37] Their reality was, however, no less evident.

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### Notes

- 1 On this, see Nigel Worden, "Adjusting to Emancipation: freed slaves and farmers in mid-nineteenth-century south-western Cape", in Wilmot G James and Mary Simons (eds), *The Angry Divide: social and economic history of the western Cape* (Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1989); John Marincowitz, "Rural Production and Labour in the Western Cape, 1823-1888, with special reference to the wheat growing districts", PhD thesis, University of London, 1985; Saul Dubow, *Land, Labour and Merchant Capital: the experience of the Graaff-Reinet district in the pre-industrial rural economy of the Cape 1852-1872* (Cape Town: Communications of the Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, No 6, 1982).
- 2 This has been worked out in most detail for Stellenbosch. See Mary I Rayner, "Wine and Slaves: the failure of an export economy and the ending of slavery in the Cape Colony, South Africa, 1806-1834", PhD, Duke University, 1986; Pam Scully, "'The Bouquet of Freedom': social and economic relations in Stellenbosch district, 1870-1900", MA, UCT, 1987; and Hermann B Giliomee, "Western Cape Farmers and the Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1870-1915", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (1987), pp 38-64.
- 3 See, for instance, my "The Origins of Capitalist Agriculture in the Cape Colony: a survey", in William Beinart, Peter Delius and Stanley Trapido (eds), *Putting a Plough to the Ground: accumulation and dispossession in rural South Africa, 1850-1930* (Johannesburg, 1986), pp 56-100.
- 4 Cape, Stellenbosch, Swellendam and parts of Worcester districts. See map XX.
- 5 Uitenhage, Albany, Somerset, Graaff-Reinet, Cradock and Colesberg districts.



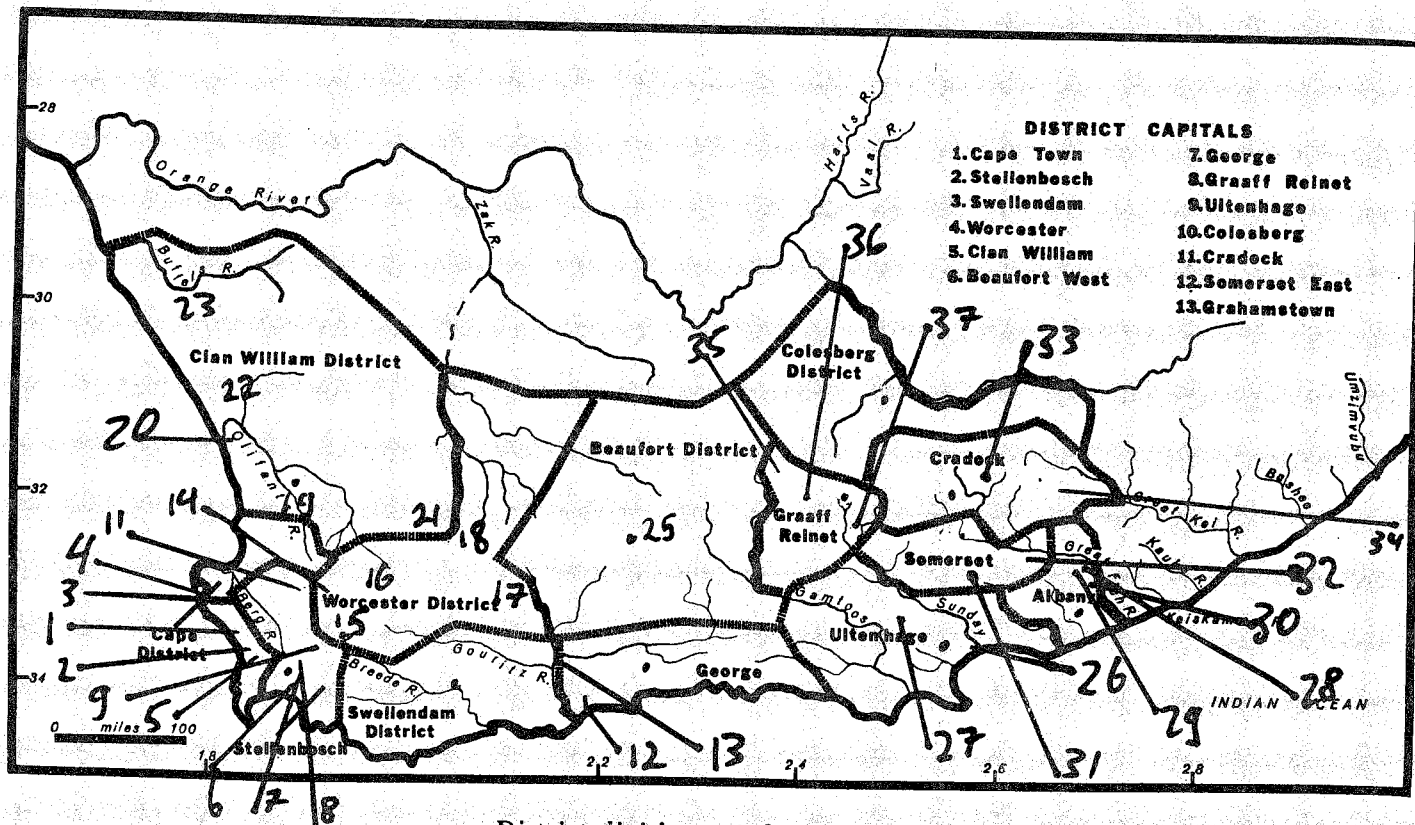
- 6 The valuation was conducted by "competent persons", who tendered for the right to value each district. See *Report ... Upon the Operations of the Central Board of Commissioners for Public Roads*, Cape Parliamentary Paper, G3 of 1855, p 5.
- 7 Two farms in East Riet River veldcornetcy, Somerset East, which were described as being rented (by the prominent 1820 settler families of Bowker and Atherstone) from the estate of the late Louis Trechardt. For the opportunities which the trek gave for land speculation in Beaufort West district, see below.
- 8 The statistics in this summary are taken from the Cape of Good Hope, *Statistical Blue Book of the Colony*, for 1845, and for other years as appropriate for purposes of comparison.
- 9 The relative importance of the various crops was estimated by multiplying the volume of the harvest reported in the *Blue Book* by the Resident magistrate for each district by the price he reported.
- 10 There were a number of other smaller, "invisible exports", notably the victualling of merchant ships, but these could never have given the Cape any economic stability without the British military.
- 11 This point is worked out in more detail in Robert Ross, "The Relative Importance of Exports and the Internal Market for the Agriculture of the Cape Colony, 1770-1855", in G Liesegang, H Pasch and A Jones (eds), *Figuring African Trade: proceedings of the symposium on the quantification and structure of the import and export and long distance trade of Africa in the nineteenth century* (Berlin: Kolner Beitrage zur Afrikanistik, 1986), II.
- 12 Digby Warren, "Merchants, Commissioners and Wordmasters: municipal politics in Cape Town, 1840-54", MA thesis, UCT (1986), p 253.
- 13 CA CRB 129.
- 14 Respectively, 3/CT 7/1/2/1 and subsequent volumes and 3/AY 7/1/1/1.
- 15 In Stellenbosch district this information was not given, very probably because owner occupancy was so universal that it was not thought relevant.
- 16 It was through this information, used in A Appel, "Die Distrik Oudtshoorn tot die Tagtijejare van die 19de Eeu: 'n socio-historiese studie", PhD, University of Stellenbosch (1981), that I discovered the existence of the original registers.
- 17 None of the four veldcornetcies concerned, two in Rondebosch and two in Wynberg, turned up in the sample, which contributed to the under-representation of the highest values.
- 18 Warren, *op. cit.*, pp 38-39.
- 19 It is remarkable that Tony Kirk, in his brief discussion of the valuation, describes Albany as "the district of the small proprietor", failing to realise that the small proprietors in question were not part of the constituency of Grahamstown politicians like Godlonton and Cock, but, as he has shown elsewhere, their great adversaries. See "Self-Government and Self-Defence in South Africa: the inter-relations between British and Cape Politics, 1846-1854", DPhil, Oxford (1972), pp 70-71, and "The Cape Economy and the Expropriation of the Kat River Settlement, 1846-1853" in Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore (eds), *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South*

*Africa* (London, 1980), pp 226-46.

- 20 There is, of course, the suspicion that vineyards were valued as part of the immovable property of a farm, which would artificially inflate the value of the wine-growing areas, as opposed to the sheep-raising ones. Though equivalent to a vineyard as the farm's working capital, a sheep flock could scarcely be described as immovable. On the other hand, this difference in valuation procedures seems unlikely, as it would have skewed values (and thus taxes) far too much in favour of the Eastern Province, although it would also have meant that less money would have been expended on building roads in the east.
- 21 On landholding, see L C Duly, *British Land Policy at the Cape, 1795-1844: a study of administrative procedures in the Empire* (Durham, NC, 1968), and, above all, Leonard Guelke, "Land Tenure and Settlement at the Cape, 1652-1812", unpublished paper (1984); on farm dimensions between Cape Town and the mountains, see Leonard Guelke, *The Southwestern Cape Colony 1657-1750: freehold land grants*, Occasional Paper No 5, Geography Publication Series (Waterloo: Geography Department, University of Waterloo, Ontario, 1987); on Caledon district, a major section of Swellendam, see T A van Ryneveld, "Merchants and Missions: developments in the Caledon District 1833-1850", BA honours thesis, UCT (1983).
- 22 This figure is taken from the *Blue Book* of 1846, p 382; for comparison, 46.5 per cent of sheep in Graaff-Reinet were woolled. It may be that the Colesberg land values were further depressed by the drought of which the Civil Commissioner complained in his report for the *Blue Book* for 1845, p 301.
- 23 See Robert Ross, *Adam Kok's Griquas: a study in the development of stratification in South Africa* (Cambridge, 1976), pp 66-81; Timothy Keegan, "The Making of the Orange Free State, 1846-1854: sub-imperialism, primitive accumulation and state formation", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 17, 1, 1988, pp 26-54.
- 24 For the boundaries of the eastern Cape veldcornetries, see J B Bergh and J C Visagie, *The Eastern Cape Frontier Zone 1660-1980: a cartographic guide of historical research* (Durban, 1985).
- 25 See, e.g., W M Macmillan, *The South African Agrarian Problem and its Historical Development* (Johannesburg, 1919).
- 26 On Cuyler's methods of acquiring land, see the "Report of the Commissioners of Enquiry to Earl Bathurst on Mr Hugh Huntley's Case", 5 January 1826, in G McC Theal (ed), *Records of the Cape Colony*, 36 volumes (London, 1896-1905), XXV, pp 251 ff; Bourke to Bathurst, 29 January 1827, with enclosures: *ibid.*, XXX, 185 *et seq*; Bourke to Hay, 7 November 1827, *ibid.*, XXXIV, p 105, and numerous other letters in the various volumes of the *Records*.
- 27 CRB 129 does not give a geographical location to the veldcornetries in Beaufort District, but see the *Cape Almanac* for that year, in which it is at least made clear in which part of the district each veldcornetrey was to be found.
- 28 *South African Commercial Advertiser*, 13 January 1841.
- 29 The two Cradock district veldcornetries in the sample were in this respect far more similar to Buffelshoek than to the Koenap.
- 30 On these, see, e.g., Robert Ross, "The Rise of the Cape Gentry", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, IX, 2, 1983.

- 31 See, for example, Van Ryneveld's comment that "the Caledon district [part of Swellendam] largely defined itself in terms of the boundaries of labour migration from the [missionary] institutions" of Genadendal and Elim: "Merchants and Missions", p 8.
- 32 No order or evolutionary sequence is implied by this list.
- 33 See Duly, *op. cit.*
- 34 Large estates could be built up, as in the holdings of Reitz, Breda, Joubert and Company near Cape Agulhas, but these were not held with a view to speculating on rising land values. See above.
- 35 Dubow, *op. cit.*, esp ch IV.
- 36 Keegan, "The Making of the Orange Free State", *op. cit.*.
- 37 Clifton C Crais, "Gentry and Labour in Three Eastern Cape Districts", *South African Historical Journal*, 18, 1986, pp 125-46; Basil A Le Cordeur, *The Politics of Eastern Cape Separatism, 1820-1854* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1981).

**District Boundaries and Approximate Locations of the Veldcornetcies in the Sample**  
(For an explanation of the numbers see Table VI)



*District divisions of the Cape colony, 1844*



**TABLE I**  
**Valuation of Immovable Property 1845, Totals**  
(all values in pounds sterling).

<u>District</u>	<u>Valuation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Cape Town and Green Point	1,298,048	3,458	375
Cape Division	605,805	872	649
Stellenbosch	627,641	1,180	716
Swellendam	585,440	878	667
George	285,405	537	531
Clanwilliam	192,828	523	369
Worcester	255,982	587	436
Beaufort	162,196	502	323
Total Western Divisions	4,013,345	8,537	470
Albany	588,352	1,665	353
Uitenhage	372,995	981	380
Somerset	179,366	428	419
Graaff-Reinet	398,693	656	607
Cradock	221,911	382	581
Colesberg	147,728	622	238
Total Eastern Divisions	1,809,045	4,734	382
TOTAL	5,822,390	13,271	439

Source: *Report ..... upon the Operations of the Central Road Board ... 1843-53*, Cape Parliamentary Paper, G3'55, 5.

**TABLE II**  
**Numbers of Properties Valued at the Rates Shown**  
(all values in pounds sterling)

	below 100	100 -199	200 -299	300 -499	500 -999	1000 -1499	1500 -1999	2000 -2999	over 3000
Cape Town and Green Point	529	929	632	568	458	192	80	54	16
Cape District	76	134	134	218	108	97	54	23	28
Stellenbosch	98	213	155	221	303	129	42	17	2
Swellendam	106	146	108	112	155	181	47	16	7
George	66	94	48	108	106	70	40	5	0
Worcester	34	94	114	149	147	37	11	1	0
Clanwilliam	41	101	107	133	124	13	3	1	0
Beaufort	85	130	54	97	118	17	1	0	0
Uitenhage & Port Elizabeth	169	197	147	210	190	51	9	4	4
Albany	499	378	161	260	271	59	19	15	3
Somerset	30	56	65	144	113	19	0	1	0
Cradock	35	62	51	109	120	27	7	1	0
Graaff-Reinet	87	91	62	192	171	40	10	3	0
Colesberg	83	249	149	90	47	3	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,938</b>	<b>2,844</b>	<b>1,987</b>	<b>2,611</b>	<b>2,431</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>61</b>

Source: British Parliamentary Paper 1362 of 1851, *Further Papers relative to the Establishment of a Representative Assembly at the Cape of Good Hope*, 171.

**TABLE III**  
**Percentage Distribution of Properties in Various Value Classes**

	below 100	100 -199	200 -299	300 -499	500 -999	1000 -1499	1500 -1999	2000 -2999	over 3000
Total colony	14.6	21.4	15.0	19.7	18.3	7.0	2.4	1.1	0.5
Total less Cape Town & Swellendam	14.6	19.8	14.1	21.6	20.4	6.3	2.2	0.8	0.5
In Sample	10.9	13.9	12.3	22.4	27.2	9.2	3.0	1.0	0.2

**TABLE IV**  
**Gini Coefficients of Inequality**

Cape Town	.513
Cape District	.532
Stellenbosch	.440
Swellendam	.477
George	.410
Worcester	.403
Clanwilliam	.374
Beaufort	.427
Uitenhage & Port Elizabeth	.459
Albany	.517
Somerset	.327
Cradock	.359
Graaff-Reinet	.399
Colesberg	.366
TOTAL COLONY	.486

**TABLE V**  
**Proportions of Owner Occupancy in Sampled Veldcornetcies**

<u>District</u>	<u>Veldcornetcy</u>	I	II	III	IV	V
Cape	Blauwberg	99.2	0.8			
	Koeberg	100.0				
	Berg River	100.0				
	Agter Groen Kloof	76.6	15.9	7.4		
Stellenbosch	Tijgerberg	100.0				
	Bottelary	100.0				
	Groot Drakenstein	100.0				
	Wagonmakers Valley	100.0				
	Klein Drakenstein	100.0				
	Mosselbank River	100.0				
George	Honigberg	100.0				
	Mossel Bay	79.1	6.1	13.2	1.6	
	Attaquas Kloof	57.0	2.9	22.5	17.6	
Worcester	24 Rivers	78.3		21.7		
	Voorst Bokkeveld	97.7	0.8	1.6		
	Cold Bokkeveld	61.3	38.7			
	Klein Zwart Berg	94.8	5.2			
Clanwilliam	Voorst Omtrek Midden Roggeveld	79.2	16.3	4.5		
	Upper Oliphants River	78.7	17.2			
	Berg and Lange Valley	80.9	11.7	7.4		
	Onderroggeveld	67.9	30.2	1.9		
	Camiesberg	52.8	27.8	19.5		
	Namaqualand	59.0	41.0			
Beaufort	Mouth of Oliphants River	79.4	20.1			
	Nieuwveld (Alewyn Smit)	47.1	35.2	15.8	2.0	
	Coega	38.2	55.1	2.2	0	4.6
Uitenhage	Winterhoek	59.6	21.0	15.4	4.0	0
	Andries Pretorius	96.6	0	2.5	0.9	
Albany (KR)	Koenap	48.1	9.8	36.1	6.0	
Albany	Fort Beaufort	49.9	0.5	37.5	12.1	
Somerset	Zwagershoek	80.9	11.6	4.8		
Cradock	East Riet River	79.0	0.8	15.8	4.5	
	Brak river	86.5	13.5			
Graaff-Reinet	Klaas Smits River	85.0	15.0			
	Uitvlugt	59.4	13.4	14.6	9.9	3.8
	Agter Sneeuwberg	69.4	4.5	8.9	4.1	6.6
	Buffelshoek	75.2	10.9	0.4	0.7	12.9

Key:

- I Percentage owner occupied.
- II Percentage where the owner does not reside, but where there is no evidence of anyone else.
- III Percentage where the occupier is not the owner, usually a tenant.
- IV Unoccupied.
- V Occupied by servants.



TABLE VI

## Total Valuations and Numbers of Properties in Sampled Veldcornetcies

<u>District</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Veldcornetcy</u>	<u>Total valuation</u>	<u>number properties</u>
Cape	1	Blauwberg	16,350	20
	2	Koeberg	19,625	18
	3	Berg River	11,650	18
	4	Agter Groen Kloof	11,775	22
Stellenbosch	5	Tijgerberg	19,775	29
	6	Bottelary	32,265	30
	7	Groot Drakenstein	50,725	45
	8	Wagonmakers Valley	50,332	113
	9	Drakenstein	34,000	57
	10	Mosselbank River	14,025	12
George	11	Honigberg	8,475	29
	12	Mossel Bay	28,475	34
	13	Attaquas Kloof	25,912	61
Worcester	14	24 Rivers	18,870	30
	15	Voorst Bokkeveld	16,150	23
	16	Cold Bokkeveld	9,700	25
	17	Klein Zwart Berg	2,860	11
Clanwilliam	18	Voorst Omtrek Midden Roggeveld	14,400	44
	19	Upper Oliphants River	10,712	25
	20	Berg and Lange Valley	12,825	27
	21	Onderroggeveld	31,675	58
	22	Camiesberg	10,000	30
	23	Namaqualand	4,325	15
	24	Mouth of Oliphants River	15,900	41
Beaufort	25	Nieuwveld (Alewyn Smit)	22,831	80
Uitenhage	26	Coega	17,425	37
	27	Winterhoek	12,740	58
Albany (KR)	28	Andries Pretorius	9,230	88
Albany	29	Koenap	42,220	47
	30	Fort Beaufort	27,560	100
Somerset	31	Zwagershoek	41,040	60
	32	East Riet River	39,727	102
Cradock	33	Brak river	47,510	79
	34	Klaas Smits River	22,500	52
Graaff-Reinet	35	Uitvlugt	35,902	120
	36	Agter Sneeuwberg	26,600	37
	37	Buffelshoek	20,625	23